

Celebration of *Peace*

An Evening to Remember!

The 14th annual Safe Berks Celebration of Peace, held Dec. 16, 2019 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Reading, brought together hundreds of people who support Safe Berks – Board members, staff, sponsors, donors, volunteers and advocates.

Jim Boscov and Boscov's Department Store were honored with the *Vision for Peace* Award. Only three other people have ever received this award – Carolyn Holleran, Susan Fromm and Dr. Thomas F. Flynn. The *Vision for Peace* Award recognizes individuals who have made justice and peace their life's work.

A courageous survivor of domestic violence and former Safe Berks resident shared her story. She said, "Safe Berks saved my life, helped me feel safe again, define my self-respect, build my self-esteem, and to find my courage to believe."

Safe Berks also presented *Voices for Change* Awards to Moms Demand Action, for their volunteer work aimed at preventing gun violence, and to Timothy Marks, MSN, MBA, RN, CEN, NEA-BC, for his pivotal role in the growth of the Safe Berks Medical Advocacy Partnership Program (MAPP). The *Voices for Change* Award honors individuals and organizations whose work makes a significant contribution to furthering the mission of Safe Berks.

Special thanks to our dedicated Host Committee, led by Al Weber. We also thank all our donors, sponsors and volunteers, who helped make the night so special. Please see our amazing list of donors on Page 3. Together, we are building a Safe Berks!



Jim Boscov, left, received the Vision for Peace Award, presented by Al Weber, Chair of the Host Committee.



Timothy Marks, MSN, MBA, RN, CEN, NEA-BC, center, was honored with the Voices for Change Award, presented by Safe Berks Board members Dr. Eve Kimball, left, and Sherry Beriker.



Nicole Bowman, left, of Moms Demand Action, accepted the Voices for Change Award, presented by Sen. Judy Schwank.

A Message from our Interim CEO

A new year is a time for new beginnings – a time to look forward and plan with enthusiasm for the future! Here at Safe Berks, while we excitedly “look forward,” we also are thoughtfully reflecting on the past 15 years of leadership that our past CEO, Mary Kay Bernosky, provided to grow our organization in such an impactful way. Thank you, Mary Kay, for your tireless years of dedication and love toward Safe Berks.

My name is Angel Helm and I am honored to serve as “Interim Chief Executive Officer” here at Safe Berks as we “look forward” to a bright and exciting future undertaking the important work that is done here. In my first few months in this office, I couldn’t be more impressed with our vast and thorough array of important domestic violence and sexual assault services. From Crisis Services, Legal Services, Residential Services, Counseling Services, Medical Advocacy, and more, Safe Berks is committed to helping our clients navigate their way through feelings of hopelessness and despair to achieve a new start of independence and empowerment. We also offer powerful Education and Outreach services aimed at preventing domestic violence and sexual assault.

The heart of our organization and the reason for our success is truly the dedicated, capable, and passionate staff that works hard every day doing what it takes to deliver our services in the most effective and efficient way possible.

I look forward to the next few months here, during which time the Executive Search Committee will be interviewing and selecting a permanent CEO to lead Safe Berks into the new decade and beyond. In the meantime, we will continue to provide shelter and counseling services to those who need us. To the many volunteers, donors and community advocates who support us throughout the year we “look forward” to continued collaboration and organizational success!

Respectfully,



*Carolyn & Jerry Holleran, & Nancy & Doug Yocom.
Photo by Brittony Vermeer Photography.*



*Vanessa Wanshop, Diane Duff & Scott Zuidema.
Photo by Kirsten Keim-Shendge.*



Francine Scoboria, Beth Garrigan, Mindy McIntosh and Lisa Tumbleson. Photo by Gregory P. Pancerev.



John Arnold, Steve Najarian, Kate Thornton, Karen Arnold & Helen Najarian. Photo by Brittony Vermeer Photography.



*Fran Tieman, Vicki Ebner & Michele McCartney.
Photo by Kirsten Keim-Shendge.*



Tara Anspach, Mereliss Colon Ortiz, Laura Renovales, Letty Vazquez-Pena, Aleida Rodriguez, Tara Wall & Stephanie Fetterolf. Photo by Gregory P. Pancerev.



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2019 | Celebration of Peace

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#MeTooLocal: Poems by and for Survivors

Because April is both Sexual Assault Awareness Month and National Poetry Month, Safe Berks partnered with Berks Bards, a grassroots poetry group, to offer a special event.

#MeTooLocal: Poems by and for Survivors will be held on April 17 at the GoggleWorks. Poets can share their own work, or they can maintain confidentiality by having others read their anonymous poetry. Another option is for poetry lovers to read the work of poets they admire, focusing on themes of abuse, consent, survival, and transcendence.

“Underneath, hurt does not escape anyone,” said Jennifer Hetrick, President of Berks Bards. “At all levels, in all lives in today’s world, we as people have a lot of healing to do and truth to work on within ourselves from the hard episodes we’ve endured, and poetry is a powerful form of growth for this.”

This poetry reading is not limited to survivors of sexual assault; it is open to anyone who has poetry to share on this topic. After all registered poets read, the event will become an Open Mic for anyone who wishes to share a poem.

“Sexual assault is still surrounded by a dark stigma which often causes victims to remain silent,” said Francine Scoboria, Communications Coordinator at Safe Berks. “This silence causes further damage to the victim, while also protecting the abuser. The #MeToo movement, utilizing the power of social media, unleashed the silence of millions of survivors of sexual assault around the world. This poetry reading, #MeTooLocal: Poems by and for Survivors, offers the public another opportunity to replace silence with creative expression.”

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Safe Berks is working with local colleges and organizations on many events in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Events include two Take Back the Night gatherings:

April 2 • 6:00 pm • Kutztown University
Kutztown University will host Take Back the Night, starting in the McFarland Student Union, Room 218. Survivors of sexual violence and abuse come together to speak out and share their stories. Survivors are honored with poetry, a candlelight vigil, and a campus march.

April 22 • 4:00-7:00 pm • Albright College
Albright College will host Take Back the Night at Wachovia Mezzanine. Survivors of sexual or interpersonal violence will have an opportunity to share their stories and bond with other survivors.

Check out Safe Berks social media – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn – for more Sexual Assault Awareness Month (#SAAM) events.

Join us for #MeTooLocal: Poems by and for Survivors

Friday, April 17 • 6:00-8:00 pm
At GoggleWorks Center for the Arts
Studio 238 • 201 Washington St., Reading

Length of Poems: 15 lines or less per poem / 3 minutes or less

For more info or to register to read a poem contact Francine Scoboria, Communications Coordinator at Safe Berks, at FrancineS@SafeBerks.org or 610-370-7812, or Jennifer Hetrick, President of Berks Bards, at thisjenhetrick@yahoo.com.



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

Follow Safe Berks



Honoring Mary Kay

On Feb. 12, Safe Berks Board members, staff, donors, volunteers, community members, and advocates gathered at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Reading, to honor and thank Mary Kay Bernosky, Esq., for her 15 years of service as CEO. It was a special night, as friends and supporters reminisced about Mary Kay's many achievements during her tenure as CEO, especially the construction of the Safe Berks Center in 2012.

We are so grateful to Mary Kay for her tireless work expanding services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and we wish her every happiness in her next chapter!



Safe Berks Board Member Steve Ohnsman speaks at Mary Kay's Community Appreciation Social. Photo by Elaine Reinert.



Sen. Judy Schwank presents Citation to Mary Kay Bernosky to thank her for her 15 years of service as CEO of Safe Berks. Photo by Elaine Reinert.

PeaceTrust

PeaceTrust, a leadership giving program for women, was founded in 2007 by Carolyn Holleran, right, and is now led by Andi Funk, left. Carolyn founded PeaceTrust to help Safe Berks by providing solid, dependable funding. PeaceTrust members pledge \$500 a year for five years to support the mission of Safe Berks. PeaceTrust members are kept up to date regarding Safe Berks news and events, and are recognized at a luncheon every year. Junior and Link memberships are also available. For more information, or to join PeaceTrust, visit www.SafeBerks.org, email Peace@SafeBerks.org or call 610-373-1206. Special thanks to Carolyn and Andi for their dedication and support.

The annual PeaceTrust Luncheon will take place on May 13. Please save the date!



Helping Hands Add Up!

Thanks to the incredible work of so many dedicated volunteers, the Gift Wrapping table at the Berkshire Mall raised \$10,196 for Safe Berks! Volunteers shown in photo are Kathy Gonzalez, left, and Daisy Colon. Heartfelt thanks to every volunteer, and also to every shopper who supported this fundraiser. A special thank you to Pam Conlon and the many Santander employees who covered most of the weekday shifts. We couldn't have done it without you!



Cooks Wanted!

Thanks so much to dedicated volunteer Vanessa Lopez, of Emmanuel Christian Fellowship, Reading, who has been donating her time to cook for Safe Berks residents every Friday evening for two years! Vanessa often leads a team of other volunteers from Emmanuel Christian Fellowship. To volunteer to cook at Safe Berks, contact Mindy McIntosh, Director of Development, at MindyM@SafeBerks.org or 484-869-5293.



Congrats Marcia!

Marcia Graff Row, center of photo holding award, was honored by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Berks Regional Chapter as a Distinguished Volunteer for her work painting beautiful, colorful murals inside the Safe Berks Safe House. From left, Diane Duff, Mindy McIntosh, Mereliss Colon Ortiz, Marcia Graff Row, Beth Garrigan and Francine Scoboria.

The vision of Safe Berks is:
Berks County is free from
domestic violence and
sexual assault.

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

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SAVE THE DATE



TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

Saturday, June 20

9:00-11:00am

We will Kickoff Art on the Avenue!

11:00am – 7:00pm

Stop by Safe Berks table in 400
block of Penn Ave.

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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Or Text SAFE BERKS to 20121



United Way of Berks County