



Saanich Volunteer Services Society

The Friendly Visitor

Fall 2009

McRae House 1445 Ocean View Road Victoria V8P1J8 250-595-8008

16th Annual General Meeting

by Heather Fetherston, Coordinator of Volunteers

At our AGM on Thursday, June 18th we were pleased to present several recognition awards to volunteers who had contributed five, ten, and fifteen years of service to SVSS.

Receiving their five-year awards were Frank Beaumier, Gerrit Braaksma, Colin Campbell, Katherine De Mille, Dianne Frampton, Bob McLaren, Fiona Millard, Hilde Moar, Mary Murray, Lily Taylor and Bea Tellier. Ten-year recipients were Carla Boe, Sim Ko, Laura MacDonald, Pam Dawson and Leona Russell, and Dave Brown was honoured for his 15-year commitment to our agency.

A volunteer who would have received his 10-year award at the AGM passed away in early spring, and is missed by all who knew him. Horst Rothfels joined us as a volunteer driver in December of 1998 and donated many hours driving clients until he became ill at 90 years of age and succumbed just a few months later.

In addition to driving, Horst also attended many of our events and several of our workshops and was always eager to learn. A Holo-

Insert photo of foursome

Mary, Dave, Pam and Katherine smile after receiving their recognition awards

caust survivor, Horst stayed active and fit all his life, and we used to see him walking briskly along the chip trail several times a week. For many years until just before he turned 90, he would often get up at 4:00 a.m. on a winter morning to go skiing on Mount Washington for the day. We know he enjoyed his volunteer work with SVSS, clients appreciated his kindness and concern for their well-being and we appreciated his dedication.

A Note From a Client . . .

Our Community Services Coordinator, Lynn Hanman, facilitates the weekly On the Go Again programme. On The Go Again began in the Fall of 2006 and offers socialization and learning to isolated seniors. It is run in

conjunction with Silver Threads and is funded by the United Way. OTGA is one of the ongoing community outreach programmes at Saanich Volunteer Services. Lynn arranges different activities for each

weekly get-together. The following is a note from a client who attends OTGA:

"I've often wondered what the family was like, and who they were, that lived at 1445 Ocean View Road. Such a charming home, situated in beautiful countryside. What a grand place to be brought up in - imagine Christmas in those gorgeous and spacious surroundings.

"It's fabulous to know that the home is being used today with such energy, goodness and joy. The spirits of long ago must be ever-grateful for the good works and kindnesses that spring forth from within today.

"I'm proud to know many of the young ladies who work there as Volunteers and especially Lynn who organizes our On The Go Again team. How fortunate we are to be part of this fabulous group. About 24 of us - the most caring of any group you could belong to today. We come from different parts of the world, from many cultures and careers; some are so very special that it is an honour to belong to On The Go Again.

"I missed the group a few times in July but on August 5th we had the good fortune to go to the Silver Threads at 286 Hampton Road, for a great tasty free lunch. Sue, who is in charge, runs it so beautifully. All of us wish her well, and our thoughts and prayers will be with her in her forthcoming surgery. "God Bless our Sue".

"After our lunch we visited the Gift Shoppe with much glee, and then went for a short meeting in the library. While sitting in the library I realize how much I'd missed everyone when I could not be with my friends in July. That says a lot for On The Go Again and our great times together.

"God bless you all. With my thanks."
Brenda Beech

Are You Moving?

If you are a Saanich Volunteer Services Society volunteer or client, and have recently moved to a new address, please let us know so we can update our database. Call the office at 250-595-8008.

Insert *ElderSafe* ad

SVSS Welcomes These New Volunteers

Linda Bain

Bruce Bigelow

Brandt Bitterlich

Gabrielle Bitterlich

Margaret Clayton

Andrea DePollone

Stephen Dolla

Robert Gibbons

Shannon Hodge

Malcolm Holser

Emily Hovey

Janik Manhas

Isla McGowan

Don McTavish

Lisa Newman

Tina Ouyong

Christine Paisley

Lorne Peasland

Laurie Reswick

Carmen

Trofmenkoff

Rene

Weatherhead

Kate Wells

Owen Willson

Heather's Hasty Notes

*by Heather Fetherston,
Coordinator of Volunteers*

Hi everyone. Summer's a thing of the past now, vacations just fond memories recorded in the digital camera, and fall is well underway. After a bit of a break for many of you, I'm sure you're ready to get back to some serious volunteering!

Please take a look at the calendar in this newsletter, see what scheduled sessions or events interest you, and call the office to register. I'll e-mail you ahead of the workshop, but if you haven't given me your new e-mail address you're not on the list and that could be why you never hear from me. E-mail is the most effective way for me to keep in touch; so get your grandchild (or one of our volunteers) to show you how to e-mail and you'll always be in the loop.

This will be our last newsletter this year, so although it's early, I want to mention one of the best events of the year, the SVSS Christmas Party. This year it will be held on November 28 from 1:30 to 3:30 at McRae House, and we hope you'll join us to celebrate the season. Volunteers are encouraged to bring their client partner so they can join in the fun and get in the spirit with all of us.

I also like to encourage you to help me recruit new volunteers for SVSS. Volunteers are getting harder to come by - especially good ones like you. Do you know a friend, an acquaintance or family member who would like to join our team and be given an opportunity to help a Saanich neighbour? Have him or her call me and I'll do the rest.

I look forward to seeing you soon; drop in anytime and thanks as always for your commitment to our agency!



Our Sincere Thanks!

Thrifty Foods have once again agreed to assist the work at SVSS through the Smile Card fundraising program. This year, every time you use your Smile Card you will help with the ongoing support and education of our clients and volunteers. We will use our \$2,000 to pay for our new flat-screen television, enabling us to take advantage of the many DVD's available to enhance and improve our skills and knowledge! If you don't have a card, please call the office at 250-595-8008 to find out how easy it is for you to support SVSS every time you purchase groceries at Thrifty Foods.

David Cubberley may have retired from his role as an MLA for Saanich South, but he continues to make a difference as a caring neighbor. When closing down his constituency office, David and his assistant Laura decided SVSS should be the worthy recipient of their two computers! Very timely indeed, as these work stations will enhance our effective use of our new database and flat-screen TV!

Our Income Tax volunteers deserve a big round of applause. During the months of March and April our 12 volunteers completed 274 returns for clients. In many cases they did much more than form completion - e.g., applying for a client's reduced MSP payments. On behalf of our most appreciative clients and the staff at SVSS, a big Thank You to Sim, Shirley, Rob, Narinder, Leigh, Judy, John, Jean, Haji, Fran, Fiona and Bob. You do an awesome job!

Insert Rob Fleming ad

Volunteer Profile: Gabrielle Bitterlich

Gabrielle joined the SVSS volunteer team after reading in the Saanich News Volunteer Notebook column that we were looking for a Monday afternoon receptionist here at McRae House. Our ten volunteer receptionists play a very active and important role in the agency as they are our 'front line' people - greeting visitors, answering the phones, booking drives for clients and many other tasks.

Gabrielle moved to Victoria recently from the Queen Charlotte Islands with her teenage son, Brandt, so he could attend school here and play soccer with the Gordon Head Soccer Assoc. Presently working on obtaining her Bachelor of Commerce degree, Gabrielle continues a family tradition of community involvement and volunteerism by donating many hours of her time to help others. Along with her receptionist duties she also volunteers to drive for our agency a few times a week.

She has enlisted her son to become a volunteer with us and we're glad to see a young man getting the volunteer spirit. We hope that will encourage other young people to volunteer as well.

Thank you, Gabrielle - we're grateful you chose to volunteer with SVSS!



Insert Bitterlich photo

Gabrielle Bitterlich

How Are We Doing?

*by Susan Zerb,
Executive Director*

Our world is filled with media messages regarding the economic downturn, possible end to the recession and the state of our provincially funded programs! We thought you might be interested in how the financial picture looks for us at SVSS.

If you heard Treasurer Marj Hewitt speak at our Annual General Meeting in June, you may know that we ended our 2009 fiscal year in March with a deficit of \$1,122. Marj attributed our results to prudent management by a frugal team and the continued support of our faithful donors. An unexpected bequest from the estate of a deceased member helped our private donations exceed expectations. Presently we have received our annual funding from the Municipality of Saanich, our contract for Volunteer Services and Community Outreach programs are both on month-to-month funding with the Vancouver Island Health Authority, and as you read this, our annual Direct Access appeal will be made to the Gaming Commission. These represent our core funders, covering the costs associated with running the agency.

None of these funds are secure - to carry on we must appeal to the community through various fundraisers, events and mailings to ensure we can carry on helping those in the community who need our volunteer support.

Mother Theresa said, "The greatest good is what we do for others." Negative media and economic downturn aside, we shall persevere and prevail!

Insert Diana Devlin ad

Here's How You Can Help In Your Neighborhood

In the first quarter of this year, our volunteer drivers have already logged 21,550 kilometers at a cost of \$6,476!

We could make more trips if we had more drivers and the ability to compensate for kilometers driven! That is why we are asking if you can share during these times when others find they are unable to donate - you will be helping us change someone's world right here in Saanich.

Your donation will enable a volunteer supported driver, a volunteer handyperson or a volunteer visitor - extremely valuable services that provide companionship and support that make a positive change for someone in your neighborhood.



Insert InBloom ad

Upcoming Events and Announcements

For more information on any of the volunteer sharing sessions, contact Heather.

- **Monday, October 12**
Thanksgiving/Office Closed
- **Monday, October 19**
Volunteer Info Session
'Practical Tips for Supporting Passengers in your Car'
10 a.m. - 12 noon
- **Monday, November 9**
Volunteer Sharing Session
'Talking to Your Clients'
12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- **Wednesday, November 11**
Office Closed
Remembrance Day
- **Saturday, November 28**
SVSS Annual
Christmas Party
1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- **Monday, December 7**
Volunteer Sharing Session
Volunteer Visiting, Part 1
'Who Do We Visit?'
12:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Office Closed
Thursday, December 24, 2009 -
Monday, January 24, 2010
- **Monday, January 18**
Volunteer Sharing Session
Volunteer Visiting, Part 2
'How Do We Visit?'
12:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, January 30**
Orientation to Our Agency
10 a.m. - 12 noon
- **Monday, February 15**
Volunteer Info Session
'Practical Tips for Supporting Passengers in your Car'
10 a.m. - 12 noon

Meet Our Board Members

Board President Haji Charania is pleased to introduce our two new Board Members. Iris Dann and Janik Manhas are joining returning Board Members Dianne Black (Secretary), Marj Hewitt (Treasurer), Molli Holser, Damian Kowalewich (Vice President) and Theresa Vogel (Past President).

Insert Iris Dann photo

Iris Dann

I wanted to get involved with SVSS as I feel it is an organization that provides a service to Saanich residents in a practical and effective way. We make a difference in their lives by enabling them to stay in their homes longer or manage better with our support services. The Society enhances the quality of life for our neighbours!

My husband, George, and I moved to Saanich from Calgary five years ago. In Calgary, I worked in the education field for over 30 years - the last 20 at a college that included local, national and international postings. Our department's goals were to help students achieve their goals, not so very different from the mission of SVSS. Some of my most interesting work was in South Africa helping to set up support services for adults living in townships. It was rewarding and stimulating work

In many respects I am continuing my involvement with SVSS with what I was doing in my work world. I feel it is important to help others do what they can to be as effective, independent and productive as possible with the least intervention. It is a delight for me to be a neighbour helping neighbours.

George and I love to garden, travel and see our seven grandchildren, four of whom are in Victoria. We have busy lives and love living in Victoria.

Insert Janik Manhas photo

Janik Manhas

Janik was born in Victoria, British Columbia, where she attended the University of Victoria, to obtain a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Sociology. She lived in India for eight years, where she volunteered her time sitting on the board for the International Women's Association, as well as the board for the Overseas Women's Association, both of which participated in fund-raising events and charity work within different associations throughout India.

Janik currently works at Coast Capital Savings Credit Union as a customer service representative.

Her lengthy list of volunteer experiences includes Income Tax preparation for clients of care facilities and their societies, directing a non-profit organization, VITA (Victoria Interpreters and Translators Association). Her hobbies include cooking, gardening and travelling.

Welcome on Board, Janik!



Insert Gary Lunn ad