



*In memory of and with appreciation to The Rev. Erwin H. Schweigardt, PhD for his dedicated service as a member of the Board of Directors of Safe Inc. ~ July 16, 2018 ~*

**A newsletter for staff, friends and supporters of Safe Inc.**

**Summer 2018**

## Golfing for Kids' Sake with Safe

Safe Inc.'s annual Charity Golf Tournament will be held August 17, at the Schenectady Municipal Golf Course. The tournament will be a scramble format, with registration opening at 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. shotgun start.

Lead sponsor of this year's event, EXIT Realty Corp. of North America, will match the first \$5,000 raised at the tournament.

Owner John Bevilacqua and lead realtor Michael Thiesen "are looking forward to helping Safe raise funds." Also lending support is Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County whose Executive Director Madelyn Thorne says, "We must all join together to keep our youth and community safe."

Adding to the day's fun will be a silent auction and 50/50 raffle drawing, putting contest and hole-in-one contest.

An awards luncheon will immediately follow the tournament. Prizes for the day are generously donated from Schenectady Muni's Pro Shop.

For tournament information or to register, call Safe Inc. at 518.374-0166.



*Schenectady Muni's Golf Pro Matt Daley and summer intern Jason Cyr will help make Safe's tourney a memorable event!*



*At the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's regional conference in NYC, Safe Inc. was cited for its invaluable service to women and youth. Presenting an award to Safe's Executive Director Cassie Walker and Board President Barbara Dworkin during Garden Party festivities were AKA Sorority members from the left, Connie Duverney, Nettie Crossman, Thelma Hill and Meredith Henderson, North Atlantic Regional Director.*

## Garden Party... A Great Success!

Safe Inc.'s Spring Garden Party, held May 17 at the Mohawk Golf Club, drew an enthusiastic crowd of friends, supporters and staff. Seventy-plus guests were welcomed into the artfully decorated banquet room by members of Safe's Board of Directors.

Serving as emcee, Tamani Wooley of Spectrum News, kept the party upbeat and focused on Safe Inc.'s efforts on behalf of at-risk youth with her sense of humor, warmth and storytelling skills.

Musical entertainment by pianist Azzaam Hameed along with a sumptuous buffet dinner, fabulous assortment of raffle prizes and exciting wine pull were among the evening's highlights.

Special recognition was given to Schenectady Community Ministries (also known as Schenectady Inner City Ministries) for its 50 years of service to the community and founding role in Safe Inc. and to Debbie Maxwell, Immediate Past President of the Safe Inc. Board of Directors. Also recognized was the staff of Safe Inc. for their dedication and support.

*More Garden Party photos, see page 4*

***Worried about that long drive and ending up in the rough?***

***Don't be! Schenectady Muni's Golf Pro will be at the tee box to drive your ball for a small donation to the day's event.***



## Face to Face with Young Survivors

Marcus Stanford knows Safe Inc. from the inside out. Unsure of what career path to follow after college, he took a job as a shelter worker at Safe House where more than 200 homeless and runaway youth, ages 16 through 20, are housed each year.

He quickly transitioned to street outreach providing food, toiletries and much needed information to young, potentially at-risk individuals about housing, medical care, employment and life skills training.

Now into his ninth year with Safe Inc., Marcus serves as Aftercare Case Manager with an average caseload of 25 to 30 clients, ages 12 through 16. He wears many hats and covers a lot of territory in his role as advisor, advocate and navigator in the complex environs of court rooms, school districts and social service agencies. He also provides fun learning experiences from rock climbing and visiting college campuses to helping his clients understand there's life after high school and a world outside of Schenectady.

It's hard to paint a pretty picture when the issues often focus on poverty, abuse and mental illness but Marcus brings an energy and commitment to his work that are palpable. "I know what it feels like to be one of these kids," Marcus says. "Not every story has a happy ending but it's a powerful feeling to see their potential and know if we keep feeding and encouraging them, they will grow into good strong adults."

Marcus acknowledges the importance of a healthy work environment and credits Cassie Walker, Executive Director for "keeping the atmosphere light" and allowing him to make the job his own. He also acknowledges Shannon Keon, Safe's Executive Assistant, for being "such a great asset to the organization and for her encouragement and support of me." He also offers words of wisdom gleaned from personal experience and years of working with Safe's clients, "Our future is our kids. They are our best investment. Never give up on them."

## Words Worth Repeating From Friends of Safe

When asked why she and her husband were motivated to support Safe Inc., Kathleen Millspaugh replied, "Mark and I have lived in Schenectady County since 1984 where we have raised our four children.

One of my grandmother's favorite adages, 'charity begins at home,' has greatly influenced our family's choices for supporting local philanthropic organizations and Safe Inc. became one of our priorities more than six years ago.

I hope others will join Mark and me in support of Safe Inc. and together we can join efforts to combat the sexual exploitation of Schenectady's youth."



*Mark and Kathleen Millspaugh  
Special Event Sponsors  
and Past Honorary Chairs*



*Marcus Stanford  
Aftercare Case Manager*

### Join Safe Inc. at a Mystery Challenge Scavenger Hunt

Saturday, November 3  
6:00 P.M.

at miSci

Museum of Innovation & Science  
15 Nott Terrace Heights  
Schenectady

Hunt for answers to witty  
questions as you explore  
miSci's exhibits

Members of  
The Mop & Bucket Co.  
Improv Theatre will add  
to the festivities!

Enjoy a great evening  
of fun and food.

For tickets & information  
call 518.374.0166

## Nettie Crossman... Teacher. Advocate. Community Leader.

Nettie Crossman knows her way around Schenectady. Most of her 38 years as a teacher and librarian were spent in the city's schools. She knows the neighborhoods, the streets and countless thousands of children who were educated in her classrooms but in all those years, she didn't know about *Safe*.

"It's the strangest thing," Nettie says with a laugh. "Every time I passed by the building and saw the sign on Albany Street, I thought *Safe* was a locksmith shop and I should stop to get some keys made."

It was at a public forum, in 2009, where parents, educators and elected officials had gathered to discuss the rash of teen suicides in the Schenectady School District, that Nettie first became aware of the life-changing work being done by Safe Inc. of Schenectady.

"A woman stood up and began talking about kids, girls and boys, who'd been sexually exploited and trafficked right here in our own community and I thought, 'you've got to be kidding.'"

It's one thing to be aware that street crimes like prostitution exist, she explains. But it's something entirely different when you realize children are being preyed upon and victimized and you know nothing about it. "I was completely bowled over," she says, "and knew I had to do so something."

Nettie's first order of business was to contact Safe Inc. and ask, "Is there anything you need?"

The answer, "A microwave for the shelter's kitchen." With this seemingly small act of kindness, so began Nettie's commitment to *Safe* and everyone who finds shelter under its roof.

As a long-tenured community volunteer with such organizations as the YWCA, Begley Library at Schenectady County Community College and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Nettie now serves as Vice President of Safe Inc.'s Board of Directors.

When asked how she would describe *Safe*, she replies, "It's a rescue center, a place where the life of a young person can be changed profoundly, for the better, forever."

Through the eyes of a mother, grandmother and teacher, Nettie says it's hard to imagine the horrors of being used and abused, of living on the streets and feeling like there's no place to turn. "These youngsters should be out playing soccer and learning about STEM," she says emphatically.

On one of her visits to *Safe House*, Nettie saw a former student sweeping the sidewalk and thought he'd found a job. "No," he said in response to her inquiry, "I live here."

"I can't change the world," she continues, "but these young



*Nettie Crossman, Vice President  
Safe Inc. Board of Directors*

people all have stories that need to be told. We need to increase awareness and understanding of the sex trade and how teens and young adults are at risk for falling off the grid into a darker, seamier side of life.

We need more community partners – individuals and local businesses – willing to support the important work of Safe Inc."

"Together, we can help more young people find their way up and out of despair."

### **In Her Own Words... a Safe House Client**

*It is very scary to be homeless and not have anywhere to go until Safe House took me in. I came in with no support system and no one in my corner. I gained that once the staff welcomed me in, offered me a comforting place to stay and helped me search for a job. I can now get up every day and not worry about missing a meal or not having a place to stay and shower and get the support I need.*

*The counselors take time to work with us and help us gain the skills we need to go out on our own.*

*I am very thankful for the workers here for not giving up on teens like me who come here with nothing. Thanks to everyone here, I have two jobs and people who I can forever consider family who helped me get where I am.*





Enjoying Garden Party festivities which included recognition of Safe Inc. staff were, from the left, Francisco Guzman III, Residential Specialist; Barbara Dworkin, President; C. Amaila George, Residential Specialist; Stephanie Jennings, Street Outreach Case Manager; Kristin Pietrocarmo, Clinical Supervisor; Theodore Lyons, Street Outreach Worker; Nettie Crossman, Vice President; Ebony Banks, Senior Residential Specialist and Cassie Walker, Executive Director.

**Special thanks to Thelma Hill, Garden Party Photographer**



Cora Schroeter, Senior Constituent Representative for Congressman Paul Tonko, presents Deborah Mawell, Safe Inc.'s Immediate Past President and 2018 Honoree, with a U.S. Congressional certificate.



Support for Safe Inc. comes in many different ways, from special events such as the annual Garden Party to gifts of fresh produce from Capital Roots and nourishing meals from the Muslim Soup Kitchen Project (photo below). At left: Lynn Gort, Capital Roots volunteer delivers a tray of locally grown vegetables to Safe's Octavia Carson, Residential Specialist.



Recognizing the 50th anniversary of SICM (Schenectady Inner City Ministry) and its role in the founding of Safe was among the Garden Party's highlights. Offering congratulations to Reverend Phillip Grigsby, SICM's Executive Director, is Pamela Carter, Safe Inc. Board Member.



Performing for the listening pleasure of Garden Party guests, is renowned local musician Azzaam Hameed.