



2006 HIGHLIGHTS



SEVERAL OF OUR CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS DOING THE TRADITIONAL CARVING OF THE ROASTED PIG DURING THE CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION PARTY.

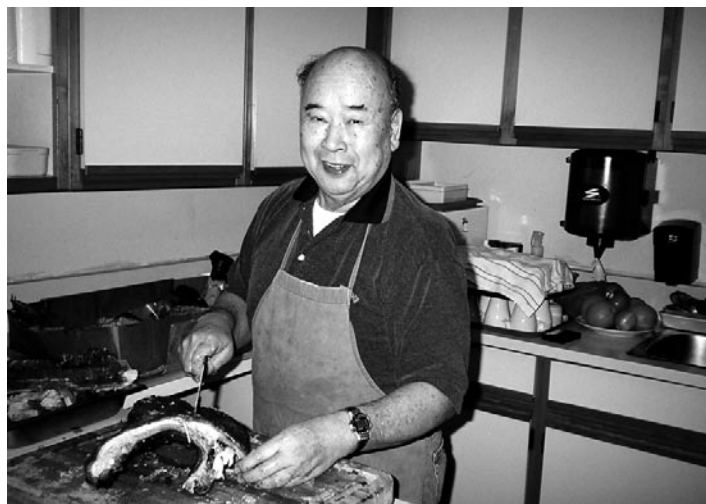
The Vancouver Second Mile Society is the oldest seniors organization in Vancouver. Our mandate is to improve the quality of life for seniors in the urban core. We have been operating a drop in day program for seniors in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver for 48 years and we are already thinking about plans for our 50th anniversary in 2008. Since 1958 we have been encouraging seniors to provide mutual support to one another thereby enabling seniors to help themselves.

The past year has seen an increased erosion in the stock of low cost housing in the Downtown Core. While our Society is not involved with homelessness we are concerned that the low income residents of the Downtown Eastside are slowly being forced out of their community as more and more of the SRAs are being closed or are being converted into higher priced hotel accommodation. Fear surrounding stability and availability of housing has reverberated throughout the community. Specifically, the stress from fears around hotel closures

has had a very negative effect on people's health (physical and mental) and other social issues. Displacement in the senior population is particularly detrimental because as long-term residents they risk losing their friends, routines, and social support networks. As a result, our Seniors Drop in Day Program at the Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre becomes even more important to the low income seniors of the neighbourhood by providing them with a place where they can meet, socialize and enjoy a hot nourishing meal.

Despite the increase in the cost of living we have been able to maintain our programs during the past year and we have not increased the cost of our meals. We also continue with our special events where members can enjoy a festive meal at no cost, thereby fulfilling their physical and social needs.

Besides applying for funding from our core funders, we continue to develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy which includes a diversity of funding sources in order to continue this program along with our outreach programs.



OUR BOARD MEMBER, KONG JUNG, IS BUSY CHOPPING THE ROASTED PIG INTO SMALLER PIECES FOR SHARING AMONG 200 MEMBERS.



Seniors Helping Seniors since 1958

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NEIGHBOURHOOD HELPERS OUTREACH PROGRAM

Betty, who is in her mid-50s and a long time community resident, has been working with Neighbourhood Helpers for 16 years. About three years ago, Betty's health issues reached a point that a severe and detrimental loss of mobility was occurring. Because loss of mobility is an extremely difficult process to accept and deal with, Betty delayed getting medical help and intervention that would improve her mobility and decrease the daily stress and depression she was experiencing as her health worsened. Betty's health and spirits began to severely decline. However, staff and volunteers never stopped believing in her or supporting her in this struggle. Through constant, ongoing active support from staff and other volunteers, we supported Betty with going on the very difficult path to receive full disability benefits and then to the long process of acquiring an electric wheelchair. Today, Betty is one of our most active volunteers; she is now a member of our board of directors, manages the food supplies and distribution in the office, helps with volunteer management, has started a women's support group out of one of the coffee times and is a strong, inspiring voice to the rest of us to deal with and communicate the pain, trauma and difficulty that we experience in our daily lives as well as with this kind of work. Through Betty's story and others like it, we continually learn first-hand the importance and benefit of mutual support and empowerment.

In the last year, one of our hotels in particular has had enormous success in expanding the number of participants, empowering residents and creating an environment of inclusivity, diversity and community.

One and a half year ago the story started with Neighbourhood Helpers staff identifying the building and asking hotel staff if we could run a coffee there, and we brought in one of our experienced volunteers to run the coffee. Through relationship building, residents began to take more interest in participating in the coffee and started making suggestions to us that they would like more food during the coffee times. Following their lead, we then asked residents if they

were interested in doing a community kitchen and connected them up with Downtown East Community Kitchen (DECK). In addition, NHP staff acquired many new clients throughout the hotel that they are actively supporting. Through participation in coffee times and the community kitchens, Neighbourhood Helpers now has four new volunteers from this one hotel that outreach and do one-to-one support into other hotels in the community, continuing the NHP model of community building. In addition, through the coffee times and community kitchens, residents are participating in and visiting the UBC's Downtown Eastside Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden. The positive effects from these actions continue to ripple throughout this hotel community. This hotel is a striking example of how collaborations between the residents, the hotel staff, Neighbourhood Helpers staff and volunteers, and other community groups can be a catalyst for the transformation from isolation to community.

Christmas is coming: Please help!



We will be hosting our Christmas Day brunch at our centre to celebrate Christmas with our 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 2007!

THANKS TO OUR 2006 FUNDING PARTNERS:

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