

509 East Hastings St., Vancouver BC, V6A 1P9 | T: 604-254-2194 | F: 604-254-2150 | www.vsms.ca

## 2009 HIGHLIGHTS



BILL QUINN, WINNER OF THE POOL TOURNAMENT, DEMONSTRATES HIS SKILL

This year, we have reached another milestone in celebrating our cultural diversity with a regular series of pool tournaments. We encouraged and promoted more interaction among our members of diverse ethnic groups. These tournaments provide a common ground for the different pool players to have a subject of mutual interest for interaction and discussion, thus allowing people to share their cultural and ethnic differences.



VOLUNTEER RETREAT AT RIVENDELL RETREAT CENTRE, see page 2

## Chinese Outreach Project

“It’s the first time I took my children on a trip.”

“It’s the first time I walked in the Downtown of Vancouver since I immigrated here some 15 years ago.”

“It’s the first time I took the ferry across the harbour.”



COOL SENIORS IN THE COOL. Bowen Island, summer 2009

There are so many “first times” for the Chinese seniors we have reached out to. The “first times” are excitement and delight but at the same time the “first times” also carry a lot of lonely feelings, a sense of isolation, and loss. The Chinese seniors in the subsidized buildings receiving our Chinese outreach service have enjoyed a few outings and a summer barbecue this year. They had the opportunity to get to know the place they have called home for so long; which also showed them they too could enjoy a quality life like everyone else.

The Chinese Outreach Project has realized the goal of helping seniors improve the quality of their life.



Seniors Helping Seniors since 1958

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## NEIGHBOURHOOD HELPERS OUTREACH PROGRAM

### Story by Arthur Irvine, one of our volunteers:

For three days and two nights, on a camping trip to Alouette Lake, nine campers rediscovered a desire to have fun and, thanks to one senior's challenge to take part in some canoe acrobatics, one of us even rediscovered a sense of daring. We hiked, we swam, we canoed and found that the refreshing outdoor experience reinvigorated and rejuvenated our city-worn bodies and spirits.

Furthermore, the lake's calm serenity and the wooded area's inviting moss carpeting conspired to break down barriers which, I feel, enabled us to connect more personally with each other. We shared with equal enthusiasm: stories of past experiences, ideas for future adventures, cooking talents and an abhorrence for clean-up chores; we laughed, joked and played games.

The seniors, volunteers and staff got along so well and the trip was such a success we've decided the next time we go camping, we'll plan for a much lengthier stay.



CAMPERS REDISCOVERING FUN ON THE NHP CAMPING TRIP

### Rivendell Retreat

Volunteers and staff went to the Rivendell retreat Centre for five days in March. The volunteers and staff worked on goals for the program based on the needs of the community for the upcoming year. People participated in Yoga programs, working with clay and being creative. The group returned to the city renewed and refreshed. The time spent together built up the team to a place of comfort and confidence.

### Partnering

Partnership with the Gathering Place made the Keep Vancouver

Spectacular event a great success in May. Together the volunteers of both programs organized, cleaned and celebrated the Downtown South Community. There was great pride in being able to give back to their community. Covering 10 city blocks to make the neighbourhood look fantastic. Donations of free pizza and pop made the volunteer party much better. The event will be held annually and will include other community groups.

### New Volunteers!

Five volunteers, with more to follow in December, will have taken the Food Safe and Community Kitchen courses which enables them to continue with the weekly meal programs and to start up Four Community Kitchen's in January 2010. Seniors in the community have voiced their need for better meal programs. The volunteers have taken on the role of putting together proposals for each of the Community Kitchen sites.

### Christmas is coming: Please help!

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

### THANKS TO OUR 2009 FUNDING PARTNERS:

City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, United Way of the Lower Mainland, The Province of British Columbia, Face the World Foundation, Government of Canada New Horizons for Seniors Program, Radical Foundation, Soroptimist International of Vancouver and you, our loyal individual supporters.