

# **Domestic violence memorial service at AMH on Oct. 15**

October 15 2015 1:27 PM



ALTON - To shed light on domestic violence and remember the victims and their families, Alton Memorial Hospital is holding a special memorial service from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, in the AMH Healing Garden.

Featured speakers will include Madison County Circuit Judge Barbara Crowder, and Alton Police Chief Jason A. Simmons. The special speaker will be Buzie Bertagnolli, who is a survivor of domestic violence and has her story of abuse, and ultimately hope and survival, to share. Alison Neace will be singing during the service and harpist Amy Camie will be performing.

Domestic violence continues to be the leading cause of injury to women. In Madison County since 1996, there have been 90 documented domestic violence-related homicides. The number of children dying from abuse also continues to rise, and it is estimated that only one case of elder abuse is reported for every 14 unreported cases.

Because of the prevalence of domestic violence, Alton Memorial Hospital in 2002 began screening for domestic violence everyone 12 and older who was being assessed in the hospital. Trained staff members confidentially ask these patients if they feel safe at home or have experienced mental, physical or sexual abuse.

Alton Memorial supports a coordinated domestic violence committee that includes members from the hospital staff, Zonta Club of Alton-Wood River, Oasis Women's Center and the Third Judicial Circuit Family Violence Prevention Council.

"We appreciate the administration and staff of Alton Memorial Hospital who do so much to help domestic violence victims," says Tina Culp, staff member of the Oasis Women's Center and Coordinator for the Third Judicial Circuit Family Violence Prevention Council. "This annual event is important to all of us because we must never forget those who have died as a result of abuse. We also need to let the community know the resources that are available because, with help, lives can be turned around."