It has been a little over 6 months since I was hired as the Executive Director at Bolton Refuge House, Inc.; the time has definitely gone by fast. I desired to obtain the position of Executive Director because Bolton Refuge House is an organization that I have been committed to and proud to work for since 1996.

Bolton Refuge House, Inc. is in its 37th year of operation; which I feel is very impressive and speaks volumes about the Eau Claire community members’ commitment to assist victims and their children since the late 70’s. The history of Bolton Refuge House is one to be shared. In the late 1970’s, a group of concerned community women developed the idea of the Women’s Community Center. Before the center even opened, they received a call from the police department asking them to provide shelter for a woman and her children who were leaving a domestic violence situation. The Women’s Community Center was opened as Refuge House in response to that call and has been providing services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault since it opened in 1976. Refuge House was incorporated in 1977 as the first domestic abuse shelter in the state of Wisconsin. Later on, the Refuge House moved into a church parsonage near Birch Street in Eau Claire. In 1987, the shelter was moved to Broadway Avenue and the name was changed to Bolton Refuge House, Inc., in honor of Eau Claire Police Officer Robert Bolton, who was killed when responding to a call for help from the Birch Street shelter.

Bolton Refuge House has provided emergency housing for thousands of victims and families and supportive services for thousands more victims and families over the years. All victim services are confidential and free of charge. The Jackson County Outreach Office began operation in 1991, as a satellite office to Bolton Refuge House. Bolton Refuge House, Inc. assumed responsibility for the Buffalo County Outreach in 2003.

Funding and support provided to Bolton Refuge House from federal, state, local organizations/foundations and community members helps to alleviate barriers for victims fleeing a situation of violence from becoming homeless, being at risk of homelessness or returning to a violent situation due to many other challenges they may face. Bolton Refuge House provides support services and personal advocacy within the existing Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Program, as well as case management and information and referrals for victims. Most clients served are from Eau Claire, Jackson, Chippewa, Buffalo and Trempealeau Counties.

Bolton Refuge House is critical; however, can be seen as a piece of the pie in enhancing victims’ safety. Bolton Refuge House has developed a great working relationship with key partners throughout Eau Claire, Buffalo and Jackson Counties. In 2013 and beyond, Bolton Refuge House will continue to address gaps in services and the needs of victims through obtaining and retaining funding. The holistic, victim-centered approach employed by Bolton Refuge House will continue and gain momentum throughout the agency. Bolton Refuge House staff is committed to listening to victims and upholding victims’ rights. As Executive Director, my goal is to ensure that Bolton Refuge House is seen as a positive and innovative partner in creating collaborative opportunities that address the needs of victims and cost saving opportunities for the communities. I encourage staff to meet regularly with key individuals and participate on community-wide teams whose focus is to enhance victims’ safety and hold perpetrators accountable for their abusive behaviors. Please contact me with any information on a team or committee you feel we should participate in.

The dedicated and compassionate staff brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the victims and the counties of Eau Claire, Buffalo and Jackson. 2013 has been an exciting and re-energizing year as Bolton Refuge House staff comes together, unified as one agency serving three counties of rural Western WI.

I hope you enjoy the new look of the newsletter and learning about the agency as a whole. Staff is excited and looks forward to sharing with you the development of goals, actions plans and activities performed that aid us in achieving the mission and vision of Bolton Refuge House. This quarterly newsletter will provide information on services, advocacy, programming and updates for the counties we serve.
Shelter Life

By: Kylee Bowe

This July will mark my five year anniversary of being the Shelter Case Manager at Bolton Refuge House. Starting as Shelter Case Manager, I never knew how difficult, yet rewarding, the next five years would be. I have worked with such a variety of men, women, and children from so many different backgrounds. In 2012 Bolton Refuge House provided services to 1,174 victims of domestic violence and 64 victims of sexual assault. There were 10,448 shelter night stays. As the Shelter Case Manager, I meet with clients on a daily basis to address various needs. We work closely to develop a plan of action regarding their future goals. I provide them with the tools and support to accomplish these goals, but ultimately they are responsible for their own paths. One of the most rewarding things about being able to work with clients is seeing the transformation as it occurs. Ultimately, being able to support and assist clients on their unique journeys is what makes my work something I’m grateful to be a part of, and makes my career unlike any other.

Bolton Refuge House (Eau Claire) Support Groups

Survivors of Domestic Violence and/or Sexual Assault
Every Tuesday from 6 - 7:30 pm

Domestic Violence Educational Group
Every Thursday from 6:30 - 8:00 pm

STAR (School Talk and Recreation)
Every Tuesday from 6 - 7:30 pm

Children’s groups are available while mom attends group

For more information, please call (715) 834-0628 or 800-252-4357

Bolton Refuge House Children’s Programs

By: Anita Otte

The Children's Advocacy Program provides quality licensed daycare services at our facility to victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault while they work, attend school, meetings, parenting classes, or other necessary appointments. We offer a structured children’s support group for ages 5-12 years, twice a week. In this last year we have had 76 children attend our support group. If enough staff and volunteers are available, we separate the children into lower and upper elementary age groups, as well as a teen STAR group. We are consistently seeing 15-20 children ages 0-12 attend. The topics are modified according to their need. We also provide resources/information on child development, behavior, regression, anger, bullying, abuse, effects of domestic violence on children, and how to co-parent with an abuser. We offer 1:1 with the mothers to further explore parenting concerns, strategies, or stresses. We are constantly looking for new ways to improve our Children’s Advocacy Program. As a result, this March we developed a Family Strengthening Group to help strengthen the mother and children’s relationship through a series of fun family activities that promote growth, communication, and trust. Because of the generous donations we receive, we are able to provide school supplies, Christmas and birthday gifts, and hold our annual Christmas party. Many of these activities have been possible because of volunteers from the community. If you have any questions about this program, would like more information, or would like to volunteer, please call the Children’s Advocate: Anita 715-834-0628
Volunteers Make a World of Difference

Have you ever had your heart touched by a volunteer? Maybe you were served at a fundraiser for a non-profit? Or were visited during a stay in the hospital? You or a loved one might have even received direct services from a volunteer! Volunteers make a difference in our lives, whether we know it or not. That is the beauty of volunteers: they give of themselves. They are absolutely selfless, volunteering for no other reason other than they love to make a difference in this world. They understand that they might not get any glory in their work. They know that sometimes, to make a difference in someone’s life, they might have to do some dirty work. They will clean a toilet or vacuum a floor. They will take on the dirty dishes that a busy mom in shelter might not have the energy to do. They rock crying babies to sleep (and change their diapers when they wake up!). They answer phones, carry boxes, organize closets, and mow lawns. They offer a smile and a helping hand, no matter the task.

At Bolton Refuge House, we are so grateful to the 500+ volunteers that we come in contact with every year. We are thankful for the groups who come in to move a client into safe and affordable permanent housing and the retired ladies who come in week after week to answer our phones for a shift. Each of our volunteers makes life better for our clients and for those of us who work with them! We also benefit from their energy and their smiles. Our jobs would be impossible without their help and we are so glad they are here.

As we are finally coming into spring, we face the seasonal challenges of getting our yards and gardens into shape! We are working on Spring Cleaning and organizing projects. We always need those special people who can show kindness to children and teach them that they are loved and valued. And, of course, we are looking for friendly, outgoing individuals to greet those who come through our doors and those who call us for assistance. If you are interested in volunteering at Bolton Refuge House, please attend a volunteer orientation. Orientations are held on the first Saturday of each month from 1-3pm at Bolton Refuge House in Eau Claire. If you are interested in volunteering in Eau Claire, Jackson or Buffalo Counties, please contact Tanya at 715-834-0628 to schedule a meeting.

Interns at work

As an intern here at Bolton Refuge House I don’t think I knew what I was truly getting into as I began my internship, but it has been above and beyond what I could have imagined. For those that come to live in the shelter this is so much more than a home for them; this is a place to start fresh and have a new beginning. They get the chance to be free from bondage, to make their own decisions, for the first time in a long time they smile again, they are heard, and they hopefully leave with a new found strength, beauty, and confidence.

There are support groups, one on one advocacy, they can meet with our legal advocate, and also get to enjoy special activities. This semester there was a Fun Food Night for the women every other Wednesday. The women could come and learn how to make a healthy and delicious meal on a budget. They got to make the meal with their children and other residents and then enjoy the meal and time together. It was an awesome opportunity for the women to learn new things, as well as share some of their own recipes and create new memories with their children.

Here at Bolton we are doing life with these women, I am humbled daily as I meet with new clients and learn things from old clients. No two stories are the same, but the fear they feel as they arrive and the strength they hope to leave with, is a reoccurring theme for most of these women. Bolton is a place where we hope to empower and educate those here in our shelter and then out into the community!
There are LOTS of exciting things happening here in Jackson County and with Bolton Refuge House Inc as an agency. By now, you’ve noticed the new logo and the new layout of the agency newsletter. Due to increasing costs and requirements for bulk mail, we are working really hard to “go green” but we could really use your help! Between our three locations in Jackson, Buffalo, and Eau Claire Counties, we have a mailing list of approximately 3,000 people. The interns in Eau Claire have been trying to contact everyone on that list to ask if they would still like to receive the newsletter and/or if they would like to receive it electronically instead. However, so many people are using cell phones vs land line phones, it’s been impossible to reach out to everyone. So, if you are reading the hard copy of this newsletter and would prefer to receive it electronically, please send me an email to brjcoutreach@gmail.com and let me know so we can remove your name from the mailing. We promise not to send you any other emails or solicitations—it is just a way to help us reduce our costs and make things more efficient. As you can see, we have also combined our newsletter to be all inclusive of our agency as a whole. This is one way that we can not only reduce our costs, but also a way to help our communities have a better understanding of who we are, what we do, and how others can help us in our mission. As you page through the newsletter, please notice which BRH site you are reading about in the upper left or right-hand corner of each page. The wish list will now include the needs for both Jackson and Eau Claire Counties but please know that donations made to Jackson County will stay in Jackson County and vice-versa and they will still be separated on the wish list page accordingly. We hope that you enjoy reading our new newsletter and everything we have to offer to the clients we serve and to our communities!

Here at the Jackson County Outreach office, we have been making great strides in our collaborative efforts with other agencies to improve the safety of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We meet with the Domestic Violence Court team three times each month to ensure that victims’ safety is at the forefront and that perpetrators are being held accountable. We attend the monthly Jackson County Collaborative Justice Coordinating Council which is a large team of people from various agencies throughout the county who work together to develop more efficient ways of helping families and children who are at risk of facing issues such as homelessness, going into foster care, etc. Trauma informed care is essential in the development of this effort, but it will provide the County and these families with some other options to help them find the assistance they need.

We are also excited to be a part of some Law Enforcement training that will be held in August. The Jackson County Sheriff’s Department and the Black River Falls City Police Department have hired several new officers in the last few years so Sheriff Waldera has invited BRJCO staff along with the Ho-Chunk Nation’s Domestic Violence Agency and the District Attorney’s office to come in and talk to all of the officers about the services we provide and about the various dynamics that can exist when responding to a domestic violence or sexual assault case. We are so excited for this opportunity! We are also working on ways to better help victims at the time of an officer’s response. Often times, victims simply don’t know about our services so they are left alone and feel scared, isolated, and confused about what happens next. Victims already live in fear and isolation with their abuser, they shouldn’t feel that way when Law Enforcement arrives and makes an arrest. So, we are working together to develop ways to let victims know that help is available and that they don’t have to go through this experience alone.

BRJCO staff is also working with the Assistant District Attorney, the Victim Witness Coordinator and the Ho-Chunk Nation’s Domestic Violence Agency to plan an awareness event/fundraiser. We are soliciting some local “celebrities” to collect pledges for both BRJCO & the HCN. Whoever collects the most pledges will ride in our float at the Karner Blue parade this summer—the others get to walk the parade in high heels! Details are still in the works, so please stay tuned! In the meantime, I’d just like to say thank you to all of our local committees and agencies who are working together with us to help us make a difference in our communities and keeping our families safe.
Sexual Assault Awareness Month

I would like to start out by thanking all of the businesses in Jackson County who allowed us to hang flyers up for Denim Day (April 24th) and/or help us spread awareness of Sexual Assault Month by selling our teal awareness ribbons. I am pleased to see that our community is active in bringing awareness to our County and supporting victims/survivors through those actions. In 2012 we provided services to 37 sexual assault victims. In 2012, the Jackson County District Attorney’s office received 15 referrals for sexual assault and as through those actions. In 2012 we provided services to 37 sexual assault victims. In 2012, community is active in bringing awareness to our County and supporting victims/survivors

Transitional Housing

I would like to thank the people who continue to help our Transitional Housing Program by donating items that are useful in our housing units. Four of our units are currently occupied and the other unit is getting a fresh, new coat of paint! In October of 2012, BRH was awarded a federal grant from the Office of Violence Against Women to fund our Transitional Housing Program. This new funding has given us an amazing opportunity to provide more resources for families and individuals who need temporary housing based on being a victim of intimate partner violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. BRJCO now serves as a “landlord” for our clients, which enables us to provide references for potential permanent housing. Not only has this funding opened more doors for clients, but it has been helpful for staff as well, so that we can attend important trainings and learn how to better serve victims. If you or someone you know qualifies for our housing, please contact Brittany @ (715) 333-2350 or email thpmanager@yahoo.com for more information. Thank you!

The Traja Act

Did you know that in the state of Wisconsin, a third conviction of Domestic Violence within a 10 year period is a felony & punishable with an additional two years in prison? On December 3, 2009, Tyrone Adair killed his girlfriend, 33 year-old Tracy Judd and their 23 month old daughter, Deja Renee; but Adair didn’t stop there. That same day, he also gunned down his ex-girlfriend, Amber Weigal and their two year-old daughter, Neveah. Adair was on the run but was later found with a fatal self-inflicted gun shot wound. After their tragic deaths, Tracy Judd’s sister, Lisa and childhood friend, Heather, learned that Adair had a pattern of abusive behavior that had escalated over time, which is almost always the case in any abusive situation. They fought for change and succeeded! On April 9, 2012, Governor Walker signed Act SB350, The TraJa Act, into law-for Tracy and Deja. As he signed the Act, Governor Walked stated that Wisconsin has taken this step to offer more protection for victims and prevent the escalation of violence before it’s too late. Together-we can make a difference!
"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"—Nelson Mandela

Bolton Refuge House—Buffalo County Outreach (BRH-BCO) also shares the belief that education is the key to change. One of the ways we are educating the community is through the classroom. BRH-BCO had the wonderful opportunity to be invited back into the Mondovi Middle School to present to local youth dating violence awareness and prevention. It is so wonderful to be able to give students the tools they need to be successful while dating and being able to handle different situations they will be encountering. The hope is that we can prevent abuse by giving students the tools they need to identify and remove themselves from abusive relationships. In an attempt to make such a heavy subject as dating/sexual violence light, BRH-BCO students are rewarded for their active participation and each student walks away with a fun button specific to their topic. Each grade 6th through 8th focused on a specific dating violence subject.

Sixth grade are introduced to the basics elements involved in dating abuse through the use of the ‘Choose Respect’ video and curriculum. The Power and Control Wheel are closely examined and each ‘tactic’ identified by which the students are given a scenario and they need to identify the tactic being used.

Seventh grade focus is on digital dating abuse. Technology continues to grow as does its use as a control/abuse tactic. Information is shared with the students as to what digital dating abuse might look like and the possible remedies. Students are once again given scenarios pertaining to the use of technology as an abuse/control tactic and it is up to them to decide possible solutions as to handle the situation.

Last but not least, the Eighth graders are building upon their previous knowledge of dating violence from the past two years to focus on Bystander Intervention. Strategies and SAFE tactic are examines as ways to prevent and intervene with dating violence and/or sexual assault. Students are given possible scenarios that they most likely will encounter and discuss possible SAFE options.

BRH-BCO is very well received by the students and faculty at Mondovi Middle School. The students seem to really enjoy our time together and we do as well! ---- Jackie MO

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My name is Ashley and I have been an intern with Buffalo County Outreach- Bolton Refuge House since February. Working with Jackie in Buffalo County has been a very positive and rewarding experience and I am happy to have the opportunity to work with such an outstanding organization. One of my main duties while working with Buffalo County Outreach has been putting together presentations for the Mondovi Middle School; we presented to the students on teen dating violence, digital dating abuse and bystander intervention. Being able to go into the schools and educate these young children on issues that they will be facing as they grow older was both a positive experience for them as well as for me. When I started my internship with Buffalo County Outreach- Bolton Refuge House I thought that I was well equipped to deal with domestic violence and sexual assault; but the truth is that we all have so much to learn about this issue and it is important that we keep others as well as ourselves educated and aware of this growing social problem. There is so many stigmas attached to domestic violence and the only thing that will prevent this is education and awareness. I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to work with Buffalo County Outreach- Bolton Refuge House and I know that the experience I gained while working here will help me in my future career. --- Ashley Doering, UW-Stout Intern
Eau Claire Wish List

- End tables
- Chests of drawers
- Table lamps
- Twin mattresses
- Twin mattress protectors
- Twin sheet sets
- Bunk beds
- Bath towels
- Pillows
- Box fans
- Laundry detergent
- Dryer sheets
- 60 watt fluorescent light bulbs
- Lawn/leaf garbage bags
- New undergarments for women & girls
- New sweat suits (all sizes)
- Diapers and Pull-ups
- Coffee & filters
- Long distance calling cards
- Gas cards
- Bus tokens
- Action City passes
- Department store gift cards
- Theater passes
- Used cell phones w/chargers
- First aid kits
- TV converter boxes

Monetary donations are also accepted and are used to assist with operational costs of the shelter. If you wish to mail a donation, please make your check payable to:

Bolton Refuge House Inc.
PO Box 482
Eau Claire, WI 54702

All donations are tax-deductible!

We are currently looking for sponsors to assist us with the cost of our newsletter. If your business, group, agency, or organization would like to help, please contact Dena @ (715) 284-8820 or email: brjc Outreach@gmail.com

Jackson County Wish List

- Twin bed sets (mattress, box spring & frame)
- Twin & full-size mattress protectors
- Side/end tables
- Cleaning supplies
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Dish soap
- 13 gallon garbage bags
- Mop buckets
- New pillows
- Table lamps
- Alarm clocks
- Wall clocks
- Kitchen glasses
- Twin and full-size blankets and/or comforters
- Living room furniture (no hide-a-beds or lift chairs)
- Shower curtains and liners
- Gift cards for gas
- Wal-Mart gift cards
- Coffee pots
- Area rugs
- Small microwaves
- Bathroom towel rings/holders
- DVD players
- Paper towels
- Kleenex
- Toilet paper

Sorry - BRJCO does not accept clothing donations. We ask that all furniture donations be in new or like new condition as we do not have the resources for cleaning or re-upholstery. Monetary donations can be mailed to:

BRJCO
P.O. Box 481
Black River Falls, WI 54615

To make arrangements for larger donations, please contact Tanya on Thursdays at (715) 284-9970 or (715) 834-0628.

All donations are tax deductible!
Be sure to “Like” us on Facebook!

Bolton Refuge House Contact Information

Executive Director - Patricia Stein (715) 834-0628
Email: boltonrefugehouse@yahoo.com

Transitional Housing Case Mgr-Eau Claire - Kris Tibbits (715) 858-3444

Jackson County Outreach Project Director - Dena Quinn (715) 284-8820
Email: brjcoutreach@gmail.com

Transitional Housing Case Mgr-Jackson - Brittany Wathen (715) 333-2350

Buffalo County Outreach - Jackie Miller-Oates (608) 685-2424

Our new website is under construction but keep checking back!

www.boltonrefugehouse.org

Or Current Resident