



Become a Sustaining Member of the WRC: Give Monthly



Help support survivors by becoming a Sustaining Member. Receive special updates, be a part of our community, and make a lasting impact.

\$35

Provides bus passes and gas cards to survivors

\$50

Covers the weekly cost of building security at our emergency shelter

\$80

Pays for one day of crisis response, ensuring that our crisis line is open 24/7/365

\$140

Provides one night of safe shelter to a survivor

\$140

Helps a survivor file a Personal Protection Order (PPO)



APRIL

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is recognized every April to raise awareness about sexual violence through education, prevention and survivor support.

With Gratitude

We would like to thank these community partners for their financial support and raising awareness for the WRC.

Thank you for standing with us. Together we can continue to provide services with inclusion, integrity, compassion, respect and excellence. Together we can help survivors feel heard, understood and safe.

- Chelsea Park West Apartments
- Cherry Republic
- Cunningham-Limp Development Company
- DTCA
- Earthen Ales/Tank Space
- Glen Lake Woman's Club
- GT Democratic Party
- GT League of Women Voters
- Higher Grounds Trading Company
- Horizon Mahjong Group

- Island Lake Ladies Social
- Just Between Friends
- Modern Bird
- Moomer's Homemade Ice Cream
- Oryana Food Co-op
- Sleeping Bear Noontiders
- Stormcloud Brewing Company
- TC Women's Investment Group
- You Be You Yoga

If you would like to know more about how you can support the WRC, please contact Cindy Lardie at 231-941-1210 or clardie@wrcgt.com.

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Juliette Schultz

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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WRC THRIFT SHOPS

1331 W. South Airport Road
231-421-3033

3030 US-31 South
231-946-4180

Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm
Sunday 11am-5pm

CONTACT

Main Office
720 South Elmwood, Suite 2
Traverse City, MI 49684

Phone: 231-941-1210
womensresourcecenter.org
24 Hour Crisis Line: 1-800-554-4972

Follow us on social media



To protect, shelter, and empower all people impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2026

Safety, Shelter, and Survival: Why Domestic Violence Must Be Part of the Housing Conversation

By Jen Dutmers
Grant Administrator

Across the United States, an estimated 1.2 million women and 2.5 million children experience homelessness each year. Domestic violence is one of the leading drivers of this crisis. For women and children in particular, the connection is undeniable: abuse at home is one of the most common reasons they lose housing, and the lack of safe, affordable housing is one of the most common reasons they stay in or return to dangerous relationships.



Jen Dutmers

In Northern Michigan, where homelessness has risen by nearly 30% annually, the need to understand this link is more urgent than ever.

For survivors, leaving an abusive home is often the most dangerous moment they will face. Abusers frequently escalate violence when they sense a loss of control, and many survivors have been cut off from money, transportation, identification, and social support. Without access to safe housing, survivors are forced into an impossible choice: remain with an abusive partner or face homelessness with their children. In May of 2024, 248 people experienced homelessness in our five county region; based on national data, at least one in four women and a significant number of children in that group are likely survivors of domestic violence.

Homelessness is not only a consequence of abuse — it's also a barrier to escaping it. Survivors report staying in dangerous relationships to avoid losing their housing, protect their children, or prevent involvement from Child Protective Services. Others who do flee often cycle through motels, cars, or unsheltered locations because abusers have damaged their credit, sabotaged rental histories, or stalked them out of previous homes. In rural communities like ours, geographic isolation compounds these risks. Survivors may need to travel 30 – 40 miles to reach safety, often without reliable transportation.

Local service providers, including the Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness, work tirelessly to address

the region's housing crisis. Their efforts are essential — and domestic violence must be part of that shared work. More than 80% of survivors entering WRC shelter identify affordable housing as their greatest challenge, and a national survey found that 84.5% of survivors had unmet housing requests. Without longterm, affordable options, survivors cannot rebuild stability, and their children face the lasting impacts of homelessness: disrupted schooling, poor nutrition, social isolation, and chronic stress.

The Women's Resource Center was the first organization in our region to provide emergency shelter and transitional housing for survivors and their children.

Their experiences make one truth clear: domestic violence is not a side issue in the housing crisis; it is central to it. As our community continues to develop longterm strategies to prevent and end homelessness, survivors' needs must remain at the forefront. Safety, stability, and the chance to rebuild should never depend on choosing between violence and living on the streets.

Local Student Organization Makes its Mark

By Cindy Lardie
Annual Giving | Marketing Coordinator

Juniors Lauren Fisk and Maggie Pryde are busy TCAPS Central High School students, but this year they took on the additional challenge of launching a student organization named Resilience Rising. The mission? To help women, especially those victimized by abuse and poverty.

"We saw a lot of girls struggling and thought we could reach a different group than the WRC by connecting with high school level students," Co-President and Founder Lauren Fisk shares.

Since its inception this fall, the organization

has met every other Monday with as many as 15 students in attendance, and the group is already impacting their community. They conducted a winter clothing drive that gathered 121 clothing items — all donated to the WRC US 31 Thrift Shop. Bake sales are also planned for high school basketball games, with all proceeds benefiting the WRC. The first, held at a TC Central Boys JV Basketball game, raised \$115 in one hour.

Social media has played a major role in the organization's growth. Social media manager Chloe Colliver attributes many brand new members to their Instagram posts. "Students have shown up at our meetings strictly because of our Instagram."

Maggie Pryde, Resilience Rising's Co-President and Founder, recognizes that the work of the organization has solidified her future goals. "I definitely want to help people in the future."



Resilience Rising Team:
Lauren, Maggie and Chloe

With the new organization thriving, Lauren and Maggie are looking to what the future holds. Lauren's younger brother has already expressed interest in leading the group when she graduates, and Lauren recognizes that bringing in underclassmen now can create a foundation for Resilience Rising's success in the future. "We hope to find some freshmen who are just as passionate that can carry it on."

The Courage of One Sexual Assault Survivor

By Juliette Schultz
Executive Director



Juliette Schultz

I once sat in the courtroom during the sentencing of a perpetrator of sexual assault. The survivor was someone who sought help from the WRC and though she did not know me, nor knew I was there,

I was compelled to be present praying that for her sake, the perpetrator would be held accountable.

The courtroom was packed with people; it was standing room only and almost every person was there to support the accused. There were coaches and clergy and family members who were positioned in a large group together. He had power in numbers while the survivor sat quietly, head bowed, with her parent on one side, and the detective who investigated the crime on the other.

Sexual assault is a crime that affects one in six women and one in 33 men in their lifetime. *It is also one of the most underreported crimes* with only 16% of survivors reporting to the police. When a survivor knows the assailant, which happens often, it is even more unlikely that the assault will be reported.

Why is that?

We had all listened to the testimony of this courageous young survivor as she recounted the rape that the evidence proved was intentionally planned.

And still, that day in the courtroom one thing was obvious. The sheer number of people who gathered there to support the perpetrator sent a very clear message: *he couldn't have done this and we don't believe her.*

Michigan ranks eighth as the state with the highest rate of sex offenses. Offenders commit an average of 17 assaults before being caught.

After hearing from many in the community who supported the accused, the perpetrator was asked to stand so the judge could sentence him. It seemed at that moment the whole courtroom was holding its collective breath. My eyes were

trained on the survivor and her father as I listened to the judge say...

...when you committed this crime, you committed a crime against the community, and I think it's best for you to spend some time in jail thinking about your actions and how you might have made a different decision.

The survivor slumped forward and began to weep. I did too. I gazed around the courtroom at the stunned faces of the supporters. Even though the young man was going to jail for a while, there appeared to be very little recognition that this was happening because *he chose to assault her.* The survivor's life had been indelibly altered. After the assault, she no longer felt safe at home and suffered from severe PTSD. And yet, disbelief among supporters in the courtroom was palpable.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. As we reflect on the life-altering stories of sexual assault survivors who have courageously come forward locally and nationally, it's important to remember that only 2 to 10% of reported sexual assaults are determined to be false.

Thank you for standing with us to honor and believe survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in April and always.

2026 TC Comedy Fest to Benefit WRC

By Cindy Lardie
Annual Giving | Marketing Coordinator



Ann Duke

Ann Duke, CEO and founding member of the Traverse City Comedy Fest is planning for a landmark event April 16 – 18th. With a record number of submissions from across the country, the festival is affectionately called "Comedy Camp" by attending comics, allowing for exposure to industry leaders across numerous local venues, including the City Opera House, the Park Place Hotel, the TC Comedy Club and The Alluvion, to name a few.

The festival's philosophy, "Crack up! It's good for you!" emphasizes their belief in the power of laughter. The diverse shows offer something for everyone and also includes open mic nights for nonfestival comics as a way to foster new talent.

Traverse City has embraced the festival since its inception in 2023. Originally affiliated with the DTCA, the festival is now managed by a large team that includes longtime partners Stuart Lazar (TC Comedy Club owner and CFO) and Bob Phillips (veteran touring headliner and CMO), with Ann at the helm. Also a comic, Ann will take the stage during this year's festival.

A notable change this year is the festival's commitment to giving back to the community. For the first time, the TC Comedy Fest has selected a local charitable partner for the

event. "The people of Traverse City have been so welcoming to us. The festival as an entity has been embraced by the city, and we need to give back." Noting the Women's Resource Center's local impact and longevity, and the festival's alignment with the WRC mission, Ann concluded, "What better nonprofit to align ourselves with?"

With an expectation to sell 4,500 to 5,000 tickets, don't wait to buy, as some shows will sell out. **Visit traversecitycomedyfest.com to learn more, buy tickets and support the WRC.**



Keeping The Mission Moving: The Cosgrove Foundation

By Jen Dutmers
Grant Administrator

This past April, the WRC Thrift Shop truck — a pre 2012 Ford Econoline box truck with more miles than anyone cared to count — made its final run. The truck was the quiet workhorse behind our two Thrift Shops, providing near daily support: picking up community donations, transporting merchandise between stores, and moving items to and from storage. When it broke down for



WRC Board Member, Debra Coburn, Tom Cosgrove and Millie

the last time, the impact was immediate. Without a truck, the WRC was suddenly facing unplanned expenses and logistical challenges that threatened a key revenue stream supporting the Mission.

Bottom line: we needed a new truck. And thanks to the generosity of Tom Cosgrove and the Cosgrove Foundation, we now have one.

Tom and his late wife, Lynda, created the Cosgrove Foundation several years ago during the early days of COVID. Lynda, Tom shared, "was a giver and loved to give to causes and organizations close to her heart." Establishing the foundation allowed them to be more intentional about their philanthropy. Since then, the Cosgrove

Foundation has supported a wide range of local organizations, including Safe Harbor, Old Town Playhouse, Child and Family Services, and the Grand Traverse Metro Fire Department.

When Tom's friend and WRC Board Member, Debra Coburn, reached out about the organization's urgent need for a new truck, Tom listened.

"Debra called me and asked if the Foundation had any funds to help the Women's Resource Center purchase a new truck," Tom recalled.

"She explained the situation, including the importance of the truck to the WRC. It was a good fit with our giving priorities, and I believe in the work they do at the WRC, so I made the decision to support the project."

For Tom, supporting the WRC isn't just about meeting a need — it's about strengthening the community. "There are a lot of organizations doing really good work in our area," he said. **"The Women's Resource Center is one that is necessary and crucial. Imagine our community without ambulances or an emergency room. That's what it would be like without the WRC. When survivors need help, they need it now. Their life and the lives of their children are at stake, and the WRC is there 24/7 to support them."**

Thanks to the Cosgrove Foundation and other generous supporters, a new WRC Thrift truck — complete with new graphics and a state-of-the-art lift gate — is now on the roads throughout the four counties we serve. The Foundation is also supporting critical improvements at our emergency shelter.

The WRC is deeply grateful for Tom Cosgrove and the Cosgrove Foundation — for Tom's generosity, his belief in the Mission, and his commitment to strengthening the community we all call home.