



Friends of Rowan House Newsletter 1st Edition August/September 2010

What Rowan House Is

At Rowan House Emergency Shelter, our goal is to provide women and their children a safe environment that nourishes feelings of self-worth, lends an opportunity for healing and personal growth, and provides temporary housing while facilitating transition back into the community. It is our intention to provide women and their children with services to foster coping skills that lead to a life free of violence.

We serve the rural Foothills including the communities of Okotoks, High River, Black Diamond, Turner Valley, Longview, Blackie, Nanton, Vulcan, Claresholm, and the surrounding areas. Women can also access our services from any rural or urban centre.

Rowan House Programs

In Shelter Services

Rowan House Emergency Shelter is a small, short-term women's emergency shelter located in the MD of Foothills. Our purpose is to provide a safe, supportive environment for women and their children fleeing domestic violence. We provide both residential and outreach services to families in need of support. In shelter support is available for women and children who find themselves in a crisis situation and in need of emergency housing.

Outreach Services

The Outreach program is designed to address and meet the needs of women who have experienced abuse, are experiencing abuse, or are at risk of experiencing abuse, through one-on-one contact and support.

Children's Programming

The best way to tackle violence and abuse in our families is to prevent it in the beginning. We know that familial abuse follows a generational cycle, often beginning with children witnessing abuse or experiencing abuse. In order to end the cycle, prevention and education must begin with the child. Through knowledge, education, and early intervention, Rowan House works to stop the cycle of abuse. This is accomplished through a program aimed at children who have witnessed abuse; educating and supporting both children and parent.

Branches Program - Public Awareness & Education

The *Branches* program is designed to raise awareness about family violence and provide family violence information at community events and through the delivery of workshops and presentations to the following groups: schools (junior high/high school), teachers, community groups, and other local service agencies as well as the general public. Currently these free presentations are offered on the following topics: Family Violence, Dating Violence/Healthy Relationships, Children Exposed to Family Violence, Rowan House (general information).

For more information or to book a presentation call Erica at 403-933-3370 or email at manager@rowanhouseonline.org

Upcoming Events

November is Family Violence Prevention Month

This month gives the shelter an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about family violence, the effects it has on the members of the family as well as on the community. It also gives Rowan House an opportunity to educate the community about the shelter and the programs and services we provide to women and children affected by family violence.

We are looking for ideas and people willing to organize events to raise awareness for this upcoming November!

Christmas Campaign

Christmas can be a very difficult time for the clients of Rowan House. Through donations we are able to help our clients have a bit of joy during the holidays. Our Christmas Card Campaign last year was very successful and all of the clients (shelter and outreach) received a Christmas basket including gift cards and other donated items for themselves and their children.

We are looking for volunteers in various areas of the Christmas Campaign for this upcoming year.

For more information, please contact Erica at 403-933-3370 or email at manager@rowanhouseonline.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Celebrate Our Volunteers will be held on September 14 at the Health and Wellness Centre at 7:00 pm.

We are hoping to start training programs for volunteers and as always Rowan House Staff will be there to assist and support volunteers. Please note that all volunteer positions require a Criminal Records Check as well as an ability to maintain confidentiality.

We are looking for volunteers who are interested in the following areas:

Brochures

Volunteers are needed to deliver brochures and business cards to our various associates who refer women to Rowan House. You are more than welcome to contact staff to find out the locations and organizations that requires brochures.

Donations

Volunteers are needed to pick up and drop off donations (either to the storage unit or the shelter garage), and to maintain an inventory of the items that are donated. Donor's addresses would also have to be recorded so a thank you card can be sent to them.

Drivers for Group

Rowan House Staff conduct a Healthy Relationships Group which takes place in High River at the Parent Link Center on Wednesday nights. Volunteers are needed to transport women and their children to and from the Group. Group is currently closed during the summer months, however, once staff have confirmed dates and times for the fall group we will let you know.

Christmas Campaign Help

Volunteers are needed to pick up items, prepare gift bags for Shelter and Outreach clients (including children), and assist in delivering the gift bags to Outreach Client's residences.

(continued on next page...)

Child Care Volunteer

Rowan House offers Child Care in Shelter every Tuesday and Wednesday night during Group. The program takes a wide variety of children, from newborn to thirteen years of age, who have been exposed to and affected by domestic violence. The Child Care Staff are looking for volunteers who are able to support staff and provide assistance.

Co-Facilitator for Group

Rowan House is seeking an individual who is able to co-facilitate, with a staff member, the Healthy Relationships Group. The Group is conducted out of the Parent Link Center in High River on Wednesday nights throughout the fall and spring. The group closes for the winter and summer holidays. The Co-Facilitator will follow the outline and plans that staff have already created for the Group.

Outdoor Maintenance for the Summer time

Staff are wishing for a wonderful yard fairy who has the time to mow the grass, maintain the flowerbeds, and remove pesky weeds. There is a lawn mower and weed whipper available to be used! This volunteer must be able to commit to maintaining all yard work throughout the summer time and must wear proper safety clothing.

For more information or if you are interested in any of these volunteer positions, please contact Gisele at 403-938-6785 or 403-771-3935 or email at volunteer@rowanhouseonline.org

Capital Campaign Update

Rowan House kicked it's campaign into high gear in July when officials got together in High River for their sign ceremony.

The following is a message from Executive Director, Sherrie Botten talking about where the campaign stands right now.

For the past 10 years Rowan House Emergency Shelter has operated out of the basement suit of a house just outside of Black Diamond. We are severely restricted by our size and our close proximity to Eagle House Group Home (for adolescents) that operates on the main level of the same house. Because we share the house, we are unable to take women fleeing high risk situations or who have children over the age of 12 years. We often turn women and children away as we are unable to accommodate them. Because half of the inhabitants of women's shelters are children, many children are turned away with their mothers as well. This is a huge concern for us. Rowan House focuses on the unique needs of rural families. But we do much more than just provide shelter to women and their children fleeing family violence. We provide education and support to everyone in the community through our Outreach and **Branches** Public Education Program.

Rowan House is desperately in need of a new, larger, more secure shelter to better serve the community. Last fall we were able to purchase land in High River to build this new shelter on. We have begun the planning to build an expanded Rowan House. The new shelter will provide services at 3 times its current level. The total cost of the building, including land, furnishings, childrens' inside and outside play areas, and high security is budgeted at \$1.5 million. Through the amazing help of public and private donations we are nearing the half way point in this fundraising campaign. We will also require \$1.1 million in operational funds to operate the facility and programs at 3 times its current capacity. Our total Capital Campaign is \$2.6 million. We still need your help to reach our final goal. We are targeting next year to be ready to build.

With your help, we will do it.



A Sign For The Times – aired on AM1140, The Eagle 100.9 and Sun Country 99.7FM



A sign reading 'Future Site of Rowan House' now sits in front of two empty lots that'll soon become the new women's emergency shelter in High River.

Officials put the sign up during a ceremony July 19th.

Executive Director of the Region 3 Family Based Care Society, Sherrie Botten says they still need to raise between 7 and 800 thousand dollars before they can break ground. "If we could start yet before winter of 2010 that would be absolutely ideal, we'd be open in 2011," she says, "but until those dollars are in our bank account we really can't commit to breaking ground."

She says they are very optimistic construction will commence in 2011 though.

The new shelter will have seven bedrooms allowing for 18-25 residents, which is triple what they can offer now.

Botten says the 1.5 million dollars will pay for the building and all of it's furnishings but they're going to require another 1.1 million dollars after that to cover the additional costs associated with having a larger facility, as the province only covers a certain percentage.

She says that 1.1 million will cover those costs for two years.

Constable Tom Christie works for the Turner Valley RCMP and sits on Region 3's board. He says as an RCMP officer he's all too aware of why this shelter is so important.

"Domestic violence is still a large and a sad problem that our society faces," he says, "and we have to battle domestic violence on a multi-tiered level."

He says, "I've been at this policing game for a number of years and gone are the days where we didn't interfere with a man and his wife's problems, and facilities like this help the police and help us do our jobs."

High River Mayor, Les Rempel says the shelter will be an important addition to the community as well. "I think it's something that we, as a community, can say that this is another thing that we are doing to help each other" he says. "In many ways I think it allows us to no longer ignore the problem and deal with it as we ought to, as a community, so I'm grateful for it to be here."

Recent and Upcoming Fundraisers

Summer is usually a busy time for third party fundraisers organized by different groups in the community. The Foothills has been very supportive of Rowan's campaign for a new shelter and continually steps up to lend a hand.

- July 1, 2010 – High River Show & Shine
 - Raised \$ 1550.27
- July 10, 2010 – Riley's Cattle Barn Pancake Breakfast
 - Raised \$1229.41
- July 12, 2010 – Rotary Golf Tournament at D'Arcy Ranch Golf Course
 - Raised \$23,500
- August 9, 2010 – Ladies Compassion Cup at D'Arcy Ranch Golf Course
 - Raised \$24,075
- August 15, 2010 – Okotoks Show and Shine
- August 26, 2010 – Sex and the City Fundraiser at Carlson's on Macleod

Community Corner

Recently Rowan House had a special visitor, leading to a very special donation. Below is a letter from 10-year-old Noah and his mom:

Hi Sherrie,

Thank you again so much for the tour. Noah was very affected by what he learned and saw while we were there. He has written a little something explaining why he donated his birthday money. I hope that we can spread the word about your shelter and help get that new building built.

Thanks again.

Roben Giesbrecht

My name is Noah Matsubara and I decided to donate my birthday money to the Rowan House Emergency Shelter for Women this year. Instead of presents I asked all my friends that came to my party to bring a \$10.00 donation for this charity. I was able to raise \$175.00 just from my friends at the party. Our family also thought it would be nice to make a donation for me and they donated \$100.00 more.

I found out about the Rowan House at an Okotoks Dawgs game. They said that the shelter had to turn away lots of Mom's and their children. I think that when people like the Dawgs tell kids about charities kids listen.

I decided to donate my birthday money to this place because I think it is so wrong for people to be violent against other people and for them not to have a safe place to live.

The Rowan House volunteers are trying to raise enough money to build another facility in High River. This would be a good thing because they don't have a lot of space now. As I walked out of the Rowan House I realized that one little donation can go a long way and to a great cause.

Thank you for giving me a tour.

Noah Matsubara



That's it for this edition of the Rowan House Volunteer Newsletter. Join us next month for another exciting look at what's happening!

In the mean time, you can visit www.rowanhouseonline.org or call the office at 403-938-6785 for more information.

And don't forget to tell your friends and families about Shop&Share.

At www.shopandshare.ca, people can select from a wide range of well known, brand name stores, shop online and then have a percentage of the proceeds donated to Rowan House.

It's free for you and for Rowan House so create an account today!

Interested in making a donation now? Fill out the form below and mail to Box 610, Black Diamond AB, T0L 0H0 or bring to the Rowan House Office on Elizabeth Street.

Rowan House Donation Form

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Pay By: Cheque Cash

In Honour or Memory of _____

Signature: _____