

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
June 7, 2011

The Vital Signs of Commerce, Charity & Community

(Golden, BC) – The challenges of the charity community in Golden were communicated by the Golden & District Community Foundation at the Kicking Horse Country Chamber of Commerce's AGM on May 5th.

After the annual meeting, held at the Rock Water Bar & Grill in Golden, the GDCF was one of five local non-profit organizations asked to present to the KHCCC membership.

Ryan Watmough, Executive Director of the GDCF, provided the standard statements and stats that you would expect from a professional non-profit organization.

The GDCF, a registered charity, has been here since 2001, holds \$1.3M in 18 endowment funds and made \$50K in grants and scholarships each year.

With the theme of the evening, it became clear that both charities and businesses need to focus on conversations, networking and mentorship now, more than ever before.

Both non-profits and businesses continually struggle with determining what products, programs and services to offer, to who and when. Both are challenged with accounting for costs and determining what the market will bear.

Mr. Watmough noted the 125-plus non-profits working in the Golden & Area A community. The Kicking Horse Country Chamber of Commerce has 200 members (predominantly businesses, from an estimated 400 businesses in Golden and Area A). Each of these organizations wrestles with the challenges noted above.

In fact, while this is a universal struggle, our community doesn't have its pulse on how its organizations are doing or how its employees, owners and directors are surviving. This type of evaluation is critical to understanding our prosperity and quality of life.

Enter the GDCF's second part of their presentation: Golden & Area A's 2011 Vital Signs Report. The Vital Signs Report movement began in Toronto in 1995 and has migrated across the country, in big and small communities. Golden & Area A is one of 6 rural BC communities committed to publishing this quality of life report in October 2011.

To get everyone back on their feet, Denise English, Vital Signs Steering Committee Chair, setup a chart of the Vital Signs Issue Areas and asked the KHCCC members to try a version of a 'dotmocracy.' With two sticker

dots in hand, Ms. English asked the members to put their blue dots on the Vital Signs Issue Area listed where they felt the community was performing the best.

Then, Ms. English asked them to take their red dots and place it near the indicator that they felt the KHCCC and its members was best positioned to oversee improvements.

Here is what the Chamber members selected independently:

1. *“Issue Areas where Golden & Area A is performing best”*: 1) Arts & culture (10/23 respondents or 43%), 2) Learning (30%), 3) Health (13%), and 4) three-way tie between Safety, Housing and Environment (4%).
2. *“Where KHCCC can make the biggest impact on the community’s quality of life”*: 1) Economic (43%), 2) two-way tie between Work and Belonging & Leadership (17%), 4) two-way tie between Getting Around and Gap Between Rich & Poor (9%), and 6) Arts & Culture (4%).

In the coming months, the Vital Signs Steering Committee will continue to pour over and disseminate local, regional and national research, and engage the community to find out if performance matches public perception and how we should prioritize improvements.

With many conversations, networking and mentorship, it’s hoped that our community’s quality of life will be clearly understood by way of the Vital Signs report project. Then, a plan can be crafted to ensure our prosperity into the future with the appropriate resources dedicated to its execution. And leading that charge will, in part, be the KHCCC and the business community.

About the Golden & District Community Foundation

The Golden & District Community Foundation’s mission is to attract and effectively grow permanent funds; provide leadership and administration that helps in addressing significant community needs; and help donors fulfill their philanthropic interests.

To stay up to date with your community foundation and the ongoing Vital Signs project, please bookmark www.goldencommunityfoundation.ca.

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