

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

2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- An average increase of 6% in the membership of the Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre.
- Through the United Way of the Lower Mainland's Day of Caring Project, we worked together with the private companies to organise their staff to come in and operate programs for our seniors such as providing entertainment, presentation of gifts and serving

desserts. Our seniors were grateful and pleased with their kindness. Their employees found the experience rewarding in serving the Community.

- Trying out new program ideas by introducing Tai Chi and Karaoke Classes earlier in the year – both programs are welcomed by our members. The former enables participants to increase their flexibility, the latter makes them feel happy when they sing.



VOLUNTEER TEAM FROM THE FAIRMONT HOTEL VANCOUVER SERVING DESSERTS TO OUR SENIORS

The Continental Seniors Centre

Another year has come and gone at the the Continental Seniors Centre and we have seen success in all areas! There has been an increase in membership and member involvement in our program activities. Our “living room” atmosphere has attracted members to utilize the common area where people are watching TV, playing pool, and keeping updated with current events. More importantly, the senior centre is specifically managed by a team of volunteers who are dedicated to keeping the facility running smoothly. Peer-to-peer training is ongoing, and members are there to help one another learn and gain new skills. One-on-one support has made huge differences in the relationships established at the centre, and friendships have blossomed. A referral network is provided for seniors who seek



WOMEN'S LUNCHEON, L-R: VIRGINIA, ROSA, LINA, LOUISE, KATHERINE

additional help in obtaining information that they may be unaware of. The Continental Seniors Centre would not be the same without the help of its volunteers; it is unique in the sense that seniors are helping seniors to help themselves.

Chinese Outreach Project



CHINESE SENIORS ENJOYING A SUMMER BBQ

Vancouver had a beautiful summer this year. To get the most out of a perfect sunny day, the Chinese Outreach Project organised a bbq party for the seniors in one of the buildings we outreach to. Although barbecuing is a common activity in the summer, not all low income Chinese seniors get to do it often. Everyone found it exciting to hear the sound of the sausages and chicken wings sizzling on the grill. Afterward, everyone sat happily under a tree, enjoying a piece of watermelon in one hand and a cream puff in the other hand, sharing old time stories.



Seniors Helping Seniors since 1958

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NEIGHBOURHOOD HELPERS OUTREACH PROGRAM

Downtown Eastside

At Neighbourhood Helpers DTES, our volunteers and staff are continuously bouncing ideas off of one another and very shortly we are in full speed mode organizing another event. In 2013, starting with a “Get Up, Get Down, Get Funky, Get Loose” Disco in January, we had the seniors boogieing to the sounds of Donna Summer, Barry Manilow, The Village People, and Gloria Gaynor, just to name a few. We also crowned the King & Queen of Disco, both of whom were in their late 60s. Then we hand-made decorations and set about creating an atmosphere of fun for the Chinese New Year’s Celebration held in the centre. Over the summer months, we secured a donation of a brand new community sized barbeque and were also successful in obtaining two Small Neighbourhood Grants. We hosted three very well attended community barbeques for the

seniors who enjoyed the change in their usual routine. More recently, we hosted a “Come BOO-gie With Us” Halloween Dance for seniors that was greatly appreciated based on the amount of compliments we received during and after the event...so much so, that some even requested another dance for December. Our volunteers are members of the DTES community and are proud to be a part of a program that is a vital component in making this neighbourhood the kind of place where seniors come first.

Downtown South

This year has proven to be another year of growth and fulfillment. The senior peer-to-peer volunteers continue to be the backbone of the success of the program. Their connection to the community has maintained our role as the go-to people when needed, or an ear for easy listening.

OUR TOP STORIES THIS YEAR:

Tommy, 93, one of our long-time residents with over 60 years in the Downtown South Area and 21 years at the Continental, transitioned into long term care in October. Our volunteers supported Tommy daily in the last 5 years in order to help him live independently and decrease isolation. Volunteers helped him move into his new place, set up weekly visits to the Continental Seniors Centre for lunch, and participate in activities at the care home; they continue to be a part of his life.



KASIA, JOHN & TOMMY AT REMEMBRANCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

The volunteers have increased their self-confidence and skills by participating in a 10 month Community Capacity Building Accredited course. Sixteen volunteers are certified in Basic First Aid, three volunteers in Food Safe and a number of people participated in the series of Wellness workshops. The quality of life has improved for the people we support as three of our volunteers now have affordable housing.

We are gearing up for our annual Christmas Day dinner; we are hoping to serve 300 or more local seniors. We have been busy collecting items for the gift bags. Our continued partnerships and collaborations have maintained sustainability, connecting with more isolated seniors in the community. We are looking forward to enhancing our one-to-one support in the New Year.



PREPARING FOR THE CHINESE NEW YEAR PARTY

Christmas is coming: Please help!



We will be hosting our Christmas Celebration 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 2013 FUNDING PARTNERS:

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