

# newsletter



## Comedy Night 2019 Thank You

Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association would like to thank all the guests and volunteers for the success of our first Comedy Night Event that took place on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 at the Lou Soppit Centre.

**MRWSA raised over \$5,000 for the support of women and children fleeing domestic violence.**



Left to Right: Cindy Easton, Executive Director of MRWSA, Comedians Will Hannigan, Howie Miller and Lisa Baker





### Message from the Executive Director

**“If we can share our story with someone who responds with empathy and understanding, shame can't survive.”**

— Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly*

Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association's Mission is to provide resources and support to individuals and families impacted by domestic violence. This is a cause that is difficult to talk about and families impacted by violence live with a sense of shame.

Domestic violence covers a wide spectrum of physical, psychological, economic, and sexual abuse. The abuse often happens in cycles, where there is a period of time in which tension escalates and some sort of violent act is committed, which is then followed by a time of reconciliation and forgiveness, often giving the victim hope that the situation has changed. When it doesn't change, the self-blaming and shame builds. Shame (among other factors) often makes victims feel like they are trapped, like they are silenced, like there is no way out. And this is where we can all help... listen and “respond with empathy and understanding so that shame can't survive.”

MRWSA believes in listening to every woman's story with empathy and understanding; that every woman who enters our doors has a unique story that is hers to tell; and no matter where she is on her journey, we will walk with her.

Please join MRWSA in our cause to end domestic violence.



### MRWSA Volunteers

‘We are Blessed’ for the community groups that partner and fundraise for our organization, as well as the teams of volunteers who come out and support these events. This year we ate spicy noodles with Cucina Spicy Noodle Contest, weathered the cold temperatures for the Freezin’ for a Reason Polar Bear Dip, tattooed by the Burly Beard in February with proceeds to MRWSA, chose to volunteer the Wednesday Night Bingo for the month of February through the Rocky Legion, as well as we were entertained by the local musicians and singers at the Lions/The Music Shop at The Great Rocky Mountain Talent Contest. So Thank You to volunteers and community for all your support in our endeavours as we feel

*‘We are Blessed’*

### Volunteers



**...are very kind.**

### Board of Directors

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Vice President  
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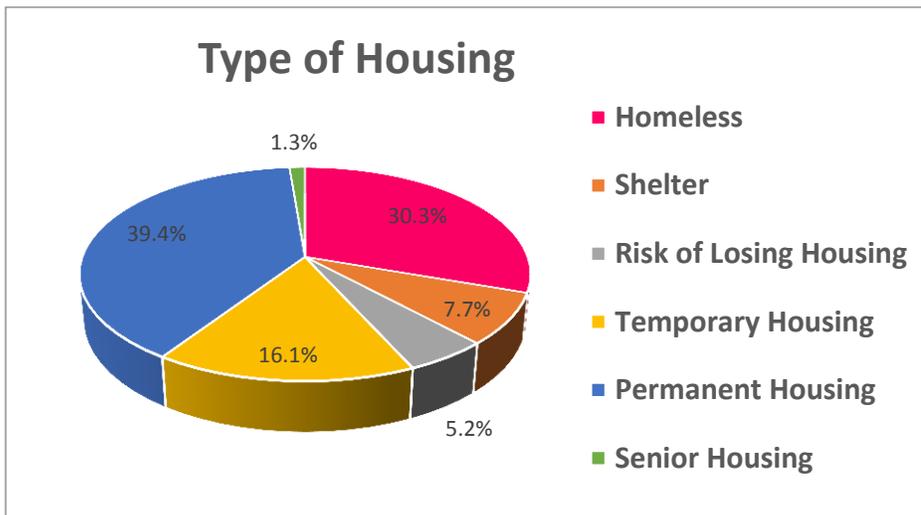
Secretary Sandy Andersen  
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**Homelessness to Housing: Building a Rural Approach Project (Rocky Mountain House and Area)  
Hosted by Mountain Rose Women’s Shelter Association**

**Project Summary:**

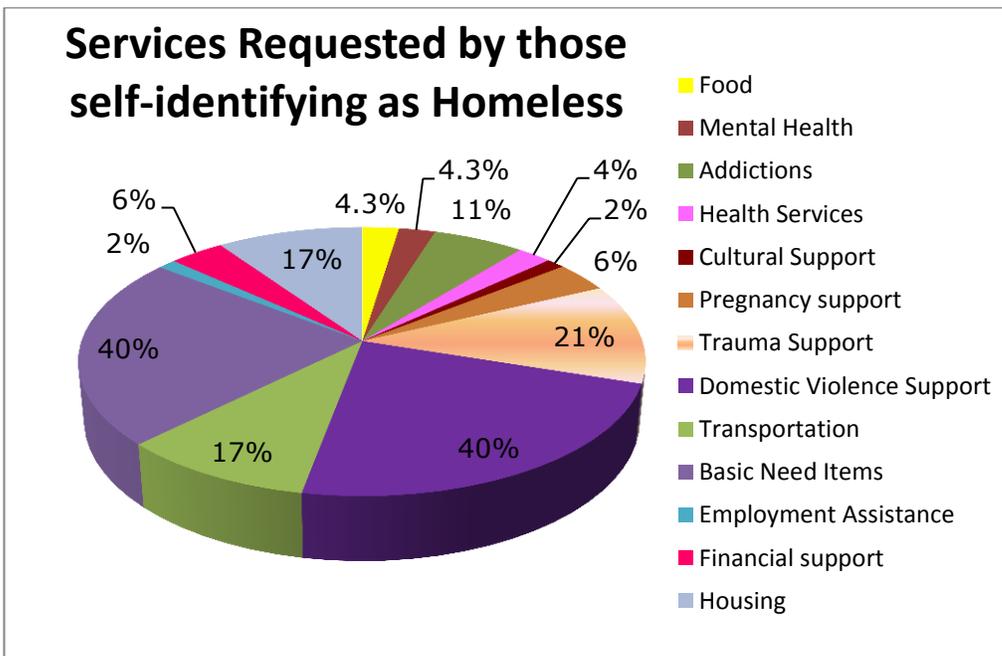
The Homelessness to Housing: Building a Rural Approach Project was implemented utilizing a community based process to bring together partnerships of service providers, funders, and the private sector in the development of initiatives that will build on rural, grassroots practices to prevent or reduce homelessness. The cross-agency data collection tool was developed that included 4 sections: Housing status, Services requested, Income, and Referral. The sections were identified as important data to collect to ensure coordinated services for marginalized populations that focuses on seamless intake, support, and referral. Data was collected from January 21 to February 15, 2019. A total of 160 surveys were completed during this time span.

The data collection committee recognizes that the data collected is a snapshot from agencies that provide services to marginalized populations which does not reflect the community as a whole.



**Definition of Housing:**  
 Homeless: couch surfing, street living, living in a tent or camper, or other with no fixed address  
 Shelter: any emergency shelter (homeless, women’s, men’s)  
 Risk of losing Housing: Eviction or foreclosure or other means where individual is suddenly at risk of becoming homeless  
 Temporary Housing: Hotel living, short term room + board, or shared accommodation which has an end date  
 Permanent Housing - Stable housing (fixed address)  
 Senior Housing: Any housing that is identified as senior living

Of the 160 surveys, 5 declined to answer. The above results indicate that of the 155 remaining responses, 92 (59.3%) were homeless or vicariously housed whereas the other 63 (40.6%) were in permanent or senior housing.



**Definition of Services Requested:**  
 Food: Food Hamper, food vouchers, food kitchens, church group, gift cards, hot meal, etc.  
 Mental Health: Referrals to Alberta Mental Health Services  
 Addictions: Prescription and Street substances and alcohol  
 Health Services: Alberta Health Services, Holistic Services  
 Cultural Support: any referrals to agency that provide cultural based services  
 Pregnancy Support: Anything in and around pregnancy  
 Trauma Support: Sexual abuse/assault  
 Domestic Violence Support: Any domestic violence/gender based violence  
 Transportation: transportation locally and/or to neighbouring communities  
 Basic Needs: clothing, shoes/boots, winter wear, feminine hygiene, toiletries  
 Employment Assistance: Resumes or employment opportunities  
 Financial support: Referrals to Alberta Works or other social programs  
 Housing: rentals, furniture, senior housing

Of the 47 responses that identified as homeless, 40% or 19 respondents requested support for domestic violence. This may reflect the number of calls recorded through the MRWSA Shelter Crisis Line which may impact the data results. 40% or 19 respondents requested basic needs items (clothing, shoes/ boots, winter wear, feminine hygiene, toiletries). The other high ranked areas of support identified were Addiction (11%), Trauma Support (21%), and Transportation (17%).

The Homelessness to Housing: Building a Rural Approach Project provides a snap shot of needs that will enable our community to focus the conversation to build rural, grassroots practices to prevent or reduce homelessness. Building partnerships to understand cross agency referrals for marginalized populations was the first important step in this project. There is work that needs to be done that includes collecting data in a trusting, respectful manner that meets the highest confidentiality practices and regulations but still meets the needs of the individuals receiving services.

The information gathered through this project highlights that homelessness issues are complex. Homelessness is a product of numerous, complex and often overlapping problems. It can be acute or chronic — lasting days, weeks, months or years. Those that experience homelessness or are vicariously housed require a broad range of services that include access to basic needs, food, health services (mental health), addiction services, transportation, and safe, affordable accommodations. There are often multiple issues which contribute to a person experiencing homelessness, making the task of addressing the problem that much harder.

The Homelessness to Housing: Building a Rural Approach Project provided a time-specific lens into homelessness and the related social issues in our community. The work must continue through:

- Cross agency collaborations to address the complexity of homelessness
- Continued research and analysis to identify opportunities for early intervention and rapid preventative action and identify gaps in local services
- Community action plan to identify key steps needed to modify services, create new services and ensure prevention

If you are interested in participating in this conversation on homelessness

Please contact Cindy Easton at [ceaston@mrwsa.net](mailto:ceaston@mrwsa.net)



## **Outreach Services**

Knowing or thinking that someone you care about is in a violent relationship can be very hard. You may fear for her safety — and maybe for good reason. You may want to rescue her or insist she leave, but every adult must make her own decisions.

Each situation is different, and the people involved are all different too. Here are some ways to help a loved one who is being abused:

Set up a time to talk. Try to make sure you have privacy and won't be distracted or interrupted. Visit your loved one in person if possible.

Let her know you're concerned about her safety. Be honest. Tell her about times when you were worried about her. Help her see that abuse is wrong. She may not respond right away, or she may even get defensive or deny the abuse. Let her know you want to help and will be there to support her in whatever decision she makes.

Be supportive. Listen to your loved one. Keep in mind that it may be very hard for her to talk about the abuse. Tell her that she is not alone and that people want to help. If she wants help, ask her what you can do.

Offer specific help. You might say you are willing to just listen, to help her with child care, or to provide transportation, for example.

Don't place shame, blame, or guilt on her. Don't say, "You just need to leave." Instead, say something like, "I get scared thinking about what might happen to you." Tell her you understand that her situation is very difficult.

Help her make a safety plan. Safety planning might include packing important items and helping her find a "safe" word. This is a code word she can use to let you know she is in danger without an abuser knowing. It might also include agreeing on a place to meet her if she has to leave in a hurry.

Encourage her to talk to someone who can help. Offer to help her find a local domestic violence agency. Offer to go with her to the agency, the police, or court. They can offer advice based on experience and can help find local support and services.

If she decides to stay, continue to be supportive. She may decide to stay in the relationship, or she may leave and then go back many times. It may be hard for you to understand, but people stay in abusive relationships for many reasons. Be supportive, no matter what she decides to do.

Encourage her to do things outside of the relationship. It's important for her to see friends and family.

If she decides to leave, continue to offer help. Even though the relationship was abusive, she may feel sad and lonely once it is over. She may also need help getting services from agencies or community groups.

Let her know that you will always be there no matter what. It can be very frustrating to see a friend or loved one stay in an abusive relationship. But if you end your relationship, she has one less safe place to go in the future. You cannot force a person to leave a relationship, but you can let them know you'll help, whatever they decide to do.

This is from The Office of Women's Health

womenshealth.gov

**Check out MRWSA Facebook page for more news, information and programs.**

**Check out MRWSA Website <http://mrwsa.net>**

### **....upcoming events**

**Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association has changed the Romance n' Roses Gala to MRWSA Gala and has also moved the date from February to September. This year's MRWSA Gala will be held on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Look for upcoming posters in our community!**

## Help Us Build the New "Abuse Prevention Centre"



*Buy a brick for \$500*

**Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association still needs to raise 2 million dollars to complete the new shelter.**

**BUY a Brick Program for the New Shelter: Have your name or dedicate the brick in the name of a loved one. Bricks are \$500 each and a charitable tax receipt is available.**

Contact Cindy Easton at 403.845.5339 to discuss the Capital Campaign and ways to contribute.

## Family Support Services

Family Support Program provides support and opportunities to families within the shelter and the community. Families receive support to re-engage and connect within the community to be able to reach personal goals. Family Support collaborates with Parent Child Assistance Program (PCAP) to facilitate the Enrichment Program to benefit families with peer support, positive life choices, community engagement, and enriched family centered activities. The Enrichment Program ensures there are no service barriers and every family can participate.

*“Making the decision to have a child is momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body”.* -- Elizabeth Stone

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## PCAP – Parent Child Assistance Program

*Here's to strong women  
May we know them  
May we raise them  
May we be them*

Fresh starts begin with awareness of one's self, mixed in with perseverance and determination, and ends with satisfaction of knowing you can conquer a hurdle that held you down for so long.....but where do we begin? We begin with one single breath in and out and stiffening of our backs with our heads held high. We take one step forward, then maybe two steps back. But we keep going forward towards our goals. We keep pushing boundaries and lessening burdens. We show up, demand respect, and advocate for second chances. We try not to look back as this is not where we are going. We are going forward, as hard as it may be, we are driven to feel the sunshine on our face. We want to see the light that shines so brightly on our futures!

**PCAP HAS SOME REALLY AMAZING LADIES THAT ARE FIGHTING EVERY DAY TO SHINE THEIR LIGHT SO BRIGHT THAT THE DARKNESS NEVER TOUCHES THEM AGAIN! *There is no force equal to a woman determined to rise!***



## Clearwater County Housing Support Services

Housing Support Services began in October 2014 and as of date 391 people have utilized this program. There are those who still are in great need of the support of this program, others who perhaps relocated to other towns/cities and then there are those who have been successfully housed with the support of the Housing Support Coordinator.

This program has had its challenges in many different ways. Such as: Shortages of available housing, hesitant landlords, lack of affordable housing, and the difficulty with funding.

Spring is coming.... Clients (and their families) sometimes will wait for the warm weather, knowing the struggles of finding a safe, affordable, suitable home can be difficult. They choose to perhaps find accommodations elsewhere eg: camping or tenting. They hope this will solve the problem, but this is only a temporary fix. Housing Support tries to meet with these clients who are choosing to perhaps "live outside" for the warmer months to discuss a safety plan, so they have the tools to stay safe at all times. We will continue to work with them to get housing before the cold weather arrives once again.

*“Homelessness is not a choice, but rather a journey many find themselves in.”*

**As a Community Member, I Support Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association**

by giving a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  by giving a monthly gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

**City:** ..... **Province:** ..... **Postal Code:** .....

**Home Phone:** ..... **Cell Phone:** .....

**Email Address:** .....

would like volunteer information  would like to sponsor an event  would like to do a third party event

Please mail your completed form and make cheque(s) payable to:

**Interac is now available**

Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association  
PO Box 325  
Rocky Mountain House AB T4T 1A3

**Project & Grant Supporters**



This project is funded by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy

**Next to New Volunteers**

**Town of Rocky Mountain House**

**GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA** Ministry of Community and Social Services

**Thank you to all event sponsors, community donors & volunteers**

Incorporated under the Canada Revenue Agency Charities Act, Alberta's Society Act and Alberta's Charitable Fundraising Act.

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Each edition will include valuable information about our agency, such as dates for special events, information about domestic violence, ways to get involved, and highlights about our programs and services. Please feel free to contact [ceaston@mrwsa.net](mailto:ceaston@mrwsa.net) directly if you have ideas for future newsletters, any comments, questions or concerns.