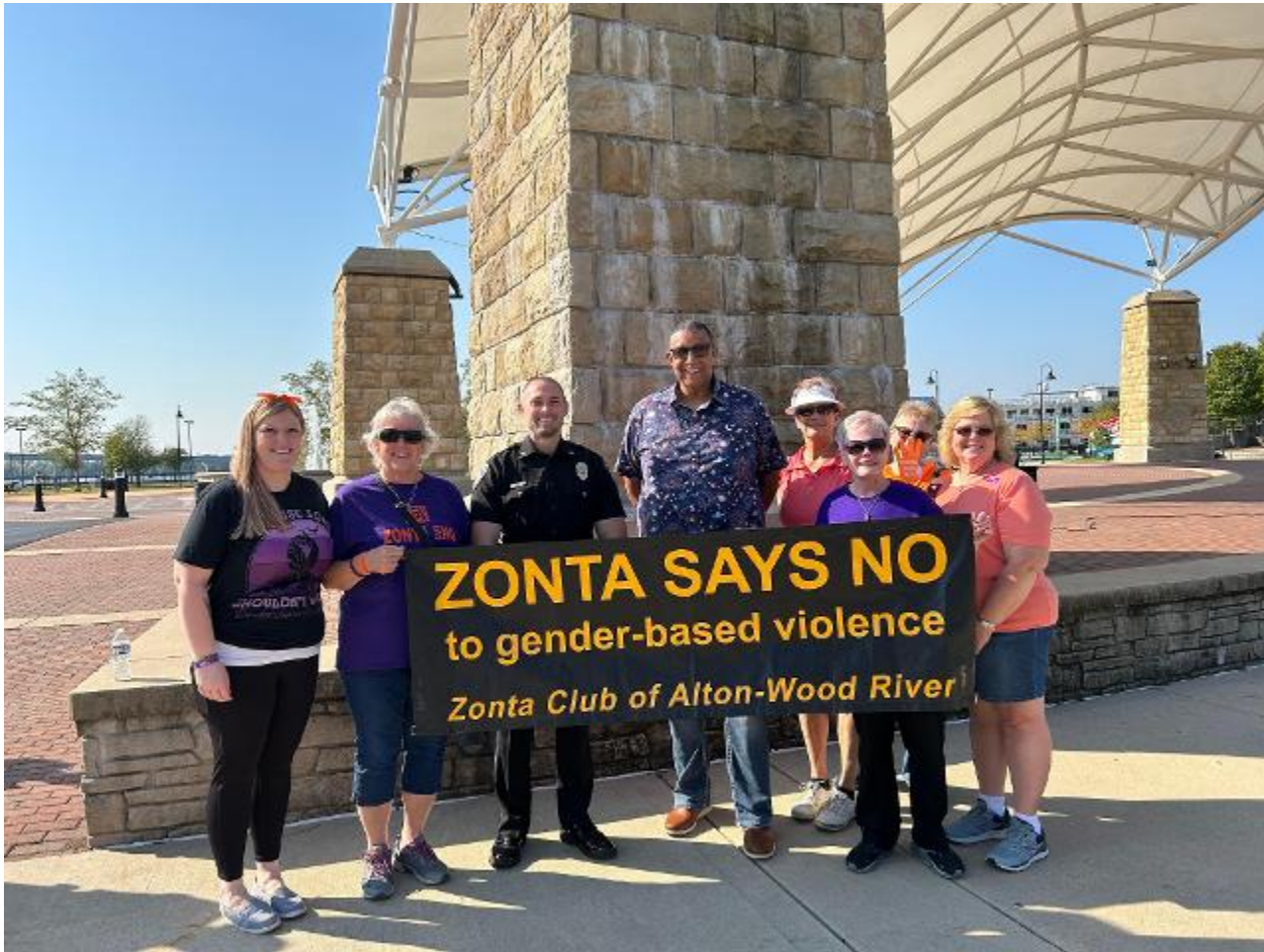


Alton Walk Against Domestic Violence Spreads Awareness, Shares Local Resources

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
October 2 2023 10:03 AM



ALTON - Several organizations and community members gathered at the Alton Amphitheater on Saturday, Sept. 30 to raise awareness about domestic violence.

The [Zonta Club of Alton-Wood River](#) partnered with the Alton Police Department, [Oasis Women's Center](#) and [Sacred Spaces of CARE](#) to organize a walk against domestic violence and share resources with the community. The organizations spoke about their services before a short walk around the Alton Amphitheater, all with the goal of raising awareness and showing support for survivors.

“One in three women and one in four men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner,” said Jean Heil, advocacy chair with the Zonta Club.

Heil thanked local organizations like Oasis Women's Center and Sacred Spaces of CARE for their work to help domestic violence survivors. Oasis has a shelter and many other services for survivors and their children. Alton Police Chief Jarrett Ford called Oasis “the unsung heroes of the community,” and Debbie Frakes, a representative with Oasis, shared some information about their resources.

“We have a lot of services that we can help you with. Orders of protection, counseling, housing, the list goes on and on,” Frakes said.

Ford noted that the Alton Police Department also aims to help survivors, and they work closely with organizations like Oasis and Sacred Spaces to connect people with resources. He said he was grateful for these nonprofits and Saturday's event to increase awareness.

“We're here to show the people that are survivors that we're here for them and that we stand with them and we're always going to be here for them and that they can lean on us,” Ford said. “If they don't feel like they have anyone else, these organizations and us they can lean on and we're here for them.”

Megan Tyler with Sacred Spaces of CARE explained that their organization is a new addition to Alton that connects people with local resources for mental health, substance use and trauma. Check out [this article](#) on [RiverBender.com](#) for more information about their work.

Tyler, who specializes in trauma-informed care, added that traumatic events like domestic violence often have lasting effects. She noted that while people can't change what happened to them, they can take control over what happens next.

“We do have power over the effects of that event, and there are resources available to us,” she said. “There are people who want to love you and come alongside you and be the voice for you when you feel like maybe you don't have one. And that's what I would encourage all of us here to do today.”

As people prepared to begin the walk, Heil thanked Alton Mayor David Goins for his presence and reiterated the Zonta Club's commitment to advocating for survivors. While the statistics she shared were "staggering," Heil shared her hope that domestic violence will eventually be a nonissue in the community.

"We believe we can do better, that we will do better, that sooner than later we're going to have a walk that says there's no more domestic violence and we'll walk and celebrate that," Heil said. "In the meantime, we do what we can do to advocate for victims, for survivors, to help them get through that trauma and come out better on the other side, to provide for them when they have needs that they can't provide for themselves, to advocate, to be their voice when they can't speak."

If you or a loved one are experiencing domestic violence, check out [this article](#) on [RiverBender.com](#) for more information about local resources in the Riverbend region. You can also call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233 or text START to 88788.



**Zonta Club of Alton-Wood River
PURPLE RIBBON CAMPAIGN**



**OCTOBER is
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH**

***Wear a Purple Ribbon to
Show Your Support!***

*Zonta Club of Alton-Wood River
is a member of Zonta International,
an organization dedicated to improving the
status of women worldwide.*

P.O. Box 1461 • Alton, IL 62002
Zonta_altonwrvr@hotmail.com