

GreeleyTribune

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A Woman's Place seeks 45 new donors in celebration of 45th anniversary



In 1978, Weld County community leaders created a crisis line after seeing a need to support domestic violence victims.

Today, 45 years later, the organization has grown to offer basic needs, a safe house and a long list of services for survivors escaping unsafe situations.

A Woman's Place, the only domestic violence shelter in Weld County, is celebrating 45 years of empowering domestic violence survivors.

The nonprofit started as a crisis line created by local men and women who recognized the need for intervention for domestic violence survivors in the county, according to the A Woman's Place website. By 1981, the Greeley Urban Renewal Authority donated a building to help A Woman's Place open a safe home.

Since 1978, the growing number of victims in need of safety and services has been on the rise, especially in the past 10 years.

In honor of the anniversary milestone and the ever-growing need in the community, A Woman's Place is seeking 45 new monthly donors this year to support their mission to help survivors achieve self-sufficiency.

"We're so grateful for the continued support of our community, business partners, foundations and families who have supported A Woman's Place for so many years," Executive Director Diane Heldt said. "The need continues to be great, and we're so grateful for that support. It's so appreciated and so important to make sure that we can continue helping survivors build their lives from violence."

A Woman's Place provides an eight-bedroom, 29-bed safehouse for emergency shelter to survivors, according to Heldt. In addition to safe housing, the organization offers a 24-hour crisis phone line, employment services, behavioral health support, legal services, safety planning and advocacy support.

"We help with all of their basic needs to make sure that they're supported while they're rebuilding their life," Heldt said.

One of the dozens of clients that A Woman's Place helped by rebuilding her life while getting her out of a crisis is Nicole, a name changed for safety and confidentiality purposes.

A soaking wet, barefoot and fearful Nicole was taken to A Woman's Place by police after showing up at her neighbor's house at 2 a.m. in the middle of a thunderstorm. She ran to her neighbor's house after leaving her house to escape abuse.

Once in safety at A Woman's Place, staff assessed Nicole's immediate need for medical attention and gave her clothing, food, toiletries and a safe place to sleep. A few days later, staff helped Nicole receive behavioral health support, transfer her job to a new location and find stable housing.

A Woman's Place receives feedback from the hundreds of clients served each year to help improve services and support. As clients, such as Nicole, gain self-sufficiency, Heldt said many reflect back with gratitude for having a space to take a breath and figure out their next steps.

"Time after time, people say 'You saved my life,'" Heldt said.

A Woman's Place serves between 400-500 people every year, according to Heldt. In the last decade, the number of crisis phone calls received has doubled. In 2022 alone, 385 people obtained safe shelter and advocacy services.

A Woman's Place saw a huge need during the COVID-19 pandemic, but that need was on the rise before the pandemic and continues to be on the rise after, she said. Heldt cited a reason for the upsurge in the need for survivors is the increase in Weld County's population.

Just in the past two years, Weld County saw a population increase of 5.7% from 2020 to 2022, according to a [U.S. Census](#). Support is also reaching more diverse groups, according to Heldt, who said the organization served people speaking 14 different languages in the past couple of years. “We’re providing services in a number of languages to reflect the community that we serve,” she said.

In 2022, A Woman’s Place received [the national Purple Ribbon Award for Excellence](#). The award honors “the countless heroes of the domestic violence movement, including advocates, programs, shelters, survivors and members of the community support system,” according to [DomesticShelters.org](#).

In honor of the 45 years of A Woman’s Place, Heldt said the goal is to reach 45 new donors by December, the month when the organization came to be. Anyone interested in becoming a donor can go to www.awpdv.org/donate.html for more information.

“I think sometimes we get really busy doing the important work of serving survivors and we don’t take a minute to say a huge thank you to the community who has kept this place going for 45 years,” Heldt said.

To reach the 24/7 crisis line, call (970) 356-4226.

Upcoming events

A Woman’s Place’s fourth annual Cornhole Tournament fundraiser is scheduled for June 11 at Just Us Sisters Event Center in Greeley. Team registration is \$60. For more information, go to www.awpdv.org/cornhole-tournament-fundraiser.



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