



# NELSON & DISTRICT WOMEN'S CENTRE

- 2018
- ANNUAL
- REPORT

TRADITIONAL UNCEDED  
TERRITORY OF THE  
SINIXT NATION

**CO EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS:**  
REASHA WOLFE  
KORI DOTY

**CURRENT STAFF:**  
SHANNON DIKKEMA  
SARAH WIMBUSH  
NICHOLA CORNELL  
RAINA GARDNER  
JEN GAWNE  
CLELIE MURRAY-CHEVRIER  
TOMIKO KOYAMA

**COORDINATING COLLECTIVE:**

NADIA ABDELLA  
STEPHANIE ANDREDE E CASTRO  
JEN BURKE  
CHELSEA FLETT  
AMY RHOADS  
SHIRLEY LAMBRECHT  
KAREN LIVINGSTON

# 2018 at the NDWC

This year at the NDWC we have experienced some big challenges; including transitions in leadership, lateral violence from within our membership, infrastructural challenges in the old house and the eternal struggle of small non-profits trying to stay afloat, but our membership has sky rocketed and our core programming has remained strong. We are proud to continue to serve the needs of our community through a wide range of grass roots programs.

Ongoing efforts to build our board have been successful and we are happy to welcome so many new faces to the Coordinating Collective. The incoming ED team of Reasha and Kori started off in February after former ED Lisa departed, but have done well navigating what happens here and learning on the job.

As the organization continues to learn and grow, this was also a Strategic Planning year, and we met in April to draft a plan for the coming 3 years. Our planning process combined conventional meeting and planning structures with emergent visioning.

As an organization committed to feminism that is alive and responsive, we are committed to pursuing inclusion, decolonization and intersectional goals. We will continue to straddle the worlds, finding ways to operate as a non-profit society while also helping incubate and nurture the development of true innovation in community building, justice and liberation.



# Our Programs

## Youth Programs

Under the direction of Raina Gardner our youth programs, GEM (Girls Empowerment Movement) and YWR (Young Women Rise continued to serve girls and young women from around our service region with innovative programs providing foundations of feminism, leadership and community engagement.

GEM has received funds from Lobstick Foundation, The Lions Club, The Osprey Foundation and the North Kootenay Lake Community Service Society. These funds have allowed us to deliver program series for girls age 10-13 exploring friendships, identity, self-expression, growing bodies & changing feelings, and personal power. Guest facilitators share skills and knowledge, and lunch is shared.

Young Women Rise hosted a weekend retreat for young women in April at the Mountain Waters Retreat centre. This opportunity was funded by \_\_\_\_\_ and provided a chance for young women between 16-18 to self-confidence, and connect with their own creativity.

## Rooted In Community

Rooted In Community is a volunteer training program held by the Nelson and District Women's Centre for over 20 years. The program reduces isolation, equips volunteers to work in the Women's Centre and other service providers in Nelson, and was facilitated again this year by Shannon Dikkema. Funders Include the Osprey Foundation and the Nelson Lions.

This year, we held 4 rounds of Rooted in Community, with 10-12 people in each round. This program continues to attract great volunteers into our space, as well as spark informative and educational conversations around such topics as feminism, violence, advocacy, gender issues, self-care and volunteerism. Many of the members of these groups are new to Nelson, and they often meet some of their best friends, and closer connections in the group.

Feedback is always very positive.

One example of an outcome of Rooted In Community is the participant Sarah Blaire, who went on to volunteer with the Centre, and soon afterwards became the Drop In Coordinator for a year.

# Volunteer Program

Under the direction and support of Shannon Dikkema, our volunteer program continues to offer meaningful opportunities for engagement and service to \_\_\_ women and folks of marginalized genders. The volunteers offer their time, skills and compassion to the organization.

The volunteers in the centre really keep the hearth warm and smelling delicious, the free store tidy and offering sweet fashions, the grants rolling in, the spreadsheets tidy, the garbage gotten rid of, the internet connecting, the garden growing, the operational policy tended, space energetics nurtured and so so much more. This year, our volunteer hours increased, amplifying our contribution to the community. We were able create mentorship opportunities for long term volunteers to train our new recruits. This system increased connections and support, and reduced the number of staff hours spent training new volunteers.

Shannon continues to host appreciation gatherings for volunteers, inviting communication and feedback. Feedback includes requests of opportunities to learn new skills and build relationship while sharing skills and knowledge.

Volunteers have facilitated all of our events, and have shown up in big ways for Womaginarium, the Beer and Burger fundraiser, and so much more.

They have also done really tons of work keeping the Free Store in order and moving the copious amounts of donations from our back door to where they need to be.

We have a number of professionals volunteering to provide services for our space users such as counselling, somatic trauma resolution, massage, reiki, acupuncture, hairstyling, resume building, art therapy and more. New administration volunteers have helped fill giant gaps.



## Community Threads

Community Threads is a unique program at the centre in that it has not had funding in years, but continues to provide a welcoming space, mentorship, support and good company to fabric artists of all kinds. Currently, the program is hosted by long term volunteer, Karen Livinston. Participants bring their current projects to work on together, and admire the work of others. Donations of supplies arrive constantly, providing everything needed for all kinds of projects. This is a great opportunity for stitchers to learn from one another, and we are working to restore funding and resources to Community Threads soon.

# My Grandmother's Kitchen

My Grandmother's Kitchen was coordinated by Jen Gawne, and consisted of 10 sessions through 2017/18. Each session was attended by 6-8 women.

Traditional recipes and preserves were made, skills were shared, and all in good company with diverse backgrounds and generations. Jen is most proud of the feeling of inclusivity and comfort that was created around the table, and says "It is a sweet little program and I hope it continues!"



## The Drop-In

Our drop-in programs have continued to be an essential point of connection for many members of our community. We serve as a food security resource, redistributing produce sourced from the Kootenay Coop Store and Harvest Rescue, tofu from Silver King Tofu, bread and other dry goods from the Coop Bakery and other local donors. Not only does the food supplement the groceries of many low-income women, trans people and their families, but it also gets prepared and served in the drop-in by our staff and volunteers. Over the course of the year we served approximately 200 meals..

Another key access point in our drop-in is the free store, which processes and redistributes 4436 pounds(2012 Kg) of clothes and shoes. This resource means that many folks who access our services are able to get new clothes for themselves and their children even when money is tight.

This year also saw supplementary offerings including art jams, yoga classes, acupuncture, volunteer work parties, counseling by professionals completing practicum hours, craniosacral therapy and more.

The work of maintaining a safe and supportive space has been very challenging this year as the ongoing displays of trans antagonism, lateral violence and harrasment have really impacted our staff and volunteers. We are sad to see Sarah Wimbush leaving this position but are excited to welcome Tomiko Koyama as our new coordinator.

## Trans & Non-Binary Resource and Community Engagement Space

The past year in the TRACES drop-in has seen visitors: share some delicious snacks and meals (more than one person reported a pleasant experience of eating tofu for the first time), participating in lively discussions, finding new clothing, making new outfits, visiting with new friends who are a part of the trans and non-binary community as well as regular visits and ongoing support from: community members, NDWC Coordinating Collective members and allies to queer folks.

Some ongoing themes and issues that visitors to the traces drop-in have communicated they are experiencing: housing insecurity, ongoing homelessness, struggling to access other community services due to gender binary based programming and eligibility to access programming, finding meaningful, adequately paid work with enough hrs/week, being the victim of physical assault in the Nelson area, processing and seeking support to help process past sexual assault, advocacy or help navigating legal and other services specifically around labor and residential tenancy issues. These issues have predicted overlap in the issues we were presenting during our women's drop-in and we are proud to be able to extend these well honed services to marginalized community members who have these needs.

Looking to the future, some of ideas that we hope to explore & offer further: weekly matinee screenings of video content that features trans characters, craft and chat sessions, making art and other craft content to sell at a future craft fair or pop up event, skills share workshops,

**Thanks to BC Gaming for their ongoing support of the drop-in program.**

**We also rely on the donations of time in service, physical supplies and monetary support from individual members of our communities.**

**Our deepest gratitude to everyone who has pitched in to make a difference.**



# Events

Womaginarium

Justice for Tina Fontaine and MMIW

International Women's Day at Touchstones

International Women's Day at the Spirit Bar

Burger and Beer Fundraiser at Finley's

Strategic Planning

Tea and Cake in May

All Genders Open House

Summer Movie & Discussion Night featuring  
"Precious"

Hall Street Block Party

Bent On Art Festival

Pride Kick-off Barbecue

Annual General Meeting





# **MEMBERSHIP LIST SEES RECORD GROWTH IN 2018**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

**AVERAGE MEMBERSHIP  
DOCUMENTED AS 150**

**MEMBERS IN GOOD  
STANDING IN FEB 2018 - 6**

**CURRENT MEMBERSHIP  
APPROACHING 400**



*the year's*

# SERVICE STATISTICS

**1086**

*women served*

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**140**

*children served*

We have **2131** volunteer hours documented, and this **doesn't** include the garden, Community Threads, TRACES, The CC, the admin volunteers, house maintenance, or staff volunteer hours. (Anyone want to volunteer to help keep track of volunteer hours?)

**2621 lbs**

*food donations*

**4463 lbs**

*clothing donations*

# Poop

## apocalypse



While we did not close this year for the week of Shambhala, as has been common in the past (we wanted to ensure we were open to serve additional influx of visitors and service users impacted by the festival)

We did end up having a one week closure while our basement became flooded with sewage. The problem was graciously solved with the hard work of Reasha and volunteer plumbing support from Jeremy. The city eventually resolved the problems by replacing the line that meets the house.

The house at 420 Mill stree is old and has a long list of infrastructural concerns. In the coming year(s) real questions about our space will continue to press us. Just hopefully not in such stinky and hazardous ways.

## Revenue



- Project Grants 52,060
- Donations 27,684
- Rental income 2,265
- Memberships 210
- BC Gaming Commission 30,00
- Fundraising 11,399
- Other revenue and interest 1,395

## Expenses



- Salaries and wages 70,572
- Project supplies
- Utilities 5,084
- Fundraising expenses 3,038
- Professional fees 1,867
- Amortization of tangible assets 239
- Sub-contracts 13,437
- Office expenses 6,792
- Insurance 3,219
- Repairs and maintenance 2,514
- Advertising and promotion 709
- Travel expenses 210

# THE NUMBERS

The organization continues in a similarly stable financial position as past years. The challenges of grant funding cycles and limited and conditional funds continue to encourage us towards large project funds whenever possible as well as building and maintaining relations with community sponsors and individual donors.

This year our accounting costs have increased for the first time in 6 years; this is reflective also of our goal we have budgeted for in the 2018-2019 fiscal year of increasing the wages of all our program staff and janitorial contracts in an effort to make feminist employment something closer to a living wage.

# WHAT OUR SERVICES MEAN



Dear Nelson Women's Centre,

Just a short note to thank you - again!  
for being here.

For more than 12 years I have been coming here for food, clothing, information, but most of all to access a community of women doing everyday stuff, having crisis supported and celebrating life.

This place means more to me than I can put on one page.

Love Michelle (Maisa)

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of:



Silverking Soya

Nelson Boxing Club

Kootenay Fund  
of North Kootenay Lake



And many more!

We gratefully acknowledge that we are living and working as guests on the unceded traditional territory of the Sinixt Nation .