



Mountain Womyn

GWRC Welcomes New Executive Director

Volume 2, Issue 3
Fall, 2008

HELLO FROM MARIA!

Hi to all of you friends of the Women's Centre and visitors, I have just survived my first eight weeks here in Golden as the new ED, and what a wonderful time I had! You all have made me feel so welcome giving me a tour of the town, explaining some of the history of Golden and introducing me to people in the community – thank you so much, I truly appreciate your generous welcoming spirit!

Just a quick little blurb on my background: for those of you who I haven't met yet, my name is Maria Walther, I am a single parent of two boys, Neil (11) and Lars (9), - our family includes our dog Selma and cat Mumin – and we have just come from Clearwater, BC, where we helped my mother cope with a bout of cancer (I'm happy to say it is currently in remission). Before that, we lived in Prince George where I have been enrolled since 2006 in the Master of Social Work program with a focus on rural communities and a specialization in counselling. I hope to finish my degree within the coming year, but above all, I hope that it will prove meaningful in my work here at the women's centre. My background is in women's issues (respectful relationships, stopping violence against women, social health determinants as they impact women, cross-cultural bridge-building etc.) and working towards community health from the perspective of women and their families, something that often includes advocacy for social justice, gender justice and basic human rights.

Being at the Golden Women's Centre is exhilarating since there are so many things going on at any given time. I particularly enjoy the fact that there is something here for almost everyone, from just dropping in for a tea/coffee or a noon workshop to utilizing our resources – computers,

library, staff all ages come into the centre to help themselves to what we have to offer. The healthy mix of emergency support (stopping the violence, safe homes), educational and recreational resources is what makes it alive and vibrant. Thanks to Roni, Cheryl, Sarah and Christina for taking me under their wings during orientation. I look forward to working with you all. Thanks also to Laurie for teaching me the ropes while at the same time juggling exam preparations and family commitments.

This is the big picture I see: we still live in a time of gender inequality and less choices for women (reproductive, career, legal, health) and we still very much need to create safe spaces for women and children who have experienced a wide range of abuse. We also still live in a society that standardizes heterosexuality, cultivates racial/homophobia and by negating or minimizing people's unique identities pushes them to the margins of society and beyond (creating a society of isms). Having said that, we all live in relation to one another, moving through life in ongoing overlapping circles of varying degrees of connectedness. With this in mind I want to build on the goals of my predecessors and continue to advance the Golden Women's Centre's role in the community as a vital, essential service provider offering commitment and collaboration in ways that enrich the lives of women and their families and enhance the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

Thank you,
Maria Walther

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"We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily difference we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee."

- Marian Wright Edelman, American activist, *Families in Peril*

Golden Womens Resource Centre
Golden, British Columbia

Services Include

Safe Homes Program
Outreach Services
Advocacy & Support
Internet Access
Resource Library
Computer Support
Good Karma Exchange
Free Condoms and Female
Supplies

Staff

Roni Beauregard, *Safe Homes
Coordinator: 250-344-2101*
Maria Walther, *Executive
Director: 250-344-5317*
Cheryl Verheyden, *Outreach
Coordinator: 250-344-5317*
Sarah Wegelin, *Special Projects
Coordinator: 250-344-5317*

Hours of Operation

Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday,
10am-5pm
Wednesday
10am-7pm
Friday
10am-4pm

Visit Us...

In person: 419C 9th. Ave. N
By Mail: P.O. Box 2343
Golden. B.C.
VOA 1H2

Online:

www.goldenwomenscentre.ca

From the Frontline

Starlight Soiree Sparkles Golden

The GWRC's third annual Starlight Soiree was held on November 27th. It was a night of many fabulous features that brought about 150 guests, dressed in their best, to the Golden Civic Centre.

Wonderful entertainment presented by Elite Sound and Light and live music by Jane Fearing and Sue Gould set the mood for the evening. The Golden Naval Academy opened up the silent auction with a dance under the lights strung between the tents and beautifully decorated with elegant and colourful origami flowers.

The Silent Auction and Loonie Draw were both very successful. Many community businesses, artists and service providers donated items and art and gift certificates.

"We had a fantastic variety of items in our Silent Auction this year and are extremely grateful to all of the generosity we received in-order to make this event possible and successful," says Sarah Wegelin, Special Projects Coordinator.

The guests at the Starlight Soiree helped the GWRC to raise just over \$6,000 in proceeds that will go towards maintaining programs run by the GWRC.

"Thank you to all of our volunteers who gave their time and creativity to the Starlight Soiree," says Wegelin.

The Golden-famous Woman of the Year basket went to, winner through random draw, Carissa Hart.

This year the GWRC recruited Sherry Grykuliac to take pictures of guests in a fun photo booth. Sherry was generous to donate her time and services to the event as well as Golden's Firefighting Association who served the bar. Thank you so much, hope to see you next year!!

Bringing Women Together

The Golden Women's Resource Centre (GWRC) will bring its volunteers, clients, members and supporters together during its Holiday Potluck, to be held at the GWRC on December 11 at noon.

This will be the GWRC's third annual potluck lunch. It is a fun way to bring women together during the holidays to celebrate the season and come together to laugh, talk and enjoy each others company.

Guests are asked to bring a warm, cold, sweet or savory dish to the event. Please contact the GWRC to make arrangements: 250-344-5317.

Dates to look
Out for....

December

Saturday, Dec. 6

December 6 Memorial

Contact: Roni 250-344-2101

Thursday, Dec. 11

Holiday Hot Lunch

Noon

Contact: GWRC 250-344-5317

Closed for Christmas

December, 24, 25, 26

Closed January 1

**Golden Safe Homes-24hr
Emergency Service is always
available: 250-344-2101**

For more information check us
out on-line:

www.goldenwomenscentre.ca

or contact GWRC:

250-344-5317

**National Day of Remembrance
and Action on Violence Against
Women**



December 6th

From the Frontline

Update from Outreach

Hard to believe 4 months have gone by since I started here. I guess time really does fly when you're having fun! Well, I am settling in quite nicely, and really beginning to feel more and more comfortable and confident in my position here, although there is still so much to learn. I guess that's what I really love about this place. You never stop learning. Every day I feel like I learn a little more, and grow into myself a little more.

Well, winter is beginning to settle in, and soon we'll be hitting the slopes. I want to thank everyone who participated in the events of Women's History Month. The workshops were awesome, and the window turned out quite nicely as well. Thanks again to all the wonderful women who let me put their pictures up. I truly believe that every woman in our community is making history and shaping our unique mountain culture. I have lived in a few different places in my life, and never before have I ever seen so many strong, beautiful, unique and amazing women in one place. Although the month is over, don't stop reaching out and learning about all the wonderful women who cross your path.

I gained one new volunteer for the courtwatch program through Sarah Wegelin's newcomers' group. I am still currently seeking one or two more volunteers for the program. If anyone is interested they can come and talk to me at the women's centre at anytime.

We had our biggest turnout ever for the Fall Girlz group! Thirty-one girls signed up in the three different age categories. The girls started out by adding to our big scrapbook of wonderful women that we keep at the centre. Come by and check it out, and feel free to add a page at any time.

As the season's change, let us welcome the cold weather and the coming blanket of snow as a time of quiet reflection and rest, while we gear up for new adventures in the upcoming winter!

Happy Fall/Winter everyone!

Cheryl Verheyden

Outreach Coordinator

Golden Women's Resource Centre

Volunteers are needed for the Golden Women's Resource Centre

Into Fashion?

Our Good Karma Exchange needs some weekly attention!

Computer Savvy?

Administrative work requiring creative input is available!

Are you a bookworm?

Our resource library needs to be updated!

Call to Artists...

Our window loves a paint job and is looking for an artist's touch.

Find out more, call Sarah Wegelin, Special Projects Coordinator

250-344-5317

From the Frontline

Update from Safe Homes

Hello to all, hope this safe homes report sees everyone enjoying the change of season and continued good health.

The Safe Homes program continues to be busy. Our statistical numbers are up compared to this time last year. I don't really believe it is because there is more violence in our community, I believe it is partially because women are accepting information about abuse and have set positive personal boundaries. This is extremely motivating for those of us who provide services. This does not change nor lessen the impact abuse has on families, there are still difficult challenges.

The community continues to support the Women's Resource Centre in very helpful ways. The Safe Homes program has a wish list. This is a list of women who need furniture, household supplies and appliances. I often receive calls from the people of Golden who have items, and we try to connect them with someone in need. This has proven to be such a wonderful bonus to local families. Not to mention the added bonus of keeping useful items out of our local landfill. I also want to extend huge thanks to anyone who ever donated clothing for the Good Karma Exchange. The staff of the GWRC are often amazed at how quickly the turnover of these items can be. When we do have items that don't seem to find a new home we pass them on to our local church stores, where they

are very much appreciated too.

The December 6th Memorial has come and gone and once again people ask me why we continue to honour the memory of the 14 women who were murdered at Ecole Polytechnique.

There are a number of good answers to that question and the message and memorial is not just for the one day, it is a year round challenge to everyone.

If one person stops a bully from hurting another, we honour this day. In turn if the bully accepts new ideas, and is accepted and forgiven in the community, we have honoured the day.

When we speak out for a better range of services for the mentally ill, we honour the 14 women.

When we continue to support families who face having a mentally ill family member we honour this day.

When we agree that all life is valued, none are more central, superior or deserving, we honour this day.

When we choose to not speak to others rudely, despite our own levels of disappointment we honour this day.

Finally, when we stand and attend the December 6th Memorial our numbers show there are many more people who believe there will be a day when we don't question why.

Roni Beauregard

Let's Get Involved!

Sign up today for a series of fun computer workshops!

Tap into your technological side in a non-threatening, fun environment. We'll show you computers are for everyone, you don't have to ask for help anymore...

Workshops will run through January, individual help will be provided. Create your own learning schedule.

Contact Sarah Wegelin at 250-344-5317

Participation maxes out Fall girls program

Over 30 girls participated in the fall session of the girls-group program, titled, *Wonderful Women of our Community, Country and our World*.

The program started in October, and maxed out to its full capacity seeing 31 girls in all three groups categorized by grades 5, 6/7 and 8/9.

Sarah Wegelin, Special Projects Coordinator and Cheryl Verheyden, Outreach Coordinator led the girls in topics that focused on overcoming challenges, standing up for what you believe in, women of our community, comic book she-roes and more.

“The girls were so enthusiastic about the program. This season’s theme allowed us to come up with some really thought provoking topics and activities that encouraged the girls to find creative ways to overcome barriers. We had a look at a video about a woman who had lost both of her arms and accomplishes her daily activities (including raising a baby) by using her feet. A lot of the girls had mixed reactions over it, some were completely amazed and others seemed unsure of how to react.

“The idea of that particular topic was to talk about not setting limits for yourself, that you can do anything you put your mind to and if there are barriers than there are creative ways to overcome them,” says Wegelin.

“Cheryl put together a great activity where the girls had to decipher a positive message by using brail. She put together the brail alphabet for the girls to use and they had to close their eyes to find the message. By the end of the activity everyone was finding it easier to figure out the different letters in the message.”

During the topic, Women of the Music World, the Girlz Group welcomed singer/songwriter Kathy Milne, who came and played for the girls.

“We designed our own musical instruments to play with Kathy when she came, so we all played with her and sang, it was a fun jam session. Sometimes having positive contact like that for a young girl with a talented ‘grown up’ can be very inspiring, especially at an age when the only music the girls are listening to is Hannah Montana-sort of stuff and not really seeing or hearing anything else in the sense that

they’re into it as much, so this gave the girls an opportunity to experience something completely original by someone completely original and uncommercialized. One of the quieter girls held a guitar we brought in and she came out of her shell a little more than usual, so just that experience for some of the girls will hopefully encourage them to not believe in limitations, but believe in themselves.

We wrapped the fall session up with a pizza party that brought all three groups together.

“We were hoping to encourage peer mentoring, that whole idea of seeing eachother at school and knowing eachother from girlz group even though they’re in different grades, a sort of unspoken comrade-woman-ship. Being a young girl can be so awkward so hopefully the girls are seeing the Girlz group as a positive, fun and safe place to just be themselves. We’re definitely getting a lot of positive feedback from parents.”

The Winter session will start towards the end of January. We’re really looking forward to it and have some really fun ideas brewing already.

The Girlz Group Program brings girls grades 5-9 to the GWRC to participate in fun, educational and thought provoking activities based on topics that affect them and our society.

It is designed to empower young women, promote independent thinking, and build self-esteem, confidence and relationships.

The grade 5 girls group program is funded by the Golden and District Community Initiatives foundation through the Columbia Basin Trust. The 6-9 group is funded through our Outreach Program.

GOLDEN WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

GOLDEN WOMEN CENTRE SOCIETY Board of Directors

Co-Chair Peggy Chalmers

Co-Chair Dalia Yanai

Co-Secretary, Hilary Frazer

Co-Secretary, Monique Limoges

Treasurer, Leslie Butala

Director, Judith Susan Doyle

Director, Janice Gustofson

Director, Amy Sharples

Women's Centre's Board of Directors are elected at our Annual General Meeting, held in June. They represent a wide variety of talented and professional women within our community.

The Golden Women's Resource Centre was formally organized in 1978, and became a registered charity in 1983. The Golden Women's Resource Centre provides information, supportive counseling, educational workshops, free Internet access and most importantly a safe, non-judgmental, supportive and welcoming environment for women to gather, relax and share ideas. We serve an area of the East Kootenays bounded by Spillimacheen, Donald, and Field, home to approximately 10,000 people.

The Golden Women's Resource Centre is committed to activities related to improving the status of women.

We are actively engaged in efforts to end violence against women and their children as well as end the tolerance of violence against women.

Our Vision: The Golden Women's Resource Centre Society supports the empowerment of women locally and globally by building women's individual capacity, acting as a catalyst for change and leading the way to a non-violent, socially just, healthy and diverse society.

Our Mission: The Golden Women's Resource Centre Society is a registered non-profit charity, dedicated to the safety and empowerment of women. The Golden Women's Resource Centre provides a secure environment, support, information and resources. The Society also provides outreach services, education and advocacy for women and issues that affect them.

Become a Member

Support your Women's Centre by initiating or renewing your membership. Your membership helps us continue to offer the services you enjoy, as well as to expand our offerings to meet your interests and needs.

To become a member, simply fill out the information below and bring it in or mail it to the Women's Center.

Cost is \$10, but don't let your budget stop you. Pay what you can afford: Every dollar we receive makes a difference!

Thank you!

GWRC Member Information

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____