

# HOPE Works!

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 2

~ A publication of Steps to HOPE ~

SPRING 2013

## IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Rapists Walk Free</i>	2
<i>Rachel Reflects</i>	2
<i>Denim Day</i>	3
<i>Clients Face Housing Challenges</i>	3
<i>STH at PCMS Career Day</i>	4
<i>DAIP News</i>	4
<i>Local Merchant Lends Helping Hand</i>	4
<i>Hunter Pace for HOPE</i>	5
<i>Groundhog Day Benefit</i>	5
<i>Paying It Forward</i>	6
<i>Second Chance Thrift Store</i>	6
<i>STH Volunteers Recognized</i>	7

## CALENDAR

- STH Law Enforcement Training—April 11-12
- Polk County Children's Fair—April 13
- Volunteer Appreciation Week—April 21-27
- Denim Day—April 24
- Orthodox Easter—May 5
- Hunter Pace—May 5
- Mother's Day—May 12
- Memorial Day—May 27
- Father's Day—June 16

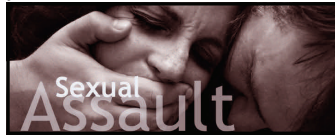


Ward Street P.O. Box 518  
Columbus, NC 28722  
828-894-2340  
www.stepstohope.org

## SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH: THE UGLY TRUTH

### How often does sexual assault occur?

**Every 2 minutes, someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted.** According to the U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey, there are an average of **207,754 victims** (age 12 or older) of rape and sexual assault each year.



By dividing 31,536,000—or the number of seconds in a non-leap year—by the 207,754—or the number of rape and sexual assault victims a year—we see that in the U.S. alone, there is 1 sexual assault every 152 seconds, or about 1 assault every 2 minutes.

### Who are the victims?

**1 out of every 6 American women** has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime.

**17.7 million American women** have been victims of attempted or completed rape.

**9 out of every 10 rape victims** were female in 2003.

### CHILDREN

15% of sexual assault and rape victims are **under age 12.**

- 29% are age 12-17;
- 44% are under age 18;
- 80% are under age 30.
- 12-34 are the highest risk years.
- Girls ages 16-19 are 4 times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault.
- 7% of girls in grades 5-8 and 12% of girls in grades 9-12 said they had been sexually abused.
- 3% of boys grades 5-8 and 5% of boys in grades 9-12 said they had been sexually abused.

### The offenders

### THE RAPIST ISN'T A MASKED STRANGER

- Approximately 2/3 of rapes were committed by someone known to the victim;
- 73% of sexual assaults were perpetrated by a non-stranger;
- 38% of rapists are a friend or acquaintance;
- 28% are an intimate;
- 7% are a relative.

### Affects of rape

Victims of sexual assault are:

- 3 times more likely to suffer from depression;
- 6 times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder;
- 13 times more likely to abuse alcohol;
- 26 times more likely to abuse drugs;
- 4 times more likely to contemplate suicide.

If you or someone you know is the victim of rape or sexual assault, there is confidential help available 24 hours a day. Call Steps to HOPE or your local law enforcement.

([www.rainn.org/statistics](http://www.rainn.org/statistics))



15% of sexual assault and rape victims are under age 12.

There is hope. Call 894-2340.

**STEPS TO HOPE  
QUARTERLY  
STATISTICS**

For period December '12 —  
February '13

Steps to HOPE provided support to 502 callers on crisis line calls.

Safe shelter was provided to 9 women and 8 children for a total of 315 shelter nights.

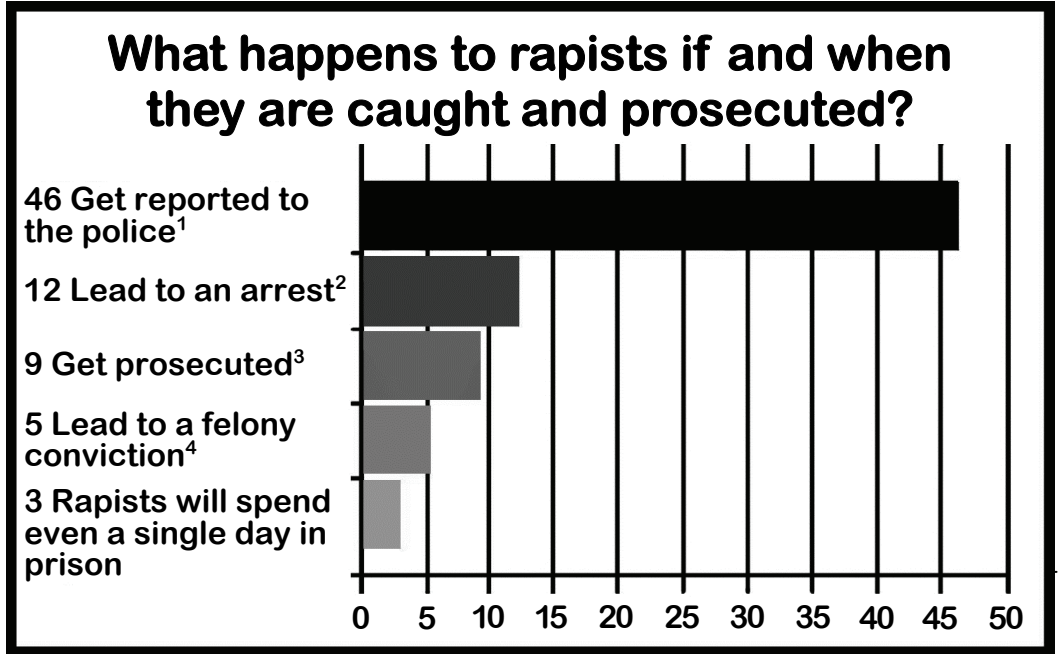
On average, 19 adults and 8 children attended weekly educational groups at our facility.

260 children attended educational or skill building programs instructed by Steps to HOPE outside our facility.

Court accompaniment was given by advocates 10 times.

1723.5 volunteer hours were worked in the agency and thrift store.

**THE PLAIN TRUTH: OUT OF EVERY 100 RAPES,  
97 RAPISTS WILL WALK FREE**



1. Justice Department, *National Crime Victimization Survey: 2006-2010*
2. FBI, *Uniform Crime Reports: 2006-2010*
3. National Center for Policy Analysis, *Crime and Punishment in America, 1999*
4. Department of Justice, *Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties: average of 2002-2006*

Sexual assault is one of the most under-reported crimes. Of all rapes and/or sexual assaults, 54% are not reported to the police, according to a statistical average of the past 5

years. Those rapists, of course, never spend a day in prison. Factoring in unreported rapes, only about 3% of rapists ever serve a day in jail.

If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, there is help. Call Steps to HOPE at 894-2340 or the Polk County Sheriff's Office at 894-3001.

**RACHEL REFLECTS**

There seem to be more and more special observances each month—so many, in fact, that it's often hard to keep track. This month boasts a dozen special observances which we cannot afford to overlook.

Sexual Assault Awareness and Child Abuse Awareness are only two of the causes that are recognized in April. My wish is that everyone would pay equal attention to these issues throughout

the year—not just in April.

Sexual abuse and child abuse are such horrific crimes that we should never let our guard down or silence our voices simply because the month ended. We can't afford to sit back and say, "I made a poster", or "I participated in a fundraiser" in support of victims. Victims live with the abuse every day, every month, for the rest of their lives.

April is also Volunteer

Appreciation Month. We have volunteers who work diligently as client advocates, accompanying victims to court, answering the crisis line, and working at our Second Chance Thrift Store, which provides funding for our victims services. What a blessing to have a large staff of volunteers who do so simply because they care, for we could not offer services to victims without their help. How very special their gift of time is.

~ Rachel

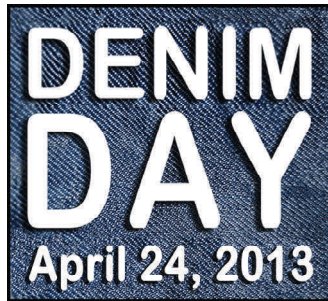
## DENIM DAY – APRIL 24

*Italy, 1990s*

An 18-year old girl's driving instructor takes her to an isolated road on her first lesson, pulls her out of the car, wrestles her out of one leg of her jeans and forcefully rapes her. The perpetrator gets arrested, is prosecuted, convicted of rape and sentenced to jail.

The perpetrator appeals the sentence, and the case makes its way all the way to the Italian Supreme Court. Within a matter of days the case against the driving instructor is overturned, dismissed, and the perpetrator released. According to the Chief Judge, "because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans it was no longer rape but consensual sex."

Enraged by the verdict, women in the Italian Parliament launched into immediate action and protested by wearing jeans to work. This call to action motivated and emboldened the California Senate and Assembly to do the same, which in turn spread to Patricia Giggans, Executive Director of Peace Over Violence, and in April, 1999, Denim Day in LA was born and has continued every year since throughout the US.



Make a social statement with your fashion statement!



Join the Steps to HOPE Staff and...  
**WEAR JEANS WITH A PURPOSE on April 24!**

### Steps to HOPE Staff

- Rachel Ramsey, Executive Director
- Ruth Richardson, Family Outreach Educator
- Cherie Wright, Victim Services Director/Case Manager
- Connie Orr, Office Manager
- Debra Backus, Publicity/Public Relations
- Drenda Brennan, Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
- Stacey Moore, Shelter Staff
- Cherie Rogers, Shelter Staff
- Carmen Shipman, Shelter Staff
- Cindy Thacker, Shelter Staff

### Second Chance Thrift Store

- Edith Lance, Manager
- Randy Conklin, Retail Assistant/Driver
- Joyce Neely, Cashier/Retail Assistant
- Alan Pritchard, Warehouse Assistant
- Douglas Wofford, Warehouse Assistant

### Board of Directors 2012-2013

- Paul Sutherland, President
- Pat Sutphin, V. President
- Heidi Mendez, Secretary
- Larry Wassong, Treasurer
- Elaine Belk
- Michael Bowers
- Denise Byers
- Dr. Thomas Dashiell, Jr.
- Helen Gilbert
- Donald Hill
- William Jones
- Lynn Kirkwood
- Sally McPherson
- David Satterfield

## CLIENTS FACE HOUSING CHALLENGES

In the past, when clients enter the shelter for protection, their stay may extend as long as 45-60 days—a period heretofore considered temporary shelter for domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

Today, a client with a baby or toddler may discover that she is 19th on a list for single-bedroom housing at a Columbus Section 8 apartment complex. After residing in Section 8 housing for a year, a voucher becomes availa-

ble for use obtaining subsidized housing elsewhere—but in the meantime, this apartment complex is the “only show in town.”

**What this means is that our resident clients must wait as long as 6 months to secure subsidized housing which, with the high unemployment rate, is all they can afford.**

Not only are we now required to house clients for three times longer than previously we must fill the client assistance void

created by the reduction or elimination of certain government programs such as TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families).

*And then, the SEQUESTER!*

“State VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) assistance grants...are also expected to be cut between 4.5%-5.8% as a result of the sequester, depending on some DOJ (Department of Justice) decisions that have not yet been made.”  
*(Monika Johnson Hostler, North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault.)*

### DATABASE UPDATE

We are in the process of updating our database to include email addresses, which will enable us to send out late-breaking news and notification of special events.

Please help us by sending an email with your name and mailing address to [pr@stepstohope.org](mailto:pr@stepstohope.org).

Thank you!

## CAREER DAY AT POLK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ruth Richardson, Family Outreach Educator, attended Polk County Middle School's Career Day on February 21st, answering students' questions about working for a non-profit, public service agency.

Students are familiar with Ruth through her programs in the school addressing such issues as alcohol and drug abuse, bullying, Internet and cell phone safety.



Ruth Richardson represents STH at PCMS's Career Day.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAM: MANY ELECT TO RETURN TO GROUP

Steps to HOPE has been home to Polk County's Domestic Abuse Intervention Program, facilitated by Family Outreach Educator Ruth Richardson, for 12 years. Since its inception, DAIP, intended to reduce the incidence of domestic violence by focusing on prevention, evolved from a 12-week program to a 26-week program. This once all male program is now open to both men and women because we accept that partner

aggression is often two-way, and men and women initiate domestic violence at similar rates.

While primarily a court- or DSS-ordered program, nearly 100 men and women have become members of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Program of their own accord, some completing the 26-week program more than once. Of those required to complete the program, some 15-20

have elected to return at one point or another, for reinforcement and encouragement. The success of DAIP can be attributed to its supportive environment—conducive to the sharing of appropriate experiences, encouraging feedback, participation and education—and of course, to the program's facilitator, Ruth Richardson.

For more information about DAIP, call Steps to HOPE, 894-2340.

### A Women's Support Group at Steps to HOPE



### WOMEN TO WOMEN

1st & 3rd Tuesday  
5:30 - 6:30 PM

A women's group for all women in a relaxed setting to encourage conversation, sharing and support.

## Local Merchant Lends Helping Hand

Thank you,  
Eric Mack, Owner  
**PURRRFECT BARK**  
Pet Supplies

DUNNS COMMONS  
155 WEST MILLS ST, UNIT 109  
COLUMBUS, NC 28722 ~ 828-894-2441



## 10TH ANNUAL HUNTER PACE FOR HOPE BENEFIT AT GREENSPACE & GOLDEN HILLS

Historic Greenspace and Golden Hills of Fairview have generously volunteered use of their land for the 10th Annual Hunter Pace for HOPE—a benefit for Polk County’s domestic violence and sexual assault prevention and treatment center, Steps to HOPE. The sanctioned event will be held on May 5th (rain date is May 12th) on 1300+ acres of the former Del Guercio thoroughbred horse training facility. Greenspace and Golden Hills have a combined 20+ miles of exclusive trails by a lake, streams, open land and hardwood forests. More than 125 riders and horses are expected to turn out for a unique day of hunter pace competition.

Volunteers will begin registering competitors and directing trailer parking at 8:00 AM. The official

start of the pace begins at 9:00 AM and last competitors may start the ride until 2:00 PM. Lunch—available until 2:00—is included in the entry fee and carrots are provided for all horses. Riders of all capabilities and disciplines are encouraged to compete.

The hunter pace is designed to replicate the

original Foxhunt by having riders compete over terrain in a safe and disciplined manner. Safety rules are always enforced and riders must wear hard hats and have negative Coggins for their mounts. For more information, call Steps to HOPE, or visit the official Western Carolina Hunter Pace website at [www.WCHPace.org](http://www.WCHPace.org).



**May 2012 Hunter Pace for HOPE.**  
Front row, from L: Patty Otto, sponsor; STH Board members Larry Wassong, Elaine Belk and Pat Sutphin. Executive Director Rachel Ramsey; STH Board members Helen Gilbert and Lynn Kirkwood.

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## RICHARD C. BAKER HOSTS 1ST ANNUAL STH BENEFIT GROUNDHOG DAY PARTY

Punxsutawney Phil may have seen his shadow on April 2nd—but few attending Richard C. Baker’s Groundhog Day Party at his Saluda studio seemed to care.

Wine, hors d’oeuvres, desserts—and beautiful paintings—were enjoyed by the dozens who braved the spitting snow to attend the first annual benefit party at the artist’s studio.



*Pictured from L: John Austin, Kerry Austin, and Richard Baker at the Richard C. Baker Studio in Saluda.*

### DONATE CELL PHONES

and help

#### Steps to HOPE!

*We collect unwanted cell phones for emergency use by our clients.*



#### Supporting Steps to HOPE is easy!

*You'll find a collection basket in our lobby for convenient drop-off of your old phones!*

## PAYING IT FORWARD: CRAFTSMAN SERVICES TEAM VOLUNTEERS THEIR TIME

Master craftsman Buddy Poore, Project Supervisor Ron Gosnell, and Owner Ed Lettelier finished up a porch project at the shelter earlier last month.

area in our protected yard for use by mothers and their children. Just when it looked as if it might never happen, once more, our prayers were answered.

*Thank you,  
Craftsman Services, for  
your generosity!*

Ed Lettelier, Craftsman Services owner, called Executive Director Rachel Ramsey and asked if there were any special little project at Steps that needed doing. Ed and his team were looking for a way of helping the community.

For some time, we've been in need of a covered



### Save a tree!

If you would rather receive an electronic version of this newsletter, send an email to [pr@stepstohope.org](mailto:pr@stepstohope.org). Please include your name and mailing address. Alternately, you may read our newsletter online at [www.stepstohope.org/newsletterarchives.html](http://www.stepstohope.org/newsletterarchives.html),



## Downsizing? Redecorating?



## Second Chance Thrift Store

Help Steps to HOPE break the cycle of domestic violence and sexual assault.

# CALL 894-2373

for a pick-up of your tax-deductible treasures!



## Thank you!



SECONDS CHANCES

*We all believe in...*

## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONTH

### STH'S PRICELESS VOLUNTEERS...

April reminds us that we need to take time to acknowledge our 60 regular volunteers, without whom we would have to close our doors, especially in these trying economic times.

### ...AT THE THRIFT STORE

The following is a list of our dedicated Thrift Store volunteers, arranged by number of years worked in support of Steps to HOPE.

#### OVER 15+ YEARS

Carolyn Daily, 15; Jean Jeanson, 17; Sally McPherson, 18; Bernadine Monroe, 18; Betsy Schenkel, 16; Mary Wofford, 17.

#### 10-14 YEARS

Myrtle Heitman, 13; Charles Leister, 14; Karen Molnar, 11; Mary Swift, 10; Bonnie Zelinskie, 11.

#### 5-9 YEARS

Gavyn Bannister, 5; Judith Becker, 5; Lee Berry, 5; Carolyn Cobb, 9; Don Cobb, 7; Lynette Conrad,

7; MarJean Dahlgren, 5; Ruby Drew, 5; Ingeborg Ege, 6; Kathleen Foerster, 5; Lynn Geier, 6; Gertrud Godlewski, 7; Tish Jaccard, 8; Dianne McCraw, 7; Joann Newman, 8; Bob Quattlebaum, 7; Liz Quattlebaum, 7; Harry Walker, 9.

#### LESS THAN 5 YEARS

Lester Backus, 1; Sylvia Bella, 1; Alice Evans, 3 mos.; Mary Ann Ferrin, 3 mos.; Roberta Kellerman, 4; Ken Kitchen, 1; Brenda Laughter, 1; Olivia Phillips, 4 mos.; Kristina Provines, 4; Gail Stockdale, 4; Rosemary Taylor, 5 mos.; Dyanne Ward, 4; Linwood Williams, 3.

### ...AS COURT ADVOCATES

Bea Rolla, 10; Jeannette Schmeikel, 7; and Pat Huwyler, 1 accompany clients to court for orders of protection as Court Advocates.

### ...HELPING WITH CHILD CARE

Hannah Newman, a student

at The Virtual College, has been helping with child care during our Thursday Parenting Education classes for the past 5 months. The children just love her!

### ...AND ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our 14 Board members (whose names appear on page 3) not only volunteer at monthly meetings, but also help organize and run our fundraisers, and have full oversight of all agency programs, facilities and finances. Board member Bill Jones even volunteers weekly as receptionist!

Where would we be without our 60 outstanding volunteers?? Forty-nine percent of our operating income is generated by Second Chance Thrift Store sales—where 70% of our volunteers are! It's clear that we would struggle to keep our doors open without their support.

Many thanks to all of our committed volunteers!

### Add your name to the SECOND CHANCE THRIFT STORE EMAIL LIST

to receive notifications of Thrift Store sales and special events! Send an email to [pr@stepstohope.org](mailto:pr@stepstohope.org) and put "Thrift Store email sign-up" in the subject line.

To learn about volunteer opportunities, please call Connie Orr at 894-2340.

## SHELTER AND OFFICE WISH LIST

### SHELTER

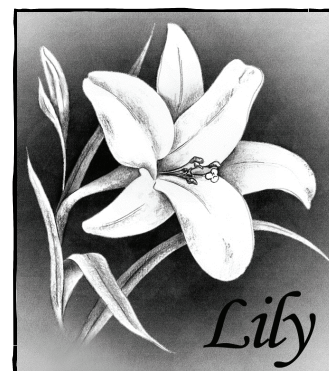
- Drinks: water, juice boxes, soft drinks;
- Kid-friendly, easy-fix & microwavable meals: Spaghetti O's, Ravioli, Hamburger and Tuna Helper, pizza kits, pasta or rice dinners;
- Individual fruit, Jell-O, applesauce and pudding cups;
- Tampons;

- Pump hand soaps;
- Laundry detergent;
- Dishwashing detergent;
- Swiffer mop and duster mopping solution refills;
- Clorox;
- Paper towels;
- Energy-efficient light bulbs—40-60 watt;
- 33 gallon trash bags;
- Prepaid phone or grocery cards;

- Picnic table for play area;
- 6 kitchen table chairs.

For updates to this list, call Drenda at 894-2340.

**Thank you for your continued support!**



Lily — "Hope"  
*The Language of Flowers*  
Kate Greenway, 1846-1901

*Drawing by Debra Backus*



**Sexual Assault**  
Awareness Month

**Steps to HOPE, Inc.**  
Ward Street · P.O. Box 518  
Columbus, NC 28722  
828-894-2340  
www.stepstohope.org  
E-mail: steps@stepstohope.org

## STEPS TO HOPE: SERVICES PROVIDED

- **24-Hour Hotline** – for crisis intervention and assistance.
- **Confidentiality** – all services are guaranteed confidential.
- **Shelter** – emergency safe shelter for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault.
- **Counseling** – individual counseling with trained crisis counselors and referral to a LPC.
- **Referrals** – hospital (staff will transport and assist); court (free legal aid may be provided through Pisgah Legal Services).
- **Court Advocacy** – trained volunteers accompany and support clients through the judicial process.
- **Case Management vs. Crisis Intervention** – holistic support of clients.
- **Youth Groups** – character and skills building groups for adolescent girls and boys.
- **Support Groups and Education Programs** facilitated by trained professionals: women victims; male and female abuser; parenting education; and support group meetings, including Women to Women—a support group for *all* women.
- **Family Mediation** facilitated by a trained professional.
- **Community Education** – through schools, organizations and civic groups.
- **Public Awareness** – presentations and workshops.
- **Resource Library** – videos, pamphlets and brochures are available.
- **Advocacy Center** – forensic interviewing of children.
- **Rape Prevention/Victim Services**
- **Second Chance Thrift Store** – outreach to victims; gently used, quality merchandise.



Visit us at  
www.stepstohope.org

**HOPE Works!**

*A Quarterly Newsletter of  
Steps to HOPE, Inc.  
Debra Backus, Editor*

Steps to HOPE, Inc. is Polk County's Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention and Treatment Center. For all victims of domestic violence or sexual assault in this community, there is:

**H**elp  
**O**rders  
**P**rotection  
**E**ncouragement

*"The mission of Steps to HOPE is to create a community free from the violence of domestic and sexual abuse through education, advocacy and victim assistance."*

**BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Columbus, NC  
Permit No. 25**