

Feb 4, 2025

To: The Municipality of Yarmouth

The Municipality of Argyle

In the past year we have seen an increase in intimate Partner Violence with recent tragic events affecting our local community. This year marks the 30th Anniversary of another incident and the loss of a friend who was killed in South Ohio, Yarmouth County. As a community advocate, I asked myself what we can do to support the residents of Yarmouth who may be dealing with these issues as well as remember those who have.

“Barb’s bench” is an international initiative in partnership with Silent Witness Nova Scotia. The program provides awareness and support for those experiencing Domestic Violence / Intimate Partner Violence. “Barbs Bench” is a purple bench that is placed in communities, started in Nova Scotia and now with benches located across Canada and as far away as Australia. These benches not only provide a solace, but they also include contact information for help and support with a contact information for our local transition houses.

Attached is more information on the bench and its origin.

I started with the vision of one bench located in Frost Park. With the support of the Town of Yarmouth Councillor Gil Dares and MLA Nick Hilton the idea has grown. With the goal to make this reality as early as this spring. We are planning an event for June 4th, 2025. This event will include local stake holders like Juniper House. This event is designed not only to bring awareness to the benches and their location but to bring a voice for those who may need it.

Although this idea started as one bench, we recognize that everyone from the Municipality of Argyle and the Municipality of Yarmouth are as affected by intimate partner violence and would like to invite both Municipalities to participate in this project. Placing one and possibly two benches within the

town of Yarmouth provides a central location for all citizens of the Municipality and town to demonstrate that we stand as region, united.

We are willing to put in the work to make this happen, however there is a cost of approx. \$2000 to procure each bench plus the cost of installation. We are asking the Town of Yarmouth , the Municipality of Yarmouth and the Municipality of Argyle to assist in offsetting this cost . We are asking that you consider covering the cost of two benches between all 3 of you, in full or in part.

In addition to purchasing the benches, there will be an unveiling ceremony. If you are unable to assist in covering the cost of the benches, we would appreciate any in-kind contributions to assist with the project such as decorations or possible food and beverages for the reception that will follow the event .

On June 4th 2025 we would love to do a joint unveiling and awareness campaign showing the support of all three municipalities. We know this community has suffered and this would be a way of supporting each other during this difficult time.

We appreciate you considering this request and look forward to hearing from you. We hope you will consider this request at your February meetings.

I am also available to answer any questions that you may have in this regard .

Ina Comeau-Collins

inacomeau@gmail.com

(902) 740-1887