

Making a *Difference*

“Fostering safety, hope, and healing through advocacy, intervention and education.”

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“The Tunnels Don’t Get Much Blacker Than They Were For Me....”

The sexual abuse began when she was six years old, but she lived to tell her story ...

She was thrown down a stairway by her first husband who tried to abort her pregnancy, but she lived to tell her story ...

She battled cancer at ages 21 and 29, but she lived to tell her story ...

She sought love in all the wrong places and only found meth and brutal abuse, but she lived to tell her story ...

He beat her and left her for dead in a gun cabinet for three days, but she lived to tell her story ...

***Weighing** less than 100 pounds, covered with scabs from meth use and traumatized by losing her daughters, she tried to commit suicide, but she lived to tell her story ...*

***Now**, nearly ten years clean of drugs, happily married and gainfully employed, she wants to help others by telling her story.*

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In The *Know*

A Good Ol’ Fashioned Auction

The Lakes Crisis & Resource Center recently hosted the first of what is intended to be an annual event – an Old Fashion Charity Auction to raise funds to support the programs and services provided by LCRC and Mary’s Place Shelter.

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A Word From *LCRC*

Spotlight on Staff

Each quarter we highlight an LCRC Staff Member. This quarter, get to know JoAnne Riegert.

What is your role at LCRC? Mental Health Counselor

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Making a *Difference* *Continued...*

I'll call her "Peggy" – I kind of knew her and her Detroit Lakes family – but I didn't know her background and how it would solidify my belief in the importance of the Lakes Crisis and Resource Center and other organizations that provide a safety net. I have learned her parents ignored the sexual abuse she suffered early in life that played a part in what she calls her "wild streak" as a teenager. She craved love from her parents but never felt it so she tried to earn it by excelling in advanced classes in high school and at a Moorhead university. One remaining semester of college stood in the way of a professional degree. Still she felt unloved so she sought comfort through marriage but when a bout with cancer was followed by an unexpected pregnancy, her husband resorted to violence. She was the working poor, now divorced with two young daughters to care for; she returned to her hometown in hopes of finding answers.

"Every guy attracted to me seemed to have meth in his pockets," she recalled, and before long, she was hooked and living with her dealer, Danny. The abuse was beyond most of our comprehension. His paranoid accusations (brought on by meth use) claimed she was cheating on him when in reality she was home with her preschoolers becoming more and more withdrawn from friends and family, wasting away on drugs. When he threw her head-first into the refrigerator door and one of her four year olds tried to defend her, she knew it was time to flee. From a safe house she was sent for treatment in Duluth and her sister took guardianship of her daughters but meth had a grip on Peggy she could not resist. She called Danny to help her escape from the program that was designed to save her life. More paranoia and abuse followed until her dad finally intervened and she was committed to treatment. Again, a lifesaving program almost resulted in death as she tried to strangle herself with her shoe laces. God was not obvious to Peggy before that day but she is convinced God sent a male guard in to check on her. He resuscitated her and she was given yet another chance at life. The State Hospital was her next step to recovery. She felt safe locked up in Fergus Falls because she knew Danny couldn't harm her and she finally set her goal on recovery so she could be reunited with her daughters.

Additional treatment followed; it was not easy but those dark, dark days are nearly ten years ago. Once again she believes God intervened. She met a Detroit Lakes man who is the opposite of any fellow she ever dated. She finally feels loved. They've been married eight years, her daughters are part of their family, and she's working full time in a managerial position. She has participated in groups at the LCRC and her daughters found help dealing with post-traumatic stress syndrome.

"The tunnels don't get much blacker than they were for me," she says. "Whenever I feel like veering off the path, I feel God bringing me back." She doesn't claim to have a "rainbow answer" but she knows she wants to help others.

As far as Danny who tried to repeatedly kill her – left her for dead in a gun cabinet for three days -- now he's dead – cancer got him. When Peggy heard the news she went out and bought some bright red lipstick. No longer will she live in fear – she has lived to tell her story!

In The *Know* *Continued...*

The event was held on August 16th at the Kent Freeman Arena under the professional guidance of Bachmann Auctioneers. The auction bill was comprised solely of items donated by individuals and businesses from the local and surrounding communities. The auction committee and LCRC staff are grateful to all who donated towards and attended the auction making it an incredibly successful fundraiser.



The event would not have been possible without dedicated committee members, generous and thoughtful members of the community, and supportive businesses. We are especially grateful to Daggett Trucking for providing the trailer for storing our auction items and to Jack Chivers Realty for allowing the trailer to reside in the parking lot throughout the summer. In addition, thanks goes out to KLN for providing storage space during our Perham drop off weekend. Also, thanks to Newman Signs, Central Market, Jill Mickelson, United Community Bank, and all who volunteered at the trailer on the drop off dates and the day of the event.

We are so appreciative of the generosity of Leighton Broadcasting for getting the word out to the community by donating air time, and to the area newspapers for graciously promoting our event. Finally, a huge thank you goes to Bachmann Auctioneers for their professionalism and generosity.

Please visit our Facebook page and look through our Auction Photos to see how generous our community was: www.facebook.com/lakescrisis **THANK YOU** to everyone who donated and attended!

Members of the hard working Charity Auction Committee at the end of the day: Jill Askelson, Beth Leighton, Sandy Brasel, Anna Sellin, DelRae Chivers, Deena Cavanagh, chairperson Linda Mickelson, Nancy Erickson, Julie Vomacka, Kathy Carlson, & Jan Logan. THANK YOU for your hard work!



A Word From *LCRC* *Continued...*

What does that entail? My role is a supportive one for women and children of May's Place, and community based men, women and children. Research shows that talk therapy can be an effective tool in helping individuals improve their overall mood, and personal wellbeing.

How long have you been with LCRC? April, 2014. Prior to that, I was employed on a contractual basis to co-facilitate Domestic Violence Re-education groups for men who have used violence against their intimate partner and want to change so that their families can remain intact. I currently still co-facilitate these groups.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? Seeing an individual make healthy change for themselves and their families is the most rewarding aspect. Hearing a story in which they have utilized a skill that they have learned in therapy has an amazing ripple effect on their overall outlook on life as the person moves forward.

What is the most challenging part of your job? Even though perceptions about mental health have changed in recent years, there is still much stigma about accessing support for these types of issues. Helping individuals realize that they have made a healthy choice to begin therapy is an essential part of overcoming these long standing stereotypes.

What is your background? I was raised on the White Earth Indian Reservation and have strong cultural ties to this community. These cultural beliefs are core elements in how I understand others, and the foundation of how to embrace the whole person. The principals of the Native American Medicine Wheel (Emotional, Physical, Mental, and Spiritual) guide my interactions and work with others. My advanced degree of Community Counseling was obtained from Minnesota State University, Moorhead. I am currently licensed by the Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy as a Licensed Professional Counselor. I also have formal training in Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

What is your dream vacation? My dream vacation would be spending time with my children and husband on a cruise ship bound for Alaska!

Who is the most influential person in your life? My grandmothers and my mother. These women have taught me how to be patient and respectful to all people and how to love and support my family, and lead in a humble way.

What brought you to LCRC? When I learned about the opening at LCRC, it felt as if it would be a good fit for me as I continue to build my knowledge base and assist others in need. Helping individuals acknowledge resiliency, and helping families stay intact is essential to my work. All families may not look the same, but their unity is important. My goal is to guide and support them in their journey.

What is your favorite childhood memory? My grandmother taught me how to can food, bake and most importantly how to spend quality time with others. My favorite times with her were often spent looking at catalogs to find the most current clothing trends. Somehow, the clothing always looked better on the models than it did on her when she ordered it; it was often was returned!

Circle of Angels



The **Circle of Angels** is a special group of individuals who come together in support of local women, men, and children by providing a planned, consistent, monthly gift. **Thank You and Welcome** to the newest members of The Lakes Crisis & Resource Center's **Circle of Angels!**

Snow Angel
Lynne Auten
Greg & Missy Wokash

Join the Circle of Angels and help us eliminate violence in the lives of men, women, and children. When you sign up, your planned monthly gift is transferred automatically around the 15th of the month with no hassle to you. If you would like more information regarding joining this elite group of caring individuals, please contact Anna by calling 218-847-8572 or emailing: annas@lakescrisis.com.

WISH LIST

- Dish cloths/towels
- Cleaning supplies
- Pillows
- Digital camera & bag
- Boys size 3T & 4T clothing
- CD player
- Children's music CD's
- Children's shoes and boots
- Children's educational DVD's
- Queen & single size air mattresses

Upcoming Events—SAVE THE DATE!

Domestic Violence Awareness Month: October
Children's Breakfast: Thursday, November 13th
7:30—8:30 a.m. Holmes Theatre Ballroom \$40.

Learn about the impact LCRC's support groups has on children in school. The Laker Singers will be performing again as well. Enjoy food and fellowship while supporting children in our community.

Give to the Max Day: Thursday, 11/13

A state-wide day of on-line giving. Help LCRC raise money & earn cash prizes for participating!