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The New Trier News

VOL. XCIV, No. 4

NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL, 385 WINNETKA AVENUE, WINNETKA, IL 60093

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2014

Clothesline exhibit opens at opportune time

by Max Borushek

Through the use of t-shirts, Shannon Sloan is spreading awareness about domestic violence and violence against women.

Sloan is the person who brings the Clothesline Project to New Trier, an anti-domestic violence art exhibit where victims of domestic abuse or friends of victims share their stories by writing them on a t-shirt.

Each color on the t-shirt represents a different kind of story. For example, a story on a white t-shirt represents a story that talks about a victim who has died as a result of violence. A story on a yellow t-shirt represents a story about a victim who was "battered or assaulted."

"The Clothesline Project is about victims or people who are close to victims sharing their stories and how that has affected their lives, to show violence against women," said Sloan.

The Clothesline Project could not have come to New Trier at a more appropriate time. Domestic violence has been at the forefront of the national spotlight, as NFL players

like Ray Rice and Jonathan Dwyer have been shamed by the media for the abuse of their spouses.

Minnesota Vikings star running back Adrian Peterson has also been pushed into the spotlight. Not for his amazing play on the field, but for the abuse of his son.

Sloan said this isn't the first time the Clothesline Project has been shown at a high school. In fact, the Clothesline Project has toured the Chicagoland area at various schools and has come to New Trier every other year for the past 18 years.

"I go to a different school every day," said Sloan, "but I'm here [at New Trier] for two weeks."

Schools such as Barrington High School and Oak Park/River Forest have also held the exhibit and have had students contribute their stories to the project.

The Clothesline Project shares many powerful stories about victims of rape, sexual assault, and even murder. Sloan said that she hasn't had difficulty getting students to share their stories with her to add to the Clothesline Project.

"Whenever we show this project

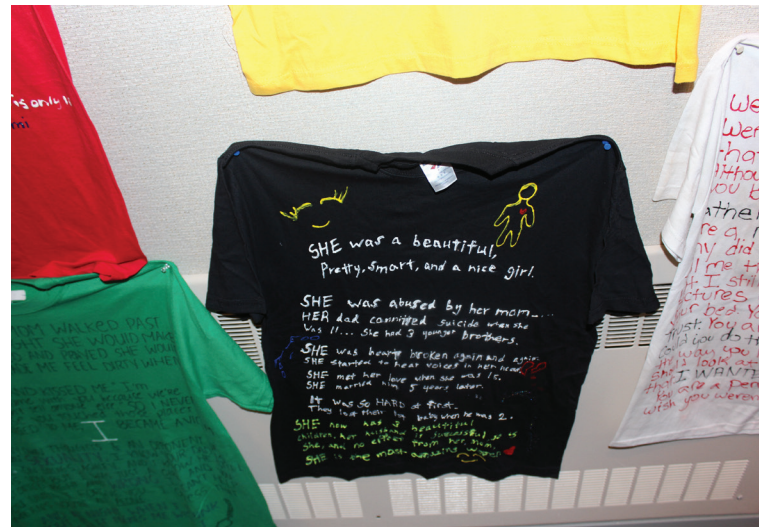
I give students the opportunity to contribute. The stories are mostly just naming these events, but that creates a sense of safety, and students feel like they can approach someone that has been through the same thing they have been through," said Sloan.

The reception of the exhibit has been excellent according to Sloan, who said that a lot of teachers have really found the exhibit powerful.

Teachers have taken time out of their classes to show students the significance of this issue, many saying that this exhibit has been a great way to spark conversations about domestic violence and educate students on the topic.

"I want [my advisory] to be aware that this could happen to them or their friends and have them think about what they would do if it did happen to them," said Michael Christenson, a senior girls advisor and social studies teacher.

Andy Horne, a health teacher, said "I think a lot of the kids were overwhelmed. If there was one word to describe it, it would be powerful. I hope that they realize that this happens everywhere and it's a social



A shirt made with the Clothesline Project representing sexual or physical violence | Borushek

issue that effects everyone. I think the kids gained more awareness."

According to Sloan, her main goal is spreading awareness about domestic violence. While the t-shirts tell real stories that are both powerful and sad, they are there to help students prevent these horrible events from happening to them or their loved ones.

"In my opinion, this is one of

the most misunderstood things in our society, and I hope to educate people and help them to understand this issue," said Sloan.

"I want those who have been affected by domestic violence to know that they are not alone, and I want to help them reach out to other resources to get through this."

The Clothesline Project is at the Ann Brierly Gallery, closed Oct.10.

Police militarization causes controversy across America



Police tactical team dispersing protesters Wednesday, Aug. 13th in Ferguson, Missouri | AP Images

by Ben Portnoy

The shooting in Ferguson, Missouri has called into question the validity of police militarization and, thanks to recent legislation passed by congress, police forces, like those patrolling Ferguson, have seen an influx of new weaponry, comparable to that used by the U.S. military.

If one were to wander the streets in the small town of Ferguson today, it could be easily mistaken for the streets of Baghdad, as Police forces patrol the streets in full military fatigues, accompanied by armored vehicles reminiscent of tanks.

While the militarization of

police forces has been in the news recently, it is not a new concept. According to MSNBC, since 1996 as a "response to the war on drugs," the department of defense has transferred nearly \$4.3 billion in military equipment to local and state police forces.

In addition, after 9/11, the Department of Homeland Security made even more material available through federal funds for terrorism prevention.

"There's so many teams, like specialized police forces teams that are equipped [well enough] to where basic officers should not have to be involved" said New Trier Police

Liaison and former SWAT team member Officer Jeremy Walton. "I don't think there is a need for increase in weaponry."

Satirical news anchor John Oliver pointed out on his weekly television show, "Last Week Tonight," that through this process, Keene, New Hampshire, a town of only 24,000 people, was equipped with a Bearcat, a military grade armored vehicle, citing that "The terrorism threat is far reaching and unseen." The town noted in their application for the Bearcat, that their annual Pumpkin Festival was a possible target.

According to Oliver, it is cases

like Keene that show the absurdity of the militarization of local police forces. As Walton observed, with SWAT teams and the National Guard to handle riots or civil unrest, there is no need to militarize simple patrol officers.

However, with America's situation in the Middle East heating up thanks to the terrorist group ISIS, some Americans do feel that the arming of the police is a smart and realistic prevention tool.

"The program that allows local law enforcement or public safety agencies to receive surplus military gear has been around for many years, but since 9/11 it has been on steroids," said Frank Scafidi, director of public affairs for the National Insurance Crime Bureau, in an interview with MintPress News.

"The 'militarization' of police departments is more the increased awareness among the population and the media that the surplus machines of war have found new life in domestic public safety organizations. If you go back and look at video of other major events, you're likely to see all manner of former military vehicles providing some level of support to those events."

While opinions like Scafidi's have supporters, many Americans still believe that the militarization of local police forces is an overreaction.

"We have terrorism that does occur at home," noted Walton. "But we have teams for that. Just because there's been a spike doesn't mean we need more."

Oliver also pointed out the

absurdity of police forces in Ferguson, Missouri right now who are donning military fatigues and not following military protocol that guns should not be pointed at anyone unless you intend to fire. "The point is," said Oliver. "That if you are a cop in the United States, you should dress for the job you have, not the one you want."

Al Jazeera also introduced some startling facts regarding SWAT activity, citing that SWAT raids are up nearly 1400% since the 1980s, and an estimated 15,000 take place each year. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) added "79% of SWAT deployments the ACLU studied were for the purpose of executing search warrants, most commonly in drug investigations."

The affects of militarization can be seen in the small town of Ferguson, Missouri, which has been the center of police concern over the past two months.

After the shooting and subsequent death of Michael Brown, an 18 year old African-American, at the hands of white Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson, Ferguson was thrust into a state of civil unrest, causing race riots across the town and sparking an investigation into whether racial profiling was involved in the fatal shooting.

"All police are equipped with what they need" said Walton. "If [a patrol officer] cannot control the situation by themselves then they should call for backup. Good old fashioned police work."