

## Zonta Club of Victoria: Service Club Making a Difference



By Lenore Kennedy

This year the Zonta Club of Victoria donated \$5000 to cover transportation costs associated with VSAC's Crisis Response Program.

VSAC's Crisis Response Program is a 24-hour immediate response service available by phone or in-person for people in our community who have been impacted by sexualized violence. During business hours, a highly experienced crisis worker responds to phone calls and people who walk-in to VSAC. After hours, phone support is provided in partnership with the Vancouver Island Crisis Line, with access to mobilize our volunteer-staffed collaborative Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). SART provides information, support and/or accompaniment to hospital and police reporting for survivors of recent sexual assault. During the initial hours and days after an assault, survivors can be confused, overwhelmed, and most likely still in shock. The experience of sexual assault can be devastating and life altering. Consequently, the role of the SART support worker in providing emotional support and information can be integral to a survivor in the aftermath of a sexual assault.

As part of this process, survivors and SART workers often need to be transported to the hospital or the police station where medical needs are attended to, forensic evidence collected and police statements made. If the survivor does not have the resources that would allow them to get to the hospital, VSAC provides transportation for them.

With Zonta's help, VSAC is able to ensure that survivors and SART workers have a transportation resource available, making our emergency response services more accessible. We extend a special thanks to the Zonta Club of Victoria for their commitment and partnership.

### THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & GRANT PROVIDERS

Ministry of Justice - *Stopping the Violence & Victim Services contracts*  
 Province of British Columbia - *Community Gaming Grant – Project Respect & youth-focused counselor*  
 Provincial Employees Community Services Fund – *Crisis & Information Line, Information Meetings, Workshops for Supporters*  
 United Way of Greater Victoria – *Project Respect*  
 Vancouver Foundation – *Trans\* Inclusion*  
 Canadian Women's Foundation – *Project Respect*  
 Telus Community Fund – *Project Respect*  
 Government of Canada – *Canada Summer Jobs – Project Respect*  
 Status of Women Canada – *Preventing and Responding to Sexualized Violence*  
 Girls Action Foundation – *Project Respect*  
 Thrifty Foods Smile Card Program – *Signage and Promotional Material*  
 Harweg Foundation

### For Service Clubs:

*Are you a member of a Service Club? Here's how your group can get involved:*

- Invite a speaker from VSAC to talk to your group
- In consultation with our Resource Development Staff, choose a project that feels meaningful for your group to support
- Make a donation
- Volunteer at our events
- Host a third party event, proceeds to VSAC (<http://vsac.ca/host-an-event/>)



VSAC board member, Julia Denley (left), has spent several weekends promoting our services and collecting donations for VSAC at grocery store locations around Victoria (thank you Country Grocer, Thrifty Foods, and Walmart). To date, Julia and her dedicated volunteer team have raised over \$4000!

### Find us on the Web!

[www.vvac.ca](http://www.vvac.ca)  
[www.yesmeansyes.com](http://www.yesmeansyes.com)

We now have a blog! Keep up-to-date at: [www.vvac.ca/blog](http://www.vvac.ca/blog)



@Victoria Sexual Assault Centre  
 @Project Respect - VSAC  
 @ Trans and Gender Variant Inclusion at VSAC



@VSACentre  
 @projRespect  
 @inclusiveVSAC

summer 2014

## OUR MISSION

The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre is a feminist organization committed to ending sexualized violence through healing, education, and prevention. We are dedicated to supporting women and all trans\* survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, through advocacy, counselling, and empowerment.

## VSAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Heidi Exner, Co-Chair  
 Sean Dhillon, Co-Chair  
 Kelly Branchi  
 Kim Brown  
 Julia Denley  
 Jean Ference  
 Gulrose Jiwani  
 Nat Johnstone  
 Lisa Josza  
 Debra Scarfone  
 Sinan Soykut  
 Makenna Rielly, Executive Director



Victoria Sexual Assault Centre  
*healing, education & prevention*

## SUPPORT COMES IN MANY WAYS

Newsletters provide an opportunity to share with all of our supporters the amazing work being done here at the Centre, showcase our dedicated staff members and volunteers, and thank all of our donors for their ongoing generous support.

Whether you give through one of our three annual direct mail appeals or choose to support us by sponsoring a loved one participating in one of our events, your choice to help us in our work makes a significant difference. **Big or small every donation is appreciated.**

Donors and supporters honour VSAC, with their trust to use their donations wisely and responsibly with hopes that we continue our services to those in the greatest need. We still have a wait list for those who need long-term counselling, but ongoing support is given in the interim. We are not only meeting our contract mandates, but we go beyond those service levels to meet the demand through grants and private donations.

The need for services has not lessened and sexualized violence continues. As long as there is a need we will be here to provide support to heal, educate, empower and advocate for women, trans\* individuals who are survivors of sexualized violence. As a community we can stand together to work towards ending sexualized violence with your continued support and donations.

This vital connection not only helps provide a needed holistic response to trauma survivors, but assures that we work together by joining our expertise, knowledge, and resources to support our community. We thank you for supporting our efforts.

Makenna Rielly, MA, Executive Director

PS—Thanks to: all those who took time to organize a third party event on our behalf, the dedicated grocery store fundraising volunteers, corporate sponsors, each and every event participant who raised pledges, and to those who made those pledges! Finally, special thanks to those of you who take the time to faithfully send a cheque in response to our direct mail. We are grateful.

### Invisible Door By Sarah B.

As the years continue to pass by,  
 He is someone I will never forget,  
 I used to be his favorite grandchild,  
 But now, I'm his biggest threat.

Running into his arms upon his arrival,  
 He used to be my best friend,  
 Always there when I needed him,  
 We had a binding friendship without an end.

I thought that I could trust him;  
 He made me laugh and would always listen,  
 He was supposed to keep me safe,  
 I thought that was always a given.

When I was ten my world came to an end,  
 Something just didn't feel right,  
 I didn't want to keep our secret anymore,  
 It hurts, I told my mother that night.

I was left with shattered faith in the world;  
 The monster was in the house,  
 I lived through life being scared of outside,  
 I felt no bigger than a mouse.

I sought out help in counseling;  
 I realized I was not to blame,  
 I was actually the survivor;  
 This was his sick and twisted game.

I needed to make a drastic change,  
 This happened when I was twenty four,  
 With my new found strength and all my might,  
 I kicked down my invisible door.

# CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SERVICE!

By Georgie Jackson



Karen Wickham came to VSAC by a fortuitous accident. Volunteer Victoria misdirected Karen to the VWSAC crisis line instead of the general crisis line in 1986 when she was a student at UVIC, wanting to volunteer in the community. And the rest, as they say, is herstory!

After a year on the crisis line and a trained member of the Emergency Response Team, Karen became an employee in 1988. She has worn several hats in different capacities: crisis intake, emergency response, crisis intervention program (a combo of crisis and victim services), counselling and court services. Today Karen still manages two hats; Crisis Line Coordinator and Team Leader for Direct Client Services.

Being an icon of longevity, Karen has worked with three executive directors, has seen the staff contingent grow from 4 to 25 employees. She was here for the inception of the Victim Services Program, the roll out of the Stopping the Violence Initiative, the introduction of the Residential Historical Abuse Program, the creation of Ending Violence Association of BC, the provincial umbrella group supporting Victim Assistance and Stopping the Violence Counselling programs, and now the ground-breaking trans\* inclusion work being done to provide services for the trans\* survivors.

Karen is the "EXPERT" when it comes to statistics and the database. Having begun with no computers and hand written data, Karen has assisted those of us who glaze over at the mention of numbers report on our daily work and has shared with us the "joy" of data input and recording statistics!

In 1996 when VWSAC certified with the BCGEU, Karen became a shop steward and continues to support the staff to this day. As shop steward, Karen has served on the Provincial Bargaining Committee and participates in ongoing training with the union.

Adding to the legend of longevity, Karen is happily ensconced in a long term relationship. Karen professes to love pets, especially dogs. Karen and her partner enjoy the wilds of Shirley, close to the Pacific shore, where their visitors on any given day are bears, cougars, deer, raccoons, rabbits and the cheeky squirrels. Her most important lesson learned in Shirley is that alders are not trees, just tall dangerous weeds!

Karen holds the history of VSAC and is a much respected and revered member of this organization. We appreciate the enormous breadth of knowledge and expertise Karen brings to the table and her strength and wisdom that supports and enriches us all. Another 25!!!???

## Goddess Run

Over 3000 runners and walkers took to Langford streets on June 1<sup>st</sup> for the third annual Victoria Goddess Run. VSAC was honored to be one of three charity partners for the 2014 event. In addition to the main run, VSAC and VWTH also received proceeds from two new pre-race events: Sunset Yoga and the Bathrobe Run.



**Left:** Lara Graves, VSAC Victim Service Worker wins first place in the 2014 Victoria Goddess Run half marathon with a time of 1:35:07!

**Right:** Goji Strength Club teamed up to support VSAC.

## Need to talk?

Have you have been recently sexually assaulted, experienced sexual assault in the past, survived childhood sexual abuse or feel lost about how to support a loved one who has experienced sexualized violence?

VSAC's Crisis & Information Line provides emotional support, information and connection to services to people of all genders directly or indirectly affected by sexualized violence.

250-383-3232

## #TopLeft : Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender-Based Violence Prevention

By Elicia Loiselle

In 2013, we began a partnership with national youth organization, the Students Commission of Canada, undertake the Top Left project. Youth involved in the project named it Top Left because that's where the heart is. The project is designed to engage more boys and young men in working with youth of all genders to end gender-based violence. Top Left is happening in four communities across the country: Victoria, Saskatoon, Toronto, and Miramichi NB.

Top Left challenges the idea that ending gender-based violence is "girls' and women's work", because we know that in order to create the change that is needed, boys and young men must play an integral role in changing peer cultures based in dominant masculinity, which create and normalize gender-based violence.

We're just at the end of the first year of this two year project and it has been amazing!

Over the course of the year, Rhizome youth travelled with Project Respect staff to two national Top Left conferences in Ontario hosted by the Students Commission. At these conferences, youth from all four communities came together, shared experiences, ideas, and skills, and created social action products (such as videos and presentations) to take back to their home communities. The conferences were also life changing on a personal level for many of the youth who were able to go.

Locally, we also hosted Project Respect's first overnight youth conference in March 2014. Organized and co-facilitated by the Rhizome youth social action team, Project Respect the conference was held at Camp Barnard March 7, 8, and 9 as part of our local Top Left project. In line with the outcomes for this project, 13 of the 30 youth who participated self-identified as boys or young men. The conference brought together youth ages 12-18 from diverse backgrounds and cultural contexts to explore the root causes of gender-based violence and create strategies to end it. Spending three days together at a camp also enabled everyone to build the kind of inclusive and positive community we all want to have everywhere.

Highlights of the conference included: the powerful welcome and blessing by T'Souke Nation Elder Linda Bristol; anti-colonial nature walks led by Beecher Bay Nation Elder Pakki Chipps who is an amazing educator, artist, and ethnobotanist; the gender sweater skit created by the youth facilitators to introduce the idea of gender as a spectrum; the trans\* inclusive space everyone created together; camp fire discussions about community and consent; the Consensual Dance Party; and the 6 social action plans the youth created to address gender-based violence in the community that we'll be working on implementing over the coming year.



Project Respect at the Unite and Ignite National Youth Conference in Ottawa.

## Triathlon of Compassion



This June, 2014 Triathlon of Compassion participants raised \$22,000 to support VSAC services. Kudos to Colette (13 years old) and Hannah (14 years old) who not only won first place in their age categories, but also were this year's top fundraisers with over \$4,000 in pledges! Second place went to longtime supporter and tri participant, Jules Wilson, who raised over \$3,000 this year and whose lifetime fundraising for VSAC now exceeds \$20,000! Wendy Perrot, another long time fundraiser came third and won the brand new road bike donated by the Trek Bike Store Victoria. Five VSAC staff raced (four were first timers) and three medaled. Well done to all who participated and raised funds. We also want to thank the hundreds of volunteers who worked hard to make the event happen, especially the Tri of Compassion organizing committee who, under the leadership of Human Powered Racing's Rob Dibden, did a stellar job of ensuring the event ran smoothly.



**Top:** VSAC staff who participated in the Tri.

**Left:** One of our youngest Tri competitors in the 6-7yr old category

**Right:** Top fundraisers Colette and Hannah being interviewed by CTV.