

2018 Domestic Violence Awareness Month events

One in four American women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime, according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. That's more women than are affected by breast cancer, ovarian cancer and lung cancer combined. Still, more than one-third of Americans have never discussed the issue.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the Immokalee office of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children is raising public awareness with its annual Immokalee Children's Peace Fair from 3-6 p.m., Monday, Oct. 22, at the Collier County Immokalee Sports Complex, 505 Escambia St.

The event is free and open to the public. Activities will include children's games, food, entertainment, and information booths hosted by partner agencies.

"The Peace Fair has always been a very special event for The Shelter," says CEO Linda Oberhaus, "With the upcoming ground breaking for The Shelly Stayer Shelter in Immokalee, it is even more important than ever to raise awareness in this community."



Submitted photo
A young participant chooses a peace sign at the face painting booth during the 2017 Immokalee Children's Peace Fair hosted by The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.

For more information on The Shelter or the Shelly Stayer Shelter for Victims of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence, contact Kaydee Tuff at 239.775.3862 or ktuff@naplesshelter.org



WATCH LIVE!
October 24, 2018
7:00 pm ET

The race for Florida's next GOVERNOR DEBATE

October 24, 2018 7:00 pm

PRESENTED BY:



ANDREW GILLUM (D)



RON DESANTIS (R)

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WATCH LIVE

7:00 PM ET | Wednesday, October 24

- FT. MYERS - WBBH (NBC)
- GAINESVILLE - WCJB (ABC)
- JACKSONVILLE - WJXX (ABC)
- MIAMI/FT. LAUDERDALE - WFOR (CBS)
- ORLANDO - WESH (NBC)
- PANAMA CITY - WMBB (ABC)*
- PENSACOLA - WEAR (ABC)*
- TALLAHASSEE - WCTV (CBS)
- TAMPA/ST. PETE - WFLA (NBC)
- WEST PALM BEACH - WPBF (ABC)

*These stations will air the debate with a one hour delay at 7:00 pm Central Time

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Guest Commentary

Domestic Violence seems to dominate our daily headlines

We live in a time when domestic violence seems to dominate our daily headlines. Two local stories recently captured my attention. Both began very much the same, but ended very differently.

The first story was about Rubi de los Angeles Velasco, 18, who was killed Sept. 13. Santiago Burbano, 20, is accused of killing her at his family's apartment in East Naples. A year ago, the two had a budding relationship, but according to her mother, his attempts to control Rubi's life — her make-up, her clothing, her activities — were not for Rubi. We don't know why Rubi went to his home that day, but friends describe her as the kind of person who was always willing to help a friend. She died that afternoon from a knife wound to her throat.

The second story ran just two days later. According to sheriff's reports: David Heinz, 19, drove to Naples from Texas with threats to kill his 17-year-old ex-girlfriend and shoot up a school. Unwilling to accept her breakup, he sent her more than 50 threatening texts, including photos of guns. She reported the texts to law enforcement. Neighbors later reported seeing him driving in her neighborhood, and he was arrested at a local Publix parking lot. She is pressing charges.

Both stories involve an accused abuser

unwilling to accept the loss of power and control over his victim, but only one woman is alive to tell her story. The senseless tragedy of Rubi's death underscores the importance of recognizing and reporting the signs of domestic violence. Although every situation is unique, the young woman in the second story is alive today because she spoke out; her concerns were taken seriously, and the public got involved.

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This month, and throughout the year, The Shelter for Abused Women & Children calls on every Collier County citizen to take a stand for countless victims like Rubi, as well as survivors, families, friends and communities impacted by domestic violence.

Last year in Collier County, there were 1,794 reports of domestic violence, including two murders, 29 forcible rapes and 317 aggravated assaults. Chances are

likely you know at least one of these victims because domestic violence crosses all ethnic, economic and geographic boundaries. Domestic violence isn't always as obvious as a black eye or split lip. Things like lapses in communication, personality changes, never having money on hand, having to constantly check in with a partner, absence from work, school, or social outings can be red flags of abuse.

If you notice such a change in a friend, relative or co-worker, don't assume that you are over-reacting or that it's none of your business. Call to see why you haven't heard from her. Lack of response can have disastrous and far-reaching results. Many mass-murders had a history of domestic violence prior to committing their violent public attacks. Failure to recognize and report domestic violence in our homes can put the entire community at risk. If you see something,



By Linda Oberhaus, CEO, The Shelter for Abused Women & Children

say something — before it's too late.

Rubi's Facebook page is filled with the things she loved — photos from high school graduation, friends and family and videos of social causes she believed in. Her beautiful brown eyes look out from her cover photo, filled with the promise of a bright future ahead. It was the last post she would ever make.

This spring, The Shelter plans to break ground on the Shelly Stayer Shelter in Immokalee. If you suspect or observe domestic violence, call the Collier sheriff's tips line at 239-252-9300 (you may remain anonymous). If you are a victim of abuse or feel unsafe due to a violent relationship, call The Shelter's 24-hour Crisis Line at 239-775-1101.



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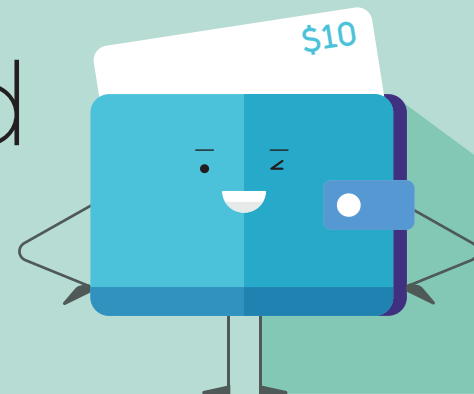
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