

# SUMMER 2023 NEWS



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In January 1982, the Gillette Abuse Refuge Foundation (GARF) began providing services in Campbell County, WY. Staffed with twelve volunteers, GARF provided advocacy and services to sixty-two adults and eighty-five children in the first four months of operation. In March 1982, GARF received funding from the State of Wyoming. This funding allowed GARF to expand services and in October 1982, GARF was able to purchase a safe house or shelter for victims of family and sexual violence. By the end of the first year, GARF had provided services to 275 victims and housed eighty-eight women and 119 children in our shelter. In the last fiscal year, we have provided services to 2,000

victims and housed 250 women and children in the safe house. Services today include the following: Shelter community education, victim advocacy, crime victim's compensation, support groups, children's programs, protection orders, life skills ,etc.

## Upcoming Events-

Codependency Group starts June 14,2023 @ 10am. For more information please call Melissa 686-8071

If anyone is interested in a group for family or friends of survivors please call Alicia 686-8071

July 11th GARF will be doing concessions @ Tuesdays in the Garden!

SAVE THE DATE: July 12,2023 for WyoGives day! Please watch our social media for more information.

*"I now see how  
owning our story  
and loving ourselves  
through that process  
is the bravest thing  
that we will ever do."  
— Brené Brown*

## CURRENT NEWS:

We just wrapped up our 8 week Sexual Assault Courage to Heal group. We had a great turn out and the Group was a success!

We have an ongoing Women's Stronger Together group every Thursday (unless it's a major holiday) at 10 AM at the GARF office. Topics include but are not limited to: Boundaries, Red Flags, Self-esteem, Healing After Abuse, Emotional and Financial Abuse.

Did you know? Gardening has been shown to **lighten mood and lower levels of stress and anxiety**. It's very gratifying to plant, tend, harvest and share your own food. Routines provide structure to our day and are linked to improved mental health. Gardening routines, like watering and weeding, can create a soothing rhythm to ease stress.



## Advocates Corner

Advocates do so much more than crisis intervention. They work hard to meet immediate safety needs for clients, but also provide resources and support to encourage self-sufficiency going forward. Here is one of our stories. Names will NOT be shared due to Confidentiality. We also have permission to share.

We met while I was working in a bar. Honestly, I never really liked the guy, he was too full of himself and gave me a funny feeling. Looking back now I wish I could have seen the Red Flags. One night he showed me a different side of him, caring, compassionate, funny, and even sincere. So, when he offered to take me out on a date, I said yes. Next thing I knew he was moving into my home with me and 4 children. It happened out of nowhere, and honestly, I wasn't even comfortable with it. I still to this day cannot wrap my head around how fast it happened.

In the beginning this was good. Then his true side came out. He became very controlling, jealous, and angry all the time. I recall many times where he got so angry by either something the kids did, or I didn't do. And I would later pay the price many times I had to hide busted lips, black eyes, and bruising from friends, family, and my children. I wanted out I wanted to leave, but remember he was in MY house, and the laws are since he lived there, there was nothing they could do. And of course, he used that to his advantage.

I felt hopeless and lost. One night we had been drinking heavily, and the look in his eyes I knew I was in trouble. We were having a BBQ with some friends when one of them made a comment about my black eye. That made him very agitated, most of the night it was like walking on eggshells. I knew when everyone left, I was going to beat once again. Suddenly in front of everyone at the party he put a gun to my head. Stated, "Want to see something cool?" If it wasn't for bystanders, I truly feel he would have killed me that night.

I took what I could grab and left with my four children. Talking with my sister she told me about GARF. The staff at GARF were welcoming, friendly, compassionate, and made us feel safe. While staying in the safe house I got a call from a detective, someone that seen the gun put to my head had turned it in. This was my saving grace. He was arrested and sent to federal prison. They got him for felon with a gun.

Just as I thought life was back to normal until the threatening letters started coming in. I sold my house, changed my phone number, and blocked him on social media. It was quiet for a while.

I then, a year down the road, started dating someone else. Unfortunately, this is when he was released to the halfway house here. The harassment and stalking got so bad. I lived in fear every minute of my life. I again turned to GARF who helped me get a Staking Protection Order.



How can you help? GARF is looking for new volunteers! If you are interested in learning more please contact Alicia, our Volunteer Coordinator 307-686-8071.

You can help by donating: **Your Tax-Deductible Gift Helps Keep Families Safe**

**To Donate Text GARF to 26989.** You can do a one time Donation, monthly or simply round up your change.

*1 in every 4 women will experience domestic violence at some point in her life*

The demand for domestic violence services continues to grow. We remain steadfast in our commitment to keeping families safe. With your help, we are able to provide survivors and their families not only with safe shelter, but with critical services such as groups and therapy, help with filing protection orders, and referral assistance to help find housing, daycare, and other needed services. As always, all our programs and services are provided free of charge to the families we serve.

You can make an immediate difference by making an in-kind or financial contribution today.

*Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much! - Helen Keller*