Verde Valley Sanctuary

Spring 2019 Newsletter

Judy's Journey to Safety

Insight into a client's experience

Late one night, Judy and her two young children fled rural Florida in her 1998 Ford pickup. In a complete panic, knowing that her life was danger, she fled. No goodbye's, no planning, no money, no purse or ID, no phone, no idea where she was going. An hour earlier, her boyfriend had choked her until she blacked out and left her in the yard for dead. As a fugitive already, the man spun out on the gravel driveway without a glance back. She knew that if he did come back, he'd finish the job.

Hyperventilating and disoriented, Judy pointed her truck "west towards California;" her two kids sleeping next to her. As a low-income woman who had never been outside of her small town, she was terrified. Judy told us that she cried and prayed all the way; she imagined an image of Mother Mary over the road in front of her. At every stop, hardly able to stop crying enough to speak, strangers gave her fast food, blankets, prayer blessings, gas money, hugs, and encouragement.

Some two weeks later, the Sedona Police found Judy and her children sleeping in their truck and brought them to our thrift store in Sedona, where they knew they could receive help. The thrift store staff brought in food for the kids then called our shelter's D.V. hot line. 30 minutes later our Mobile Crisis Advocate arrived for an assessment. Once the Advocate made sense of the story, Judy and her children followed the Advocate to our hidden shelter.

Judy and her children rested for a few days and then began working with a case manager to create an action plan. At V.V.S. we are sensitive to the effects of deep trauma and providing a safe environment while also operating a solution-focused and action-oriented support program. As Matthew Kelley, Ph.D. our

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How to Get Help

Call our 24 Hour Helpline or

Stop Into Any of Our Offices

(928) 634-2511 (800) 930-7233

Outreach Center
601 W. Mingus Ave,
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
(928) 634-6255

Legal Advocacy Center
1770 East Villa St. Ste 5
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
(928) 639-2079

Twice Nice Thrift Store
1225 W. SR 89A, Sedona, 86336
(928) 282-2563

Twice Nice Thriftique
297 S. Main St.
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
(928) 282-2563

All services are free of charge and open to all victims regardless of gender or sexual preference

The Victim Advocate - Supporting New Beginnings

Many people know about the comprehensive services that the Verde Valley Sanctuary offers: shelter, legal, outreach, education etc… but few understand what our dedicated staff tackles on a daily basis. On the frontlines at V.V.S. are our victim advocates. These incredible individuals have a very challenging job and often do not get the kudos and recognition they deserve. It is the Victim Advocate's job to help each client identify what their immediate needs are and develop a plan to get them back on their feet again.

Every client's situation and obstacles are unique. It is very scary and intimidating for survivors of abuse to leave their abusive situation and begin a new life. Our Victim Advocates provide guidance and support and help clients navigate the complexities of starting over.

Some of the obstacles our clients face when fleeing an abusive relationship is arriving at the shelter without any form of identification. Before they can begin to look for a job or a place to live, they need to reestablish their identity and obtain new copies of their birth certificate, driver's license and social security card. Obtaining any one of these documents without the other is extremely difficult and the Victim Advocates are experienced in helping clients navigate these types of challenges.

Other clients are so traumatized by their experience that they will not be able to resume independent life for some time. The Victim Advocates then work to identify the best place for them to find long-term support whether it be with friends or family and then assists with making arrangements for transition.

We often celebrate the courage and bravery of the survivors we support, but it is also important to take a moment to celebrate the incredible individuals who help clients transition from victim to survivor.

Our Victim Advocates also work with clients on an outpatient basis. They help them develop a safety plan while they remain with their abuser while, simultaneously creating an exit strategy.

A TIME TO TALK

Free weekly support groups open to all survivors of violence and their families. Come and talk about your common experiences and learn coping skills for dealing with trauma.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
6 pm	6 pm	6 pm	12 noon
Legal Office	Twice Nice	Outreach Office	Outreach Office
1770 E. Villa St.	1225 SR 89A	601 W. Mingus Ave	601 W. Mingus Ave
Cottonwood	Sedona	Cottonwood	Cottonwood
Spanish Speaking			

No Registration Necessary

Violence Based Support Group

Local Teens Learn About Healthy Choices at "Teen Maze"

Our team in the education and prevention department just completed the 18th year of "Teen Maze". Teen Maze is a fun, interactive way for Junior High Students from across the Verde Valley to learn essential information that will help them to make healthy choices throughout their lives.

The Verde Valley Sanctuary is the organizer of the event and partners with the Yavapai County Community Health Center, Matforce, Cottonwood Police Department, Arizona Rangers, Yavapai Anti-Tobacco Coalition, Sedona Police Department and MRC, all of whom host interactive booths within the maze.

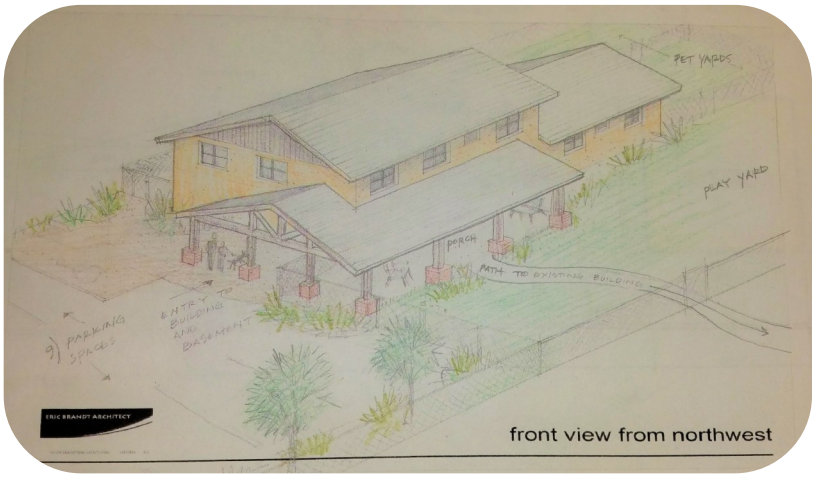
As the students go through the maze, they spend about 8 minutes in each booth playing games and learning through hands-on interaction. Some of the booths included seat belt demonstrations with crash test dummies, drunk driving and substance abuse simulations, nutrition , tobacco. and prescription drug education, healthy relationships and safe dating practices, important info on sexually transmitted diseases, and cyber safety exercises. Many kids today are misinformed about issues critical to their health and well-being. The Teen Maze is a fun, structured event that empowers the teens in our community to make healthy and informed choices.

This annual five-day interactive event is sponsored by the Department of Human Services. To get involved or sponsor next year's event, please contact Jennie Underwood at (928) 634-2511.

Shelter Renovation and Pet Friendly Update

We are pleased to share with you an update on our Shelter Renovation Plans and the Pet Friendly Shelter. Originally, our plan was to purchase an adjacent property for our Pet Friendly Shelter. Unfortunately, the owner cannot sell at this time and we have worked with architect Eric Brandt to develop an alternative plan on our existing property. We will replace our current modular shelter which has outlived its useful life, with a new multi-purpose three story shelter. The new building will not only accommodate our clients with pets it will also have quiet rooms for victims of sexual assault and complicated medical issues.

Fundraising is continuing for the Pet Friendly Shelter and construction of the building will begin when the Phase I, in the main shelter, is complete. (To learn more about the Shelter Renovations visit the news section of our website, www.VerdeValleySanctuary.org)



In the meantime, we are welcoming clients with pets into our emergency pet shelter, which accommodates three pets and we have one room in the modular that has been retrofitted for clients with pets. We are also pleased to announce that we are partnering with the local non-profit and animal sanctuary, Pets Return Home, to care for and rehabilitate our client's pets while they are with us.

If you would like to learn more about our Capital Improvement Projects please contact Jennifer Perry, Development Director at (928) 282-2755.

Cover Story: Judy's Journey Continued

Executive Director explains it, "We can't change what happened to our clients, but with work and support we can help clients better-manage how it affects them."

While our D.V. Advocates are remarkably good with complex case-management and crisis counseling, in order to get our clients back on their feet in a timely fashion, we must rely on the support of other agencies, community partners, and private donors. Spectrum Health Care provided Judy with weekly therapy and eventually medication. Because it took several months for the Arizona AHCCCS insurance to kick in, the initial doctors' visits were covered by the V.V.S. victim emergency "Step Ahead Fund". The "Step Ahead Fund" is crisis money donated by generous supporters to help clients with medical costs, transportation, legal issues, child welfare and professional development. Judy's kids were also outfitted with clothing and supplies then enrolled in school. In addition, Judy received help from our Legal Advocacy Department and the DV Victim Advocate from the Cottonwood Police Department.

Most of our clients are encouraged to work as soon as possible. Within one month, Judy was working full-time in a retail store. Because we don't charge for any of our services, she was able to begin saving money. Within two months she completed her G.E.D. and is now planning to take nursing classes at Yavapai College.

Finding affordable housing is an ever-increasing challenge. Most single, working mothers can barely afford marginal living expenses and childcare. Three months after arriving at our shelter Judy found a tiny subsidized apartment in Camp Verde. She received help with the first and last rent months' rent from V.V.S. and Catholic Charities. Volunteers from our two thrift stores delivered her household furniture and our Outreach case-managers continue to offer her support. We are proud to share that Judy and her family are now a self-sufficient part of our community. Although Judy's creativity, intelligence, and strong spirit put her on the fast track, her case is not that unusual. Of our 28 shelter beds, many of our clients struggle with similar extremes. *[This story is true in events and spirit but identifying markers have been mixed up to protect the client.]*

How To Get Involved

Help Change A Life - Make a Tax Deductible Donation - www.VerdeValleySanctuary.org

Shop and Donate At Our Thrift Stores

Twice Nice Sedona & Twice Nice Thriftique Cottonwood

The Thrift Stores generate 20% of our operating budget and serve as resource centers for our clients.

For Hours and Locations
visit our Website
www.VerdeValleySanctury.org

Share Your Time & Expertise

Call (928) 634-6255 to Learn More