

July 2017

Volume 2, Issue 2

SART Connection

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Sexual Assault Kits Test Update

Florida law now states that sexual assault evidence kits must be submitted for testing within 30 days after the evidence is received by law enforcement and must be processed by the lab within 120 days of receipt. According to victim advocates, the change in the law has been very positive. Victims are happy to know that their kits will be tested and they will receive the results in a timely manner.

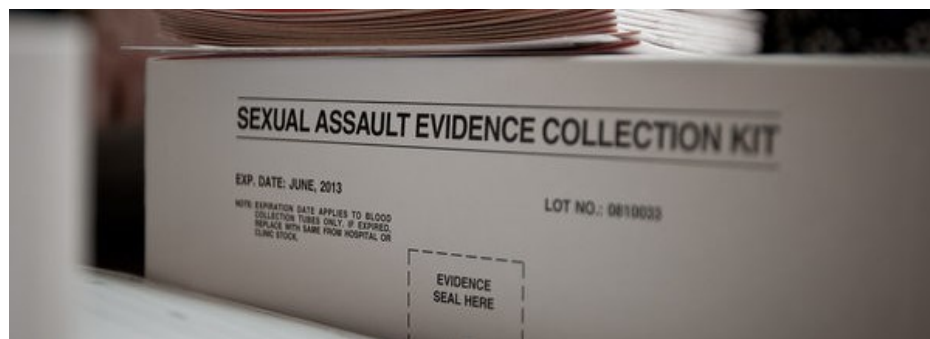
Law Enforcement is doing a good job complying with the new laws and implementation seemed to occur without any significant issues. The labs are also doing their part to process these kits in a timely manner.

In July, the FDLE published the latest Sexual Assault Kit Progress Report which stated that 3,663 previously unprocessed kits have been tested as part of Florida's efforts to eliminate the backlog of unprocessed sexual assault kits.



Director: Nicole Bishop

As of June 30, 2017, DNA from these kits has produced 843 CODIS hits. I want to applaud Palm Beach County for embracing this new law, implementing it successfully and helping keep our communities safe.



SART Member Highlight

In this issue of SART Connection, meet Detective Labbe and his K-9, Harley. Detective Labbe has been with Boynton Beach Police Department for the last 15 years and has been a detective the last 11 years. He currently works in the Special Victims Unit. Prior to becoming a law enforcement officer, Detective Labbe worked as a social worker for 30 years. He feels that his background in social work was one of the reasons he was selected to work with Harley. Detective Labbe has been working with Harley since August 2016.

Detective Labbe shared that Harley is involved in all aspects of his job and is with him at all times. She is involved and by his side during the investigation process, interview process, and in court proceedings regardless of if the case is big or small. Detective Labbe shared that the success of the program and Harley has been, 'tremendous.' He has been able to see how Harley's presence can help comfort victims and take away some of the added pressure that comes with the interview and court proceedings. So far, every interaction and case that Harley has been a part of has received overwhelming positive response.



In addition, Harley has been able to help other detectives on their cases and has been involved in community events. Recently, Detective Labbe and Harley came to support and offer comfort to victims of crime at Victim Services 'Ceremony in the Garden.' Detective Labbe also expressed his willingness to be involved in any way possible, stating that Harley is an added tool that we can use help work with victims in our community. Detective Labbe shared his excitement about the work he and Harley are doing and will continue to do in our community.

Written by: Therapist Kelly Dambra



SANE's Corner

The successful prosecution of a sexual assault case often hinges on associative evidence corroborating the occurrence of a sexual assault and linking a suspect to the victim. The recognition, preservation and collection of physical evidence in these cases is significantly influenced by the involvement and interdependent roles of SART members including police, medical experts and EMS personnel. Physical evidence can support details of the victim's statement and assist in establishing the identity of a perpetrator through DNA testing.

Evidence preservation is a team effort and specialists from all involved parties and agencies must convene to ensure the integrity of evidence collection through the proper handling of specimens. The value of the physical evidence collected is extremely limited in court unless meticulous care is taken to preserve and collect all available physical evidence. To facilitate optimal evidence preservation and collection the Palm Beach County SANE program educated 65 EMS providers and 40 emergency room nurses regarding evidence recognition, preservation and collection during the months of April, May and June 2017.



During those same months, PBC SANEs responded to 86 sexual assault victims and performed a total of 73 sexual assault forensic exams. Of those exams that were performed, 4 victims elected to make use of the non-reporting option. All sexual assault forensic exams were performed by PBC SANEs with 48 exams performed at Butterfly House and 38 exams performed at various hospitals throughout Palm Beach County.

FORENSIC NURSES

The
character of the Nurse
is as important as the knowledge
she possesses.

Written by: SANE Coordinator Sherry Britton-Susino

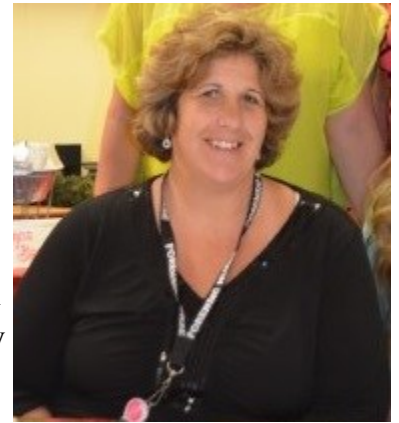
SANE Member Highlight

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE-A/SANE-P)

The earned credentials of SANE-A* and SANE-P** designate that the recipient has achieved the highest standards of forensic nursing for sexual assault nurse examiners. In addition to SANE-A certification, Palm Beach County SANE Coordinator, Sherry Britton-Susino recently earned the credentials of SANE-P certification through the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN).

Forensic nurse examiners initially become SANE-A or SANE-P certified by meeting the eligibility requirements and achieving a passing score on the certification examination.

Certification renewal is required every 3 years and is done by either examination or completion of a requisite amount of documented continuing education activity over a three-year period. (45 CEUs with content that is specific to the intended exam population and 300 hours of practice as a SANE within the preceding 3 years--at least 200 of those hours must be specific to the pediatric population.



SANE Coordinator

Sherry Britton-Susino

According to the IAFN website, there are 437 SANE nurses world-wide who have earned the distinction of SANE-P. Sherry is 1 of 5 total SANE-P certified nurses in the state of Florida and is currently the only SANE-P certified nurse in South Florida. Please join us in congratulating Sherry for achieving this esteemed designation.

* Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner- Adult/Adolescent

**Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner-Pediatric



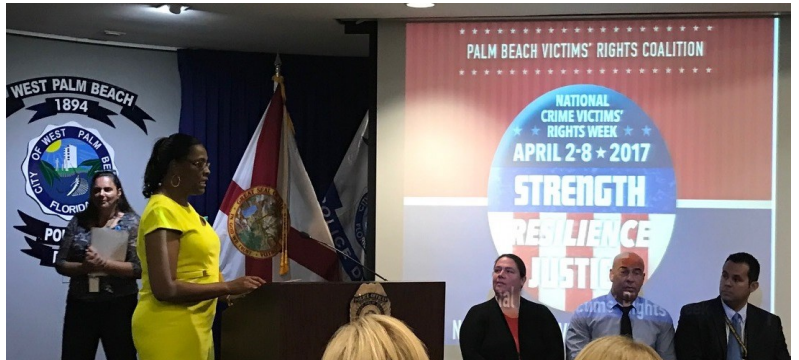
SANE/SART
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
Sexual Assault Response Team

Opening Ceremony/Officer of the Year

The West Palm Beach Police Chief, the City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Office, the Office of the State Attorney, US Representative's Office, State Representative's Office, Palm Beach County Commissioner, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have been invited to give briefings and open the 2017 National Crime Victims' Rights Week for Palm Beach County. A testament was given by a victim of crime so attendees can understand the impact crime has, not only for the individual, but for the community.

Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center's presented the Officer of the year Award to Det. Brent Joseph of Boynton Beach Police Department. Start by believing.

This is the statement that Detective Brent Joseph of the Boynton Beach Police Department, Special Victims Unit, has made his own. It is an integral part of his familiar conversation when discussing a case with his peers. It is his genuine mindset in his day-to-day duties. Start by believing. A Palm Beach County Victim Services advocate wrote that these were some of Detective Joseph's first words when briefing her on a new case over the phone. She wrote that his words were genuine and refreshing. Detective Joseph went on to effortlessly make the sexual assault victim feel comfortable in the crucial first moments of the investigation. He also took the time to discuss safety planning and precautions which further enforced the victim's trust and overall first impression. In another investigation,



Detective Joseph showed empathy with a sexual assault victim who was choosing not to go forward with the case. He still maintained the same "start by believing" attitude. Later he was able to let this same victim know that her perpetrator had been apprehended for another crime. The belief in this victim's words rang true and the victim herself was validated and relieved to know that her initial report was not forgotten. Start by believing. Words that are intertwined in Detective Joseph's dedicated actions.



Field of Hope

Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center held a “Field of Hope” event in observance of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).

This event brought together survivors of sexual assault and their supporters for a unique “speak out.” Survivors wrote their messages on teal-colored flags, then spoke their messages, and placed their flags in the ground which filled a huge, butterfly-shape symbol to honor survivors.

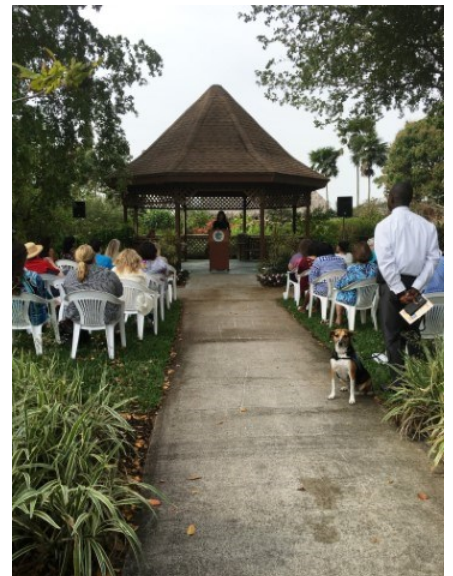


The experience was moving and uplifting with a solid feeling of hope infusing the participants and those in attendance.

Zonta International members were guest speakers at Field of Hope event. Also on hand were Kelley Burke, aide to County Vice Mayor Melissa McKinlay, West Palm Beach Mayor Jeri Mouio, West Palm Beach Police Chief Sarah Mooney, and Dan Liftman, representing U.S. Rep. Alcee Hastings.

Ceremony in the Garden

Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center, Palm Beach Victims' Rights Coalition members, invited dignitaries, members of the community, victim advocates, crime victims, and surviving family members gathered together for the Sixth Anniversary of the Ceremony in the Garden. All crime victims in Palm Beach County were honored in the ceremony. Those in attendance were invited to engage in healing activities to include their personal stories, the presence of Therapy Dogs and the opportunity to participate in guided relaxation.



Awards Luncheon/SART Award

To qualify for this award the nominated member must be a standing member of the SART in 2016. The purpose of the SART member is to strengthen relationships, build agency collaborations, and increase communication and clarification that will ultimately result in the best possible outcome for the Sexual Assault victims we serve.

The member shall be an individual who has promoted the mission of SART and shown exemplary dedication to the victim centered approach. The Support Services Division of the Boynton Beach Police Department is very proud to say that Investigator Lagor is a part of this team.

Nothing less his tenaciousness and hard work was the reason for this case getting solved. Investigator Lagor was voted as SART member of the year by his fellow SART members and was presented with the award at the Victim Rights Week luncheon.



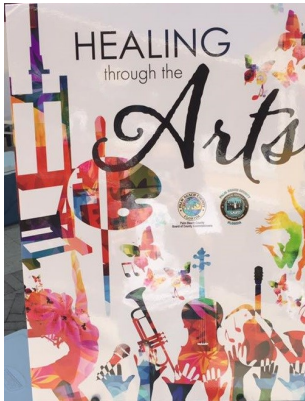
Boynton Beach Police; Investigator Lagor

Victim Services Director Nicole Bishop



**Victim Services Adrienne Hillman
and Kelly Roan**

SAO Attorney Dave Aronberg



Healing Through the Arts



“Healing Through the Arts” was a powerful and inspirational SAAM - Sexual Assault Awareness Month event held on the evening of April 7th at City Place. Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center hosted a visual art display along with artistic performances. The performances were presented by Survivors of Sexual Assault, with a major part of the cast from members of the Survivor Action Team who are empowered Survivors, public speakers and performers. The Survivor Action Team is an integral part of the Palm Beach County SART Team.



The Survivors shared their healing journey with an audience of over 400 in attendance showing their resiliency through music, story, dance, theater, and poetry performances; all dedicated to the hope of ending sexual violence.

This event generated discussions following the performances and throughout the evening as the engaged audience walked through the outdoor visual art gallery interacting and speaking with the artists. “Healing Through the Arts” moved the audience to a greater height of awareness about Sexual Assault and many new connections were made by all of the participants.

SART Mock Response Training Simulation

SART, Palm Beach County Sheriff Office, Palm Beach Gardens Police Department, the Office of the State Attorney and the SART Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners provided a collaborative successful training to for SART members. The objective was to increase initial responder's knowledge thereby creating a greater support for sexual assault victims through victim-centered care and justice.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION
INFORM. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.



We all have something to gain by
becoming involved in the prevention of
sexual violence.

Law enforcement in attendance were trained on investigation, documentation, and interviewing skills on sexual assault cases. The training provided an opportunity to visually see response methods from inception of call, initial fact finding, advocacy, sexual assault exam, interviewing and report writing. Law enforcement officers from several agencies attended; many stated they will now *Start by Believing*, have more patience and overall have a greater understanding a what a victim goes through.

EVAWI Conference

The End Violence Against Women International Conference was held in Orlando on April 18th through the 20th. The focus was on Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Systems Change. I was lucky enough to attend with people from Victim Services and AVDA. Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center Victim Advocate, SANE Coordinator and SANE nurse were in attendance. This year's conference was the biggest yet, with 2,069 professionals representing 49 states, as well as Three U.S. territories and thirteen countries. The representation by professional discipline was equally diverse.



SART partner Aid to Victims of Domestic Violence

The first day began with a plenary which everyone was asked to attend. It was a large conference room filled with professionals ready to learn. After the plenary we all broke up into smaller groups and you have options to pick the presentation that seems most beneficial to you.

The final day's plenary included two wonderful presenters. Rising Above the Scars by Johnnetta McSwain-Clay was a woman's autobiographical account of her own abuse and how she has not let it hold her back.

It was empowering and hopeful. Next was Russell Stand and Lori Heitman discussing Forensic Experiential Trauma Interviews. The most wonderful part of this whole trip was how well we were taken care of. The hotel where the conference was held was huge but beautiful.



*Victim Advocate Valerie Messineo
SANE Linda Brock & Sherry Britton-Susino*

Clergy Training

In an ongoing goal to reach the underserved populations through the faith-based community leaders, SART received permission from the Arch Diocese of South Florida to provide education for over 60 ministers, deacons and priests.

The theme; *To strengthen our families within our churches and communities in a coordinated response.*

PBCVS talked about services available, the dynamics & impact of domestic violence, OVW partner Destiny by Choice (DBC) clarified the role of clergy, OVW partner Aid to Victims of Domestic Violence; Dynamics & statistics of intimate partner violence and Riviera Beach Police Department discussed; Church before Police: the importance of the clergy role before Law Enforcement Intervention.



Reverend Dr. JR. Thicklin

AEQUITAS

On May 26, 2017, SART provided a Technical Assistance training to Law Enforcement, advocates and State Attorneys. Presenters John Wilkinson, Attorney Advisor, AEquitas, Dr. Bev Frantz, Temple University and retired Deputy Chief John Beyer, Duluth Police Department, presented a seven-hour criminal justice training on working to improve response to crimes of sexual violence. The multidisciplinary audience learned how to be properly equipped for their encounters with victims having developmental disabilities or other special needs. The training identified some of the unique challenges faced by survivors with disabilities and provided effective resources and strategies for professionals responsible for investigating and prosecuting their cases. The training integrated all possible hindrances from initial contact through evidence-based investigation and prosecution of the case. The Florida Bar Association approved seven CLEs for attending attorneys.



AEquitas: The Prosecutors'
Resource on Violence
Against Women
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393-1918

Survivor Action Team Telly Award

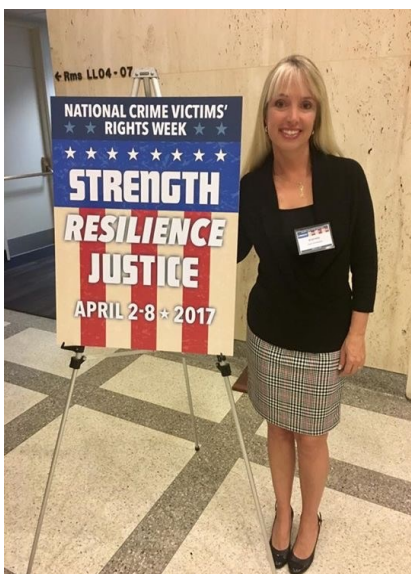
The Survivor Action Team, an outspoken and inspiring team of sexual assault survivors is part of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART).

With 593 new and on-going cases in Palm Beach County for the year 2016, the survivor action team did a 30 second video increased awareness that Palm Beach County has a comprehensive system to support victims through the criminal justice system.

SART public service announcement has won a bronze Telly Award in the General-Public Interest/Awareness category.



SART Survivor Advocate Julie Weil



Julie was the special guest speaker at the April 2-8, 2017 National Crime Victims' Rights Week opening ceremony at the Florida Capitol with Governor Rick Scott and Attorney General Pam Bondi.

Contact:

Not Just Me Foundation

julie@notjustmefoundation.org



OVW Grant Partner Awards

Brandy Macaluso FBI Award



CILO receives FBI Director's Community Leadership Award.

SART OVW grant partner, The Coalition for Independent Living Options Inc. [CILO] was distinguished with this honor as one of only two honorees representing the entire State of Florida for their outstanding work in the community on behalf of crime victims with disabilities.

CILO's crime victim services program has done extensive trainings with law enforcement and other community agencies and published a book for first responders on how to respond to crime victims with disabilities.

CILO has seen a huge influx of crime victims with disabilities being identified and served through concurrent programming serving, not only their victim service needs, but disability service needs.

Dr. JR Thicklin

SART grant Partner Dr. JR Thicklin of Destiny by Choice was the recipient of the presidential Lifetime Achievement Award on June 17th 2017 at the Signature Grand Hotel in Fort Lauderdale... this award was presented for JR's Lifetime of Service including the work of addressing domestic violence for over 25 years, addressing the issues of fatherlessness, infant mortality, building boys to men and engaging Men and Boys in the plight of domestic violence. The award was presented to 31 recipients on that day from all over the country.



Crimes Against Women's Conference

SART lead advocate and the SART sexual assault responder attended a four-day conference *Crimes Against Women* to learn the newest ideas and intervention strategies for sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking crimes against women.

The conference had an attendance of 2200 people from all over the World. There were many areas of discipline at the conference such as; law enforcement, advocacy, clergy and nursing.

A lot of information was presented and sometimes it was hard to choose what to attend. PBCVS advocates attended Burnout and Self Care that they stated was very dynamic.



A lot of information on Human Trafficking such as the roles in the hierarchy and victim vs. suspect; how to tell the difference and how interviewing of victims of human trafficking is learned differently.

There was information on how the Danger Assessment is being used in other parts of the U.S. in the court systems and how this is paying off with judges understanding more about domestic issues and dangers the victims face.

There were breakout sessions where lead advocate Rene brought up our Debriefing Group we do, our Point Cards how well these are received by other agencies. They thought the Point Cards were a great idea and concept. Overall, the training was very informative and was highly recommend for others to attend in the future.



Conference on Crimes Against Women, Inc.
C/O Genesis Outreach

Address

4411 Lemmon Avenue, Suite 201
Dallas, Texas 75219

Phone

214-389-7710

Email

info@conferencecaw.org



Upcoming EVENTS

September 15, 2017 @ PBSO training facility

SART and PBSO will co-host an 8 hour interaction domestic violence and sexual assault training by the Battered Women's Justice Project.

Registration is free and limited to 100 attendees.

Registration: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SARTBWJP>

The 2017 Southeast Regional SART registration is now open. Seating is limited to 100 so please register ASAP at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017regionalsart>

DATE: October 19, 2017

TIME: 8:30am – 4:00pm

LOCATION: Long Key Nature Center - 3501 SW 130th Ave, Davie Fl. 3330

TARGET AUDIENCE: Advocacy Organizations, Law Enforcement, Forensic exam providers, Crime lab staff, State Attorney's Office, Legal Aid partners, Military, Survivors of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, and Local Schools and Universities.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES: Participants will learn about the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to providing support for sexual assault survivors.

COST: Free - Continental breakfast and Lunch provided.

CONTACT: Ana Maria Ferrer, (954) 357-5775, aferrer@broward.org

Seual Assault





<https://palmbeachcan.wordpress.com/>

<http://pbcsart.org>

Victim Services SART Center

4210 North Australian Ave.
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
(561) 625-2595

24/7 Rape Crisis Violent Crime Hotline

HOTLINE: (561) 833-7273

TOLL FREE: (866) 891-7273

TTY: (561) 355-1772

Vision: Justice for all Crime Victims

Mission Statement:

With compassion and respect, we assist victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, homicide, and other violent crimes through crisis response, advocacy, therapy, and community awareness.



“This project was supported by Grant No 2014-WE-AX-0011 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author (s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.”

Created by the OVW Team Editor/Writer Susan Carlini , Designer and Creator Cristi Wilson, and Writer Kelly Dambra