



Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence

# New Beginnings

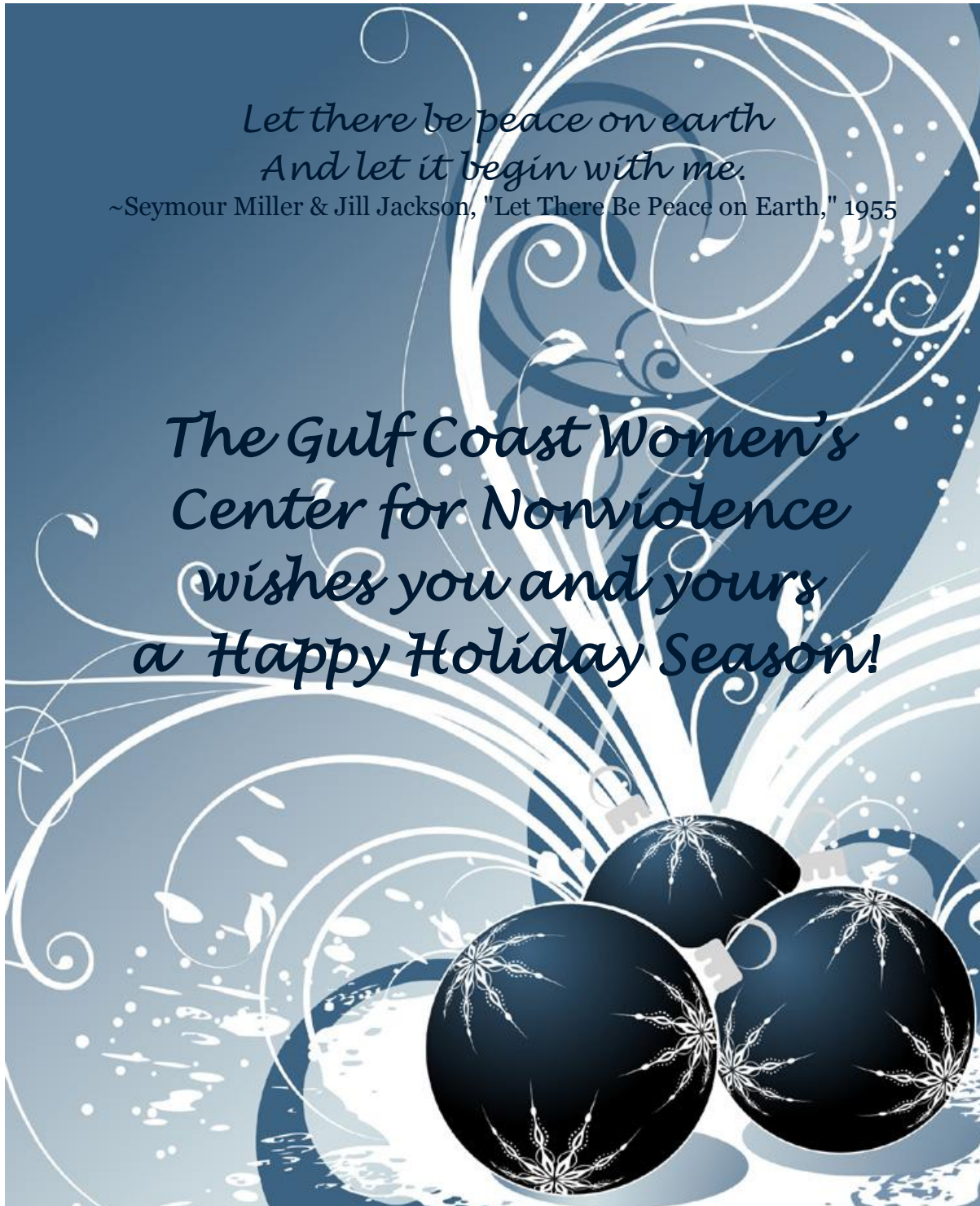
Volume 33, Issue 1

Serving Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, Stone, and George Counties

*Let there be peace on earth  
And let it begin with me.*

~Seymour Miller & Jill Jackson, "Let There Be Peace on Earth," 1955

*The Gulf Coast Women's  
Center for Nonviolence  
wishes you and yours  
a Happy Holiday Season!*



## **A Message from the Director**

In 2013, the Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence continued to provide outstanding comprehensive services to adult and child victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and family members of homicide victims. The staff and volunteers here at the Center are dedicated to ensuring victim safety and providing numerous opportunities to successfully live a life free from violence.

From January 1 to October 31, 2013 the Center has provided direct services to 2,062 adults and children; answered 12,830 crisis calls; and provided prevention education to 5,658 community members and school children. During the holidays, the number of victims seeking services often increases dramatically.

In this newsletter, the Center will be spotlighting several of our staff, programs, and community members that have made a difference in the lives of victims during the past year. We thank them all for their support of the Center's mission!

The Center depends on the generosity of the communities we serve. By supporting the Center, you are helping a young mother and child escape a violent home; rape victims receive counseling; and family members of homicide have the support they need to face life without their loved one. Thank you for all that you do for the Center and Happy Holidays!

*Sandra Morrison, Executive Director*

**Center Crisis Line: 1-800-800-1396  
Or 228 435-1968**

**Adrienne's House Crisis Line:  
228 762-8267**

**Northcutt Legal Clinic: 228 864-7144**

**Pine Belt Office (NLC): 601 705-0139**

## **Forever Changed in Mississippi**

Suzanne Magee, the Center's Victim Advocate for the Forever Changed Program (for family members of homicide victims) has been elected as the President of the Mississippi Coalition for Survivors of Homicide.

The MS Coalition for Survivors of Homicide Victims (MCSHV) was established to provide statewide support, advocacy and referrals to families and friends of homicide victims to help them cope with the incomprehensible murder of a loved one.

MCSHV provides direct services to survivors and educate communities, law enforcement, medical personnel and other related agencies on the trauma associated with violent death. MCSHV advocates for the rights of victims and informs them of their rights and how to invoke them.

MCSHV also hosts events such as an annual retreat weekend that helps survivors learn coping skills and provides them with the opportunity to meet others who have suffered similar loss. And helps sponsor the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony in Jackson to recognize families of homicide victims in early December.

This year, MCSHV is placing emphasis on educating survivors and communities about the prison system and are working with the Governor's Task Force and legislature to improve and simplify the sentencing structure in the MS Prison system.

Numerous Groups for Adults are conducted by the Center each week:

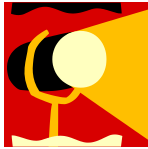
Please call 228 436-3809 for more information:

Mondays at 10a	Life skills
Tuesdays at 6p	DV Support
Wednesdays at 2p	DV Support
Thursdays at 1:30p	Art Therapy

Groups conducted at Adrienne's House:

Mondays at 4p	DV Support
Thursdays at 10a	Life skills
Fridays at 10a	DV Support

DV Support Groups are also held in Bay Saint Louis on Thursdays



## Staff Spotlight

**Wanda Lynn Mayer**, the Center's PATH Case Manager is completing her Junior and Senior level classes at the University of Southern Mississippi to obtain her Bachelor's degree in Psychology. Upon graduation, she will apply to the University's Master's Social Work Program.

**Gina McKnight**, Senior Legal Advocate at the Center's Northcutt Legal Clinic is an avid health enthusiast. She began training for marathons about 2 years ago. During her training, she managed to recruit **Stacey Myers**, Shelter Director at Adrienne's House, to compete with her. These ladies have each completed three marathons since October 2012. Both Gina and Stacey completed the Marine Corps Marathon in Oct. 2012 and the Rock-n-Roll NOLA in Feb. 2013. Stacey recently did the Pensacola Marathon on November 10, 2013 and then Gina did the Rock-n-Roll San Antonio on November 17, 2013. The next marathon on the calendar for these ladies is February 2014.



### Forever Changed Meetings

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays in Gulfport

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays in Wiggins

4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays in Pascagoula

Call Suzanne at 436-3809 for more information

**Thank You So Much for the Outstanding Community Support in the 2013 Toyota 100 Cars for Good Campaign!!! The new van will be used to help women and children at the Center's Adrienne's House!**



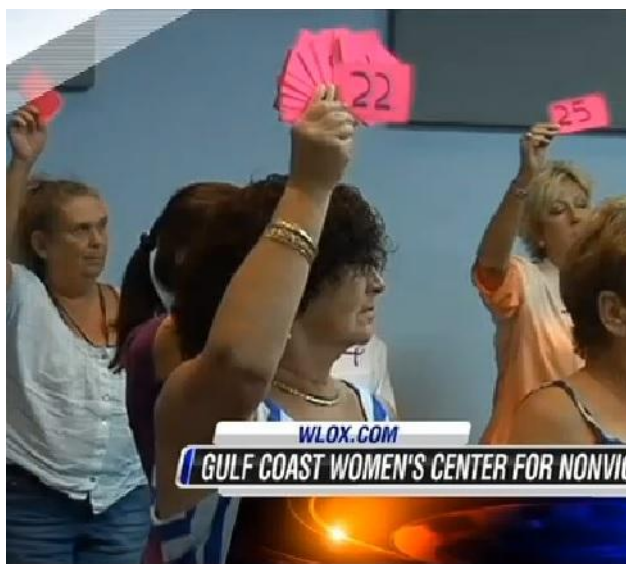
**CONGRATULATIONS** to our own Executive Director, Sandra Morrison for being recognized as one of the Coast's Outstanding Women at the annual Lighthouse Business and Professional Women of Achievement Luncheon.



**A very special thank you goes to the Center's Board of Directors and Rape Crisis Volunteers! These caring individuals commit numerous hours of service to the Center.**

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”** At the Center, we use the above quote from Margaret Mead often to encourage empowerment and action. In fact, that's how we got started. In 1977, several concerned community members put that quote into action and established our organization. Fast forward 36 years, we are now a multi-office agency providing services to thousands of victims annually.

In September, the Center was privileged to witness new life being breathed into that old quote when 40 concerned Bay St. Louis citizens show up at a city council meeting and advocated for us!



After hearing that the Bay St. Louis City Council decided to cut our funding (\$2,500) from their tight budget, concerned citizens Rhonda Gambrel, Cyndi Mirambell, Mickey Evans, and Dr. Tina Richardson

started a grassroots effort to convince the Council to reverse their decision. Over 40 people showed up to Tuesday's meeting and held up pink cards numbered 1-164 which represented the number of victims in Bay St. Louis that were provided services last year.

Councilwoman Wendy McDonald made an impassioned plea to her fellow councilmen to reconsider the budget cut. Police Chief Mike De Nardo spoke to the fact that cutting our funding would have a negative effect on the town's budget since the domestic violence and aggravated assault crime rate would increase. Several others addressed the Council on our behalf as well.

In a unanimous decision, the Bay St. Louis City Council reversed their decision to cut our funding. This reversal would not have been made possible if several concerned citizens hadn't decided to get involved; we are honored to call them friends. Our deepest gratitude goes out to everyone who helped spread the word, who showed up to the meeting, who held a card up, and who spoke on our behalf.

An extra special thank you to the following people who were an integral part of this effort:

- Rhonda Gambrel
- Cyndi Mirambell
- Mickey Evans
- Dr. Tina Richardson
- Councilwoman Wendy McDonald
- Police Chief Mike De Nardo
- Mike Hemsley
- Dr. Pat Davis





## Making a Difference

All too often, the leading news of the day is of violence happening in our world. The adults, children and families served by the Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence are those for whom violence has had an intimate face. A young pregnant female entered Adrienne's House to escape the emotional and physical abuse by her partner. Upon entry, she had no personal belongings including coat, shoes, or any other clothing. She had not been allowed to bathe for several days. She was able to escape confinement and was found by a citizen in this community. She was immediately put in touch with the shelter's hotline and cleared for shelter.

With your support, the Center was able to provide shelter and comprehensive services to this woman and many others like her. She is enrolled in GED classes at a local facility and has obtained employment.

Please consider a monthly or one time gift to the Center. You can complete the form below or donate easily and securely on the Center's website at [gcwcfn.org](http://gcwcfn.org).

**YOUR SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO OUR PROGRAMS IS INVALUABLE. PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS IN PLEDGING A MONTHLY DONATION TO THE GULF COAST WOMEN'S CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE, INC.**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ a month.

I'd prefer to make a one time donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please make my donation in Memory or in Honor of \_\_\_\_\_.

Donor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete if this is an Honorarium or Memorial:*

In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor Of: \_\_\_\_\_

Occasion: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send an Honorarium or Memorial Card** Memorials and Honorariums are acknowledged.

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail to:**

**Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 333 Biloxi MS 39533**

All contributions may be tax deductible as provided by law.

The Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence is a United Way Agency. The Center's is funded in part by federal funding including grants from US Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women; Housing and Urban Development; Mississippi Department of Health; Mississippi Department of Mental Health; Mississippi Department of Public Safety; Mississippi Development Authority; City of Gulfport Community Development Block Grant; MGM Resorts Foundation; Madison Foundation; Mississippi Bar Foundation; Mary Kay Foundation; City of Biloxi; United Way of South Mississippi; United Way of Jackson and George Counties; IP Casino Resort and Spa local government entities; and caring individuals and businesses on the Gulf Coast.

**A Special Thank You to Our Fabulous Local Supporters, such as:**

Alexander, Van Loon, Sloan, Leven, and Farve; Allen Toyota; Beau Rivage; Biloxi Regional Medical Center; Biloxi/Ocean Springs Junior Auxiliary; Boomtown Casino; Charter Bank; Wilma Chandler; Chevron; R. Collins; Community Connections Jackson County Chapter; Deborah Compton; Community Bank; Corban, Gunn and Van Cleave; Dr. Patricia Davis; Diamondhead Community Church; Diamondhead Women's Club; Dupont; Robert Everett; Fraternal Order of Eagles; First Presbyterian Church Ocean Springs; First United Methodist Women of Long Beach; Diane Griggs; Judy Guice; Gulf Coast Children's Clinic; Dawn Hansen; P.L. Hollier; D. Hunter; IP Casino, Resort and Spa; Keesler Spouses Club; Lions Club of Ocean Springs; Mary Mahoney's; Mississippi Power Foundation; NBCC Chaplin Corps Accounting Center; Nextaff; Nerds on Site; Ocean Springs Rotary Club; Owen, Galloway and Myers; Plitz, Williams, and LaRosa; Redding House; Sarah Reese; Gary Ruff; Silver Slipper Casino; Joel Smith; St. Mary's Guild, St. John's Episcopal Church; Jimmy Stuart; Treasure Bay Casino; R. Terrell; Margaret Trimble; Trustmark; Cynthia Minton Walker; Julia Weaver; Wells Fargo; Westminster Presbyterian Church **And the 2013 Board of Directors: Walter Moore, John Prentiss, Linda Swann, Cyrellia Toney, Christina Richardson, Sarah Reese, Chief John Miller, Darnell McCormick, Virginia Adolph, Dixie Bertucci, T.J. Moran, Cynthia Minton Walker**

**Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence  
PO Box 333  
Biloxi, MS 39533**

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