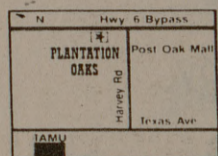


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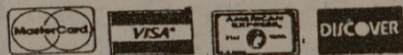
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B-CS temporary shelter offers aid to abused women, children

By Elissa Grossman
Reporter

Phoebe's Home is a temporary shelter where Brazos Valley women who have been abused by their husbands or boyfriends can turn for help. The home provides information and temporary care to the victims of family violence.

Liz Jackson, director of Phoebe's Home, said the home's overall purpose is to provide temporary shelter to women in physical danger or to those who have been emotionally abused. The location of Phoebe's Home is kept confidential to protect the women who stay there.

Phoebe's Home was established in 1979 as a project of Twin City Mission. The mission is a private organization that offers shelter for abandoned children, the homeless and battered women. Twin City Mission had received many phone calls from women requesting help and needing a place to stay. Joanne Sebesta, assistant director when the home began, drafted the proposal for the grant that established Phoebe's Home.

Phoebe's Home is a private, non-profit organization. The home is funded by the state of Texas, the cities of Bryan and College Station, the United Way and Twin City Mission. Service organizations from Texas A&M University help collect donations for Phoebe's Home. The home relies on donations of food, clothing, toys and toiletry items.

Women from Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson and Washington counties are eligible to go to Phoebe's Home. Women who

wish to relocate into the Brazos Valley are accepted at the home if room is available.

Phoebe's Home has the capacity to house 17 women and children. In an emergency, the shelter can hold up to 21 people. The four bedroom, 15-bed home is a free service to those women who qualify.

When a woman calls the hotline number, she is screened by the staff to determine if Phoebe's Home is the right service for her. She must be either the victim of family violence — physical or emotional — or have been threatened by violence.

"A woman does not have to be physically beaten to come in," Jackson said.

Fear is a just cause for a woman to call the home for help, she said; if a woman is being mentally battered she can suffer just as much as a physically abused woman.

A brochure distributed by the home says that every 12 seconds a woman is abused, and between 4,000 and 5,000 women die annually from abuse.

Jackson said if a woman comes to Phoebe's Home it does not necessarily mean the termination of her relationship with her husband or boyfriend. Women are free to leave when they feel they are ready. The women are encouraged to get their own apartments and begin taking care of themselves. It is up to the woman whether she returns to her husband or goes out on her own. The women are permitted to stay at Phoebe's Home up to 30 days.

The staff that works with these women consists

of only five members. However, graduate students and volunteers also help. Three staff members work alternate weekends. The weekend staff members work a 48-hour shift. There is always at least one member of the staff at the home. If an emergency occurs and no staff members are at the home, they can be contacted by beeper.

Group counseling is conducted once a week by two counselors for women staying at Phoebe's Home. Individual counseling is given by Jackson when needed.

Because many women take their children with them when they go to Phoebe's Home, the children also are counseled. The children's counseling is done by a graduate student from Texas A&M.

Although Phoebe's Home counsels only the victims of family violence, the men who have been abused also are encouraged to get help.

After a woman moves out of Phoebe's Home, non-resident counseling groups are available for those who wish to attend. It is encouraged, but not mandatory. Currently there is one non-resident group, but more groups can be added if needed.

Along with psychological counseling, Phoebe's Home also provides referral services for legal and vocational counseling. The staff helps the women live independently by assisting them in finding jobs and housing.

For battered women in the Brazos Valley, Phoebe's Home can be reached by calling the 24-hour hotline number: 775-5355.

Grand jury clears 3 men of tampering with case of actress's alleged attacker

EL PASO (AP) — An El Paso County grand jury cleared three men of wrongdoing in the setting of \$100 bail for a man accused of trying to sexually assault actress Tracy Scoggins the weekend of the Miss USA pageant.

But the man who was arrested in connection with the attack, Pedro Concepcion Padilla, still faces the possibility of indictment for the alleged Feb. 25 attack in a hotel elevator.

The grand jury investigated Padilla, Municipal Judge Rodolfo Romero and former Assistant City Attorney Enrique Medrano on charges of tampering with government records, and looked into charges of official misconduct by Romero, Assistant District Attorney Gonzalo Garcia said.

"They considered all the evidence before issuing a no bill," he said.

Garcia refused to comment further about the April 7 grand jury action, citing state law compelling secrecy in grand jury proceedings.

Scoggins, who was in El Paso to co-host the Miss USA Pageant March 1, said Padilla got in a hotel elevator with her, ripped her dress and tried to push her to the elevator floor.

She said she fought the man off, and Padilla was detained by hotel

guests and employees until police arrived.

Padilla at first gave an alibi but was released on \$100 bail set by Romero and paid by Medrano.

Police began an investigation receiving reports that Padilla and Romero are longtime friends, meaning that Romero might be known Padilla had provided bail for himself.

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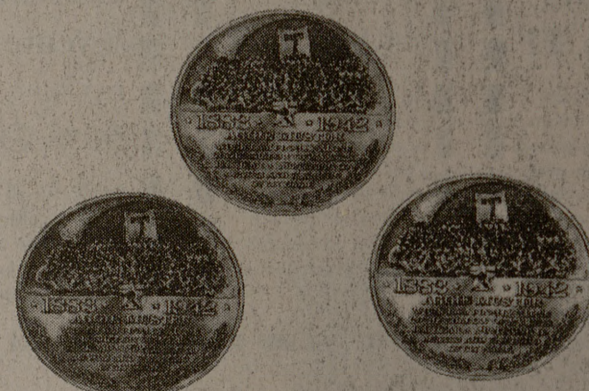
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