

# Editorial Opinion

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## Time to speak out against domestic violence



### Your Turn

Colin Estrem  
Chair, Gentle'men Against  
Domestic Violence®

In 2015 I heard a recording of a 911 call that would forever change my life. The tape was part of an educational training session at The Shelter for Abused Women & Children. We sat in the classroom, listening helplessly as Lisa, the young girl on the phone, frantically screamed for help while her father brutally attacked her mother and sister. By the end of the six-minute call, officers arrived in time to save this young girl and her family.

As the father of two young daughters, I will never forget those six minutes of terror in Lisa's voice. It stirred me to action through a local initiative called Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence® (GADV). Today, I serve as chair of this initiative.

In 2017, there were nearly 1,800 domestic violence calls to 911, affecting nearly every neighborhood in Collier County. It is very likely that you know one of these callers. They could be a

neighbor, a co-worker or even a relative.

On March 12, Collier County Commissioners will proclaim the very first Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence® Day. On this day, GADV calls on men to stand as equal partners with women to end domestic violence and human trafficking in Collier County and beyond. A full-page ad in the Naples Daily News will include the names of 250 like-minded men who are taking a stand as part of our 250 Men & More campaign. These men share the belief that we have a unique role and responsibility to create social change, now and for future generations.

In addition to joining GADV, there are many things that men can do to become part of the solution.

Examine and challenge your own thoughts about gender and the role you might, even unintentionally, play in supporting men who are abusive. This could take form in jokes, song lyrics or sharing stories that demean women and endorse sexual abuse or the oppression of women and girls. Even if you don't join in, remember that silence is affirming, and is essentially consent. When we choose not to speak out against do-

### Guest commentaries

A guest commentary can be 600 words or less on a topical subject. Authors must have considerable experience, public involvement or expertise in the subject matter. Due to the large number of guest commentaries we receive, these may be returned to the author with a recommendation to resubmit it as a letter to the editor within the guidelines for letters. Submit to [letters@naplesnews.com](mailto:letters@naplesnews.com).

mestic violence, we are supporting it.

If you are a parent or guardian, educate and re-educate your sons and other young men about our responsibility in ending domestic violence. Challenge traditional images of manhood that stop us and future generations from actively taking a stand to end violence against women.

I challenge all men to stand with us and recognize that violence against women is not the responsibility of women and the violence will not end until men become part of the solution to end it. We must take an active role in creating a cultural and social shift that no

longer tolerates violence against women.

With the support of The Shelter, GADV strives to create systems of accountability to women in our community. Violence and discrimination against women will end only when we take direction from those who understand it most, women.

Today in America, one in three women will be a victim of domestic violence at some point in her lifetime. With your support, we can help ensure that no young girl or woman in our community will ever be on the terrifying end of a 911 call like Lisa's. It's time to stand up and speak out.

For more information on how you can join GADV, go to [naplesshelter.org/gadv](http://naplesshelter.org/gadv). If you know or suspect that someone is a victim of domestic violence or human trafficking, call The Shelter's 24-hour crisis hotline at 239-775-1101.

*Colin Estrem serves as chair of Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence®, which calls on men to stand as equal partners with women to end domestic violence and human trafficking. GADV is an initiative of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.*

### TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Sunday, March 3, the 62nd day of 2019.

### LETTERS

#### Time for change

The City of Naples needs change. The City of Naples needs Ray Christman on City

our land codes. These approvals serve only to stress our infrastructure, reward developers with better return in investment and change the face of the City

#### Letters policy

Letters can be 275 words or less. Letters may be edited for clarity or taste, to