

The Gift of Giving:

A compassionate response to tough economic times

The New River Valley is such a wonderful place to live. Its beauty and natural scenery are breathtaking in any season you pick. The people here have always been compassionate and collectively create a place where neighbors stop by and check in on each other and provide for each others' needs.

This year, our community, state, nation and world all are facing difficult economic times. Our economic situation has us all nervous and worried.

People who were in critical need before are even in more critical need now. Any family situation that is already stressed begins to stress even more. We have families in need of transportation to get a job, coats for the cold winter and food to feed their families.

As the community of the New River Valley, how will we pull together in this time of need and continue to provide for those who have so little? Do you have an extra vehicle in the garage that you've been meaning to get rid of? Do you have an extra coat in your closet that you haven't needed in a long time? Does your church or civic organization need a community project? Do you have an extra \$5, \$10 or \$100 that could help the Women's Resource Center provide its critical services?

In this season of giving, we have chosen to highlight ways you can help the people served by the Women's Resource Center. Here are just a few ideas:

The Gift of Money

Included in this newsletter is an envelope. We hope that you will consider an end-of-year gift to the Women's Resource Center. Times are tough for everyone, especially those that we serve. This past year, we saw a 15 percent increase in people we served from 3,340 in Fiscal Year 2007 to 3,815 in Fiscal Year 2008. Already this year, we have seen three record-breaking months in our sexual assault program. Numbers of victims that we are meeting at the hospitals in their



Artwork by "Tamara"

When those fleeing domestic or sexual violence arrive at the Women's Resource Center and are treated with dignity and respect, they are often overwhelmed with gratitude. This art (above), a mandala, was created in an art therapy session by one of the women we serve, "Tamara." A mandala literally means circle and in art can represent wholeness. This picture represents "Tamara's" gratefulness to the WRC and the staff mentioned around her circle. You have helped us help this person with your donation of money, time and gifts. See page 2 for more artwork and more of her story.

time of crisis are skyrocketing. We need money to help fund our services.

The Gift of Time

The Women's Resource Center looks for volunteers in every shape and form. Our volunteers answer our 24-Hour Crisis Hotline to ensure that there is a voice always on the line for those in need. Volunteers meet domestic violence or sexual assault victims at the hospital at their times of crisis to be there to advocate for any need they may have. Individuals and groups have fund raisers, food or coat drives, work on our lawns, or help pick up

and drop off donations, which can include large furniture. Our kitchen also is in need of renovating. After having been in the Emergency Shelter for 15 years, the kitchen has seen 4,175 people come and go for 87,660 nights of shelter. We are looking for funding and a contractor to potentially partner with on this project with the time to assist us.

The Gift of Transportation

We have clients that arrive without transportation. Without transportation, the

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Pat Brown



We are constantly reminded by newspapers, radio commentators and television newscasters that “times are bad.” How do we get through this scary period? The answer is in who we are. The New River Valley community is a great community full of compassionate and giving people. We will get through this as we always do, by supporting each other.

If you are able to help the work at the WRC, please know what a difference it will make in the lives of people who are in desperate need. We expect there will

be more victims of domestic and sexual violence this year that will need our services, and we need funds to continue providing those services. Your support is critical to our ability to do this.

As I was thinking about the worries we all have, I was reminded of one of my favorite musicals by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, “Whistle Down the Wind.” The story line is (loosely) about lonely people who are in need. The words to the title song are words that speak to me for our community and those we serve. (You can substitute the “New River Valley” or the “Women’s Resource Center” for the word, I.) I wanted to share them with you today.

Whistle Down the Wind – Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber

Whistle down the wind
Let your voices carry
Drown out all the rain
Light a patch of darkness
Treacherous and scary

Howl at the stars
Whisper when you’re
sleeping
I’ll be there to hold you
I’ll be there to stop
The chills and all the
weeping

Make it clear and strong
So the whole night long

Every signal that you send
Until the very end
I will not abandon you
my precious friend

So try and stem the tide
Then you’ll raise a banner
Send a flare up in the sky
Try to burn a torch
And try to build a bonfire
Every signal that you send
Until the very end, I’m there

So whistle down the wind
For I have always been right
there

In Peace and Hope,
Pat Brown
Executive Director

Therapy, mandala style

Recently, Kay Montgomery, a second-year master’s of social work student from Radford University, approached the Women’s Resource Center about providing mandala art therapy for domestic and sexual violence victims. Facilitated by staff member Misty Cox Henderson, the project started in the fall.

Mandalas are an ancient form of artwork originating from Tibetan Hinduism and Buddhism. Loosely translated, mandala means circle and represents wholeness. Kay chose to use the mandalas in the therapy because she believes they help people reduce the anxiety usually felt during life transitions. She also believes that the mandalas help these victims with that transi-

tion in a positive way.

“The mandalas have opened an expressive part of them that allows them to draw their feelings and their experiences,” said Misty. “I’ve really seen them move toward some goals as this therapy has helped them know what they are working toward. What their dreams are and how to get to those dreams.”

Prior to coming to the Women’s Resource Center, “their aspirations have been squelched due to the abuse,” Misty said. “This group helps them verbalize their dreams. This group validates that, yes, they can and should have dreams and aspirations.”

The women have met in group for six weeks of art therapy. Now their children are

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people we serve can't get a job and can't support their families. Any donation of a car, van or truck to the Women's Resource Center is tax-deductible. So if you have a vehicle that you might consider an old clunker, that old clunker could be a lifesaver for someone in need. We accept cars, trucks and vans in good working order. The Women's Resource Center also could use a truck to pick up donations and help clients move into homes and apartments.

The Gift of a Hot Meal

Of late, we have had groups interested in feeding families residing in the Emergency Shelter. Groups can purchase food, prepare a meal for 26 people including children, and bring it to the Women's Resource Center. This provides a hot, nutritional meal to families that are escaping violence.

The Gift of a Stocked Apartment

Cornerstone, our transitional housing facility, has eight apartments for women escaping domestic and/or sexual violence who need a place to live while getting back on their feet. These apartments turn over about eight times a year. When families leave the apartments, they take all the sheets, towels, blankets, dishes and small appliances with them as starter items for their new home. The empty apartments are then prepared and restocked for a new family. We look for groups of people to adopt an apartment and buy the items listed above and prepare it for a new family. I can't adequately explain the emotions incoming families experience seeing their apartment for the first time. Many families haven't had their own space before.

The Gift of Food

- Canned meats like Spam, corned beef, ham, chicken (not tuna)
- Canned spaghetti sauce
- Ramen noodles
- Macaroni and cheese, boxed
- Small jars of peanut butter & jelly
- Crackers
- Snacks
- Cup of soup
- Box pizza mix
- Box spaghetti mix

- Box chicken noodle soup
- Canned soup, especially Chicken Noodle
- Breakfast cereal

Gifts for the WRC

Items that the Women's Resource Center needs are:

For the House

- Compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Small fire extinguishers
- Zippered mattress covers, twin
- Gallon-sized white vinegar
- Bathroom Cleaners
- Disinfectant spray Sponges
- Trash bags – 30 & 13 gallon
- Aluminum foil
- Saran Wrap
- Oven cleaner
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Facial tissue
- Bleach

For Children

- Used or new Pack N' Plays for toddlers
- Used or new baby monitors
- Children's socks
- Sports balls: basketballs, footballs

For Adults

- P1x, 2x and 3x sweat suits & pajamas
- Socks & L, XL slippers

For All

- Gift Cards: Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Target, CVS, Restaurants, Grocery Stores, Gas Stations
- Pre-paid phone cards
- Stress Balls & Silly Putty
- Teddy Bears
- Used or new small appliances
- Alarm clocks/Clock radios
- Diaries
- Journals
- Multi-color gel pen sets
- Sketch Pads
- Oil pastels (art supplies)
- Craft supplies
- Fabric paint
- T-shirts
- Used or new pots & pans
- Vacuums in working order
- Silverware

Thank You

There is no way we can thank everyone who has helped us over the years, because, thanks to your generosity, the list is just too long. Please know that we couldn't have come this far without each and every one of you.

Our gratitude goes to:

- Church folks who bring us supplies
- Students who have holiday parties for our children.
- Civic groups that send checks.
- Individuals who bring gifts.
- The Police who protect our clients and us.
- Attorneys who fight the injustices of violence.
- Our state, federal and local government funders.
- Those of you who give to the United Way or the CVC Campaigns.
- Volunteers that are forever providing their time for nothing in return and who tirelessly answer our Hotline phones and meet domestic violence or sexual assault victims at hospitals.
- Community members that ask us to speak to your churches, schools or civic organizations
- Those of you who come to hear us speak.
- Generous donors that give us \$5 and those that give us more.
- Our Board of Directors who meet once a month to discuss the work of the Women's Resource Center.
- Our allied professionals who assist us in too many ways to count.
- Our sister organizations.
- Our sisters in state coalitions
- And our allies in state government.

You have all played a role in helping the Women's Resource Center in our efforts to create a community free of domestic and sexual violence for the past 31 years. We celebrate your gifts and donations. On behalf of the people we serve, we thank you.

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 540.639.1123
or **1.800.788.1123** (*regional access*)

Office: 540.639.9592
E-mail: director@wrcnr.org
www.wrcnr.org



women's resource center
of the New River Valley

P.O. Box 477 | Radford, VA 24143

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Therapy, mandala style

becoming interested in the mandalas as well. But to continue the therapy, they are in need of supplies – sketchbooks and oil pastels.

For "Tamara," one person in the art therapy group and a client of the Women's Resource Center, the therapy has turned into an outlet she uses more than just in group. When her emotions are running high and she has no other outlet, "Tamara" turns to her sketchbook, oil pastels and her own imagination. The result is quite stunning.

"Tamara" shared her mandalas with us to include them in this newsletter. She shared them with us because she wanted to say thank you to us, staff at the Women's Resource Center for all that we have done. She is so grateful for our organization and that we were here to help. She is so grateful that when she sees staff, all she can say is "thank you, thank you, thank you."

We cannot help those like "Tamara" without your generous support, so we are passing on her gratefulness to you, our supporters of the Women's Resource Center, and sharing with you her stunning artwork drawn to deal with the domestic violence in her life.

About the art

1: "Tamara" produced this mandala (on page 2) after a group session. She drew the



women in the session by how they described themselves. The mandala is centered in darkness and daylight. In between, the mandala is filled with the people in the session. At top is one woman, an eagle protecting what appear to be flowers, which represent her children. Clockwise from that is a puppy with three hearts. This woman described herself as normally a lion, but after taking her children to the park to play, she felt like a puppy that could play with her children. The tree represents Kay Montgomery who demonstrated the mandala. "Tamara" described Kay as a great tree by

a riverbank who allows the women in the group to be the wind rustling the leaves on her branches. The light and dark faces are "Tamara." The light face is the one she puts on to go out among other people; the dark face is the one she wears when no one else is around. The two faces together is her counselor. Around the mandala is a necklace that each woman wears – the front decorated and beautiful. The back of the necklace is black depicting the heaviness of this necklace around their necks.

2: "Tamara" associates with 'Lady Autumn.' At left, 'Lady Autumn' comes to take "Tamara's" pain and put it in a box. In the center, 'Lady Autumn' then takes "Tamara's" box and puts it in her much larger box where she puts other people's pain. At right, 'Lady Autumn' is showing "Tamara" that she shouldn't be sad anymore because she has love and a generous bounty of food and shelter.

3: "Tamara's" child created this drawing. Her child's wish was to have one beautiful day and a new home.

4: This mandala represents "Tamara's" heart and how broken it is.