

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
County of Luna

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Media Release

Luna County has a clear message to domestic violence survivors – You Are Not Alone. To mark October as national Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Luna County Healing House has begun the #YouAreNotAlone campaign. It began with Healing House staff and volunteers from Wells Fargo tying ribbons around trees along Gold Avenue.

The campaign revolves around raising awareness that domestic violence is not a private matter, but rather a community matter. The campaign aims to raise awareness that domestic violence is not a private matter, but rather a community matter because it impacts everyone, not just the person being abused. The campaign shows community support for survivors and people currently suffering with family violence, who often feel isolated and are blamed for their situation.

The ribbons are a part of the larger effort throughout October with events and social media messages to inform the community that supporting survivors starts with them, because they will come to friends, family and co-workers first before they seek help anywhere else and being supportive of them is vital to their decision to seek services or safety.

“We thought the purple ribbons would show survivors of domestic violence that the community cares about them and is united to help them,” Irene Trejo, Healing House director, explained. “I am seeing a positive shift in the attitudes of community members. We’re moving past victim-blaming and into support and care for survivors that can actually help.”

The Healing House and the Friends of the Healing House support board have a month of activities to show survivors that the community cares about their wellbeing and that there are resources to get help.

The first activity is participating in the Southwestern New Mexico State Fair parade, which will begin at 10 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 9. The route will begin at by the Deming Police Department on Spruce Street, then head west before turning south on Diamond Street. The route will then head south to Poplar Street and travel to the parking area behind the Luna County Courthouse. Healing House staff and volunteers will join McGruff the Crime Dog on the float in the parade.

The next event is a yard sale sponsored by the Friends of the Healing House, slated for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 17 at the Healing House, 522 W. Pine St. Various donated items will be for sale, with proceeds going to the Healing House.

The last events will have fun and solemn remembrance of domestic violence survivors and those who have fallen to violence. The third annual “Fun in the Park” will begin at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 28 at Luna County Courthouse Park. It is a free event and will feature food, music, prizes, face painting, cup cake walk, a jumping balloon, information booths and a special appearance by McGruff and his friends in law enforcement. Following the fun, a candlelight vigil will be held at 8 p.m.

“I attended the candlelight vigil last year and had very mixed emotions. Hearing the survivors tell their stories was powerful and saddening, but seeing the tremendous turnout and support from the community for them was uplifting,” Charles “Tink” Jackson, Luna County manager, said. “I strongly encourage the community to attend all of the events, but the candlelight vigil in particular. It is a moving experience.”

Trejo points to the popularity of Healing House events as a sign the community is coming around to more positive attitudes about supporting domestic violence survivors. Instead of telling a survivor what they must do, she explained, it is much more helpful and healing to support a survivor’s decisions and provide them with knowledge of resources that can help them get out of a harmful situation.

“The overall attitude of the community is, ‘I have a part in this,’” she said. “Community members are our first responders. How you respond has a huge impact on the survivor’s decision to seek safety.”

To honor members of the community who help support survivors, the Healing House held a Hope Awards ceremony on Thursday, Oct. 1 at the Luna County Train Depot. Hope Awards were given to the following individuals and organizations: Lt. Joy Mullins, Sgt. Luis Malina, Cassandra Brulotte, Lt. Matt Rudiger, Sonia Gonzales, Gretchen Bolsins, Charles “Tink” Jackson, New Mexico Community Foundation and the Community Health Foundation.

PHOTO CAPTION

Winners of the Healing House’s Hope Award are shown with program director Irene Trejo. They are, from left: Gretchen Bolsins, Don Hill, Lynn Manning, Lt. Matt Rudiger, Sgt. Luis Malina, Lt. Joy Mullins, Cassandra Brulotte, Sonia Gonzales, Trejo and Charles “Tink” Jackson.

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