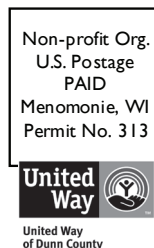




The Bridge to Hope
P.O. Box 700
Menomonie, WI 54751



Return service requested

Advocacy services for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and human trafficking

Providing a bridge to hope that creates a safer, more just and compassionate society

Cedarbrook Church Rocks!

Thanks to their very generous congregation for collecting donations and presenting us with a surprise check of **\$4,211!**



Melanie

has been our office baby since we moved into our new building in September. She has been a great addition to our team and has made our daily tasks a little less stressful. The staff members enjoy taking a break to get in some cuddle time. She attended our staff meeting on Monday and everyone thought her green chair was adorable which made her more official in our meeting.

"Whenever I have a particularly hard day, I know I can count on Melanie to make me smile"

-Angie
Sexual Assault Victim Advocate

Our Wish List

- Twin size sheets and comforters
- Pillows
- Bath Towels
- Laundry soap
- Toilet paper
- Dish soap
- Non-perishable food items
- Frozen meat
- Paper towels
- Dish washer soap
- Premade meals
- Seasonings for cooking
- Printer paper



Newsletter Winter 2018

Editor: Brittany Olson

Our heartfelt thanks

to Menomonie Police Chief Eric Atkinson for testifying before the Menomonie City Council on behalf of The Bridge to Hope. He spoke eloquently about the need for our services in Menomonie and that funding The Bridge to Hope was a good use of tax dollars. The City Council voted to include \$10,000 for The Bridge in the 2018 city budget.



"I support The Bridge to Hope because of the exceptional services they provide to all survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual assault. Without their dedicated services survivors would continue to feel isolated, marginalized and more likely to be re-victimized by their abusers. Additionally, The Bridge to Hope not only helps survivors, but they assist the survivors' children and pets as well. Often times the consideration of children and pets are why survivors don't leave their abusers. This is why I am proud The Bridge to Hope has space dedicated for children and pets. Menomonie and Dunn County are very fortunate to have such a fine organization serving the community."

Eric M. Atkinson
Police Chief- Menomonie Police Department

Many thanks to the Council Members too!

3M has played a big role in our success this past year.

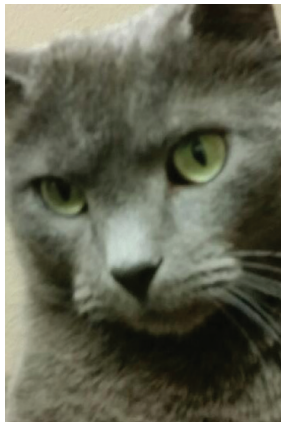
They generously donated \$40,000 to our capital campaign and contributed in many other ways as well. The local plant sent a volunteer crew that worked hard to prepare our new building before we moved in. Tom Harris, the General Manager of the Menomonie plant, has served admirably on our board as vice-chairman for the past year. His wife, Jody, has been very generous in many ways, including working very hard to clean and organizing our new building. She also has baked innumerable plates of incredible chocolate cookies. Many thanks to Tom and Jody as well as the 3M Corporation!

Save the Dates

April 18
6:00 - 9:00
Guest Server Night at Barrel Room

September 16
12:00-3:00
Over the Bridge Restaurant Tour

November
9:30-3:30
Biennial Quilt Tour



How did I find myself living at The Bridge to Hope Shelter? My answer is by the grace of God and a little bit of luck. I fled in fear. I had been watching the love of my life and his sons taken over by a drug that I now know is truly of epidemic proportions in this country: meth. My heart was broken. With much remorse, I had to give up on them for my own safety. In retrospect I sure didn't plan well. In fact I didn't plan at all. I just grabbed by cat Judson, got in my car, and left. I lived in that vehicle from August to December with my cat. I stayed in campgrounds, truck stops, sometimes a friend or relative, but I couldn't find a safe place for me and my Judson.

Someone gave me the number of The Bridge to Hope. I nervously called and Ashlee told me that the Bridge had a bedroom and they would accept pets and that we would be welcome. Oh my goodness...my eyes started leaking and I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I was afraid of running out of gas before I arrived. Ashlee just told me to drive as far as I could and call if I didn't make it; help would come. In faith I drove and believe this as I tell you...my vehicle sputtered into the parking lot of The Bridge and abruptly stopped. We were home. Thank you God! I am so grateful to The Bridge and all of its amazing employees. Without them, their guidance, genuine care, their concern, and their provision of our basic needs as humans: food, shelter, clothing...I truly cannot bear to think of what or where Judson and I would be right now. You can love someone so much. But if they don't want to be saved, nothing will save them, not even love. It has been one of the hardest things I have ever had to do....to grieve the loss of a person who is still alive.
(B...a shelter resident)

Volunteer Opportunities

at The Bridge to Hope

Pantry

Organizing pantry and/or help with our delivery every 1st Wednesday of the month.

Yard Care

Seasonal lawn care including: Planting annuals or perennials in the spring, caring for beds throughout the summer, and shoveling walkways and steps in winter.

Meals

Prepare and deliver healthy finger food for Thursday Support Group (delivered by 4:30).

Office Help

Stuff and seal newsletters or donor letters.

Child Care Assistance

Childcare for children in shelter so moms can complete some tasks and go to appointments.

Interested?

Contact Brittany

brittanyo@thebridgetohope.org

(Volunteer opportunities that involve client contact will require a signed confidentiality form, and in some cases a background check)



Jamie Pepin County Advocate

I started this position in September after completing a 3 month internship within the organization. I recently graduated from UW-Stout with a Bachelors in Human Development and Family Studies. My goal is to work with people in troubled situations and to help the community. I'm originally from Elk Mound, WI and now currently live in Menomonie. Pepin County is a new community for me but I am working to connect with the people of Pepin and provide my services to those in need.

Karen

Our Amazing Accountant!

We are so fortunate that Karen has been our accountant since 2009. She comes every week with a smiling face to handle all our financial accounts and payroll. We compensate her for her time, but she donates many hours as well. She has worked long-distance from such far-flung places as Costa Rica, Mexico and Europe to make sure we stay on top of everything. She says, "I enjoy working here because I feel like I'm helping victims indirectly; I could never be on the front line. And I've seen all the positive changes that have happened with this agency over the years." The reports and financials that we have to prepare for grants have probably quadrupled in the past 8 years, but Karen has perserved through it all. Amazingly enough, she says, "I like the grants, how they're like a big jigsaw puzzle and I have to fit all the pieces together." That's an attitude many of us do not share; thank heavens for mathematical minds like Karen who have patience with the rest of us!



Predicting Who Will Kill Their Partner

Punching, pushing, kicking and biting an intimate partner can sometimes be deadly, however the strongest indicator of a future homicide is an assailant's act of strangulation. Their willingness and their action of putting their hands around their partner's neck and squeezing until they lose consciousness is a serious red flag. In the aftermath of a long line of mass shootings and killings in this country, there is a growing realization that those horrifying events were often preceded by acts of domestic abuse, but more specifically strangulation. The list of mass shooters who had previously choked their partners include Omar Matten, the Orlando Pulse Nightclub shooter; Devin Patrick Kelley, the Texas church shooter; and many others.

According to a 2002 report, 43% of domestic homicide victims had been strangled by their perpetrator within the last twelve months of their lives. "Domestic violence that includes strangulation, and a record of doing so, is a strong marker of homicidal danger," states Gael Strack from the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention.

Only 8 to 11 lbs. of pressure on the throat area for approximately 10 seconds can cause loss of consciousness. Within 30 seconds, permanent brain damage may occur. Symptoms of strangulation may include slurred speech, dizziness, hoarseness and trouble swallowing. Bruises and symptoms may not appear until several days after the assault. Victims may have an inability to remember the details of the event due to loss of consciousness at the time. They may not even remember the strangling. If emergency rooms release strangulation victims without tests such as CT scans or MRI's, death can occur several days later due to gradual swelling to the throat tissue. Repeated incidents of strangulation over time can have devastating effects on victims.

Due to a growing recognition of this problem, strangulation is now a felony in 45 states, including Wisconsin. Unfortunately, the charges are often plea-bargained down to a misdemeanor and the perpetrator is free to continue to prey on partners. But even worse, he may go on to commit a mass shooting. In studies of people who have shot police officers, there is also a strong correlation of previous acts of strangulation. These are often very dangerous people.

Training is essential for law enforcement, medical personnel, and others to recognize the signs of strangulation, and to provide adequate services to victims, as well as arrest and prosecute perpetrators accordingly. In view of this, The Bridge to Hope is facilitating a training on April 16th on strangulation. It will be open to law enforcement, and other agencies in nearby counties. The trainer will be Crystal Jensen, Violence Against Women Resource Prosecutor for the Northwest Region. For further information, please contact The Bridge to Hope at 715-235-9074 or manager@thebridgetohope.org.

~Naomi Cummings,
Executive Director

The Bridge to Hope Board of Directors

Deb Meyer: Chair - Retired Educator
Tom Harris: Vice Chair - Menomonie 3M Plant Manager
Howard Lee: Treasurer - Retired from UW Stout
Julie Furst-Bowe: Secretary - Vice President CVTC
Mary Orfield: Retired from UW Stout
Becky Kneer: Parish Nurse at Our Saviors Lutheran Church
Gary Johnson: Aurora Community Counseling
Mary (Mame) Gale: Personal Assets Manager
Ruth Potter: Retired Registered Nurse

Stock Donations Gladly Accepted!

Have you considered donating stock? We now have a brokerage account at Westconsin Credit Union to facilitate such donations. We have had some very generous donors make stock donations to our capital campaign and we are very grateful to them! To donate stock please call Naomi Cummings for further information, or contact Tim Carlson, Financial Advisor at Westconsin Credit Union.

Thank you!