

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

YWCA of Genesee County

Update

NOVEMBER 14, 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **YWCA Board Meeting**
5:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Nov. 15
- **Children's Center Advisory Committee meeting**
1 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18
- **Thanksgiving**
Thursday, Nov. 24

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Looking at Self

Sherry Crumity, Support Services Coordinator, is in her second round of self-esteem groups for women. The goal is not to learn about what's wrong, but about what's right within each participant, she says.

"And how to build and develop your self-esteem and inner strengths. The group focuses on coping strategies, women's issues, life skills and self-awareness," Sherry said. "The eight-week sessions contain exercises to increase self-esteem, recover the personal power of the participants and provide practical tools to help the women make changes in the quality of their lives. Empowerment Skills Groups can be a powerful and valuable venue for healing and growth."

Is it working? One woman had what Sherry calls a major break-through: she learned that she had a choice in how to respond to a negative situation.

"The one major break that comes to mind is a participant realizing she had the power to say NO. She discovered that saying NO set healthy boundaries and limits for her," Sherry said. "Being involved in intimate partner violence she would never tell anyone NO out of fear, not being liked or needing approval. Going through the group helped her understand that NO is a complete sentence and many people have a hard time putting themselves first and feel uncomfortable flexing their assertiveness muscle, which is a key component to building self-esteem."

Sherry uses art projects — an affirmation jar and vision box — to complement her lessons with hands-on, safe self-expression.

Sherry hopes to continue these groups next year and expand them to include adolescents and men, each in their own sessions. There



are clear links between the way we feel about ourselves and our overall mental and emotional well-being, she said.

"By continuing to offer these groups we provide the women with tools to interact and build healthy relationships with others and replace those negative feelings and a negative perception of themselves with positive feelings and perceptions."

More information can be found at www.ywcagenesee.org or by calling (585) 343-5808 and asking for Sherry.

Program Numbers to Date ...

- 639.....new DV clients
- 189.....children in Adventure Program
- 11,660.....calls taken at Care+Crisis Helpline



One at a Time

Although callers are always tallied at the Care+Crisis Helpline, there are other numbers that cross Program Manager Holly Baxter's desk. There are the five Helpline specialists who, on occasion, have their own crisis or issue to deal with. That in turn means that Holly must scramble to find coverage or step in to provide the service herself. She is happy to announce that there will soon be seven people

taking calls in the CCH Office. Other numbers are the five squirrels that peek into the windows. Three have been named (Nutter, Butter and Tubby), and they join the tweetings of Blue Jays, Cardinals, crows, grackles, sparrows, chickadees and at least one Summer Tanager — visitor that migrates to Mexico and South America, according to one staffer who is also a birdwatcher. We can't forget the two baby rabbits, chipmunk, a buck that startled a staffer while staring in the window, two does, twin fawns and a mama skunk and her

baby. Did you know that baby skunks start out all white? There have been some 1,200 posters and 5,000 business cards distributed, with another 5,000 cards in progress. By the end of September staff handled 54 Live Chats and took 11,660 calls through October this year.

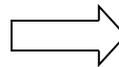
Live Chat is also available 24/7 through our website: ywcagenesee.org.

And Then News Happens

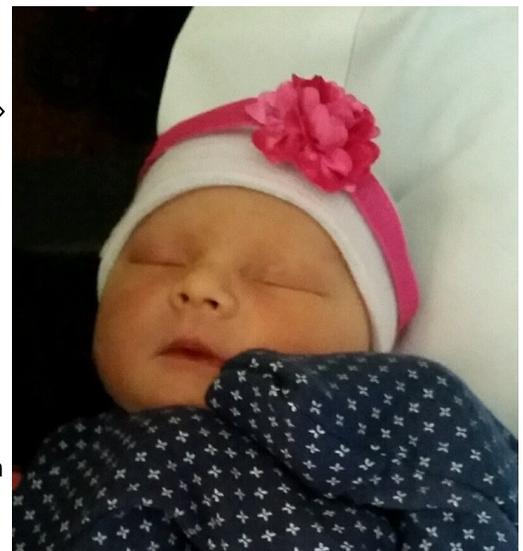


As another update rolled around, it seemed as though there may not be enough news to fill the pages. And then news happened ... At 8:18 a.m. November 7, **Caroline Mead** said hello to the world. Grammy (Rena) McCumiskey was anxiously waiting to hear if she had a grandson or granddaughter while watching Caroline's big brother Grant. At 20 inches long, she weighed 6 pounds, 13 ounces. Caroline (no middle name has been announced just yet) is the daughter of Alex and Courtney Mead. Courtney was a case manager in our DV Department and recently left her position for other pursuits, including childbirth. Meanwhile, Grammy McCumiskey has been sharing the good news and beaming proudly!

Now let's all give a collective "Awwwwwww!"



Joanne Beck became a great-aunt when her niece gave birth (three weeks early) to **Lauren Adeline Bagg** on Oct. 28.



Footprints in the Hallway



Is Jeanne coming to the meeting? Oh, never mind, I hear her now. That's how we often determine where someone is and if she is in fact walking down the hallway. Yep, that sounds like Amanda. Or are those stilettos? Then it would be Justina. You see, Jeanne has a pretty fast click of her pointy-toed heels, which is different from Amanda's slower and steady slightly lower heeled gait. Of course, Sarah can sneak up on us with her low-heeled, knee-high boots or Docksidors. After all, it's hard to run around from one

Adventure site to another in high heels! Donna's signature sound can fluctuate from heeled pumps to more comfy footwear, though she's definitely a woman on a mission with her stride. Ashley is often soft-footed in flats or low heels, Sherry and Rena are fairly quiet walkers and Joanne's pace and heels can vary depending on the day. Pam is too busy in the Main Office to do much walking up and down the hallway.

Interpreting one another's walking sound has become second nature to YWCA's staff. There's no telling how we would operate if the tile floor

suddenly got a coating of carpet! Oh, and not to worry Holly that you dig those PW Minor orthotic styles. Just give it another 10 years and you will have lots of company when bunions, corns and blisters take their toll!



A three-year old put his shoes on by himself. His mother noticed that the left was on the right and the right was on the left. She said, "Paul, your shoes are on the wrong feet." He looked up at her and said, "No they're not, Mom. I KNOW they're my feet."

Online Abuse: Let me count the ways

Can you name at least five?

- **Defamation:** An abuser posts lies about an individual in an attempt to disparage his or her character.
- **Doxing:** An abuser posts an individual's private information, including full name, address, date of birth or social security number with the intent of harassing the individual or opening them up for others to commit crimes against them.
- **Financial abuse:** With online banking and electronic bill pay, an abuser might take financial abuse to the Internet by interfering with an individual's accounts, changing passwords, denying access to finances or even identity theft.
- **Harassment:** Social media offers abusers a multitude of new ways to harass victims via private message, voice calls and public posts.
- **Google bombing:** In this tactic, the perpetrator uses optimization to cause defam-

atory content to rise to the top of search results when someone Googles the victim's name.

- **Online impersonation:** This is when an abuser creates a fake account or hacks into a victim's account and sends messages that appear to be coming from the victim. Often the messages are disparaging or defamatory in nature. Or, they may be used to cause turmoil between the victim and a third party. In extreme cases, abusers post fake prostitution ads or rape fantasies inviting individuals to the victim's home for sex.

- **Revenge porn:** An abuser shares intimate photos or videos of a sexual partner that were obtained with or without consent during the relationship or when the abuser hacked into the victim's computer, phone or online document storage.

- **Stalking:** Abusers tracking the victim's whereabouts through online "check-ins" or by installing GPS tracking on the victim's phone and monitoring the location hits.

- **Threatening:** This tactic is as old as time, but can now be done behind a veil of secrecy. Internet threats aren't always taken seriously by online platforms or law enforcement but they do cause real anxiety in victims.

- **Unsolicited pornography:** This occurs when an abuser sends unwanted pornography to a victim or posts it online, such as in an open-forum comment. It also includes sexualizing a photograph of the victim and posting it online.

Our DV staff has served clients that dealt with at least five of these: defamation, financial abuse, harassment, stalking and threatening.

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301 North St.
Batavia, NY 14020
(585) 343-5808

YWCA's mission is to eliminate racism and empower women and the vision is to implement sustainable programs that foster healthy, balanced living for women and families.

Our three primary programs are:



A word from Executive Director Jeanne Walton

Saying farewell to someone may not seem appropriate for "Something to Smile About," but, as is often the case, there is a silver lining even when a dedicated employee leaves YWCA. That is the case with Sarah McLaughlin, program manager for Children & Family Services. We will all miss her enthusiastic demeanor and constant smile, but she is spreading her wings to take on more experience and professional opportunities. Sarah has given us herself wholeheartedly, and for that we are grateful yet sad to see her go. The silver lining is that she was

empowered to move on and journey toward a new horizon.

And that's something to smile about.

