

COLUMBIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

85 Industrial Tract
Hudson, NY 12534
24 Hr Dispatch (518)828-3344
Fax (518)828-9088



Press Release

SHERIFF DAVID W. HARRISON JR.

Contact: Lieutenant James E. Andrews
(518) 828-3344

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 19, 2012

October is 2012 National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Columbia County, NY - October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (NDVAM), a time for public safety agencies, victim assistance organizations and community leaders to work together to provide greater awareness about domestic violence and support for its victims.

Columbia County Sheriff David Harrison, Jr. wants domestic violence victims to be aware that they have access to vital information through two victim notification programs offered by the Sheriff's Office through the New York State Sheriffs' Association Institute, Inc.

The first is the Family Court Order of Protection Notification Project SAVIN-NY (Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification), which allows domestic violence victims to register at www.savin-ny.org to be notified by phone, text message, or e-mail when a Family Court Order of Protection has been served. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The second is the New York Sheriffs' Victim Hotline - VINE® (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), which allows crime victims to register at www.vinelink.com or toll-free at 1-888-VINE-4-NY to be notified by phone or e-mail in the event of an offender's release from jail or prison. This service is also available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Sheriff Harrison explains that according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, about one-third of female murder victims were killed by an intimate partner. "Victims of domestic violence often need the information that can be obtained quickly by phone or on the internet that the VINE and SAVIN-NY programs provide. Both programs provide registered crime victims with critical information when they need it most. This allows domestic violence victims a greater degree of control in their lives and while making informed decisions about their safety."

Sheriff Harrison would also like to acknowledge and thank those people who are many times the first points of contact for victims of domestic violence when calling for help and support, in Columbia County;

~ MORE ~

the Sheriff's Office Communications Officers provide victims with information, support and a calm voice to talk to until Deputy Sheriff's or local police officers arrive at their location, County 911 Emergency Dispatchers receive emergency calls from domestic violence victims, many times when the violence is still in progress as they send police patrols, all of the Deputy Sheriff's, Troopers and Police Officers who respond to reports of domestic violence, one of the most dangerous calls that a police officer responds to. Also, Columbia Greene Domestic Violence, an organization who provides a 24 hour hotline, emergency confidential shelter for domestic violence victims, assistance with orders of protection, training for police officers when requested, assistance filing family court petitions and referral to legal and other victim services agencies.

Sheriff Harrison said, "We want victims of Domestic Violence to know that there is hope, there is support and they have options. They do not have to stay in a relationship which involves violence."

INFORMATION:

Domestic Violence Awareness Month was created in 1987 to promote increased rights and services for domestic violence victims; to educate the public about the crisis of domestic violence and the prevalence of this epidemic in all of our lives; and to encourage involvement and support from our community for domestic violence victims and those who serve them.

The New York State Sheriffs' Association Institute, Inc. was established in 1979. The mission of the New York State Sheriffs' Association Institute, Inc. is to assist New York's Sheriffs in the advancement of education in the criminal justice community, to prevent juvenile delinquency, to develop lawful and productive citizens, and to support victims of crime and their families.

The New York Sheriffs' Victim Hotline - VINE® is a program of the New York State Sheriffs' Association Institute, Inc., which provides crime victims and the general public free information in both English and Spanish 24 hours a day about offenders incarcerated in the New York City Department of Correction, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DCCS) and 60 county correctional facilities. The nation's first automated service for victim notification, **VINE** currently serves crime victims in more than 2,400 communities in 47 states, including most of the nation's largest metropolitan areas.

SAVIN-NY is a program of the New York State Sheriff's Association Institute, Inc., in partnership with: the NYS Association of Chiefs, NYS Police, NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, NYS Unified Courts, NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, NYS Office of Victim Services, Westchester County Department of Women, and NYS Coalition against Domestic Violence. This project was supported by Grant No. 2011-VN-CX-0012 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.