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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Safe Place Invites Lake County to Discover the Impact Behind One of Its Best-Kept Secrets

17th Annual Unmask the Violence Gala: Hope Lives Here celebrates 48 years of impact while raising critical funds for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking

LAKE COUNTY, IL — September 2026 — For 48 years, A Safe Place has provided safety, healing, and hope to survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking throughout Lake County. This fall, the organization is inviting the community to experience that impact firsthand at its 17th Annual Unmask the Violence Gala: Hope Lives Here, taking place Saturday, October 24, 2026, at the Lincolnshire Marriott Resort.

The signature fundraising event will bring together community members, business leaders, advocates, and supporters with a goal of raising $300,000 to sustain critical programs and services for survivors and families throughout the community.

Through comprehensive programs and services provided free of charge, A Safe Place helps survivors find safety, heal, rebuild their lives, and move toward independence. The organization's work extends beyond direct survivor services through prevention education, community outreach, awareness initiatives, and targeted intervention for those who cause harm, all designed to help break the cycle of abuse throughout the community.

The theme of this year's Gala, Hope Lives Here, represents the resilience of survivors and the power of a community committed to standing alongside them.

"Hope is more than a theme for this year's Gala, it is at the heart of everything we do," said Pat Davenport, CEO of A Safe Place. "Hope lives in the survivor who takes the courageous step toward a new beginning. It lives in the advocate who stands beside them, and it lives in every member of our community who chooses to speak up, get involved, and make a difference. When we come together, we remind survivors that they are not alone and that a future free from violence is possible."

This year, guests will have an opportunity to experience the Hope Lives Here theme throughout the evening, including an interactive journey during cocktail hour highlighting A Safe Place's 48-year history, the impact of its work today, and its vision for the future.

"For 48 years, A Safe Place has been doing extraordinary work right here in Lake County, yet in many ways, it remains one of the community's best-kept secrets," said Tabitha Kilpatrick Ferguson, MBA, 2026 Gala Chair and A Safe Place Board Member. "This year, we want to change that. Through Hope Lives Here, guests will experience where hope began and grew, where hope lives today, who powers that hope, and where hope is going next. Our goal is for people to leave with a deeper understanding of the work A Safe Place does and inspired to become part of what comes next."

FOX 32 Chicago's Gabriella Premus to Emcee the Evening
A Safe Place is honored to welcome Gabriella Premus, reporter at FOX 32 Chicago, as Emcee for this year's Unmask the Violence Gala. Guests can look forward to an inspiring program featuring a survivor sharing a powerful story of resilience and hope, along with special moments highlighting the impact of A Safe Place.

Premus has a personal connection to the mission. Her mother experienced domestic violence as a young adult and, with the support of an organization similar to A Safe Place, was able to safely leave and rebuild her life. That connection makes Premus' role as Emcee especially meaningful and reinforces the importance of ensuring survivors have access to safety, support, and hope.

The evening will also feature a Silent Auction, Live Auction, Wall of Wine & Spirits, Vacation Station, Winners' Choice, and additional opportunities for guests to directly support A Safe Place's mission.

Supporters do not need to attend the Gala to participate in the Silent Auction or purchase a travel experience through the Buy It Now section. Online participation is free and open to the community. Visit the Gala website and register for the free Online Auction Access Ticket (no admission included) to bid, win, and support A Safe Place from anywhere.

Tickets are on sale now. Community members are encouraged to reserve their seats and join A Safe Place for an unforgettable evening of hope, impact, and purpose. Sponsorship opportunities are also available for businesses, organizations, and individuals looking to make an even greater impact.

For tickets, sponsorship opportunities, and additional event information, visit the 17th Annual Unmask the Violence Gala: Hope Lives Here event page.

About A Safe Place
A Safe Place is the only organization in Lake County, Illinois, dedicated exclusively to supporting victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. Through comprehensive programs and services, A Safe Place provides survivors with the resources and support they need to rebuild their lives while working to prevent future abuse through intervention, prevention education, advocacy, and community awareness.

A Safe Place believes ending domestic violence and human trafficking requires a community-wide response. By supporting survivors, educating the community, and working to break the cycle of abuse, A Safe Place strives to create safer, healthier communities where everyone has the opportunity to live free from violence.
All services are provided free of charge to survivors.

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EVENT INFORMATION
17th Annual Unmask the Violence Gala: Hope Lives Here
Saturday, October 24, 2026
Lincolnshire Marriott Resort
10 Marriott Drive, Lincolnshire, IL 60069
Cocktail Reception: 5:30 PM
Dinner & Program: 7:00 PM
Attire: Cocktail Attire