

Community Shows Up for Safe Berks Walk For NO MORE!

On Saturday, June 16, 2018, the weather was warm and balmy, and the stars were in line. More than 200 people of all ages, backgrounds and genders joined together to make a statement: NO MORE domestic violence! NO MORE sexual assault!

The bright Safe Berks T-shirts created a sea of turquoise as the crowd walked down Penn Avenue in West Reading, just before the annual Art on the Avenue. Some people pushed baby strollers, others

walked their dogs, and many carried handmade signs. In addition to demanding an end to abuse, the signs also asked for More Love, More Peace and More Justice.

All day, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., musicians entertained the crowd from the Safe Berks Stage at the 400 block of Penn Avenue. Volunteers and staff provided info, sold raffle tickets, offered children crafts and activities, and shared the Safe Berks

Photo Voice Project, photos created by Latina survivors of sexual violence.

Thank you to all the donors and volunteers who made the Walk For NO MORE a great success! Together, we raised nearly \$40,000 to serve survivors and provide education to prevent these crimes. Together, we raised awareness. Together, we helped dismantle the stigma that keeps survivors silent. *Together, we are building a Safe Berks!*



From left, Mary Kay Bernosky, Esq., Safe Berks CEO, Senator Judy Schwank & Carolyn Holleran, founder of PeaceTrust at Safe Berks. Photo by Danielle Reardon.



Mary Kay Bernosky, Esq., Safe Berks CEO, front left, and Senator Judy Schwank, lead more than 200 participants in the Safe Berks Walk For NO MORE on June 16, 2018. Photo courtesy of Reading Eagle, photo by Jeff Doelp.



Musical entertainment by Matt Bailey featuring Mereliss. Matt Bailey recently assisted with Camp Safe Berks, and Mereliss Colon Ortiz serves as Director of Residential Services. Photo by Gregory P. Pancerev.



The Blue Knights PA IV Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club also lead the Safe Berks Walk For NO MORE - this demonstrated the partnership between Safe Berks and Berks County law enforcement professionals. Photo by Danielle Reardon.

A Message From Our CEO



As we enjoy the lazy days of summer, we look back on the last fiscal year at Safe Berks and once again are overwhelmed by our accomplishments and the support we have received from this community. In this fiscal year we have successfully enhanced or implemented the following initiatives:

- **Lethality Assessment Project (“LAP”)** – now being implemented in seven local police departments, that allows us to connect our resources to individuals in relationships where there is a high danger of lethal or near lethal violence.
- **Therapy** – we now have a full-time therapist available to clients in our Residential Program, that allows us to better serve this vulnerable population and to help them heal from the trauma they have experienced.
- **Nature Explore Garden** – both Residential and Counseling staff will be attending training on how to maximize our utilization of our Nature Explore Garden to increase our ability to provide trauma-informed care to survivors.
- **Walk For NO MORE** – we returned to Art on the Avenue for our Walk For NO MORE. This year was our best year yet in terms of participation, awareness, and amount of funds raised.
- **Photo Voice Project** – Our Reliance funded Photo Voice Project allowed a group of Latina survivors of sexual assault to come together, develop their voices through their photographs, and to continue their journey to healing. The Project has been on display at the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, Mi Casa Su Casa, Art on the Avenue, and the PA Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) State Conference. We hope to continue this project next year with another group of survivors.

We anticipate additional challenges and accomplishments in the coming fiscal year that will ultimately allow us to continue to impact our community in positive ways. With the support we have received from our law enforcement partners, our arts community, Master Gardeners, and all of you in the Berks community, we are creating a Safe Berks!

Gratefully,

Mary Kay Bernosky



Diane Duff, Safe Berks Board member & Captain of the Safe Berks Board Team, which raised the most funds!



Volunteers from Koinos Community Church, Sinking Spring, coordinated fun activities for children at the Walk For NO MORE, including rock painting.



WALK FOR NO MORE

Fast Facts

- Raised nearly \$40,000
- More than 200 walkers participated
- 25 teams raised funds

Safe Berks services are free, confidential, and available in English and Spanish.

Toll Free Hotline:
844-789-SAFE (7233)
or
Text SAFE BERKS to 20121
Available 24/7/365

www.safeberks.org
610-373-1206
peace@safeberks.org

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Thank You to our 2018 Sponsors!

WALK FOR NO MORE

PLATINUM



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- Georgeadis Setley Attorneys & Advisors
- Reading Pediatrics
- Primerica

TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

A Team Alliance to End Violence

For 19 local teens, the week of July 23-27, 2018, was a journey into discussing and understanding oppression, building empathy, and creating strategies to be promoters of peace and social justice in their schools and communities.

It was also a week of fun, laughter and new friendships. Gathering on the beautiful campus of Albright College, the campers participated in discussions, group activities, crafts, games, and delicious meals, including a festive Talent Show. They also had free time to chat, play games, relax, or swim in the pool.

The Education and Outreach Department at Safe Berks planned and presented Camp Safe Berks, with help from other Safe Berks staff, Board Members, and volunteers. The free camp brought together youth and adults from across Berks County to form alliances that have great potential to continue to grow in the future.

Each day focused on a separate oppression: Adulthood, Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Classism. Participants gained a deeper understanding of the role oppression plays in being a "root cause" of violence in our society.

Camp Safe Berks is designed to ignite a passion within youth participants to not only spur their own personal growth, development and improved well-being, but also to become champions for social justice change throughout their community.

If you are interested in becoming involved in Camp Safe Berks 2019, as a camper or volunteer, email JenniferE@SafeBerks.org, or visit www.SafeBerks.org.



Photo by Danielle Reardon



Photo by Gregory P. Pancerev

A special Thanks...



Thank you to the 2018 Leadership Berks team who created a fabulous Marketing Plan for Safe Berks! From left: Craig Dodge, Sherry Berriker, Lindsay Crist, Alyssa Conahan, Jennifer Ebersole, and Kristin Nawocznski. Jennifer Ebersole also serves as the Director of Education & Outreach at Safe Berks. Check out our Fall Newsletter for more info about the Marketing Plan.



Thanks so much to Becki Achey, far right, Associate Director of Public Safety at Albright College, and the Albright students/Peer Educators, who recently visited Safe Berks and cooked delicious tacos for the residents. And for all the volunteers who visit Safe Berks to cook dinners for our residents, we appreciate your kindness, support and positive energy! To learn more about this volunteer opportunity, or to schedule a night to cook, contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at MindyM@SafeBerks.org or 484-869-5293.

Safe Berks Welcomes New Chief Operating Officer



Beth Garrigan, new Chief Operating Officer at Safe Berks

In May, one chapter ended, as Safe Berks staff congratulated and said goodbye to Christine Gilfillan, Chief Operating Officer, who was chosen as the new Director of Domestic Violence Services (DVS) of Lancaster County.

In July, a new chapter began, as staff welcomed our new Chief Operating Officer, Beth Garrigan. She serves as the organization's second-in-command, reporting to Mary Kay Bernosky, Esq., Safe Berks CEO. Garrigan's responsibilities include supervising staff, writing and managing grants, and representing Safe Berks locally, regionally and nationally. She will also work with the Board of Directors and staff to continually improve services.

For the past 11 years, Garrigan has served the Children's Home of Reading (CHOR), last working as the Program Manager of their Residential Program. "Prior to CHOR, I spent more than 10 years working with the Department of Public Welfare and independent employers, helping Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients re-enter the workforce and gain self-sufficiency," said Garrigan.

"I believe in and want to help support the mission of Safe Berks," said Garrigan. "I feel proud to be offered an opportunity to be part of such an important non-profit organization, with such a committed team that works from the heart. My goals are to learn from everyone, build strong community connections, and help educate, advocate and end abuse!"

RACC Raises Funds to Help Renovate the Safe Berks Playground!

The students, faculty and staff of Reading Area Community College (RACC) worked throughout the 2017-18 school year to raise funds to help Safe Berks. On April 27, all their hard work came together as students gathered on campus to celebrate the annual RACCy Olympics, where they competed in fun games, including a hula hoop contest.

The RACCy Olympics culminated in the presentation of a huge check to Safe Berks. When the real check arrived at Safe Berks soon after the event, the staff felt a combination of gratitude and awe. The check was for \$11,156! Those funds will be used to help renovate the Safe Berks Playground.

The students raised the funds by completing a series of fundraisers, including selling candy bars, selling tickets to a bus trip to Washington D.C., and selling ads in a RACCy Olympics program book. Each year, students vote to decide which local non-profit to help.

"At RACC we feel that it is important to teach our students to become future leaders in our community," said Kimberly Uphold, Student Life Coordinator at RACC. "One of the ways we chose to encourage that growth is through RACCy Olympics. We all truly care about our community and hope to teach our students that the best way to help and change things is by taking action. Our staff and faculty chose to participate because RACC is a community and we feel it is important for us, as leaders of RACC, to also set the example for our students. Our students understood the need for the children at Safe Berks to have a nice safe environment. When they found out that the funds they were raising were going to build the playground, they were very excited."

Check out the Safe Berks Fall Newsletter for an update on the playground renovation!

Welcome New Staff!



Stacey Jordan, Safe Berks Campus Advocate/Paralegal, provides services to local college students. To contact Stacey, email StaceyJ@SafeBerks.org.



Rhonda Bates, Case Manager



Dalitza Ruiz, Counselor/Advocate



The RACCy Olympics culminated in the presentation of a huge check to Safe Berks – the real check was for \$11,156!



The hula hoop contest was a highlight of RACCy Olympics!



The Raven, RACC's mascot, and Kim Uphold, Student Life Coordinator at RACC, celebrate the RACCy Olympics.

The vision of Safe Berks is to eliminate domestic violence & sexual assault in Berks County.

- ▶ Crisis Services
- ▶ Residential Services
- ▶ Education & Outreach
- ▶ Counseling
- ▶ Systems Advocacy
- ▶ Legal Services

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Celebration of
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CELEBRATING

Voices for Change Award Winners

Koinos Community Church & The Power of the Purse of Berks County

Vision for Peace Honoree

Dr. Thomas F. Flynn, President, Alvernia University

Gifts to Safe Berks

The Give Now button, located on our website at www.safeberks.org/donate/donate-now/, is a convenient way to support Safe Berks. Receipts are generated immediately via email. The official registration and financial information of Safe Berks may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does imply endorsement.

Contact Us

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Reading, PA 19602

www.SafeBerks.org
P: 610.373.1206 | F: 610.372.4188
Email: Peace@SafeBerks.org

Toll Free Hotline:
844-789-SAFE (7233)
Or Text SAFE BERKS to 20121



United Way of Berks County