



VOICES

FALL 2020

THE HEALING PRACTICE OF GRATITUDE

Although the challenges have felt insurmountable at times, Safe Haven has learned to adapt and to cope in much the same way survivors of domestic violence are forced to do. This deepened perspective has made us even more effective advocates for the women and children we serve. It has also magnified our gratitude for all of the many individuals, businesses, organizations and foundations that have stepped up to support our agency through all the uncertainty and challenges of 2020.

We are eternally grateful for every last bit of it! Thank you all!



SHELTER

New COVID funding support and adaptations to our programs, like the plexiglass barrier above, have been instrumental in keeping our shelter open and safe. In addition, the impact of contributions from donors like you make it possible for us to truly support survivors in the individual ways they need, including:

- Direct advocacy for the 566 women and children who stayed with us so far in 2020
- Life-saving safety plans for each of those survivors and their children
- 24/7 support for the 1,416 callers who used our crisis line in 2020
- Basic necessities such as food, clothing, hygiene products, and warm bedding



RESOURCE CENTER

The impact of giving on our downtown drop-in center means we are able to increase capacity and support survivors when they need us most. In 2020, with your help we have:

- Served 1,331 unduplicated clients at the Resource Center
- Followed up with 687 survivors after an arrest or police call
- Assisted with 144 Orders for Protection and 44 Harassment Restraining Orders
- Provided 468 survivors with self-sufficiency and self-care resources including obtaining an education, employment, stable housing, and housing assistance

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Early in my career at Safe Haven, one of our shelter guests left me a note on a piece of scratch paper on the day she decided to move on. It said, "Thanks for everything! You all do good things here." Her message was so simple and so genuine. In the midst of her own unravelling, she had the selfless compassion to express gratitude. There have not been many times that have inspired me in quite the same way before or since. She inspired me to take every opportunity, no matter how or when it's presented, to say "thanks." I kept her note and every one that has come after it as constant reminders to stay true to that commitment.

So let me now say THANK YOU- from the bottom of my heart- for both the financial support you share with Safe Haven (our first-ever online **Week of Giving** was a huge success—thanks to you we raised close to \$80,000!), and also for the spirit in which you give. You care deeply for those we serve. We know that you are as committed to their success as those of us who come to work at Safe Haven every day. We hope you have a joyous season despite the ongoing challenges, and we thank you for helping to make our holiday season brighter too.

With immense gratitude,



Brittany Robb
brittany@safehavenshelter.org

Support is available 24/7



(218) 728-6481

THE GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

For many, the holiday season is filled with gatherings and celebrations and joy in different forms. We look forward to certain traditions as well as embracing new ones. COVID restrictions will make it more difficult for most of us to host or gather in the way we used to take for granted. But because many of us have resources and support at our disposal, we will find a way to celebrate the season even if it looks different than the years that have come before.



For survivors of domestic violence, the holiday season often brings increased anxiety and stress. There is a greater sense of isolation and loneliness when you know others are celebrating but you feel trapped. There is a sense of guilt over not being able to provide a special gift or meal for your child. There is sadness over what you wish was true versus where your reality is. All of this is part of the experience of living in an abusive situation, and there is no special holiday tradition that can make it disappear.

However, every December Safe Haven receives an outpouring of holiday donations that lift our spirits and help make our clients' season a little brighter. These gifts come in many forms, including stockings filled with goodies, holiday toys and crafts for kids and moms, handmade blankets and quilts, collection drives from various churches and businesses, and personal shoppers who go out and get items off our Holiday Wish List and more. Many of the individuals and groups that give to Safe Haven over the holidays have been doing so for years, and have become a highly anticipated tradition for our clients and staff. We are grateful for each and every one of these gifts—and you know who you are!

THE GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

There is one particular tradition that goes an extra-long way in bringing joy and a sense of community for the women and children we serve. For close to 20 years, local members of the 11th District Bar Association New Lawyers Group have come together to host a holiday party for our residents and staff, as well as collect donations for gifts and other holiday cheer. The group goes through annual member transitions every year, and yet always maintains a strong level of support and engagement, showing a real institutional commitment to Safe Haven and our work. Because of a critical need for confidentiality at our shelter, engaging volunteers and connecting with the community in a direct way is often a little more challenging for us. Part of what makes this annual holiday tradition so impactful is the coming together of survivors and staff and members of the 11th District Bar Association to enjoy what the season can bring. The party, often hosted off-site, consists of a variety of festivities including coach bus transportation to and from for our residents, a holiday movie, games, food and beverages, gift bags for the women, and even a chance for the children staying with us to visit with Santa himself! The authentic connections and long-standing relationship of the two organizations embody the spirit of togetherness and giving that we all so desperately long for, especially in this time of increased isolation.



Previous holiday staff photo

While the ongoing pandemic has changed how this annual tradition can be hosted in 2020, we know we can count on our friends at the 11th District Bar Association to come together and provide that extra support and holiday cheer we so appreciate.

From all of us at Safe Haven, our hearts are filled with gratitude for ALL the special holiday donations and support we receive. THANK YOU for all you do for us!

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

John Lawler



“The more good you can do, the better off you are.” Pretty simple advice from local potter and long-time supporter, John Lawler. For at least the past 8 years, John has delivered holiday cheer to Safe Haven in the form of beautiful mugs and other handmade treasures; gifts for both staff and survivors. And not only does he give of his time and talents, on more than one occasion John has told customers about his mug donation and that has led to strangers taking out their checkbooks and making a gift to Safe Haven on the spot. John says that some of his motivation is an attempt to counter negativity in the world, and also that his mother was always a supporter of this cause and of those less fortunate. He believes that “giving comes back ten-fold” and has already started on some child-sized mugs after learning about the number of kids we have in shelter at this time of year.

Safe Haven is thankful beyond words for ALL the many holiday donations we receive year after year from both new and past supporters. We highlight John’s contributions because they are special to us, and in part as a way to elevate and say “THANK YOU” to ALL our amazing holiday donors-- we appreciate you!

To remove yourself from our list or to receive an electronic copy, email us at outreach@safehavenshelter.org

Support is available 24/7
 (218) 728-6481

Safe Haven Shelter's 2020 Holiday Wish List

Gifts donated to Safe Haven from our 'Holiday Wish List' should be new and unwrapped.

****More than any other year, due to the pandemic, donations of gift cards are greatly appreciated and encouraged in order to limit in-person contact****

- Ideas for Children & Teens**
- Gift cards to Target, Walmart, Old Navy, TJ Maxx, Dick's, Barnes & Noble, Michaels, Best Buy, etc.
 - Dolls of all ethnicities
 - Lego sets
 - Science, art & DIY kits
 - Journals, stationary & gel pens
 - Super hero figures or sets
 - Small electronics
 - Learning toys of all ages

- Ideas for Adults**
- Gift cards to Target, Walmart, Dollar Tree, Walgreens, Super One, Holiday, Kwik Trip, Minit Mart, etc.
 - Gift certificates to hair & nail salons
 - Self-care spa items
 - Fuzzy socks & slippers
 - Purses, scarves & accessories
 - Towels, sheet sets & blankets
 - M-3 XL bath robes & sleepwear

- Ideas for Families**
- Gift cards to Subway, McDonald's, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Domino's, Bulldog Pizza, Burger King, Caribou Coffee, Starbucks, etc.
 - Board games for all ages, playing cards & dice games
 - Small electronics, DVD players & movies
 - Prepaid phone cards & phones
 - Holiday candy & treats

Out of respect for the privacy of survivors residing at Safe Haven, our shelter location is confidential, but we'll be glad to pick up your holiday donation! Please call for more information, or to schedule your pick up time!

Shelter Manager Molly Smith 218-730-2461

Thank you for keeping our families in your heart!

