

# Newsletter

Vernon Women's **Transition House** Society

Issue # 1

Date: September 2014

## FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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I am pleased to share with you our first **Tri-Annual Newsletter** of 2014!

In the past year we have reviewed our newsletters and determined that it was time for a change. It is our hope that the new format and content of the VVTHS Newsletter will serve as one of the channels to help you stay connected with VVTHS.

The intent is to provide you with information about our staff, our services and our events, giving you the opportunity to be knowledgeable about and actively involved with our Society.

My contribution to the newsletter will mostly consist of a variety of Administration updates.

#### Here are a few highlights from the recent months:

- Following a management reorganization process we are privileged to have **Brooke M.** and **Monica M.** overseeing all VVTHS Programs and supporting the staff to deliver excellent services to our clients.



**Ninke Beekma**  
Executive Director

- We have completed a successful audit in May 2014. As a Society we were able to maintain a healthy financial position during the fiscal year 2013-2014.
- Our AGM was held in June 2014 and we are fortunate that the one vacant seat on the Board of Directors was filled. **Welcome, Jeanne Byron!** The Board of Directors meets on a monthly basis from September to November and from January to June.
- Our Health & Safety (H&S) Committee meets monthly to discuss H&S related items, to recommend H&S Policies, and to plan for H&S Training.

Current members of the Committee are: Wynn H., Pat S., Marg S. and Ninke B.

- In the midst of summer, Sherry D. started her position as the Accounting & Payroll Administrator with VVTHS. I'm happy that Sherry joined our team!

I wish to use this opportunity to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their amazing work for the people we serve. Please know that you make a positive difference in the lives of people in the community of Vernon.

*Women will live with dignity and respect, free from violence and abuse.*

WEBSITE: <http://vwts.ca>

B.C. Housing  
Ministry of Justice

Gaming Policy & Enforcement Branch  
Ministry for Children & Family Development

Law Foundation of B.C.  
Legal Services Society



## COMMUNITY PROGRAM UPDATES

Brooke M.

### Community Programs Update:

The community programs have had several changes over the past months. We welcomed Daphne R. to the STV Counselling program in March and Jackie S. to the CWWA Counselling Program in April. During Wynn H.'s absence this summer, the Outreach Program has been staffed by Shannon F. and the LSS Community Partner program by Lorraine. L. We have just hired Cindy P. as the new Legal Advocate.

**Featured Program: Specialized Victim's Assistance Program (SVAP) Location:** Vernon Courthouse. SVAP provides support and information to women, men and children who have been victimized as a result of domestic

violence, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse (recent or in the past), elder abuse and stalking.

The staff at SVAP will assist clients to understand the court process, accompany them to meet with judicial officials such as Crown Counsel and police, assist them to write Victim Impact Statements, assess their safety and work with them to create a safety plan, provide updates about their court case, assist them to apply for Crime Victim Assistance funding and accompany the client to court. This program has two full-time workers and have an average caseload of 400 open cases. Clients may self-refer.

### VWTHS Projects Update:

**Feature Project:** The Integrated Case Assessment Team (ICAT) work has been busy over the past several months.

ICAT reviews cases of high risk domestic violence where there is risk of serious bodily harm or death to the victims of the violence.

VWTHS co-chairs this team with the RCMP. Since ICAT began reviewing cases in 2010 we have assisted in the assessment of an average of 20 cases per year. So far, in 2014, we have reviewed 15 cases and deemed 11 of those cases as high risk.

The North Okanagan Case Management Team (ICAT) was announced as the winner of the Regional Premier's Award in the Partnership category. This award honors exceptional service to British Columbians by provincial public service employees and their partners.

## RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS UPDATES

Monica M.

We have had a very busy summer at the Transition House and look forward to a team building day planned for September as well as a number of training opportunities both on-line and in the community.

Thank you to all staff for their unfailing dedication and hard work.

### Feature Program:

**Casimir Court—Support to Young Parents Program:**

This program provides affordable housing and support to pregnant and parenting teens and young women (ages 15-24). The services include one or two bedroom apartments with affordable rent, free utilities, laundry and cable. There is a Security System in place and it is monitored regularly. Furniture and household items are available on a limited basis.

Our staff provides life skills groups such as budgeting, nutrition, cooking, and shopping, as well as parenting support and information. Personal growth groups are also offered such as self esteem, relationships and addictions. Our staff are also responsive to cultural identity needs.

We provide on site support from Public Health, Mother Goose, Literacy Support, Addictions and Mental Health Counsellors and we also provide supportive counselling from on site staff. Residents also receive peer support and recreational opportunities.

For referral information please call Brenda D. or our new staff member Susan N. **250-549-2887** to begin the referral process and tour of the program.



## STAFF & VOLUNTEER NEWS

There have been a number of changes to staff over the past months, and we have a number of new staff members that have joined our agency.

We would like to take the opportunity to welcome the following people to VVTHS:

Susan N., Kaila S., Shelly W., Taylor Z., Rosalie P., Sherry D. and Cindy P. Welcome Aboard!

Wynn H. is now back in the Outreach Worker and LSS Community Partner roles.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society gratefully accepted a donation for **\$8,457.60** from **The Rise Community Association (RCA)** for the purchase of new beds for the Transition House. The funds were raised at the RCA's **First Annual Charity Event**. The RCA paired local artists and local celebrities to create a piece of art to auction off at the event held July 5, 2014 on Johnny's Patio at The Rise. Eleven pieces of art were auctioned off as was a furniture set donated by Beachcomber Home Leisure.



Brooke M. (Left) VVTHS Program Director with her artist-teacher Linda Hunt (Right) and their painting titled *"Transition"* which was auctioned off for **\$850**.

From Kalamalka Rotary Club's "Dream Auction" we received a total of **\$10,000** for our Bedroom Renovations Project and the Sexual Assault Services.

We would also like to thank all of the people and businesses who so generously donate to our organization throughout the year.

VVTHS provides valuable services to women and children in crisis. All support we receive will greatly benefit the women and children we serve at VVTHS.

For more information about our services, please refer to our **Website: <http://vvths.ca>**.

We are always accepting **Society Memberships**. If you wish to be a Society Member you can download a *"Society Membership Application"* from our website. Memberships help to maintain ongoing funding for our services.

## TRAINING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

**The Women's Counselling Group - Making Connections** will run from October 2nd for 12 weeks. Women call 250-558-3850 to join the participant list.

**BC Housing—Domestic Violence Safety Planning Online Training**

**BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH)** Annual Conference is being held October 22nd and 23rd in Richmond, BC.

**BC Council for Families** will be providing a Young Parent Program Conference October 24th and 25th 2014 in Nanaimo, BC.

**Ending Violence Association (EVA)** Annual Conference is being held November 7th & 8th in Richmond, BC

**Little Black Dress Party II** - Our annual "Ladies Night Out" will be held at the **Vernon Lodge on November 8th, 2014**. More details will be posted to our website when they are available.

**Staff/Board Christmas Dinner:** December 11th at the Best Western Vernon Lodge.