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The Giving Tree Gives Back to Victims of Domestic Violence *Community and Local Businesses Provide Holiday Gifts to Families Kickoff December 1*

NEWBURYPORT, Mass. – Local businesses and community residents are being invited to make the holiday season happier for families impacted by domestic violence and participate in The Giving Tree, a gift-giving program organized by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center for their clients.

Fourteen area businesses and organizations have already committed to adopting individual families and fulfilling their Christmas wish lists. They include the Institution for Savings, Interlocks Salon & Day Spa, Currier & Associates, Inc., Valentino Salon, Chase & Lunt Insurance, Arthur S. Page Insurance, Carry Out Café, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, all of Newburyport; Munters Corporation, Amesbury Industrial Supply Company, and Educational Child Care, all in Amesbury; as well Andover Healthcare, Inc. and Latitudes Sports Clubs, both of Salisbury and Home Made Brand Foods, Inc. of Newbury. In addition, the Maritime Landing condominium complex in Newburyport and the Newburyport Garden Club are purchasing gift cards for businesses such as Market Basket, Wal-Mart, Kmart and gas stations which will be donated to families.

Area residents are also invited to participate in The Giving Tree program in two ways: Interlocks Salon and Spa and Valentino's Hair Salon will host a holiday tree where the public can choose a gift tag with an individualized holiday request for a child or parent to buy and donate to families served by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center. Also, people are invited to visit either Jabberwocky or The Book Rack, choose a gift tag with a suggestion for an individually-selected book matched to an unnamed child whose family has been affected by domestic abuse, and purchase that book to be distributed by volunteers at the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center.

“Our goal is that every child involved in our programs will receive a new book as a special gift,” says Cintra Warden, head of volunteers for the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center. “This is the first time we've attempted to gift a book to each child with whom we work.”

Last year, The Giving Tree program distributed holiday gifts to 52 families. “This should be a joyous time of the year for everyone, particularly families who have suffered, and the community wants to be give back and give joy,” says Suzanne Dubus, executive director of the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center.

For more than 25 years, the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center has been helping individuals and families who are at risk because of domestic violence. What began as the compassionate mission of several volunteer parishioners of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Newburyport

in 1982, has grown into a nationally-recognized local organization serving families from Amesbury, Merrimac, Georgetown, Newbury, Newburyport, Rowley, Salisbury, West Newbury and Groveland. The mission of the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center is to empower community members to live free from fear, intimidation, violence or the threat of abuse by providing support, advocacy and education. Its goal is to end domestic violence and create communities that are safe for all its members. For more information about the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center, visit www.jeannegeigercrisiscenter.org or call 978.465.0999.

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