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## • Stonehamites pledge intolerance of violence against women



Local officials and SAAV members including state Sen. Jason Lewis, Anthony Moreschi (constituent service rep for Katherine Clark), U.S. Rep. Katherine Clark, State Rep. Michael Day, Chief of Police James McIntyre and Selectman Tom Boussy, pose for a photo during the Stoneham Alliance Against Violence's White Ribbon Day at Stoneham Town Hall. The event was to speak out against violence towards women and challenge attitudes and behaviors which condone or tolerate violence. Wicked Local Staff Photo/Nicole Goodhue Boyd

○ [• GALLERY: White Ribbon Day in Stoneham](#)

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## STONEHAM

Last Wednesday, residents and community leaders joined the Stoneham Alliance Against Violence to pledge intolerance of violence against women in observance of White Ribbon Day.

According to Linda Leis, the victim advocate for the Stoneham Police Department and the head of the local White Ribbon Day affiliate, the statewide campaign sponsored by Jane Doe Inc. begins in March with men pledging and showing their support by wearing white ribbons and encouraging others to do the same.

This year Massachusetts celebrated its eighth annual event at the Statehouse in March, but Stoneham chose to celebrate in May to also honor mothers for Mother's Day. This year marked the third annual celebration in Stoneham.

"Men and boys show they do not tolerate men's violence towards women, men, or children," said Leis about the pledges made at the event.

Among those who pledged and spoke at White Ribbon Day was Chief of Police James McIntyre, along with state Sen. Jason Lewis, U.S. Rep. Katherine Clark, state Rep. Michael Day and town Selectman Thomas Boussy, who read the town's proclamation for White Ribbon Day.

"Sadly, domestic violence is something one in four women will experience," said Congresswoman Clark. "I'm grateful for the leadership of Stoneham Alliance Against Violence, and I'm proud to see our community working together to end violence."

Leis said this event is also international and began in 1991 after the murder of 14 women in Montreal, Canada. Leis said a group of young men wanted to raise awareness of the murders as well as violence against women by pledging to never commit nor tolerate any violence against women.

Leis added that a part of this pledge is to create awareness of violence against women, but also to help the victims of domestic violence. As part of her work with the police department, Leis has witnessed the hardships women face when trying to leave an abusive environment.

She said many women are "re-victimized" in lengthy legal battles, often having to leave their homes and, if children are involved, relocating them as well.

Leis hopes someday the stresses of handling violence against women will fall more heavily on the perpetrator rather than the victim.

"It was great to see the politicians who make changes about the law in this state make the pledge," said Leis.