

Women's Center

SPRING 2023



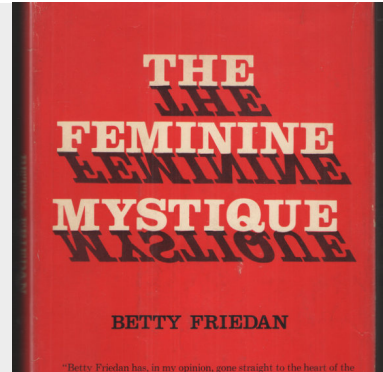
Anniversary Edition

Women's Center

A Historical Snapshot

When the book, *The Feminine Mystique*, hit the newsstands in 1963, it raised troubling questions. Local women began to gather in homes for consciousness-raising meetings. For the first time, many realized they were willing to fight for the rights of all women and encourage each other to be all they could be. The inspiration was contagious.

1963



1972-1973

"The Changing Role of Women In the 70's" conference was held at NMU as a result of on-going Consciousness Raising Groups that were formed in Marquette several years earlier. 150 women from across the UP attended the conference. A speaker from Oakland University was invited to share information about the Women's Center on Oakland's campus. At the close of the conference, the attendees unanimously called on NMU to establish a Women's Center.

NMU President, John Jamrich, approved a Women's Center through the Continuing Education Department at NMU. Karlyn Rapport and Marilyn Marshall established the Spouse Abuse Shelter Project. Rapport and Becky Beauchamp established the Sexual Assault Program and Holly Greer established a Community Advisory Council of women to help guide the Women's Center at NMU. In addition, trailblazing legislation was passed to establish policies, procedures, and standards for prevention and treatment of domestic violence across the state. Pat Micklow played a key role in this development.

1973-1980



1980

The NMU Administration decided they would no longer fund the Women's Center and the Advisory Council applied for and received 501 c (3) non-profit status. Under the leadership of Sally May, the Women's Center moved to the basement of St. Paul's Episcopal Church Guild Hall. A meeting was held to ask members of the community if the Women's Center should continue. 100 people attended and unanimously called for the center to continue and offered help and support.



1986

The Women's Center purchased the former Wittcock Supply Building located at 1310 S. Front St. The back end of the building was renovated into a bingo hall to generate revenue for the Women's Center. During this time, the Women's Center was asked to assume responsibility for the Spouse Abuse Shelter. The shelter was renamed Harbor House and was located on Fisher Street in Marquette.

During this time, the Women's Center was making waves in the legal world. The Women's Center was subpoenaed to provide information on the whereabouts of a domestic violence survivor. The Women's Center refused and a Sheriff Deputy arrived to arrest Sally May, the Director, for refusal to comply with the subpoena. Local attorneys assisted and no information was divulged. The Women's Center also received national recognition for refusing to turn over a rape survivor's file that was subpoenaed. The refusal went all the way to the State Supreme Court.

1986-1992



1993-1996

These were years of phenomenal growth! The Women's Center expanded services to Alger County and opened outreach offices in Munising and Ishpeming. The Women's Center collaborated with the Marquette County Prosecutor's Office and Matt Wiese on a grant project to provide a coordinated community response to domestic violence that resulted in the formation of the Marquette County Domestic Violence Coalition.

The resale shop was opened as a way to assist clients in obtaining necessary items and to generate revenue for programs. Initially called the Women's Center Resale Shop, the resale shop expanded in 2003 to a 3,000 square foot space and again in 2007 to a 7,000 square foot space now known as PakRatz Resale. Nikki Durand, PakRatz Manager, has played a key role in maintaining the resale shop since 2003. She will be celebrating 20 years with the resale shop this year.

1995



1998

The Women's Center celebrated 25 years of excellence and won the distinction of being the oldest continuing Women's Center in the State of Michigan. Pat Micklow, one of the Founding Mothers, stated, "I have always been so proud of us and this community because the Women's Center is the oldest continuously-operating center in the State. We think possibly in the nation. It has been absolutely such a kernel of growth and strength and leadership in this community."



2005-2007

The Women's Center purchased the permanent location for the Harbor House in Marquette. A capital campaign was launched to assist with the purchase and renovations. Renovations were completed in 2007 by volunteers including Gerry DeFont, Marquette County Trade Unions, and local businesses. On moving day all contents and six families were moved seamlessly. The Harbor House is still located at this residence and currently operates a 15 bed shelter for survivors fleeing domestic and sexual violence.

This was a difficult transition period for the Women's Center. With financial difficulties looming, the organization took on the task of restructuring and transformative change to promote and restore public perception and organizational rebirth. The Board of Directors took on the role of a "working" board. Emphasis was placed on evaluating organizational structure as it relates to the mission, vision, and service delivery values.

2010-2013



2013

The Women's Center celebrated 40 years and gained Congressional recognition from Senator Carl Levin as an exemplary community service organization. Sasawin Safe Haven was formed under the leadership of Helen Kahn to provide safety and care for the pets of Women's Center clients who are fleeing violence. This program was developed in cooperation with UPAWS and NMU.

These were great years of expansion and financial sustainability. Beth Casady was hired as the Executive Director. A capital campaign was started to pay off the mortgage on the Harbor House. The campaign was a huge success and the mortgage was paid off in December of 2019. Services were also expanded during this time including an extension of the Blueprint for Safety program through the prosecutor's office and an expansion of sexual assault services in Alger County.

2016-2019



2020

The Women's Center opened up a new satellite office in the Gossard Building in Ishpeming in the beginning of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic then hit the nation with a force that was unexpected. The Women's Center had to make some drastic changes to service delivery. Most staff members began working from home providing services to survivors through technology. Zoom meetings became the new normal. Despite access to services reducing, the Harbor House continued operations.

Then and Now



Women's Center Administrative Office- 1990's



Women's Center Administrative Office- 2022



Women's Center Resale Shop- 2003



Pak Ratz Resale- 2023



Women's Center Staff- 1998



Women's Center Staff- 2023

The Legacy Continues

From the Executive Director

This year, the Women's Center is celebrating its 50th anniversary. In the early 1960's the book *A Feminine Mystique* empowered many women across the nation to address women's rights. Many local women joined the movement to address equal rights for women especially those experiencing domestic and sexual violence. The Women's Center started out as a small group of women meeting in their own homes to discuss how to reform roles of women. In 1972, a group of these women organized a conference titled, "The Changing Roles of Women in the 70's." This conference led to the establishment of the Women's Center through Northern Michigan University's Office of Continuing Education. The focus of the Women's Center was establishing a social and educational support group for women with the extension of the Spouse Abuse Shelter Project to ensure survivors had a safe place to stay when leaving their abuser. Thus, began the legacy of the Women's Center in our community. The Founding Mothers: Holly Greer, Sally May, Patricia Micklow, and Karlyn Rapport played a vital role in ensuring the lasting impact the Women's Center would have on survivors and supportive services.

The Women's Center is carrying on their legacy through supportive services for survivors. Today, the Women's Center operates administrative and sexual assault offices in Marquette; satellite offices in Gwinn, Ishpeming and Munising; and the Harbor House, a 15 bed shelter, for survivors and their families fleeing domestic and sexual violence. In fiscal year 2022, the Women's Center provided services to 283 domestic violence survivors, 127 sexual assault survivors, and 77 survivors and their families seeking shelter after fleeing abuse. Supportive services for survivors include housing and employment advocacy, legal advocacy, food assistance, emergency shelter, emergency response teams, group support, and therapy services. The Women's Center has continuously expanded services including offering services to all self-identified survivors, not just women. None of the work done today would be possible if it were not for the women in the 1970's who dedicated their time and effort to creating a sanctuary for survivors to receive support. We are forever grateful for each and every one of them.

Looking back on the history of the Women's Center has been a great honor for me. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Founding Mothers, Women's Center Staff, volunteers, and the Board of Directors for all of the hard work they have put in to the success of the Women's Center. Lastly, I would like to thank the NMU Archives Department for access to documents, photographs, and interviews to share with you all.


Interim Executive Director

To Our Supporters:

Without you, we are not possible!



Zonta Club



Give 'Em A Break



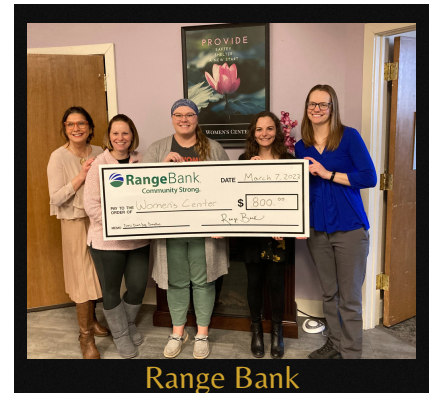
Marquette DDA



Skandia Lions Club



U.P. Home Health & Hospice



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Girls Only Ride. Period.



U.P. Human Trafficking Task Force



Rize



Nirvana Center



NMU Hospitality Club



Marquette West End Rotary

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Volunteers

Alex Lucas	Gail Albright	Meagen Morrison
Alyssa Grey	Jean Tiernan	Melinda Savola
Amber Joyal	Jennifer Jones	Nina Kewatt
Amy Nelson	Joni Hendrickson	Pam Miller
Betty Sommers	Katie Lamers	Rachel Phillips
Brenda Greenhoe	Kendra Reed	Rebecca Kolbus
Brittney Schaeffer	Kenna Jones	Roxanne Mannisto
Brody Rosten	Kyle Flowers	Savannah Stein
Cassie Cira	Lauren Michie	Sharon Ely
Corey Cromell	Laurie Kibler	Tekoa Marshall
Crystal Elefante	Lucas Tarvainen	Theresa Wolters
Crystal Savola	Lynn Brown	Tina McCorkle
Dee Dee Larson	Lynn DeRoche	Victoria Wus

Harbor House Needs List

- Toilet Paper(1 ply)
- Paper Towels
- Cleaning Supplies
- Garbage Bags
- Dish Soap
- Tissues
- Baby Wipes
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Dryer Sheets
- Laundry Detergent
- Canned Foods

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Reed Benton, Marquette County Resident

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Nikki Durand, PakRatz Manager

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Women's Center
1310 S. Front Street,
Marquette, MI 49855
906-225-1346

24/7 Toll Free Support Line: 1-800-455-6611
Website: www.wcmgt.org Facebook:
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WOMEN'S CENTER
1310 S. Front Street
Marquette, MI 49855
Office Hours: 9:00-
5:00pm Mon-Fri
906.225.1346
Or 1-800-455-6611

ALGER OFFICE
Munising Central
Community Center
413 Maple Street
Munising, MI 49862
906.387.4554
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