



Remember My Story. Remember My Name.

Hello! I'm excited to be sending you our first Newsletter in quite a long time - and to keep you connected and updated with everything that's going on with the Silent Witness Initiative and it's important work to end domestic violence homicides.

The goal of our new Newsletter is to reconnect all of the amazing Silent Witness projects and exhibits around the globe, and to learn more about the work you're doing in your own community - and then to share it with others. We have some important information that will be updated on our website (www.silentwitness.net) in the near future and we want to be certain that you stay in the loop. If you would like to sign up to receive future Newsletters (about one per month) please click on the Join our Mailing List tab to the left and we'll add your email address to our database for future mailings.

First, let me catch you up on what's been going on with the Silent Witness Board of Directors. In 2006, the current Board of Directors was created after the resignation of Executive Director (ED), Janet Hagberg. As one of the founders of Silent Witness (SW) in 1990, Janet maintained the organization as the ED until her retirement in 2006. Janet's energy and passion for SW throughout her years of involvement was the driving force that kept SW vitally committed to the original mission to end domestic violence (DV) murders through awareness and education. The connections made by Janet throughout the United States and Canada were valuable relationships that brought people and their passions together.

In her preparation to leave the Board, Janet selected a new Board of Directors to carry the mission and vision forward and find a strategy that would keep SW involved in healing domestic violence in our society.

From 2006 - 2012, the Board struggled to find its momentum and regain connections with the SW projects in the USA, Canada and abroad, but we continued to reach out as best we could and get information to people as needed - but it's been a struggle. After a long discussion in the summer of 2013, it was decided that we would make the commitment to begin a campaign to reignite the Silent Witness Initiative and it's important work.

In October 2013 the Board voted to hire Annie Sarver-Bodoh, a consultant with Advancement Advisors in St. Paul, MN to assist the Board in developing a strategy for creating the next phase of the SW organization. Annie came to us with twenty-seven years of experience working in the non-profit sector in St. Paul. Annie's leadership skills, experience and motivation have added renewed strength to the Board.

The synergy and goodwill of each Board member contributes to an integrated approach to improving the media presence through the website, newsletter, blog, facebook and linkedin, in addition to obtaining current DV statistics, updating the contact information for the network of SW projects and in the future locating other successful organizations that are doing DV education and prevention work.

We are pleased to showcase the new Newsletter, website and media presence this month. A grateful thank you to Annie Sarver-Bodoh, Jennifer Stanley, Co-Chair, Board members Nancy Rafi, Fay Choban, Renee Falcum-Youngberg, Leslie Monaghan, and Karen Hartz, Treasurer.

We hope that you'll stay connected to learn about the good work that Silent Witness is doing all over the

planet...and if you currently host a SW exhibit and would like to share your stories and photos with others, or if you have a program that's working to end domestic violence in your community that you think we should know about, please email your info Nancy Rafi by clicking [HERE](#).

Yours in Peace,

Jacquie Skog, Co-Chair, Silent Witness Initiative Board of Directors

New Website and Social Media Sites

Announcing our new website design!

We have been hard at work updating our social media presence and redesigning our website (which will go live on May 1st).

Check it out at <http://silentwitness.net>

Find us on [Facebook](#)

Join the conversation at [Linked IN](#)

Read our [Blog](#)

[Email us](#)



What's Happening on Campus?



Silent Witnesses on local college and university campuses

The Silent Witness Initiative College Program is a great way for students to increase awareness of the devastating issues that surround relationship violence.

This project is especially powerful and educational for college populations because it:

- *Opens the door to difficult conversations about the cycle of violence.*
- *Provides an opportunity to review and discuss campus and local resources.*
- *Creates forums to engage students in conversations about healthy relationships.*
- *Honors the lives of people from your local community who were tragically lost at the hands of someone they once loved and trusted.*
- *Complements Title IX and VAWA campus programming efforts.*

Creating a Silent Witness exhibit on your college campus can be the catalyst for safer campuses and increased education. If you have an exhibit on your campus, we would love to hear about the amazing ways you are utilizing your project. Please share your stories and photos with us!

If you are interested in creating an exhibit, please contact Jen Stanley at (jstanley@rwu.edu) or at 401-254-3161.



News From the States

Rhode Island

We've been busy with Silent Witness exhibits around our little state. We have 9 separate exhibits that display our Witnesses at local businesses, colleges and universities. Each year we host our annual March to End the Silence on October 18th in Providence which brings all 104 Silent Witnesses together for a candlelight vigil and march through the streets, led by bagpipers.



We're extremely grateful for the oversight of all projects by the RI Crisis Assistance Center (RICAC) and continue our good works around our state. What's happening in YOUR state?



International Silent Witness Update

What's been happening in Canada?

The New Brunswick Silent Witness Project (www.silentwitness.ca), inspired by Maine's project (Susan Fuller and Wayland Linscott) was officially launched in November 2002. We have created a Guide to encourage and support other provinces in establishing their own projects, and to date, we are thrilled that almost all Canadian provinces have Silent Witness exhibits. The project also inspired the creation of the ballet "Ghosts of Violence" (www.ghostsofviolence.ca), which held its world premiere in 2011. The New Brunswick Witnesses travel to a different community each month to take part in education and awareness events in the province.

Sheila's Shawls and Paul's Scarves

The healing power of a shawl or scarf for those left behind



Our Silent Witness project in memory of the late Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone and his wife Sheila has really swept the country. The Sheila's Shawls and Paul's Scarves projects began in 2002, and as of February 2014 we have provided shawls and scarves to over 6000 families and friends of our Silent Witness figures.

Thirty or so women across the nation continue to knit prayers of safety and comfort into scarves and shawls for family members and victims of domestic violence.

Sheila's Shawls and Paul's Scarves has been operating under The Silent Witness Initiative since 2002. We knit because there is a need. We knit because we care. Everyone needs to know that they have love and support. The group started from the grassroots of the Silent Witness Initiative in Minnesota and then spread across the nation, the continent, and the world. We have shawls that are made or sent to Canada, Malaysia, Europe, and Africa. We started locally, moved to the Yahoo groups and when Ravelry started it's knitting groups we moved there. You can also find us on Facebook. We work in small groups or individually, connecting wirelessly around the world and sharing pictures and mailing our bundles of comfort to other states and shelters throughout the world.

As of March 2014 we have donated 6074 items. If you are having an event, know of a family who has lost a loved one to domestic violence or a victim and need shawls or scarves, feel free to contact Renee Youngberg at falkum23@gmail.com. If you want or need identifying tags please join Ravelry.com - it is free and you get nothing emailed to you. Search Sheila's Shawls under groups and you should find everything you need.



How Can You Help?

There are many ways to get involved.

The Silent Witness National Initiative is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Unlike many other non-profits, we have no paid staff members, no office building (we're completely virtual!) and are run by generous volunteers around the globe- all working towards a common goal - to end domestic violence homicides.

Any funds that we receive are used directly to reach our goal, and pay for things like printed materials, website design and maintenance, to offset costs for meetings and to support Silent Witness projects and programs around the globe - no funds are used for paid staff, we are completely volunteer run!

If you'd like to help us reach our goal by making a donation, please click [HERE](#).

Thank you.



We hope you enjoyed this first edition of our SW Newsletter - there will be more to come. Be sure to sign up to continue receiving them each month to learn what's happening in your state/country.

And if you have something you'd like to add to next month's Newsletter, be sure to send us an email. We'll see you next month!

Sincerely,

Nancy Rafi

Silent Witness National Initiative