

New duds for Willy Forest



Willy Forest sports his new overalls with his good friend, Rainbow Threads Madd Seamstress, Tammy. Photo by Carrie White

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Published: **June 15, 2010 6:00 PM**

Through community grant programs, a local artisan is busy dressing up the town.

Rainbow Threads Madd Seamstress, Tammy has been busy this season, thanks to some help from the Golden and District Community Foundation (GDCF).

The GDCF administers the Columbia Basin Trust's (CBT) Community Initiatives and Affected Areas Program. Recently, local celebrity Willy Forest was granted some funding to secure some new clothing and that's where the Madd Seamstress came in.

“Willy approached me at the craft fair and said that he needed some new clothes. So with some help from his friends at Kicking Horse Culture, he applied for the grant to the CBT, through their Community Initiatives and Affected Areas Program and was granted the funds he needed by the Golden and District Community Foundation and their Community Funds Local Selection Committee.”

Rainbow Threads provided Willy with his new mainstay outfit, a spiffy new pair of overalls that really represent Golden.

“ I felt that they needed to be fun and approachable, yet stylish and cool,” said the Madd Seamstress. “Nothing achieves that like a pair of pinstriped bell-bottoms! What I really felt strongly about expressing is what Willy Forest represents. Willy is all about sustaining our valley, the mountains, the forest and above all our clean water. So I incorporated Mount 7 and the Kicking Horse River into Willy’s overalls. He’s a guy who knows where it’s at and deserves to be sporting the best duds, for sure. It was a pleasure to work with Willy.”

Willy and the Madd Seamstress said they wanted to give a shout out to the fact that there are such programs available in the community, being put to use in the community.

“Willy would like to say thanks and even though the amount of funds may seem small, they mean the world to the groups they go to. Willy thinks these programs are a nice way to keep it local. He was able to get his costumes at reasonable prices, within the community while supporting community efforts and programs,” said the Madd Seamstress.

Ryan Watmough, executive director at the GDCF, said, “Willy Forest has become an ambassador for Kicking Horse Country. The Community Funds Local Selection Committee (CFLSC) realized that our furry icon should look his best in every season – snow or shine.”

Rainbow Threads, through the Community Initiatives and Affected Areas Program, also facilitated workshops held earlier in the year. Through the workshop, the Madd Seamstress was able to teach students skills and techniques in sewing and was able to provide 15 professional costumes for the Circkidz group. The costumes were fully completed recently and the group was able to show off their fancy new duds to area schools.

“I think it is very important to let people know that grant money is playing a face card in the community and also is supporting a local artist.”

According to the CBT website, the Community Initiatives and Affected Areas Programs (CIP/AAP) are CBT’s largest and longest running programs. This year the programs will be supporting communities with \$3.3 million, the final year of a three-year \$10 million commitment.

All areas of the Basin receive CIP funding, while additional AAP funds are allocated to areas of the Basin most affected by dam construction under the Columbia River Treaty. These areas are part of the Arrow, Kinbasket, Duncan and Koocanusa Reservoirs.

Funds for these programs are allocated on a per capita funding formula and are distributed once a year to our delivery partners: the Regional Districts of East Kootenay, Central Kootenay, Kootenay Boundary, City of Revelstoke, Town of Golden, Village of Valemout and the Ktunaxa Nation Council. Decision-making on how to disburse funds is community-based. In Golden’s case, money is allocated through the GDCF’s Community Funds Local Selection Committee.