

# Sounds of Survival

*Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass & Hubbard Counties*

## April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month And a very busy month for SAP!

The month of April was an exciting time for me and the community education aspect of SAP! We pushed hard to reach as many people in many different ways with information regarding sexual assault. The stigma surrounding it is so strong that it takes each one of us knowing the truth to break the silence that has been around for far too many years. One of the ways we reached out was by providing training in Bagley for health care providers with the DOVE (Down on Violence Everyday) program from White Earth. This was well received by the people in attendance and even taught me a thing or two!!

To reach a larger audience, I was on two afternoon radio shows sharing information about our program and raising awareness about the issues. One of the more fun April awareness activities I did was have a booth at the Kelliher Health Fair where the theme was "A Garden Party." It was a cheerful event with people of all generations passing through and hopefully I got some good information out to people.

On top of these amazing opportunities (along with setting up library displays in four area towns), on April 29<sup>th</sup>, hours and hours of work by a few dedicated people came to fruition with my personal favorite event we did in April, Take Back the Night. We had a great turn out, with an estimated 100+ people throughout the night. Our guest speakers, Dr. Annie Henry and Elaine Fleming, both gave powerful talks that impacted all in attendance. The march downtown was short due to the construction but the energy and passion that was going through the crowd made it an amazing nonetheless. We also had 3 amazing musical acts. The most touching moments probably came when we opened the floor up to people to come share their thoughts. We heard powerful stories of pain and growth along with calls for us all to help end the atrocity that is sexual assault. It was an emotionally charged night that hopefully left people a bit more knowledgeable about an issue few want to talk about. After an exhausting April, I just want to say thank you to all of the people that helped put together the events, to all those who attended and also to those that are supportive of us in anyway. Society as a whole has to rethink its views on sexual assault and it is us as individuals that have to make that happen. These small steps are helping clear the way for a changed world. Thank you once again! Jolene, Community Education and Outreach Coordinator.

The Mission of the Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass & Hubbard Counties is to provide support for all victims of all levels of sexual violence, to educate the community about the issues of sexual violence, and to promote changes in attitudes and behaviors that will stop sexual violence



Volume 1, Issue 8

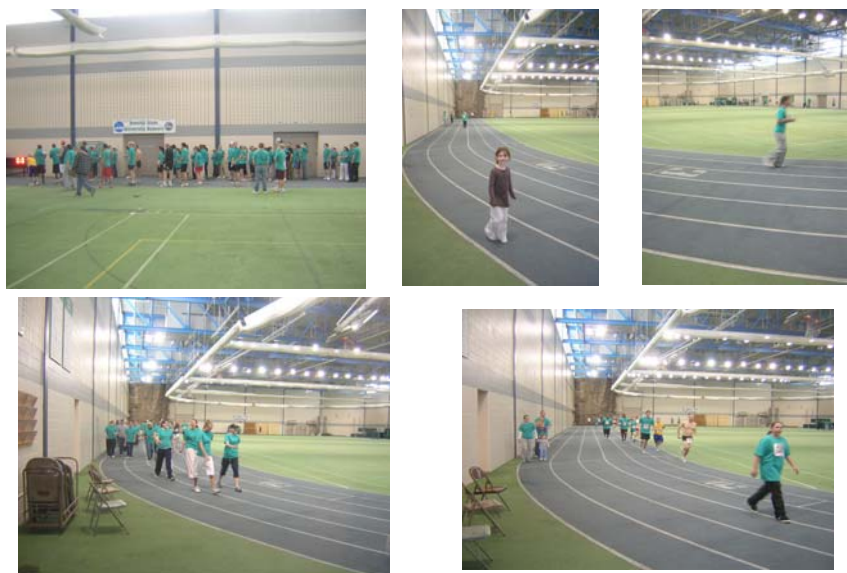
May 2008

### *Inside this issue:*

- First annual 5K Run/Walk a success despite the snow! 2
- Volunteers of the year 2
- SAP Basket wins big at MNCASA AWARE event 3
- SAP at the Cass Lake Weed N Seed Event 3
- B-SMART Corner 3
- SAP says Good-bye to staff 3
- Mark Your Calendar 4

### SAP's First Annual 5K Run/Walk

The Sexual Assault Program's volunteer Beka Majava organized our first annual 5K Run/Walk for Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention. The event scheduled for Saturday, April 26, turned out to be quite the experience. Twelve inches of snow fell prohibiting the outdoor route. Still 70+ people braved the weather and ran/walked inside the BSU Gillett Recreation Center. Thanks to all who participated! As you will see, some folks were so fast they appear as a blur on film!



### Sounds of Survival

#### SAP's Basket wins 1st Place at the MNCASA's annual AWARE Event

The Sexual Assault Program staff and volunteers put together a wonderful basket for the MNCASA AWARE event. Our basket theme was "Northwoods Picnic" and brought in the highest bid. Therefore, we won the prize of enjoying "Cookies of the Month" courtesy of MNCASA staff. Who will take the prize from us next year?



## VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

### 2008 Group Volunteer of the Year SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAM ADVOCATES

SAP volunteers were recognized throughout the Bemidji community as this year's "Inspire by Example" Bemidji Group Volunteer of the Year for their involvement, advocacy and dedication in being available at the times when sexual assault victims. In recognition of the Sexual Assault Volunteer Advocate's impact, Kim wrote, "It's our volunteer advocates that give victims/survivors the much needed lifeline to sanity and healing. Imagine what goes through the mind of the volunteer when the phone rings, they know the nature of the call, but that doesn't always prepare one for the details you will hear; they literally hold that person's spirit in their hands. What they do and say makes a difference for that caller to move from victim to survivor."



Pictured are Asya G., Brenda K., Ashli Bowen of United Way, Tammy W. and Mike Z.

### 2008 Volunteer of the Year MIKE ZIMMERMAN

In 2007, Mike logged 1360 volunteer hours with the Sexual Assault Program and crisis line. As part Mike's nomination Kim wrote, "A male advocate is a unique gift for female callers. To speak with a compassionate male that believes them, often gives them enhanced healing and hope. Insight that not 'all men are evil' can make the difference for that caller to move from victim to survivor. Mike also has worked with male secondary victims, giving them a male perspective on how to be supportive to their female loved ones who have just experienced a horrific deal. His advocacy throughout the community makes an impact on what is often wrongly thought of as a 'women's issue'." Mike assists with general maintenance around the office, attends trainings to further his knowledge of sexual violence, and generously participates wherever and whenever he is needed.



# Volume 1, Issue 8

## LOOKING TO HELP YOUR COMMUNITY?

## *Sexual Assault Program at the Cass Lake Weed and Seed Open House*

### 1st Annual Volunteer Fair held in Park Rapids

On April 30th SAP joined 10 other agencies in the Park Rapids area to host a "volunteer fair". The goal was to have a diverse mix of agencies/groups and opportunities to make it interesting for potential volunteers to come and see what options they have in their community. We also enticed them with door prizes. Agencies that participated were Kinship of the Park Rapids Area, Headwaters Intervention, Headwaters Animal Shelter, Mahube RSVP, Living at Home/Block Nurse/Interfaith Caregivers, St. Josephs Auxiliary, St Josephs Area Health Services, Hubbard County DFL, Hubbard County Historical Society and Kids Against Hunger. It was a little slow but steady. Lots of praise for hosting it. Several "new to town" people came to check out what was available. Talk is we will do it again.

The Sexual Assault Program was happy to be a part of the last big event sponsored by the Cass Lake Weed and Seed. The site was the Leech Lake Boys and Girls Club. Several children and families enjoyed Pizza and prizes as well as information from agencies serving the greater Cass Lake Area. SAP staff had some special help setting up the booth! The helpers are pictured below!



### *SAP says Good-bye to two staff people in May*

The Sexual Assault Program bid a fond farewell to two valuable staff persons in May. Candace Ophus led the BSMART with skill and enthusiasm. Valerie Olsen has been a n advocate for about six-months, fulfilling a short term grant opportunity. Valerie, "the donation queen", will be moving out of state soon. We thank them both for their dedication and service to the community. We send them off with good wishes!

## B-SMART CORNER

The BSMART (Sexual assault Multidisciplinary Action Response Team) is a multidisciplinary team of professionals from many areas, including Law Enforcement, Advocacy, Corrections, Medical, Mental Health, Prosecution, and Higher Education. Each month, the team comes together in an effort to create agency guidelines on how to respond to sexual assault cases. In 2007, the BSMART became fully funded to initiate this process in our area and currently has team representation from Beltrami and Clearwater Counties, as well as Leech Lake and Red Lake Reservation. The BSMART has adopted a proven 8-step protocol process that has been successful for other teams in the state. Currently, we are working on writing the protocols, after completing the initial steps of evaluating: area services, victim experiences, and performing an overall community needs assessment related to sexual violence. The rest of 2008 will be a very productive year of creating protocols that are victim-centered and promote the best possible outcome for any sexual assault case. When the protocols have been written, we will begin to implement trainings for each of the agencies' employees that are members of the BSMART; ensuring a coordinated community response to sexual assault. If you are interested in learning more about the work of the BSMART, contact the coordinator at the Sexual Assault Program with questions!



# Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass & Hubbard Counties

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## Mark Your Calendar

### May 28 - 30, 2008

- \* **Annual Conference on Crime Victims**, sponsored by MN Office of Justice Programs, Cragun's, Brainerd

### June 6, 2008

- \* **Launch of *The Promise of Primary Prevention, A Five Year Plan to Prevent Sexual Violence***, sponsored by the MN Department of Health, St. Paul

### June 19, 2008

- \* **BSMART Protocol Training**, provided by the SVJI, MN BCA offices, Bemidji

### June 20 - 22, 2008

- \* **Annual Native Girls Retreat**, sponsored by MN Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Lanesboro, MN

### July 24, 2008

- \* **Red Lake Health Fair**, Red Lake MN

## WISH LIST

- ◆ White & colored copy paper
  - ◆ AAA & AA batteries
- ◆ Postage stamps (.42, .18, & .80)
  - ◆ Kleenex & Paper Towels
- ◆ "*Courage to Heal*" books & workbooks
  - ◆ Kitchen-sized garbage bags
  - ◆ White Noise Machine
  - ◆ Paper folding machine
- ◆ "Gifts" that we may give to volunteers & as door prizes
  - ◆ Manilla File folders
- ◆ Ink Cartridges (HP 15, 17, 27, 28, 56, & 57)
- ◆ Journals (bound blank) for client usage