Summer 2007

CROSSROADS

New Hampshire Department of Corrections Victim Services Office

"Inform & Involve Survivors of Crime"

William L. Wrenn
Commissioner

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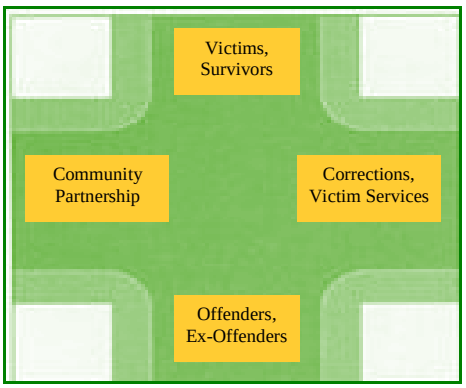
FROM THE COMMISSIONER

We are proud New Hampshire is among a handful of states with a fully accredited statewide corrections department. The American Correctional Association and Commission on Accreditation for Corrections recognizes the NH Department of Corrections as meeting the highest national standards in adult probation/parole, correctional facilities and the many related support operations. It is a testament to the hard work of our dedicated employees and many other agencies with whom we work to protect citizens and offer offenders the opportunity to improve themselves as productive members of society.

With over 30 years in law enforcement prior to arriving as Commissioner, I am respectful of the experiences and needs of crime victims and survivors. Police officers see the immediate effects of crime on "the front lines." In corrections, we understand many crime victims continue to experience the impacts for years or even a lifetime. As such, we will continue to be respectful and responsiveness to those victims/survivors who choose to remain involved during the offender's time under our supervision or custody. There are always areas in which we can improve, and we will continue to move in that direction.

Bill Wrenn



This *CROSSROADS*

By *Peter A. Michaud*

A number of people have asked me, "what happened?" to the Victim Services' ***Crossroads*** newsletter since 2005. The short answer is, a hiatus of sorts. As requests for crime victim services increase, we need to continually re-prioritize our workload. The NH Department of Corrections wants to remain responsive to the interests of victims as we fulfill our responsibilities in promoting offender change and public safety. The Victim Services Office strives to continuously improve assistance and support for crime victims and survivors. We are committed to keeping interested citizens informed, involved, and safe.

At the same time that crime victims and others were inquiring about the status of ***Crossroads***, Ms. Tabitha Plante contacted me about her interest in volunteering with Victim Services. Thanks to Tabitha, we bring you this Summer 2007 edition of ***Crossroads***. A crossroad is a crucial point, especially where a decision must be

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made. Many people have a stake in a successful justice system. During the system's corrections phase, there is a crossroad – an opportunity where interested victims, offenders, and other citizens of New Hampshire may move forward in the aftermath of crime.

"Crossroads" is an opportunity for people to share and learn how corrections and others strive to improve responses to crime. ***"Crossroads"*** is intended to address several core themes:

* Understanding the impacts of crime on victims, families and communities
* Victims rights & "system" responses
* Family violence
* Offender change – the victim's view

Thanks, again, to Tabitha Plante and others contributing to this ***Crossroads***. In particular, we thank the many people who are crime victims and survivors from whom we learn every day how best to improve the correctional response to crime in New Hampshire.

Peter Michaud is the Victim Services Coordinator for NH Department of Corrections. He may be reached at (603) 271-1937 or pemichaud@nhdoc.state.nh.us.

THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

BREAK THE SILENCE

Thirteenth Annual New Hampshire Clothesline Project

The New Hampshire Clothesline Project, part of a national initiative, is a visual display that bears witness to domestic and sexual violence and stalking in New Hampshire. The display consists of a clothesline hung with t-shirts designed by survivors or people who care about them. At last year's event the display showcased over 300 shirts made throughout the state.

This year marks the Thirteenth Annual New Hampshire Clothesline Project sponsored by the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program. Governor Lynch and Attorney General Ayotte unveiled the 2007 display on the State House lawn during New Hampshire Crime Victims Rights Week in April. The purpose of the Clothesline Project is to help with the healing process, for people who have lost a loved one or are a survivor of this violence, as well as to educate, document, and raise awareness of the extent of this type of violence. The Clothesline Project also provides nationwide networks of support, encouragement, and information.

The mission of the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program (AVAP) is to expand the network of victim support services throughout New Hampshire to more effectively meet the needs of victims of domestic and sexual vio-

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A Grieving Parent

by Eileen

As a victim of a drunken driving crash that took my son's life on 7/20/03, I would like to bring awareness to the affects of what my family has had to deal with.

My husband and I were woken by a knock on the door. Two police officers were on the other side to tell us, "Your son Stephen died in a car crash ..." this morning. The worst news a parent could bear.

We wanted to go to the scene of the crash, but were told there was nothing we could do. We wanted to see our son, regardless of what had happened. We were told that was not a good idea. We felt defenseless and without very much support or information. I wanted to know what happened. When the police left they gave me a phone number to the local police where the crash occurred. We called only to find out that they could not tell us anything.

Our world will never be the same. Our only child, GONE in an instant! Never to hear him speak those words, "Ma, I love you… Dad, I love you." Never to hold him in our arms again. His dreams, our dreams, everything gone along with our future.

How do we go on? Everyone asks us this. My answer, "I don't know?" I think of Stephen every waking moment of the day…. I talk about him all the time to anyone who will listen. I dread the holidays and birthdays, because I know Stephen is not here to enjoy them with us. Mother's Day and Father's Day are the hardest for us. You see, Stephen made them special for us.

We as a society have got to do something to stop this most horrific senseless act of drinking and driving. We continue to hear the news everyday with one more crash, one more repeat offender, one more death and many more of us victimized. Why?

We as a society have got to do something to stop this most horrific senseless act of drinking and driving. We continue to hear the news everyday with one more crash, one more repeat offender, one more death and many more of us victimized. Why? Because we haven't figured out how to stop people from drinking and

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"Inform & Involve Survivors of Crime"

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NH Victims' Assistance Commission Victims' Compensation Program

by Bette J. Riordan

Since 1990, the State of New Hampshire financially assists innocent victims of violent crime by providing compensation to them and to immediate family members for losses incurred due to personal injury or death of the victim. The economic losses must be directly related to eligible misdemeanor or felony violent crime. The Office of the Attorney General is entrusted to administer the fund, which consists of monies collected through penalty assessment on criminal fines and by a federal grant. The NH Victims' Assistance Commission consists of five dedicated individuals who are nominated by the Attorney General and confirmed by the Governor and Executive Council. The Commission members volunteer their time and currently consist of a victim of a home invasion, a dentist, an Emergency Room trauma physician, a licensed mental health professional and an attorney. The Commission meets monthly to award eligible claims. With two staff from the Attorney General's Office, applications are reviewed, claims are awarded, and payments are made to victims whose lives are benefited in significant ways, after sustaining trauma and economic loss due to violent crime.

During FY 2004 and 2005, victim compensation funds allowed for the relocation of 69 families in life-threatening, domestic violence situations, replaced lost wages and loss of support for 95 families, provided mental health counseling for 157 families and educated numerous victims on other available care in order to maximize their benefits. There were over 800 claims processed during the biennium. During 2006 and 2007, the program has experienced a marked increase in the number of survivors who have applied and been awarded funds, as well as an increase in the amount of

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MADD
Activism | Victim Services | Education

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driving!

If you choose to drink and drive you have broken the law. Those who break the law need to be held accountable for their actions. We need to educate the public on the consequences and the financial burdens they are faced with. There needs to be more awareness as to what victims are left to face, for months and years to come. It doesn't stop or go away.

Upon receiving the Death Notification we needed support or an advocate to give us guidance on the legal process. This came much later for us. Support from a counselor who understands these types of situations and can give support or resources to the family or loved ones. As I speak throughout the State of New Hampshire, many are amazed at how victims are treated. Along with the loss of a loved one, we can then re-victimized in the legal process. Resources should be available as soon as a family is notified.

Eileen is a MADD-NH Representative. For more information about the New Hampshire Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving: Email info@madd-nh.org or call 1-800-764-6233.

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lence and stalking. AVAP members are placed at Crisis Centers, Police Departments, Prosecutor Offices, the NH Department of Corrections, Child Advocacy Centers, and on College and University campuses throughout the state. AVAP began in 1994, and since its inception has assisted over 38,000 victims throughout New Hampshire.

For more information, NH AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program may be reached at (603) 224-6466 or info@avap1.org.

AMERICORPS

ASSISTING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: LAW ENFORCEMENT'S ROLE

by Chief Shaun Mulholland

The police have two primary roles in assisting victims of domestic violence. When responding to reports of domestic violence, police officers secure the scene and separate the persons involved to prevent further violence or criminal activity from occurring. NH RSA 173-B:10 entitled, "*Protection by Peace Officers*," requires the police to use all means necessary to prevent further abuse. Once this primary responsibility is met, the investigation phase begins. Victims and witnesses are questioned to determine if a crime occurred and what evidence may be available to be collected. The suspect is also questioned if he/she is still on scene. The law also states the police need not arrest both offending parties in a domestic disturbance if they are both criminally liable. However the police may arrest the primary physical aggressor. The statute further defines what should be taken into consideration in making the decision as to who is the primary physical aggressor.

If a determination is made that a crime was committed, than arrest(s) may be made. Officers have 12 hours to make an arrest in domestic violence cases without an arrest warrant. The defendant is then transported to the station, processed, and then may be released on personal recognizance bail or cash bail is set. Generally, conditions of bail are set to prohibit the defendant from having any contact with the victim for a specified period of time to allow the victim to apply for and be granted a domestic violence restraining order.

VICTIMS ARE ADVISED OF THE PROCEDURE TO APPLY FOR AND OBTAIN A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTION ORDER.

NH RSA 173-B requires the police to confiscate any deadly weapons involved in the alleged abuse and any firearms/ammunition in the defendant's control, ownership or possession. Weapons seized pursuant to this section can only be released with a court order from a judge. The police must transport, or arrange for transportation, of the victim and any children to a designated place to meet a domestic violence counselor, local family member or friend. Officers must assist the victim in removing toiletries, medication, clothing, business equipment and any other items determined by the court.

The police are also required to give the victims written no-

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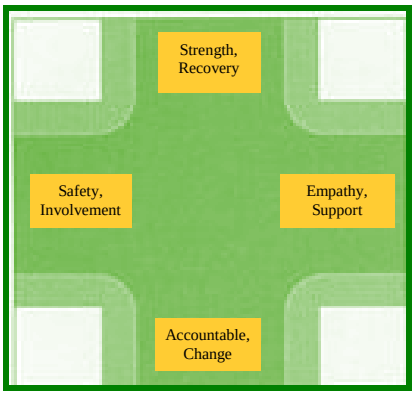

Dear World

By "Anonymous"

I want you to understand my pain. For once instead of muffling my cries, please hear my pain. Please know that for years I held back my tears, and no one listened. No one cared. No one knew. I pretended to be perfect, I smiled although I hurt inside. I appeared to be alive although I was quite dead inside and physically wanted to die. I wanted more than anything to be alone, to run and hide from him, to protect myself from the hatred. I have learned to develop a defense. I've created coping skills that some others may consider to be abnormal. When I feel overwhelmed I revert back inside of myself. I turn the pain inward. At other times I want everyone to suffer along with me.

At this point in my life, I have become the perpetrator instead of the victim. I wanted someone to share my pain, anyone. Also this pain has always equaled love to me. Justification of situations that were abusive to me as a child led to my relationship patterns today. Co-dependant behavior became the norm to me. Denial was very common in my world. Emotional scars that are not always visible to the naked eye have had almost the same effect on me as some of the physical ones.

The lack of being provided with the proper emotional and psychological nurturing necessary for me to develop into a proper adult was unavailable to me. Things that most people take for granted as a small child, such as a hug from a parent, or simple cuddling, or praise for a job well done in school, was not readily available to me. I was not loved in the normal sense. Anger was more prevalent in my world.

Please Welcome . . .

In June 2007, Merrill Beauchamp joined NHDOC as the Victim Services Program Assistant. She previously well served crime victims/survivors as the Ameri-Corps Victim Advocate at our Manchester District Office. Her passion and skills in offering effective customer service is a tremendous asset as we strive to keep people informed, involved and safe!

Welcome Aboard, Merrill !

The abuse that I have suffered unfortunately was passed down to me as easily as silver or china set in a family.

This was my legacy. This was all I knew. I in turn escaped through the use and abuse of substances. This was MY WAY. Not his. This made me feel different. Even if I felt badly, it was different from the feelings the abuse brought me. It actually covered up those feelings. My abuse led me to victimize others, thus leading me to prison. I am not proud of this; this was all I ever knew.

I have learned an abundance of things about myself while incarcerated. I think the most important were the tools I have learned to move on, to heal. I have learned not to mask the feelings, to give them a name, to acknowledge them. I've learned to deal. I've learned to start the healing process. I hope that others can go a different route. I hope my story can reach someone. Maybe it will help. Through handwork and understanding the vicious cycle of domestic abuse can in fact be broken. Respect and empathy are much healthier ways to have a parent/child relationship. "Being a child should never hurt," and emotional endurance and physical strength should never factor into this either. Breaking the cycle can prevent many distorted values from being passed down to future generations. Unfortunately, all the letters and information in the world are useless without any efforts to make changes. I strongly urge anyone with questions to go and further investigate "change." You may save a child's life, and or an adult's future, and perhaps you're own life….

~ Anonymous ~ is an inmate in the custody of NHDOC

When Victims of Violence Meet the Offender

The NH Department of Corrections hosted an intensive 5-day training in March 2007 for people interested in serving crime victim and offenders who choose to meet and discuss the personal impacts of crime. Eighteen participants attended, representing NHDOC (Community Corrections, Field Services, Lakes Region Facility, Northern Correctional Facility, and NH State Prison), volunteers and provider agencies from Berlin, Claremont, Concord, Gilmanton, Hampton, Keene, Nashua, Northwood, and Portsmouth. The Victim-Offender Dialogue training was facilitated by Karin Ho of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction, NHDOC Victim Services Coordinator Peter Michaud, and several current VOD facilitators in New Hampshire.

The 37 hours of training addressed:

* The Experience of Crime Victims (including a conversation with a panel of survivors of violent crime).
* The Offender Experience (including a conversation with a panel of prison inmates).
* The Victim-Sensitive Approach to Dialogue.
* Case Studies ~ analysis and review of VOD cases facilitated in New Hampshire and nationally.
* A Roundtable Discussion with current VOD Facilitators in New Hampshire.

The goal of Victim-Offender Dialogue is to support justice and healing by empowering crime victims & survivors to meet with the offender and address the personal impacts of violent crime. The week's training participants learned much from crime victims and offenders in New Hampshire and about their very personal experiences. For each, the impacts of violence have become a part of their lives for years to come. As facilitators of these very compelling conversations, we learn that a key to successful dialogue is "Preparation, Preparation, Preparation."

Trained and skilled co-facilitators make dialogue easier between the crime victim/survivor and offender. We support both parties "through a structured process which neutralizes status and power, in an environment conducive to meaningful discussion under highly emotional circumstances. A facilitator does not promote reconciliation, settlement, or compromise" (NHDOC's Protocols for Victim-Offender Dialogue).

Who is asking for victim-initiated Dialogue in New Hampshire? Between 1998 and 2006, they were victims/survivors of these violent crimes: Murder 21 %; Negligent Homicide 10 %; Sexual Assault 49 % (43 % childhood; 6 % adult); Others 20 % (Assault, Robbery, Criminal Threatening, D/V – Stalking).

People requesting a meaningful dialogue with their offender are respected and offered an opportunity to meet, consistent with safety and security needs.

For more information about Victim-Offender Dialogue, please contact Victim Services Coordinator Peter Michaud at (603) 271-1937 or email victimservices@nhdoc.state.nh.us.

Receive *Crossroads* by E-Mail !

** An electronic version is available by e-mail **

To submit comments or articles for ***Crossroads***, please contact the Victim Services Office at victimservices@nhdoc.state.nh.us

(603) 271-7351

(Victim Assistance Commission from page 3)

compensation paid. The allowable amount for relocation assistance expenses is now $5,000.00. This benefit allows victims to have their security deposit, two months rent, and moving and storage expenses paid when they are forced to flee from the offender for their safety. The program is the "payer of last resort" after all free care, health insurance, workers compensation, proceeds form civil lawsuits or other available financial resources have been made available. The fund is also sometimes replenished with court ordered restitution payments from offenders.

The Victims Compensation Program makes a significant difference in victims' lives and can continue to succeed only in cooperation and partnership with victim advocates, law enforcement, crisis centers, and service providers. For more information, please contact the Attorney General's Office at our toll free number 1-800-300-4500 (in NH only) or 603-271-1284. Visit our website at: http://doj.nh.gov/victim/compensation.html.

Bette J. Riordan is Program Specialist with the NH Victim Assistance Commission. She may be reached at (603) 271-1284 or email BETTEJANE.RIORDAN@DOJ.NH.GOV.

(Assisting Victims of Domestic Violence from page 4)

tice of their rights and remedies as well as services available. This is generally done by a standard form provided by the NH Attorney General's Office. Victims are advised of the procedure to apply for and obtain a domestic violence protection order. These orders can be obtained at various courts. The victim may apply for a restraining order in the court district where the abuse occurred or where they now temporarily reside. These orders remain in effect for one year unless withdrawn or dismissed. Defendants who have a domestic violence order against them have this information attached to their driver's license data in a statewide database. Police are able to determine if an order is in effect and what the conditions are by running a simple license check. Domestic violence orders from New Hampshire are valid in throughout the country. Domestic violence orders from other states are valid in New Hampshire as well.

Police officers are required to arrest defendants who violate conditions of a domestic violence protection order. If the police determine there is probable cause to believe the defendant violated the order, they must make an arrest. NH RSA 173-B:9, unlike other statutes, does not allow officers to use discretion – an arrest must be made. These defendants are brought before the court for further action.

Chief Shaun Mulholland of the Allenstown Police Department may be reached at (603) 485-9500 or Email: chiefmulholland@comcast.net.

New Hampshire's Crime Victim Services in Corrections

The NH Department of Corrections' Victim Services Office provides direct services and other activities necessary to ensure quality direct services for crime victims and survivors, including:

- Notification of offender custody changes
- Advocacy and support during reduced custody processes
- Accompaniment at Parole Board hearings
- Reasonable protection from offender intimidation and harassment
- Victim-offender dialogue (upon victim request)
- Restitution advocacy
- Public awareness and outreach
- Information and referral
- Victim participation with the IMPACT program
- Evaluating victim satisfaction with services

During SFY 2006, 1,585 crime victims/survivors were served. Victims with offenders in the following crime categories were served:

Sexual Assault	37 %
Other Violent	46%
Domestic Violence	4 %
Non-Violent	13 %

Victim Services

New Hampshire Department of Corrections
Victim Services Office
P.O. Box 1806
Concord, NH 03302-1806

Phone: 603-271-7351 or 1-888-NH-NOTICE

Fax: 603-271-5639

Email: victimservices@nhdoc.state.nh.us

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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

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DID YOU KNOW...?

Who abuses New Hampshire's elderly and incapacitated adults? In 2005, the most frequently reported perpetrator was related to the alleged victim. The most frequently reported relative perpetrators were: Adult daughters: 127; Adult sons: 127; Husbands: 110; Wives: 42. *(SOURCE: NH Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee, Governor's Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2006)*

During FY 2006, NH Department of Corrections' probation-parole staff collected more than $2.8 million in payments by offenders, including court-ordered restitution for crime victims and survivors. *(SOURCE: NHDOC Annual Report, 7/1/05 to 6/30/06)*

The number of women in New Hampshire who have been the victim of a sexual assault could fill Fenway Park more than 3 times over. *(SOURCE: "Violence Against Women in New Hampshire," 2007 - A report from the NH Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence in collaboration with the University of New Hampshire and the NH Division of Public Health Services)*

Forty one percent of the most recent sexual assaults reported in the New Hampshire Violence Against Women Survey occurred before the victim's 18th birthday, and 83% occurred before the age of 25. *(SOURCE: Ibid.)*