

Assisting seniors in the Downtown Core

The Vancouver Second Mile Society • 509 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1P9 • Tel: (604) 254-2194 • Fax: (604) 254-2150

2005 Highlights

In light of the funding cuts in the previous year, we have carefully reviewed our current programs and services. We have started new initiatives in fundraising and are monitoring our current programming to ensure that we are meeting the community's needs.

We launched our new website in June this year: www.vsms.ca and our email address is info@vsms.ca. Through our website, visitors can obtain information about our society and better understand the work we do to serve our community.

During the year, we developed some new fund-raising ideas to raise resources from different sources, including the donation of food which we distribute to our seniors at the Centre and through the Coffee Rooms in the SRA hotels.



Tammie Tupechka, one of our Outreach Workers, receiving a skid of donated healthy snacks from Dan-D-Foods.

We are grateful to the Soroptimist International Vancouver club who donated \$5,000 to fund the replacement of our aging Cooking Range/Oven in the Seniors Centre. Now we can provide efficient low-cost nutritious hot meals to our low-income seniors without worrying about blowing a fuse. The new stove/oven was delivered in March 2005.



Presentation of \$5,000 Cheque from the Soroptimists

We continue to offer a free meal for members participating at our special events such as Christmas Day Brunch, Chinese New Year Celebration and Chinese Moon Festival.



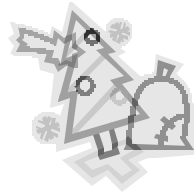
Joseph Couturier is enjoying a piece of Mooncake at our Chinese Moon Festival Celebration in October 2005.

Neighbourhood Helpers Outreach Program

Fred is a very isolated senior who came to our attention due to the concern of a hotel manager who had noted his decline over the previous month. When we first knocked on his door, Fred was not too receptive to anything he regarded as interference. He told us, through the door, that he was fine. We arranged for a street nurse to pay a visit, with similar results. Then Ivan, another resident who attends our coffee room, enticed him to come down the hall for a cup of coffee. We were there, and once we had met and he could see for himself that we were not going to threaten his autonomy, he began to relax with us. It took patience and persistence to reach this lonely man but we began to notice some changes. We were not able to arrange for a regular caregiver since that program had been curtailed, but we were able to convince him to accept a visit from the street nurse and to hook him up with the 'food to you' program. Regular meals and a little "TLC" did wonders for his energy, and we noticed that he was taking care of his appearance again and making some nice friendships with other residents at the coffee room.

We find that assessment and referral are challenged by isolation and often apathetic, sometimes resistant, seniors who may regard help as interference. Poor general health and mobility issues restrict many seniors from accessing activities and services they could use. Limited resources, neglect, and despair all play a part in loss of motivation to self-care, and we have found seniors living in the most alarming conditions. Many continue to ignore symptoms until they are severe or fatal. We are in a position to monitor a situation so that with our caring and attention we can provide encouragement, timely intervention and direct referral to various services before the situation completely deteriorates. Sometimes all that is needed is a bit of attention and support. Many do not like to complain and are habituated to discomfort. Perhaps they wish privacy more than company and many of those we have visited express mistrust in the systems that they feel are

indifferent to their plight. This point of view is reflected in a spectrum of attitudes from "what's the use" and "why bother" to outright resistance. Our volunteers and staff are trained to be respectful and discreet. Our method is to achieve a level of trust that we strive to build and maintain. We do this by showing consistent concern for the opinion and well being of the seniors who participate in our program. Only when this is achieved can we begin to facilitate what is revealed to be necessary or desirable in the way of referrals.



Christmas is coming, please help!

We will be hosting our Christmas Eve brunch at our centre to celebrate Christmas with our lonely seniors. We do not charge for this event and we need your support to make this possible. Your donation provides support for all of our programs. *If you can help, please call us at 604-254-2194.*

Happy Holidays and best wishes for the year 2006.



A United Way
MEMBER AGENCY

Wheelchair Accessible Facilities 

Thanks to our 2005 funding partners:

City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, United Way of the Lower Mainland, BC Gaming Commission, Central City Mission Foundation, Face the World Foundation, Soroptimist International Vancouver and you, our loyal individual supporters.