

"Make others blush, not bruise": Domestic Violence Awareness Walk spreads messages of love, respect toward others

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ALTON - As many as 85 people walked laps around the Alton Square Mall to march against domestic violence on Thursday night.

The Domestic Violence Awareness Walk was put together following the gruesome murder of an Alton woman who was mutilated and tossed into the Illinois River in Hardin by her lover. Alton Police Chief Jake Simmons said the walk is designed to remind people love should make them "blush, not bruise."

"One of the empirical rules of life is that people need each other," Simmons said in a message. "When officers grant people their humanity and are empathetic, most will return the favor. The human race is held together by the respect that we give each other."

Marquette Catholic choir students did a performance, and keynote speaker Deb Cox delivered a strong message against abuse. Alton Mayor Brant Walker also spoke on the subject before the nearly 100 attendees walked several laps around the property.

Simmons warned domestic violence education should start early in children.

"I've said this many times, when you dedicate time to our children, we need to be involved in our children's lives," he said. "We need to teach them to respect others. I teach children to be responsible adults, and boycott violent video games that show violence against women and kids playing getting points for demeaning and battering women. We all need to teach civility to our youth."

