



The LP Report 2019

A Nonprofit Grief, Loss, and Trauma Counseling Center

Storyteller Project 2019



Andrew Skerritt, Tallahassee Democrat Storyteller Project Coach, **Beth Tedio**, Lee's Place Director of Development, **Skip Foster**, Tallahassee Democrat President



The November 30 2018 storytellers

1. **Christic Henry** (real estate broker)
2. **Kenneth Jones** (FAMU Journalism Professor)
3. **Rachel Sutz Pienta** (Director of Wakulla County 4-H)
4. **Domonique Rora** (Elementary school Teacher)

ONE BRAVE MOTHER SHARES HER STORY

By Former client of Lee's Place

On a cold November night, I was attacked in my home with a knife and left for dead. As this attack was going on, my young son hid and watched. When the attacker finally left, my son went for help. That very brave action saved my life. He knew what had to be done and did such. Shortly after the incident, my son went to counseling at Lee's Place. When I was able, I joined him. The guidance we received at Lee's Place provided the necessary tools for my son and me to rebuild our lives. This was not easy for us. With the professional experienced counselors at Lee's Place, we managed to take baby steps to begin the healing process. My son and I found comfort at Lee's Place.

During the sessions at Lee's Place, the case began to unfold. I would have been lost without the dedicated guidance of Brenda. With her help, I learned to cope with the helplessness and confusion. I learned to believe in myself again. I realized that the attack was not my fault. Brenda helped me to recognize that in spite of all that I have been through, I am a good mother. I was gently reminded that I am doing okay.

Karen gave my son what he needed when he did not know if I would live. Karen helped my son establish places where he felt safe. He finally learned to accept that he did all he could do that dreadful night. He learned that there will be highs and lows, that he is going to have different feelings and that they are all okay. With Karen, he learned how to work through those feelings constructively and even looked forward to his sessions with Karen. I am grateful that Karen worked with him on his level to establish a much needed trust.

Brenda and Karen continually and consistently do what Lee's Place was opened for – to provide a place of comfort and guidance for those who are faced with loss and trauma. I honestly feel that thank you is not enough for Lee's Place.

I was not financially able to afford the counseling services that Lee's Place provided for my son and me. With your donations, my son and I, along with countless others in the community can continue to receive counseling that is essential to us. Because Lee's Place is a non-profit agency, your donations allow Lee's Place to provide counseling on a sliding fee scale.

Community Collaboration has a happy ending

By Beth Willis Tedio

As with all nonprofits Lee's Place has offered a fair share of various fundraisers both to raise money for programming and also to continue sharing our story to the community.

Lee's Place, a nonprofit

grief, loss, and trauma counseling center, has been serving Tallahassee for almost 20 years.

For 5 years DoveTales was a major fundraiser for Lee's Place. Each fall we chose 6 local community members to share a true "tale" or story on a simple stage with minimal décor, offering affordable ticket prices, and the opportunity to share your story.

Last year the Tallahassee Democrat began offering a storytelling event to our Tallahassee community. The set up was simple – 6 storytellers from around the community would each tell a true story on a simple stage with minimal décor. Sound familiar?

We feared losing our audience since the Democrat has far more marketing resources than our small nonprofit. But we needn't have. When we contacted the Tallahassee Democrat they were quick to respond. After several meetings and sharing of our histories, intentions, and needs, a new plan was made that ended up being a wonderful collaboration in the true spirit of community.

Did you know that USA TODAY NETWORK, the Tallahassee Democrat's parent company, has been hosting Storyteller Projects around the country for eight years? The primary goal is bringing the community together. That's it. They want varied stories, with a common but loosely woven theme, from a true representation of our community, shared to a diverse crowd. They take applications from potential storytellers, choose those they feel will fit the quarterly theme, and then coach them in how to best tell their story. These are everyday people like you and me; teachers, managers, lawyers, store clerks, camp counselors, realtors, and parents. They have no special skills. They have the desire—perhaps the need—to tell their story.

So how do you take two businesses, one for profit and one not for profit, and combine their eerily similar events into one success story? Lots of communication!



The sold out crowd at the event

We first chose a topic we all felt would attract interesting stories that would fit the theme of Lee's Place:

In the Blink of an Eye; Stories of Tragedy, Triumph, and Transformation

The Democrat staff found and coached the tellers, wrote articles and did other marketing about the event, and made sure details were handled for the evening. Lee's Place found sponsors, secured a location, got volunteers to run the door, and took care of other details for a successful fundraiser. And we all emailed and talked on the phone with each other. A lot.

Stories are the windows to our souls. At Lee's Place stories are how the journey of therapy begins. One must share their own unique story with the therapist to begin the healing journey. Throughout history storytellers were the revered members of a tribe. They held the secrets of the ancients and the admirable quality to share the history in fascinating rhythm and cadence. To stand in front of a crowd and share a personal true story is to be admired and respected. It is not easy!

The night of our collaboration the crowd was at capacity for the American Legion Hall. Money was raised. The stories were wonderful. The evening was fun and a success for everyone.

Lee's Place board and staff are thrilled to work in conjunction with the Tallahassee Democrat to continue bringing quality storytelling entertainment to our area.

We are finalizing the date of our next collaborative event in the fall, but the Tallahassee Democrat will hold several storytelling events before then. Find information about all upcoming storyteller project events at www.storytellersproject.com/tallahassee.

And consider telling your own story. Who knows where it may lead.

Lee's Place Mission Statement:

To provide quality therapy to adults, children, and families, regardless of their financial circumstances, who are coping with loss, trauma, and life changing experiences, while offering specialized training and education to the community.

AAML Foundation Grant Check Presentation

From L-R- Lee's Place
Director of Development
Beth Tedio, Therapist
Karen Lockard, President
Brenda Rabalais,

Left To Right AAML
Staff and Fellows

Susan Duggar Stafford
- Executive Director,
Florida Chapter AAML

Kristin Adamson - AAML
Florida Chapter Fellow

Elaine Duggar - Member
of AAML National and
Chair of the Florida
Chapter's Scholarship
Committee

Shannon Novey - AAML
Florida Chapter Fellow

Jerome Novey - AAML
Florida Chapter Fellow
and Florida Chapter
Past President



Thank you to the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Foundation for their support of community members experiencing debilitating symptoms from Divorce and/or Domestic Violence.

A check for 2 grant awards was presented on November 27 to Dr. Brenda Rabalais of Lee's Place
AAML Foundation and Lee's Place have partnered for over 15 years serving children and families.



For the year 2018, during each of the 12 months, Aegis Business Technologies featured one of its not for profit partners to raise awareness in regard to the work they do in our community and beyond.

Lee's Place was featured in their October 2018 newsletter as well as in a wrap up video that can be seen here

<https://youtu.be/VEIUgVrXnxI>

Thank you to Aegis Business Technologies for their support of not only Lee's Place, but many other local agencies! Businesses supporting our nonprofit strengthens our entire community.



**Thank you
for
helping us
each year.**

2019 Lee's Place Board of Directors



Seated L-R

Kristin Whitaker (Board Chair), Brenda Rabalais (President),
Harriet Williams, Donovan Brown,

Standing L-R

Lucy Westfall, Carin Butler (Secretary), Mack Rush, Jody Elliott,
Jeanne Kimball, Danielle Kosberg (Treasurer)

"Like us" on Facebook and stay up to date on events and happenings at Lee's Place.

[www.facebook.com/
LeesPlaceTallahassee](https://www.facebook.com/LeesPlaceTallahassee)



JAN 2019

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WWW.LEESPLACE.ORG

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Lee's Place Staff



Brenda
Rabalais, PhD
Founder
and President



Karen Lockard,
LCSW
Therapist



Beth Tedio
Director of
Development



Catherine Shoultz
Part-Time
Bookkeeper

Donovan and Jessica New baby

Congratulations
to our newest
board member –
Donovan Brown
and Jessica
Crawford on
their new son –
Crawford Grover

Brown. A happy surprise for the whole family.
Crawford also has a big sister, Teagen and a
big brother, Barrett.

We are so happy for everyone!

