

## 2014 HIGHLIGHTS



VOLUNTEER TEAM FROM THE BANK OF MONTREAL SERVING DESSERTS TO SENIORS

- The membership of the Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre increased again over 2013 and remains at over 500.
- New collaborative ideas with other DTES agencies to serve our members:

Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House serving nutritious smoothies through their Mobile Smoothie Project, Carnegie Community Centre hosted the “Creative Movement” Workshop, the Quest Outreach Society offering affordable and healthy food choices through their food redistribution program for use at our Kitchen and Seniors Centre and the Chinese Library Services Association organised a workshop and demonstration on “How to use Tablets and Smart phones”.

- Through the United Way of the Lower Mainland’s Days of Caring Project, we continue to collaborate with the local

companies to organise their staff as volunteers to do programs for our seniors by providing entertainment, presentation of gifts and serving desserts. Our seniors appreciate their generosity and thoughtfulness. The volunteers found the experience rewarding in serving the Community.

- A donation of an automatic door opener for the main entrance door of the Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre has been secured. Our members having mobility issues can soon gain access to our centre through the push of a button.

## The Continental Seniors Centre

We have had an amazing year at the Continental Seniors Centre, with tremendous growth in all aspects of our social recreational programming. So much has been accomplished – especially with the help of our dedicated senior volunteers who continue to provide a warm and welcoming environment for everyone to enjoy. This year we have seen a rise in membership of over 50% compared to 2013! Thanks to the New Horizons for Seniors Program Grant, we received funding to purchase 4 new computers along with supplies to provide members with internet and printer access. 9 volunteers received 12 weeks of Basic Computer Skills and Facilitation Training at the UBC Learning Exchange where they brought back their skills to the senior centre, and have been in charge of facilitating classes

and drop-in sessions to fellow peers in the community. The Computer Program has been one of the most successful programs in the past year as seniors have been able to connect with their family members from around the world through e-mail and social media websites like Facebook. Volunteers continuously talk about the many success stories that they have encountered, and how heartwarming it is to help others because of the positive differences that the program has made. Health-related and educational workshops have also been put in place based on the seniors’ interests; on average we have 20 people attending each presentation on various topics such as Memory & Aging and Falls Prevention. It is so amazing to see everyone come together because of the programs that the Continental Seniors



VOLUNTEERS’ GRADUATION FROM TRAIN THE TRAINER COMPUTER TRAINING PROGRAM AT UBC LEARNING EXCHANGE

Centre offers. Taking the time to engage with seniors one-on-one and to develop genuine relationships has helped the Project Coordinator and Volunteers become closer to members and also closer to each other, as a reminder of the importance of working together as a team!



# Neighbourhood Helpers Projects

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE, DOWNTOWN SOUTH & CHINESE OUTREACH

## Downtown Eastside

### A Senior With A Reason To Live



NEIL LOUTTIT, GATHERING HIS COFFEE HOUSE SUPPLIES FOR VET'S MANOR

We have an elderly volunteer who went through a cataract removal and unfortunately, he has lost ability to see very clearly in that eye. He comes to the office to pick up supplies and requires our help to gather the snacks. He constantly talks about death and dying, but in reality, he actually looks forward to serving the group of seniors who attend his coffee house. He always wants to ensure that the snacks are soft and sweet because he gets lots of compliments and that apparently make his days worthwhile. He often drops by the office to get caught up on daily newsworthy events since he no longer has a television and he gets quite animated when it comes to discussing politics, religion and sports. While he appears to be morose, he is actually quite full of vim and vinegar. The coffee house duties give him a sense of value. It gets him out of his room and provides him with an opportunity to participate socially with other residents. He has responsibilities and he takes great pride in fulfilling the roll of serving seniors. His past was that of an investigative reporter and he has many, many interesting stories to share. The residents that attend his

coffee house enjoy his company, which in turn gives him a reason to live, as much as he may complain otherwise. We know he enjoys doing what he's doing and that is the greater gift of our program.

## Downtown South

This year has been another busy fun filled year. The peer volunteers continue to connect with isolated seniors in their community, diminishing barriers and building community.

Our volunteer retreat on Bowen Island in July saw 8 volunteers come together to get to know each other, share ideas and make changes in the program. The need for Aboriginal programs is first and foremost on the list of new programs for the New Year.

Partnerships with local Health Centres has bridged the gap in servicing frail seniors living in Hotels, enabling them to connect with their community and medical services. With this support and service seniors are able to remain in their homes longer and healthier.

Two volunteers have increased their self-confidence and skills by successfully completing the Capilano College Community Capacity Building Accredited course. Fourteen volunteers have completed workshops in Mental Health and Safety for senior's workshop. Four volunteers have completed their Food Safe and 6 volunteers completed Fresh Choice Community Kitchens program. The peer volunteers have an increase in self confidence and leadership skills.

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.



BOWEN ISLAND VOLUNTEER RETREAT 2014, SHOWING OFF OUR TIE DYE MASTERPIECES

## Chinese Outreach Project



SUMMER PICNIC FOR THE CHINESE SENIORS AT BEAUTIFUL STANLEY PARK

The Chinese Outreach Project kicked off the 2014 summer with a picnic at the beautiful Stanley Park on a warm June day. We know our seniors love to eat, play and be merry. So we reserved a nice covered picnic area where over 60 fun-seeking seniors could relax and enjoy delicious hotdogs, crunchy chips and mouth-watering donuts. Many of them also competed against each other in a ring tossing game, while others played soap bubbles or chatted away like long lost friends. After a few hours of fresh air, yummy food and a few good laughs, everybody went home with a smile on their face and a spring in their step.

## 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 2014 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, Central City Foundation, Soroptimist International of Vancouver and you, our loyal individual supporters.