

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

### 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Our members celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vancouver Second Mile Society. Our society, being the oldest seniors non-profit in Vancouver, aims to improve the quality of lives of the marginalized low income seniors in the urban core of Vancouver through our drop in centres and outreach programs. We provide seniors with opportunities to socialize so that they stay away from isolation and loneliness. Through our motto of “Seniors helping seniors,” we encourage seniors not only be good companions among themselves but also provide social and emotional support to one another.

Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre is considered a second home to many of our members residing in the



VSMS'S 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



MEI CELEBRATING HER 102<sup>ND</sup> BIRTHDAY

neighbourhood. Due to gentrification, there are fewer and fewer places for seniors to hang out.

Mei shared with us her secret to longevity as she celebrated her 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday. She stays active by playing mahjong games daily with her friends at the Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre. She can still get around by herself and walks without the aid of a cane. *Awesome!*

### Downtown South



COMMUNITY KITCHEN IN GRESHAM RESIDENCE

The community kitchen at the Gresham Residence continues to be a great success. This program is completely run by the residents of the Gresham where they host a weekly meal with much of the ingredients for the nutritious meals supplied from the food bank. This year, one of the neighbourhood helper volunteers stepped up to take leadership of facilitating the community kitchen. There are usually between 10 – 15 residents who take part and help prepare the meals. As a result, some residents who haven't normally been so involved have stepped up to lead the meal preparation. The menus are planned month by month, with a focus on preparing a balanced meal from what is available. The community kitchen is bringing the tenants together. This continues to strengthen the Gresham community in a way that everyone can relate to, through delicious food.

### The Continental Seniors Centre



MEMBERS OF THE CONTINENTAL SENIORS CENTRE

The Continental Seniors Centre continues to move forward one step at a time. Our greatest success has been our volunteers who maintain our reception desk and computer program. The computer program is run by three volunteers and offers access to computers in a home-type atmosphere. The volunteers are available to assist seniors with accessing information for local senior events, services and resources. The seniors who sometimes feel intimidated by computers are assisted by peers to develop their skills. The senior centre is a friendly atmosphere where seniors can gather to enjoy art activities, games and personal development workshops. A popular aspect of the programming is personal care and health care which includes hair and nail care, as well as the flu and other health clinics offered by community partners. It's a friendly atmosphere for all to join together as family.



## Downtown Eastside

When Robert first joined our volunteer program, he was comfortable running a coffee house in his building, and he was also accommodating when we needed to transfer him to a larger location. He proved himself to be quite reliable, so when our long time office support volunteer retired due to health reasons, we offered him that position. He was a bit shy and timid when he first started and used to just sit at the desk, never turning on the computer. We helped him set up an email and encouraged him to go online when in the office. His self-esteem has grown experientially. When asked about the changes he has noticed in himself, he stated that volunteering gave him a purpose. He used to stay in his room and sleep a lot. He said he now gets up early, even on his days off. He also said his diet has improved now that he's eating breakfast and lunch, whereas before eating was infrequent. He added that since he's become more known in the community, he gets greeted by many of the people who know him from the program, and that makes him feel valued.



ROBERT ARCHIE WORKING IN THE OFFICE

## Chinese Outreach Project



SENIORS PRACTISING FALLS PREVENTION EXERCISE

Six community projects initiated by our seniors have received Neighbourhood Small Grants from Vancouver Foundation. With some support seniors have started a social club; a cross cultural living English class; a dialogue between the First Nations and the Chinese immigrants; a number of cultural and nature tours; and a series of Health & Wellness Cafés benefiting over 250 seniors. We believe this is the most effective way to empower seniors to lead a healthy and active life. In turn they are able to support their neighbours. Sharing the same vision and working in partnership with our volunteers and community agencies, the Chinese outreach program has served 600 seniors in 2018. Surely we are better together!™



SUMMER OUTING TO BOWEN ISLAND

## Christmas is coming: Please help!



Once again we will be hosting a special Christmas brunch for our seniors. Your donation makes this lunch possible and will provide support for all our programs.

## THANKS TO OUR 2018 FUNDING PARTNERS:

*City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, United Way of the Lower Mainland, The Province of British Columbia, Rennie Foundation, Soroptimist International of Vancouver, and you –our loyal individual supporters.*