



JOE LESTER
Sheriff

DATE: Monday, October 06, 2014

SUBJ: **PRESS RELEASE by Sheriff Joe Lester**
October recognized as Domestic Violence Awareness month

October is recognized as Domestic Violence Awareness month and spotlights a problem for many families in Oklahoma.

Domestic abuse occurs between family or household members and those in dating relationships.

In 2013, Cleveland County sheriff's deputies responded to 573 disturbance calls, according to the Cleveland County Coordinated Community Response Team. The figure includes domestic violence incidents.

The team reported about 355 domestic violence criminal cases were filed in Cleveland County District Court.

Statewide, the number of reported domestic abuse incidents decreased 7.1 percent between 2004 and 2013, according to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

OSBI statistics show law enforcement officers responded to 22,801 reports of domestic violence in Oklahoma in 2013.

The agency reported 49 murders were related to domestic abuse in 2013. The number decreased from 53 in the previous year.

Assault and battery was the most common type of offense reported to police, according to OSBI. In 2013, law enforcement officers investigated 19,848 assault and battery cases.

Reports show domestic violence occurred most on Sunday compared to other days of the week. In a 24-hour period, the highest number of incidents happened between 8:01 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Several events are planned to bring awareness to the situation.

People are encouraged to wear purple every Thursday during the month in observance of domestic violence awareness. Cleveland County Board of Commissioners will proclaim October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month at their Oct. 14 meeting.

First responders in Cleveland County will participate in a softball game from 1 to 4 p.m. Oct. 25 at Reaves Park in Norman which will benefit Women's Resource Center. Tickets cost \$10 for adults, and children 12 and younger will be admitted free. Tickets are available through Women's Resource Center.

Sheriff Joe Lester said domestic abuse should never be tolerated. If someone is a victim or knows a person who is being abused, they should seek help immediately.

“Domestic violence hurts too many people,” Lester said. “Victims often stay because they are afraid of their abuser and the consequences. I urge anyone in an abusive relationship to get out because there are options available and people ready to help them.”

Any questions regarding this press release and/or information can be addressed to Meghan McCormick, Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office, community liaison/public information officer. McCormick can be reached at (405) 701-8847.