



**WHISTLER COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY**

*"A Helping Hand Toward A Healthy Community"*

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2011-2012**



*Staff from left to right: Davin Moore, Outreach Supervisor, Kari Mancer, Administrative Manager, Cheryl Skribe, Re-Use-It Centre Manager, Melissa Deller, Seniors Needs Action Planner, Claire Mozes, Outreach Program Manager, Lorna Van Straaten, Executive Director and Brian Van Straaten, Re-Build-It Centre Manager. Absent: Jackie Dickinson, Drug & Alcohol Education and Sara Jennings, Food Bank Coordinator.*

*-photo by Joernrohde.com*

**CELEBRATING 23 YEARS IN WHISTLER 1989-2012**

**OUR MISSION:** *Providing programs and services that support social sustainability in Whistler.*

**OUR VISION:** *To be the prominent social services resource in whistler by responding to the changing needs of a diverse Whistler community.*





## ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

June 2012

*"To be the prominent social service resource in Whistler by responding to the changing needs of a diverse Whistler community."* Whistler Community Services Society vision statement.

Our vision has been *the* significant driver for the operations of WCSS.

An organizational review resulted in the administrator and executive director roles being combined. Lorna VanStraaten was appointed executive director and two new manager positions were created. Lorna and her senior staff have been diligent in monitoring programs offered by WCSS to ensure they are meeting Whistler's evolving needs. This has led to a number of program changes at WCSS.

- New management at the Re-Use-It Centre have launched a number of creative ideas to expand the business. Revenue from the Centre is vitally important to WCSS; it provides over 60% of the revenue for all WCSS programs.
- The food bank is Whistler's canary in the coal mine. Economic tough times, escalating food prices and employees not working enough hours, have an immediate impact on food bank usage. Record numbers of people using the food bank have resulted in the need to be creative. Our dedicated staff have responded. Operations increased to weekly — from bi-weekly — and were refocused to meet individual needs. New programs to raise community awareness of the need for donations of both food and money were successful.
- Outreach staff are available to support people experiencing challenges in their lives such as relationship violence, employment issues and drug and alcohol problems. Staff fulfill a key role in helping people when they are most vulnerable. They *are* the "hand up" when someone is struggling. Staff have been very busy supporting people throughout the year and have their fingers on the pulse of the under-30 community.
- The Re-Build-It Centre was a new business for WCSS in 2011. The community has responded favourably to its operation and we look forward to the creative energies of staff as they facilitate the ability of homeowners and renters to re-use existing resources and reduce the amount of useful product that ends up in the landfill.
- The Board of WCSS grew from five to nine members with six of the nine new in June 2011. They are a dedicated, caring group of people who work behind the scenes to set policy, monitor financial results and support staff. They ensure staff have what they need to operate more than 27 programs that enhance the lives and well-being of the community of Whistler. A very special thank you to *Karen Bauckham* who is leaving the board after 12 years of dedicated service.

Next year WCSS will continue fulfilling its vision as staff explore creative methods of helping people recycle their used goods and bottles in bins closer to home. Staff will also be helping establish the first accessible community garden in Bayly Park as a prototype for other subdivisions to create their own community gardens.

For 23 years WCSS has been responding to the ever-changing social needs of the Whistler community. It does so with a dedicated board of directors who volunteer their time to ensure staff have the tools they need, staff who are passionate and dedicated to helping people facing challenging times, and donors who understand it takes a community of caring individuals, businesses and foundations to really be successful. I would like to thank everyone that has ever made a donation of time, goods or money to help WCSS fulfill its vision.

Respectfully,

*Anne Townley*

Board Chair

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**CHAIR- Anne Townley**

**VICE CHAIR- Doug Treleven**

**TREASURER- Josh Blodans**

**DIRECTOR- Karen Bauckham**

**DIRECTOR- Stephanie Matches**

**DIRECTOR-Mavis Jenner**

**DIRECTOR-Colleen Fraser**

**DIRECTOR- Christian Boone**

**DIRECTOR-Britni Troy**

**RMOW Rep: Jack Crompton**

**Outgoing: Karen Bauckham**

*(Director since 2000)*



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Continuity gives us roots; change gives us branches, letting us stretch and grow and reach new heights. -Pauline R. Kezer

The past year for Whistler Community Services Society was one full of change. A new board revitalized the agency with strong direction and purpose. A move took us physically in new directions; the new Re-Build-It Centre began to cement its place in the community and internal restructuring focused on building strong management teams at the stores and a financial framework suitable for the growing agency. The continuity at the agency continues to be the staff, most with the agency over 5 years now, some approaching their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

A move mid-year to the new Whistler Blackcomb Foundation Social Services Centre allowed staff the luxury of offices, (private space to meet with clients) and centralization with the food bank. The WCSS concept of one building housing multiple agencies and client services came to fruition with the establishment of working space for the Howe Sound Women's Centre, Sea to Sky Community Services and Zero Ceiling. Already the centre has become a vibrant community resource, offering programming for a wide variety of residents, and low cost space for other non-profit groups to meet. WCSS thanks the RMOW for the facility.

The commitment from WCSS that no person shall go hungry in Whistler was met this year in spite of over 700 more individual visits than the year prior. As well food donations were down over 10,000 pounds from 2010-11. This stress on the Food Bank, and the agencies financial commitment to the new Re-Build-It Centre forced WCSS to tap into its capital reserves for the first time in agency history. The community rallied and at the end of the day, was able to offset a large portion of the proposed deficit. This high demand has forced the agency to re-visit the food bank concept and the result is a streamlined program that offers education, healthier food and increase outreach support.

WCSS was chosen to write a Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP) that surveyed the community as to their attitudes about liquor service inside RMOW facilities and parks. This document also identified areas of concern expressed by residents and started dialogue on the issue of alcohol usage in Whistler. The municipality is now moving forward doing work to make a MAP ready to adopt.

Management changes at the Re-Use-It Centre bring exciting changes to the retail division. The Re-Build-It Centre performed well in its first year, and is poised to enter its second year with expanding furniture sales and velvet glove deconstruction services. As well, this coming year the stores venture out into the community with establishment of remote donation sites and "Community Cares" pick up days for donations pick-up. Recycling of electronics, bottles and cans are expanding the revenues of the store. WCSS will continue to add more recycling streams to increase revenues. This helps position WCSS financially to be able to meet the growing and changing needs of our community.

Other exciting concepts for the coming year are the establishment of a dedicated Seniors' Drop-In Centre, multi-cultural Welcome Centre programming and expansion of some WCSS core programming. For example the Drug & Alcohol Education Program is expanding thanks to an American Friends of Whistler(AFOW) grant, and will now include peer mentoring education for the grade 7 classes. We continue to seek to grow community capacity among residents to help the agency deliver resource information and programming. I offer heartfelt thanks to our board of volunteers, funders and the community of Whistler who truly understand the work we strive to do in the community and support us on so many levels!

Warm Regards,

*Lorna*

Lorna Van Straaten, Executive Director

## STAFF 2011-12

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Lorna Van Straaten

### PROGRAM MANAGERS –

- Outreach Services-Claire Mozes
- Administration/Foods- Kari Mancer

### STORE MANAGERS-

- Re-Use-It Centre – Cheryl Skribe
- Re-Build-It Centre – Brian Van Straaten

### OUTREACH SUPERVISOR-

Davin Moore

### SCHOOL BASED D&A EDUCATOR –

Jackie Dickinson

### SENIORS NEEDS ACTION PLANNER-

Melissa Deller

### FOOD BANK COORDINATOR –

Sara Jennings



Spring Creek Pac presents \$2,000 to the Drug & Alcohol Education Program.

## WHAT OUR CLIENTS & FUNDERS HAVE TO SAY...

*“The Resort Municipality of Whistler is quite often perceived as a community largely made up of “The Haves”, when in reality the lifeblood of the community which supports and drives its spirit and success, do not always land in that camp. As such, WCSS through its myriad of programs plays a vital role in supporting the community at large. The tireless efforts of their staff and volunteers, and the reciprocal benefits it provides, cannot be understated.”*



*Warrick Hubbard, Director of Marketing, Ziptrek Ecotours.*

*To the Whistler Community Services Society,*

*I would like to express my deepest heartfelt gratitude to Whistler Community Services Society and to Davin Moore especially.*

*I went through a life altering and extremely difficult time after being assaulted and the unbelievably long and draining court processes that have and still follow. The person who assaulted me was found guilty. I do not know if I would have been able to make it through the 5 day Trial if Davin, WCSS and the other front line workers were not there to support me and to witness what actually happens in these types of cases. For this, I am forever grateful.*

*I do not know how I would have made it through, had it not been for the wonderful and genuine help I received, even from the WCSS volunteers who helped me move last November.*

*I would also like to mention a special thanks in to the Whistler Victim Services and the Whistler R.C.M.P.*

*Thank You All, from the bottom of my Heart- D.H.*

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: APRIL 1, 2009-MARCH 31, 2010

- In 2011-12 the **Food Bank** served 3,535 visits including 209 children. This was 711 people more than 2010-11. Conversely, 15,813 pounds of food was donated to the program, down 10,048 pounds from the year before.
- **Outreach Services** connected 1,137 times in one-on-one meetings with residents in some form of crisis.
- 116 individuals qualified for the **Counseling Assistance** subsidy.
- 91 individuals accessed the **Financial Assistance** Program
- 139 free tax returns were completed for the **Tax Assist** program
- 61 children qualified for **KidSport** in Whistler
- 34 residents got free legal advice in the **Access to Justice** program.
- 179 residents qualified for the RMOW **Recreation Credit**.
- 212 residents qualified for free **Re-Use-It Centre** gift certificates to purchase clothing and other necessities.

- 32 Whistler families received Christmas hampers in the **Santa's Helpers** program.
- 153 people attended one of 26 **Community Kitchens** sessions.
- The **SNAP** Seniors walking groups had 125 attendees and 14 participated in snow-shoeing.
- **Helping Hands** helped 35 clients with 189 hours of volunteer time contributed.
- **\$10,680** worth of free gift certificates were redeemed at the store.
- **The Re-Use-It Centre and Re-Build-It Centre** in 2011 kept 218.73 metric tonnes of goods from the landfill.
- 51,529 people purchased something at the **Re-Use-It Centre**, making it the busiest thrift store in Whistler!
- The **Drug & Alcohol Education Program** in Whistler, ran 110 drug prevention classes in the three schools, and educated reaching about 200 kids a week on a regular basis!
- 14 peer educators were trained in resources and volunteered an average of 1-2 hours every week for 6 months.
- WCSS ran four locations for the **Community Greenhouse program**. Combined, these greenhouses supplied 216 community members with fresh organic vegetables each summer.

#### WCSS SUPPORTERS: SPONSORS, DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS



RBC Foundation®

THE  
Kelty Patrick Dennehy  
FOUNDATION





From left to right: Executive Director, Lorna Van Straaten, Chair Anne Townley, Columnist G.D. Maxwell, Whistler Blackcomb Foundation Executive Director, Mei McCurdy, Board Member Stephanie Matches and Outreach Program Manager, Claire Mozes. -*photo joernrohde.com*

Staff, board and funders all unite to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation Social Services Centre, located at 1519 Spring Creek Drive, Whistler, B.C.

- Space was donated by The Municipality, Rotary, and the fire hall, TELUS Whistler Conference Centre (\$8,800), My Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church (land for Food Bank \$10,000 yr), MYPlace (\$600) and the Whistler Library (\$1,560) to help run these programs. Retail value of these spaces totaled approximately **\$38,960.00 +**.
- Volunteers volunteered 4,089 hours to various programs for a net benefit to WCSS of \$40,890.



*The Jim Cook Community Greenhouse Program is dedicated to volunteer Jim Cook who has puts in hundreds of hours of time to the program year after year!*

## FINANCIALS

See attached

## WHISTLER COMMITTEES WCSS CONTRIBUTES TO:

Whistler 2020 Health and Social Task Force /Whistler 2020 Affordability Task Force/ Whistler 2020 Resident Housing Task Force /Healthy Communities/Zero Ceiling/ Whistler Liquor Licensing Advisory Committee/Whistler for Youth/Mountain Youth Society/Women's Safety Network



## COMMUNITY SUPPORT/GIFT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

We have ongoing relationships and make donations of merchandise to the following Community Groups:

Emergency preparedness for Lower Lakes Communities and Whistler/Whistler Emergency Social Services/Victim Services /Mount Currie Band/The Easter Seals Camp/Lillooet Community Group/Whistler Children's Centre's/Pemberton Catholic Church/Howe Sound Women's Centre Society/Pearl's Safe Home Program/Zero Ceiling Society/Britannia Beach Community Group/Pemberton Community Centre/Clinton Church Store/Mission Outreach Vancouver/Squamish St. Joseph's Thrift Store/Whistler Art's council/Whistler Church Groups/And many other community groups and world-wide relief efforts over the years.

- Our Gift Certificates are distributed free of charge to seasonal workers, Outreach clients and community groups who are looking for support.



-Jackie Dickinson, Lil Goldsmid and Kari Mancer at the Grand Opening of the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation Social Services Centre.

-Greg Newton of the Royal Bank presents \$2,500 to the Outreach program on behalf of The Royal Bank Foundation, Deb Lacroix, Executive Director of the Kelty Patrick Dennehy Foundation donates \$2,500 for advertising for the "You Talk, We Listen" Advertising campaign at the 2011 Welcome Dinner.