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mark your calendar.

I Run with Survivors 5K/1 Mile Walk | 4/8
Join CFPA on Saturday, April 8 in the Levee District in East Peoria for the sixth annual “I Run with Survivors” 5K run/1 mile walk in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. All ages are invited to participate and the course is stroller, wheelchair and pet friendly. The race begins at 8:00 a.m. Registration will open in February. If you are interested in sponsoring the event, please reach out to Josh Cox, Director of Development at 309-691-0551 or at jcox@centerforpreventionofabuse.org.

35th Annual Duck Race | 8/26
The Duck Race is turning 35! The Duck Race is CFPA’s signature fundraiser and the success of the race plays a significant role in helping all people live free from violence and abuse. CFPA’s Duck Race is one of the longest running Duck Race events in history and this year, we are so excited to celebrate its 35th year. On August 26, 35,000 rubber ducks race down a giant water slide at EastSide Centre in East Peoria. The first 15 ducks to cross the finish line win a fantastic prize for its owner. The first place grand prize is $10,000! Ducks go on sale in early June. If you or your company are interested in sponsoring the event, please reach out to Josh Cox, Director of Development, at 309-691-0551.

Ok, I confess; I am THAT person. My dog means the world to me. Charlie, our dachshund, is pictured on this page, and he has been featured here before. My pets have always mattered and I celebrate the tight bond we have shared. If you too are a dog person, or any pet for that matter, you know how I feel. Before Charlie it was Junior, and before him Buster, and Leo, and Muffin, and Mr. Magoo. A wonderful legacy of pets who provided companionship and unconditional love for my family over a 50+ year span.

The team at the Center for Prevention of Abuse (CFPA) lives our mission daily, helping all people live free from violence and abuse. We actively work with victims of domestic violence, providing encouragement and support, helping them find their pathway to peace. For those who enjoy the companionship of a pet, it can be extra difficult, if not impossible, to leave them behind when making the courageous step to leave an abusive relationship.

71% of pet owners entering domestic violence shelters report that their batterer had threatened, injured or even killed family pets. To add insult to injury, studies show that up to 76% of batterer-perpetrated pet abuse incidents occur in the presence of children. Philosophers and educators have been describing the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence since the 14th century.

To help pets and their owners live free from violence, CFPA’s Pet Peace Program provides individualized support to help victims of abuse and their beloved pets find safety. Many domestic violence clients report that the companionship of a pet is a vital source of comfort and encouragement and support, helping them find their pathway to peace.

Thank you for reading this month’s newsletter. What a busy month we have ahead of us. The 35th Annual Duck Race is August 26 and the I Run with Survivors 5K on April 8. We also have Sexual Assault Awareness Month upcoming and a special birthday celebration for Charlie, our dachshund. Have a great month and we look forward to celebrating together.

In Peace,  
Carol Merna  
Chief Executive Officer  

Connect With Carol  

Carol Merna  
Chief Executive Officer  

Violence (NCADV), 85% of domestic violence shelters across the country report that they commonly encounter people who speak about pet abuse incidents. CFPA is no different.

Pets are commonly viewed as family members. We get it. And so does the Red Rover organization. Recently, CFPA was awarded a very generous grant by Red Rover, a relief organization who helps people and animals in crisis. The Red Rover Relief grant program helps survivors and their pets find safety from abuse. In 2021, nationally they funded 10,209 nights of boarding through their Safe Escape program. With the aid of a $53,000 grant from Red Rover, CFPA has created our own “Pet Peace” program, helping many domestic violence clients with boarding, feeding, medical care and vaccination of their dogs and cats. CFPA has teamed up locally with the Tender Care Animal Hospital to provide high-quality care so that many of those experiencing safety in one of our emergency shelters, will also be able to keep their well-loved pets safe and sound.

Thanks to Red Rover and the generous grant they awarded CFPA, clients can focus on healing while knowing their much-loved pets are well cared for. To learn more about CFPA’s Pet Peace Program, please visit our website at centerforpreventionofabuse.org under the section devoted to domestic violence, or to give to this program, click the donate button on our website or text your gift of peace to 44321.

Happy New Year to you, and your pets!

In Peace,  
Carol Merna

Winter 2023

The CenterPeace
New year, new path. January is designated as Human Trafficking Awareness month. Whether in the form of sex trafficking or forced labor, hundreds of victims from Central Illinois are subjected to this profoundly heinous crime.

Human trafficking is a hidden crime that lives beneath the surface. It is a $150 billion industry controlled by traffickers by using force, fraud or coercion to exploit people for profit. For every victim we see, thousands more exist. Many times victims see no way out. It is CFPA’s mission to help all people live free from violence and abuse. We work every day to ensure that all victims have a voice and a chance to be happy, healthy and active members of their communities.

As one of the only agencies in the state of Illinois dedicated to Human Trafficking Services (HTS) and sanctioned to serve 46 counties, CFPA takes pride in our victim centered, trauma informed approach to care for the most vulnerable in our society. We offer counseling, therapy, safe shelter, legal advocacy, immigration assistance, Orders of Protection, medical and mental health services, affordable housing and job training/employment. All of our services are always free and confidential to all victims of human trafficking regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status or immigration status. We are the lead victim service provider represented by the Central Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force and have trained thousands on what to do if they suspect a trafficking situation is occurring. Awareness is the first step in getting help to those who are being trafficked.

Human trafficking is occurring in every zip code in Illinois. As an anti-human trafficking advocate, you play an important role in identifying and serving victims. In this new year, help survivors find their new path. For more information or if you are interested in scheduling a training for your organization, please visit our website or call us today at 309-691-0551.

During the weekend of January 6–8, the Murray Baker Bridge in Peoria shined bright in blue in honor of Human Trafficking Awareness Month.
Since 2010, February has been nationally recognized as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. At Center for Prevention of Abuse, we acknowledge the impact teen dating violence has on young people and, through prevention education, seek to empower area high school students to develop healthy relationships with dating partners.

Our PreventEd: Relationship Abuse programming for area high school youth provides information and fosters discussion centered around:

- healthy and unhealthy characteristics of dating relationships
- red flags that are signs unhealthy behaviors are turning abusive
- the importance of boundary setting, consent, and honest communication
- the cycle of teen dating violence and strategies to stop it
- how emotions affect us and those around us
- societal norms that shape our perceptions of what is healthy or unhealthy

As we spend time with students in the classroom, we realize the value of their experiences and perspectives and have been open to ways to amplify their voice to inform future programming. Thanks to a grant opportunity through the Illinois Department of Public Health for Domestic Violence Prevention & Intervention, CFPA has convened Youth Advisory Committees at three tri-county high schools. The Youth Advisory Committees will provide valuable perspective regarding the issues teens are facing today and how they impact their ability to develop and enjoy healthy dating relationships. Beyond providing opportunities for students to share their thoughts, committee members may also be inspired to make a positive impact within their school communities through relationship abuse prevention activities.

If you wish to learn more about CFPA programming and teen dating violence prevention, check out our awareness month toolkit entitled “Love Heals, Never Hurts” on the CFPA website or email us at PreventEd@centerforpreventionofabuse.org.
Honorariums and Memorials
Honorariums may be made to celebrate a special occasion and memorials may be given to acknowledge a lost friend or loved one.

Stock, Real Estate and Insurance Policies
Donations can be made in the form of capital assets.

Donations that Leave a Legacy
Remembering CFPA in your estate plans can save and change lives for many years to come.

A bequest can be designated to a certain program of CFPA or if a donor wishes, a bequest can be designated to one of two endowment funds. The Slane Endowment Fund supports the general operations of CFPA and the McPheeters Endowment Fund supports the Prevention Education program.

For more information about monetary donations, honorariums, memorials, capital assets and legacy donations, please call 309-691-0551.

At the Center for Prevention of Abuse, we are so thankful for the community support received through donations. We want you to know exactly where your money goes and how it impacts the lives of all who come to us seeking peace.

Order online at cfpapeoria.itemorder.com
orders take approximately 7–12 business days after receipt

A portion of the proceeds benefit CFPA

Order online and receive 10% off your order with code PEORIA10

scan the QR code to start shopping

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Give the gift of peace today by making a monetary donation.
Donations can be designated to specific services or as a general donation.

$5 could provide a hot meal for a survivor of abuse
$10 could provide a new pair of shoes for a child staying in our emergency shelter
$20 could provide a week’s worth of bus passes for a recent survivor of sexual assault
$25 could provide fresh produce for a week’s worth of healthy meals for a family in our emergency shelter
$50 could provide a gas card to help outreach clients get to and from appointments with our counselors or to their place of employment
$100 could provide care for a survivor of abuse living with a disability
$350 could help cover the cost of our 24/7 crisis hotline operation for one day
$500 could provide funding for an Adult Protective Services caseworker to investigate possible abuse in the home of an elderly individual
$1,000 could provide six hours of language translation for a human trafficking survivor whose native language is not English
$2,500 could cover all expenses for one month in safe shelter for an individual fleeing a violent or abusive situation
$5,000 could provide three months of therapy for one sexual assault survivor
$10,000 could cover the cost of running the Safe from the Start program for one month, a violence intervention program for children ages 0-5 who have witnessed or been the victim of an act of violence at home or in the community.

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Pantry Restock: at your next grocery run, please consider picking up a few extra items for our pantry.

- Fresh meat, eggs, milk and fresh produce
- Canned tuna and chicken
- Coffee, cream and sugar
- Oatmeal
- Microwavable rice, pasta and other sides
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Bottled water and juice boxes
- Cereals, granola bars, Pop-Tarts
- Healthy snack items for children
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Canned soups, stews and pastas

**gift cards or monetary donations to provide any of these items are also accepted**

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**donation spotlight.**

Thank you to all donors and groups who generously donated and volunteered during the holiday season!

If your organization, business, club or group is interested in doing a food or donation drive to benefit CFPA, please call Kelly Ward at 309-691-0551 to find out about our immediate or mass donation needs.

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CFPA’s Adopt Our Families program was a great success this year! With the help of very generous and thoughtful community donors, 65 families were “adopted” and more than 150 clients received gifts. We would also like to extend gratitude to all of our volunteers who joined us on our wrapping nights to get all of the families’ gifts wrapped in time for the holidays! The eagerness to support a family demonstrates to our clients just how much this community cares about them. We appreciate all the love and light sent our way this holiday season. We look forward to another successful Adopt Our Families program in 2023!
Judy Sullivan
Janitorial Assistant

Meet Judy Sullivan, CFPA’s Janitorial Assistant who assists on all maintenance projects around the agency. Design and Communications Coordinator, Clayton Frankel, interviewed Judy to get a glimpse into her work here at CFPA.

Clayton Frankel (CF): How long have you worked at CFPA, and what led you to working here?
Judy Sullivan (JS): I started at CFPA four years ago after a friend told me about the job position. They said it was a great place to work and I totally agree. I love it here.

CF: What are your favorite things about working at CFPA?
JS: I really enjoy the work, but I have to say my favorite thing is the people. CFPA staff are so friendly and have a great sense of humor.

CF: Any milestones you are particularly proud of, for yourself or the agency?
JS: I would have to say that I’m proud of the work I did while the majority of CFPA staff were working remotely at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. It felt great to hear how nice the agency looked after all the cleaning and painting that was done. I will also say that I am proud of all the employees here for the hard work that they do.

CF: What do you wish people knew about the work environment at CFPA?
JS: I want people to know that CFPA is like one big family. We all support and help each other out and have fun doing it.

CF: Outside of work, what do you like to do when you have some free time?
JS: I like to go fishing, hiking, eagle watching, taking pictures of sunsets and driving down country roads. I would always rather take the scenic routes.

Winter To-Do List:
Sip hot chocolate
Wear a pair of mittens
Build a snowman
Give to those in need

Alpha Chi Omega at Bradley University

“Alpha Chi Omega at Bradley University is fortunate to donate directly to the Center for Prevention of Abuse to raise money and awareness about domestic violence. Through our sorority, we hold campaigns during Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Healthy Relationships Week and Sexual Assault Awareness Month, where all our proceeds go towards CFPA. We also love participating in their annual gift wrapping event held in December! Our close connection with CFPA makes us stand out from other organizations on Bradley’s campus, and we’re so fortunate for CFPA for helping our community while also raising awareness and educating others about domestic violence.”
CFPA received a grant from Southwest Kiwanis of Peoria for children’s therapy

CFPA was giving funding from Ameren Illinois for utilities

The Rotary Club of Peoria presented CFPA a Hunger Grant to help provide food for emergency shelters

The PNC Charitable Trust awarded CFPA a grant towards prevention programming

CFPA received a grant from PepsiCo Foundation to help provide food for emergency shelters

Thank you!

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center for prevention of abuse.

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centerforpreventionofabuse.org