



**WHISTLER COMMUNITY
SERVICES SOCIETY**

"A Helping Hand Toward A Healthy Community"

AGM June 24, 2015

A Year in Review



www.mywcss.org

WCSS Chair's Report

Budgets are set for this year. Targets for the following year. Staff and volunteers are engaged and working hard. The Whistler community continues to grow and Whistler Community Services Society (WCSS) continues to do all it can to help those in need. This is an arena that never seems to slow down.

In 2010, we saw a run on the food bank for those in need. Now we're seeing growth and demand of our one-on-one outreach services as well as different demands on our food bank as more families with children are experiencing difficult times.

I have no Crystal ball, just a strong belief in the values within this community we call home. It is a belief that those challenges before WCSS will be met, will be tackled and will be overcome so our community stays the course to help those that need it most.

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk with Bernie Lalor-Morton, a former chair of the board, about what it was like in the beginning. The first WCSS office, along with the food bank, was in Function above the Junction Café. Later the food bank moved over to the Catholic Church, while the office moved to Myrtle Philip School. The staff, at the time, consisted of the Executive Director and a part-time assistant. In 1997-98, discussions began around the possibility of a Re-Use-It Centre. The Hornby Island 'free' store served as an inspiration for the idea. But there were many questions and concerns. Would it be a good thing for the society? How would we pay for it? Or staff it? Or pay the bills? What if it didn't work? The Mayor at the time, Hugh O'Riley was on the WCSS board and was really pushing for municipal funding to make it work. It was leap of faith that paid off. The RMOW have been our proud partners ever since.

Bernie finished our conversation with this quote I would like to share with you.

"I am incredibly proud of WCSS and happy that I was a part of such a great organization and involved in the creation of the Re-Use-It Center."

It is this type of commitment, compassion and generosity of past board members that I'd like to celebrate. In particular Mavis Jenner, our Vice-Chair who recently passed away. Our hearts go out to Mavis' husband Al and their family. Mavis will be greatly missed as a valuable member of the community and to our WCSS family.

Thank you for attending our 2014-15 AGM.

Doug Treleaven
Chair of the Board

WCSS Board Members

- ❖ Andrea Bischoff
- ❖ Anne Townley
- ❖ Britni Troy
- ❖ Christian Boone
- ❖ Doug Treleaven
- ❖ Grace Blok
- ❖ Heather Schroyen
- ❖ Jessica Averiss
- ❖ Richard Diamond
- ❖ Rob Laslett
- ❖ Shankar Raina
- ❖ Sue Maxwell

WCSS Executive Director Report

This past year has been about building a strong base. From our social service to our social enterprise we feel confident in our ability to meet the changing and diverse social service needs of the community of Whistler now and into the future.

To do anything well you need to have the right people in right place. And we do! The Re-Use-It (RUI), the Re-Build-It (RBI) and the recycling program are stronger than they have ever been. The management and sales teams are engaged, energized and caring. We have broken some significant records in the past year in both donations and sales. This has enabled us to not only create a sustainable funding stream for our social services, but also to maintain our important role in keeping Whistler green. For instance, in 2014 WCSS diverted 724,000kgs from the landfill. That is a direct cost saving to the community of over \$86,000. Perhaps more importantly, however, we were able to translate all that trash into cash thus providing \$557,000 for Whistler based social services and programming. It is a funding model that is very unique and one we need to protect and keep strong.

Our strength in people continues into our social service team. We are blessed at WCSS to have an outreach and food bank staff who are second to none! They are also in demand. Our outreach team visited 124 classes in Whistler schools, had 1,782 one-on-one meetings this past year and helped people connect to 22 programs within WCSS and many more external to WCSS. The Food Bank served 2,292 people last year including 444 children and processed 26,740kg of food donations. Our hot lunch program for food bank users has grown into an important opportunity to connect, socialize and enjoy a family style meal together. Our social service team educate and support in a caring and non-judgemental environment.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of WCSS. Every year we average 45,000 volunteer hours. That is equivalent to 2.5 full time employees! Our "Food Bank Army" contributes a significant number of those volunteer hours. Some of our Food Bank volunteers have been with us since the beginning! We continue to be humbled by their generosity and kindness!

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of our strength in people has come through our volunteer board. We are firing on all cylinders at the board level and it is a beautiful thing! Our board membership is diverse, highly skilled and exceptionally good at spreading the WCSS message to the community. The guidance they provided in decision leadership this past year has been breathtaking to say the least!

Effective social service is about understanding the need in a community, being able to quickly develop solutions for those who need support and having the right people to deliver the programs and services. At WCSS we are proud to play our part in creating the healthy, vibrant and welcoming spirit that makes the community of Whistler so unique.

Cheryl Skribe, Executive Director