Blackburn Center Against Domestic & Sexual Violence is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides 24-hour hotline services, counseling, advocacy and support groups to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, incest, child sexual abuse, and sexual harassment; emergency shelter is available to survivors of domestic violence and their dependent children. Blackburn Center also provides community education, school student awareness programs, and in-service professional trainings throughout Westmoreland County.

Contact Information
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Toll Free Hotline 1-888-832-2272
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A copy of official registration and financial information for Blackburn Center may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

United Way of Westmoreland County
Donor Designation 382

TIED OF HOLIDAY SHOPPING?

As the holiday season approaches, please keep our needs list in mind if you’re looking for an alternative to traditional gift-giving. Making a gift of items from the needs list, or donating the financial resources to purchase those items, is a wonderful way to honor someone special in your life. We’ll be happy to send a card acknowledging your gift.

NEEDS LIST

Blackburn Center needs items throughout the year to sustain the shelter program, and to support activities with children and in our support groups for victims. In addition, some of these items are made available to women and children who are establishing their own homes and need support with basic household items. We ask that all items be new.

Please put the items in bold at the top of your shopping list.

FOOD
Nonperishable food
Coffee: regular and decaf
Coffee creamer
Drink boxes
Packaged snacks for lunches
Spices and condiments
Sugar-free treats, drinks

CHILDREN’S ITEMS
Toddler car seats
Stroller
Fabric markers
Baby wipes
Disposable diapers (large sizes)
Diaper rash cream
Outlet plugs

GENERAL HOUSEHOLD
Cleaning products
Laundry detergent
Fabric softer sheets
Mops, brooms
Paper towels, toilet paper
Light bulbs (60 watt and three-way)
Liquid hand soap refills

TOILETRIES
Hotel-size items no longer needed
Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)
Hair brushes, hair dryers, curling irons
Hair care and skin care products for African-Americans
Shaving cream
Denture adhesive
Benadryl
Calamine lotion

Cough syrup: adults and children
Lip balm for chapped lips
Saline solution
Deodorant
Disposable razors

CLOTHING
Sweat suits (women’s M, L, XL)
Nightgowns: women’s one-size-fits-all
Pajamas: women’s one-size-fits-most children’s all sizes (lighter weight for warmer weather)
Underwear (women’s, sizes 5-8)
White t-shirts: all sizes, for art projects

KITCHEN
Aluminum foil
Dish drainers, dishpans
Flatware
Food storage containers
Kitchen garbage bags
Paper products: paper towels, napkins
Paper towel holders
Plastic pitchers
Plastic wrap
Pots, pans and skillets
Hand-held can opener
Small appliances: coffee maker, can opener, knife sharpener, microwave oven
Kitchen towel sets with dishcloths
Wastebaskets
Zip-lock bags, gallon-size

BATHROOM
Bath mats
First aid and healthcare supplies
Heating pads
Plungers

Shower curtains and rings
Soap dispensers
Toilet brushes
Bath towels, hand towels
Wash cloths
Waste baskets with step-on lids

BEDROOM
Alarm clocks
Bed pillows
Bed-in-a-bag sets
Blankets: twin and full
Crib sheets
Sheet sets: twin and full
Mattress covers (vinyl, zippered): twin and full
Mattress pads: twin and full
Pillow cases (white): twin and full
Plastic hangers

MISCELLANEOUS
Phone cards
Gift cards: small denominations
Wal-Mart, Target, grocery stores
Gasoline cards ($15, $20)
Spiral-bound notebooks
Batteries: AA and 9-volt
Bottled water
Bucket
Bus passes
Calendars
Extension cords
Flashlights and batteries
Outdoor garbage bags
Seasonal decorations
Telephones
Tool kits
Umbrellas

PLEASE NOTE: Deliver donations to Blackburn Center’s administrative offices on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 4:00 pm. Please call if you cannot bring your donation during regular business hours. We can make other arrangements if necessary.
In the September 2006 edition of this newsletter, Blackburn Center introduced you to a position statement on social change adopted by our Board of Directors. Through this position statement, Blackburn Center took a significant step to re-focus on the fundamental work that is needed to end domestic and sexual violence: challenging the beliefs and actions that perpetuate this violence. We developed strategies to support this work, including the education pieces and “calls to action” that have appeared in this newsletter since last fall.

We have taken time to develop a clear perspective about conditions that need to change. In this newsletter, we introduce a theme line that describes the actions we are encouraging all of you to take as you join us in our mission to end domestic and sexual violence.

**CHALLENGE THE POWER. DEMAND CHANGE.**

Domestic and sexual violence are rooted in an imbalance of power between men and women. Our society accepts violence against women as normal and inevitable. For Blackburn Center to fulfill its mission to end domestic and sexual violence, we must challenge this imbalance of power that supports the oppression of women.

Blackburn Center has been guided through the development of strategies to support our social change project by a group of individuals from the staff and community. Blackburn Center staff members Ann Emmerling and Cathy Reeves were joined on this committee by the following dedicated individuals from our community who volunteered their time and skills:

- Gloria Blint, invited to share her expertise in public relations and marketing (Principal, Red House Communications)
- Len Caric, invited to share his perspective in the business community (Owner, McKnight Cylinder), his leadership of the Men Against Sexual Violence (MASV) group in Westmoreland County, and his background as Vice President of Blackburn Center’s Board of Directors
- Susan Eichenberger, Ph.D., invited to share her expertise in social transformation and the dynamics of oppression/privilege (Assistant Professor of Sociology, Seton Hill University)
- Mary Ann Gawelek, Ph.D., invited to share her expertise in the psychology of women and community psychology (Provost and Dean of the Faculty, Seton Hill University), and her perspective as a former Blackburn Center Board member
- Jayne H. Huston, invited to share her expertise in public relations and marketing (Director, E-Magnify), and her perspective as a former Blackburn Center Board member
- Nikki Kemp, invited to share her perspective as a recent college graduate, activist and feminist
- William B. Meekins, Jr., invited to share his perspective as a clergy member (Greensburg District Superintendent, Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church) and his background as a member of Blackburn Center’s Board of Directors
- Bonnie Rack-Wildner, invited to share her expertise in strategic planning and corporate and marketing communications (Chief Executive Officer, Akoya)

Truly lasting change is only going to happen as new generations of women come of age and demand equal treatment with men in every realm, and new generations of men work with them to reject the sexist attitudes and behaviors of their predecessors. This will take decades, and the outcome is hardly predetermined. But along with tens of thousands of activist women and men who continue to fight the good fight, I believe that it is possible to achieve something much closer to gender equality, and a dramatic reduction in the level of men’s violence against women, both here and around the world. And there is a lot at stake. If sexism and violence against women do not subside considerably in the twenty-first century, it will not just be bad news for women. It will also say something truly ugly and tragic about the future of our species.

Jackson Katz is internationally recognized for his groundbreaking work on gender violence prevention with men and boys, particularly in the sports culture and the military. He is cofounder of the multiracial, mixed-gender Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program at Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society. Katz also directs the first worldwide gender violence prevention program in the history of the United States Marine Corps. His award-winning educational video Tough Guise, his featured appearances in the films Wrestling with Manhood and Spin the Bottle, and his nationwide lectures have brought his insights into masculinity and gender violence to millions of college and high school students.

The Men Against Sexual Violence (MASV) Taskforce of Westmoreland County, a project of Blackburn Center, welcomed Jackson Katz to Westmoreland County on Thursday, September 6, 2007 for two events: a workshop specifically for men and a multi-media lecture that was open to the public. These events were held on the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg campus.

The men’s workshop – Men’s Leadership in Gender Violence Prevention – combined lecture, written and oral exercises, and interactive discussion to engage the men present in a discussion about ending violence against women. Katz shared a series of strategies for inspiring men to work in collaboration with women to change the social norms that tolerate or condone some men’s sexist, homophobic and abusive behaviors. This workshop supports outreach efforts by MASV with men in leadership roles across the county, including coaches, teachers and business owners.

In his multimedia lecture – The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help – Katz explored some of the ways that male culture contributes to sexual and domestic violence and suggested strategies to enlist men in the fight against all forms of men’s violence toward women. Topics included male peer culture in schools and colleges, men’s use of pornography and prostitution, sexism in the sports culture and the U.S. military, and the many intersections between racism, sexism and homophobia in all-male groups. The lecture inspired some of the 90 community members in attendance to request more programs in this topic, and will serve as a springboard for upcoming MASV activities.

Future projects for the MASV Taskforce include winter pledge signing events at local college campuses and the initiation of a Men’s Group at Seton Hill University. The Men’s Group is a six to eight week education and training program for male students to help prevent men’s violence against women.

For more information about upcoming events or to schedule a speaker or trainer for your organization, please contact Dottie Craig by phone at 724-837-9540, ext. 114 or via e-mail at DottieC@blackburncenter.org.
For a recap of Una Sera del Dare, we can’t say it better than the Tribune Review did in their review of the event on Monday, October 1, 2007:

“Una Sera del Dare, or A Night of Giving, was the perfect name for an event where guests got so much in return for their generosity. Blackburn Center called upon the talents of the chefs at Rizzo’s Malabar Inn, and they weren’t disappointed. A huge selection of hors d’oeuvres and desserts was the centerpiece to an evening that wowed the crowd of more than 200.”

Many thanks to our generous sponsors, guests, and outstanding event committee who helped us exceed our goal of $25,000. These funds will make a significant difference in Blackburn Center’s ability to meet the needs of victims of domestic or sexual violence.

We’ll see you at next year’s event!

Una Sera del Dare Committee:
David Volpe, Chair
Linda Austin
Michele Bononi
Mary Catherine Motchar
Michael Philopena
George Shaner
Becky Thorne

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