



The MISSION: The Mission of HELP of Door County is to eliminate domestic abuse through prevention and intervention services and to advocate for social change.



HELP of Door County, Inc.
219 Green Bay Road
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Hot-Line: 920-743-8818
Office: 920-743-8785

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HARMONY and DISCORD

“Where there is discord may we bring harmony. Where there is error, may we bring truth. Where there is doubt, may we bring faith. Where there is despair, may we bring hope.”

– Francis of Assisi



Music is powerful. Music is beautiful. Music has helped heal my soul. There are songs that will take me to a rainy spring day, the smell of grass, the feeling of falling in love. There are also songs that will take me to a time when I was hurting, grieving, feeling unloved, or alone. It wasn't the melody that connected those deep strong feelings to the soundtrack of my life, but the circumstances around it. Somehow, my brain imprinted these memories to the music that floated from my headphones and reached the depths of my soul. What does this have to do with HELP's mission to end domestic violence?

Everything.

I think of music and the harmony and discord it brings when in-tune or in dissonance. I think of the order or chaos that music can bring with its melody. I think of how this aligns with the harmony and discord that relationships can bring into our lives. When we align ourselves to the principles of what equality and equity are it allows for deep connection, community, healing, and healthy relationships. Power and control, and fear in relationships are at the very core of abuse and domestic violence.

Domestic violence homicides increased 20% from 2021 to 2022. The state of Wisconsin ranks seventh nationwide for domestic violence homicides. Programs across our state are struggling to meet the needs of survivors and community as funding continues to be cut by our state and federal legislators. This year, HELP of Door County experienced a decrease in donations, and an increase in client needs for safe homes, transitional living programs, and basic client supplies. We saw an increase in client strangulations. We saw an increase in restraining orders from individuals who feel unsafe in their homes, including landlord and neighbor disputes. **(HELP writes most of the restraining order for Door County.)** Although not all is domestic violence related, we feel it is important to meet the needs of our community regardless of how they are feeling unsafe. Our services are a need for rural communities like Door. I have said this many times, and here it is once again in print. What happens in the home reflects what is going on in community, culture, society, and the world. What happens in the world, society, culture, and community is impacted and reflected in the home. We are in a vicious cycle of violence. We, at HELP, are doing our absolute best to advocate to our local and state funders what the needs of our survivors are. It is critical to keeping our communities safe and healthy.

So, if you can, please consider giving a gift to HELP of Door County. **Every** amount will make a difference.

Trauma and violence are thriving in discord between individuals residing in Door County. Let us be the composers to our own harmony. Harmony in relationships, harmony in community, and harmony in Door County.

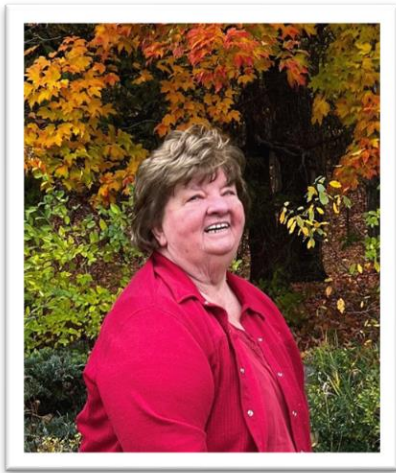
Milly Gonzales

Anne Kok Social Justice Award Winner

In February 2008, HELP of Door County and our entire community suffered a tremendous loss with the unexpected death of Anne Kok who served as HELP's Executive Director. Anne worked tirelessly to develop a number of programs that are still in place today.

As a way to recognize Anne's legacy, HELP decided to honor her with the Anne Kok Social Justice Award. Recipients of the award are people who embody Anne's ideals of Social Justice and Change and are also champions for Domestic Violence Advocacy.

We are pleased to announce that this year's honoree is... **GRACE FELLNER**



Grace Fellner is a Door County native who graduated from Sturgeon Bay High School in 1959. Grace married Robert Fellner, Sr., in 1963. They were partners for 56 years in marriage and in business at Fellner Orchards where they raised apples, cherries, strawberries, four daughters, and one son. Grace has a knack for making things grow and flourish. From the orchards to her garden and flowers to her children. Grace's consistent dedication and attention to detail allows the things she touches to blossom and reach toward the sun.

As a mother, Grace modeled a tenacious work ethic. In the fall she regularly got her four little girls off to school, then picked a dozen pallets of apples, and magically had dinner on the table at the end of the day. Grace's work ethic allowed her children to pursue the things they had an affinity for or were interested in from skiing and skating to horse riding and dancing. All of her children played musical instruments, and if they were reluctant, Grace modeled how to take a risk and try something new, taking piano and guitar lessons right next to them. Grace is a quiet community leader who invests herself in activities that support young people and build community. As a diamond award winning 4-H leader,

Grace taught classes in macrame, sewing, knitting, and horsemanship. Grace and Bob coached Little League softball for over 20 years as their children played. Together they believed that everyone should play and could improve. Their motto was "find the good and praise it." While Bob was in the coaches' box, Grace was in the dugout with the scorebook and the girls. Her detailed statistics often gave their teams an edge in understanding the opponents tendencies and weak spots.

Grace also volunteered as a Pink Lady at the hospital and was a member of the Door County Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. Grace moved from a member at large to secretary, to vice president, to president of the auxiliary where she planned and ran the House and Garden walk until she resigned to have her fifth child.

Grace has been a diligent care giver, not only to her children, grandchildren, and husband, but also to the children and families in her community. Grace's belief in the power of family and community drew her to work with Help of Door County where she has worked on the crisis line and in visitation and exchange for over twenty years. The servant leadership that this position requires is both fulfilling and rewarding for Grace.

Now in her early 80s, Grace can still be found working for HELP of Door County, bagging apples for Fellner Orchards, and enjoying her horses. She has also taken up painting, pressing flowers, and growing and tending lavender. It is fitting to find her in the rows of purple—the color that represents the mission to end domestic violence—as it has been her life's work to offer stability to families and children in crisis.



CORPORATE SPONSORS



Lynn Gilchrist



In October 2023, our advocate Kaylee Dotter, participated in strangulation prevention training. An article on the subject has been published in both the Door County Pulse and on the national website for the



STRANGULATION IS SILENT, BUT DEADLY

October 31, 2023
by Kaylee Dotterer

October was domestic violence (DV) awareness month, a time when advocates and survivors came together to shed light on a pervasive issue and empower those who have suffered in silence. Survivors are a powerful reminder of the importance of this month and the need for change.

At HELP of Door County, our mission is to eliminate DV through prevention and intervention services and to advocate for social change. DV is a wide range of abusive behaviors rooted in power and control, such as: sexual abuse, stalking, financial abuse, using intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, verbal abuse, physical abuse, and using minimizing, denying and blaming.

Strangulation has been identified as one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence. The words “choking” and “strangulation” both refer to restriction of airflow. However, it is important to know the differences between them. When a person is choking, a foreign object inside the body is blocking airflow. When someone is being strangled, an outside force is exerting enough pressure to impede movement of air. Both choking and strangulation can lead to severe injury and death.

Over half of victims who have been strangled lack visible external injuries, which leads to misunderstanding and underreporting. Although external injuries might not be visible it is important to document photos and monitor your signs and symptoms. Victims are encouraged to seek medical evaluation for changes in voice, swallowing, breathing, behavior, vision, or hearing to detect internal injuries.

Not only is strangulation a felony, it may be an attempted homicide. Strangulation causes traumatic brain injury, which is an alteration or disruption in the normal function of the brain caused by external force. Unconsciousness may occur within seconds and death within minutes. Having this knowledge is a powerful tool for change.

There is a wide range of abusive behaviors. DV impacts individuals of all genders, ages, races, and ethnicities; one in four women and one in seven men have been a victim of physical violence by an intimate partner. Many of the victims were killed after the relationship ended. If you have been strangled in the past your risk of being killed increases tenfold. This indicates that leaving does not equate to safety.

Domestic violence is not just physical but any kind of behavior that tries to gain power and control over a victim. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, reach out to an advocate at HELP of Door County 920.743.8785.

This article is brought to you in part by the Door County Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Teams and the Door County Elder and Adult-at-Risk Interdisciplinary Team.

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- In 2022, a total of 96 people in Wisconsin lost their lives to domestic violence in 2022. That’s 16 more deaths than the previous year — a 20% increase.
- Wisconsin ranks seventh in the nation for the number of women killed by men. In 2021, 1 in every 6 domestic violence deaths in the U.S. happened in Wisconsin, according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
- Officials with End Abuse said this is the highest total deaths since the organization began releasing data in 2000. This year’s total equates to one death every 3.8 days.
- Homicide deaths occurred across 25 of Wisconsin’s counties.
- The majority of these deaths were by firearm. In 2022, a gun was used in 88.5% of domestic violence deaths. This is an increase of 21.5% since 2021.

At the Governor's Mansion; Kathy Flores, Governor Tony and Kathy Evers, Milly Gonzales.

EVENTS THIS YEAR



The Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse awards ceremony.



Ava Beaudot, Domestic Violence Advocate, and Earlene Castelan, volunteer, at our booth for Open Door Pride.



Door County Community Foundation check presentation from Inge Bacon and Milly Gonzales.



Check presentation with the Women's Fund of Door County.

HELP of Door County was chosen to present two workshops at Teen Summit this year. The first one focused on Teen Dating Violence while the second reflects on boundaries, communication, and consent; "How To Say No". Our Youth Advocate, Ava, is preparing our youth for Teen Summit 2024, which will be held **May 19th – May 21st in Madison.**



Please see HELP's **WISH LIST** for our clients:

- * Dish Soap (small bottles preferred)
- * Cleaning Supplies
- * Baby Soap
- * Baby Wipes
- * Baby Wash
- * Baby Shampoo & Conditioner
- * Deodorant
- * Shampoo & Conditioner
- * Lotion
- * Tampons
- * Toilet Paper
- * Paper Towels
- * Laundry Detergent (small bottles preferred)

