



Charles Auer/Freeman Staff

Cutouts representing Waukesha County residents who were killed in domestic violence incidents stand outside the Waukesha Police Department.

Driving efforts toward preventing domestic violence

The Women's Center commemorates victims with cutouts

By Sarah Pryor
Freeman Staff

WAUKESHA — Drivers passing The Women's Center or the Waukesha Police Department this month will notice some new decorations on the lawn: wooden purple cutouts that represent each person killed by domestic violence in Waukesha County.

"One in three women in our community will be abused in her lifetime," said The Women's Center Executive Director Angela Mancuso.

In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month each October, The Women's Center's lawn at 505 N. East Ave. is covered with the purple cutouts to commemorate the 22 Waukesha County domestic violence-related homicide victims from 2000 to 2013. This year, some of the cutouts found a new home on the front lawn of the Waukesha Police Department, 1901 Delafield St.

"The Waukesha Police Department plays a critical role in partnering with us

and identifying the needs of families exposed to violence," Mancuso said. "What's great about putting (the cutouts) up is that it does signify police support for The Women's Center. They recognize the partnership and want to honor the lives lost."

According to data provided by Waukesha Police Lt. Tom Wagner, the Police Department has filed 299 domestic violence-related incident reports so far this year. In October alone, 31 calls were thought to be domestic violence-related, 14 of which resulted in incident reports being filed.

Domestic violence was a big national topic following incidents involving NFL players a month ago, but the conversation has since died down.

"The mixed feeling is that as a domestic violence agency we'd like to see the conversation take place all the time, not just during Domestic Violence Awareness Month or after a sensationalized incident involving a celebrity or athlete," Mancuso said. "The more you talk about it, the

more efforts can be driven toward prevention."

Mancuso said it's important for victims, potential victims and their families to get help.

"That's what The Women's Center is here for: We have a 24-hour hotline where people can talk to someone confidentially," Mancuso said. "I'm always so worried about people who experience violence in the home who don't know they can get help."

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, call 262-542-3828.

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