

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

The Downtown Eastside Seniors Centre was closed again from January 5 to 28, 2022 due to the rising number of the Omicron variant cases. Our staff and members were able to get their booster vaccine during our closure. Our attendance had not increased greatly since we re-opened on January 31, 2022. We organized a Chinese New Year Party and about 30 members attended. There was an up-tick in March and April when tax returns were being prepared but rarely do we have more than twenty visitors. The daily attendance since then till the end of October 2022 was between 10 to 30 depending on the daily activities such as the ESL class or Tax Clinic. The drop in attendance is attributed to the pandemic and our members' reluctance to venture out in public for fear that they might catch the disease. The other reason may be due to the seniors' concern of their own safety as many homeless people are camping outside along Hastings Street and pedestrians are accosted randomly in the DTES and Chinatown areas.

In July 2022, we resumed most of our activities /programs such as table tennis, dancing, karaoke singing, Arts Therapeutic class and Bingo. 25 seniors attended the Summer Live Concert sponsored by Health Arts Society where 2 Chinese musicians performed for us on July 22. Most of the seniors came in to play Mahjong with their peers. We continued our delivery of

hot meals to about 22 seniors having mobility issues in 5 social housing buildings in support of seniors in need. Our program and outreach staff continue assisting the seniors with one-on-one or referral services so as to help them navigate through government and health care systems. It is hoped that more members will participate in 2023.



ADLER UNIVERSITY STUDENT ORGANIZED AN ART THERAPY SESSION FOR OUR MEMBERS

Downtown South Neighborhood Helpers Project & Continental Seniors Centre

Most of the single room occupancy units in the DTS area do not have adequate cooking facilities and residents must rely on ready-to-eat food or community meal programs. We continue to deliver canned goods, side dishes, bread and pastry to 7 SRO buildings weekly. We use zip bags to pack pastas, rice, oatmeal and cereals; to ensure all residents in SROs and senior residences can prepare simple meals together with the canned goods and fresh goods that we receive from the food bank or purchase with grant money.

A senior on disability recently moved to one of the SROs that we serve. He did not know of our food delivery service until he saw food in the common area. He found it really helpful to have some extra

food and ingredients such as tomato, lettuce and carrots to prepare his own meals. He mentioned that he is reluctant to do grocery runs with his walker, especially during the winter season. Now, with the food hamper delivery program that we are offering, he has less to worry about.

However, we cannot host coffee sessions in hotels due to the pandemic-related concerns and our community kitchen at Doug's Story has been discontinued.

The Continental Seniors Centre had been shuttered for over two years due the pandemic and was only recently opened for limited use by the New Continental residents. We were not given any role in the Centre's operation.



UNLOADING FOOD DONATIONS FOR OUR FOOD BASKET PROGRAM



Downtown Eastside Project

This past year, the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Helpers project has worked on the core mission of connecting seniors with each other and freeing them from social isolation. We act as the bridge between people and available social services. After Omicron peaked from January to July 2022, our program delivered approximately 580 grocery bags to 35 unique individuals in need. Beginning in February 2022, we resumed coffee houses in two buildings only. In July 2022, we fully restarted hosting coffee house sessions/ community kitchens & events that foster positive social spaces for isolated seniors to improve their quality of life. We also provide guidance and support to volunteers, training for volunteers, liaising with other organizations, community development, and outreach that includes establishing coffee sessions with SRO hotels, and establishing community kitchens. We are committed to helping seniors and people that are in deep need of social support. Please remember to support seniors and the community during this holiday time. Happy Holidays and best wishes,

Lovepreet Deol, Coordinator



STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS GETTING READY TO BRING COFFEE CARTS TO SENIORS

Chinese Outreach Project

Ageing adults are at risk of being isolated; one of the leading causes of depression. We aim to organize more outing activities, to form a safe and caring environment to encourage socialization. Granville Island and Bloedel Conservatory walking tours were some highlight activities we organized this summer. Some seniors had not been to these places for many years and they were excited and curious about the art, craft stores, and rarely seen tropical plants.

We also reached out to seniors in residential buildings regularly to have some fun and interaction sessions with them. Through games, such as word guess and group exercise, seniors use their creativity and imagination actively to keep a clear mind.



SENIOR RESIDENTS PLAYING WORD GUESS CHALLENGE



ESL PARTICIPANTS AT THE BLOEDEL FLORAL CONSERVATORY

Christmas is coming: Please help!



We will resume our Christmas Party this year by offering each participant a hot brunch and small gift. Your donation will enable us to bring joy and support to the seniors in our community.

THANKS TO OUR 2022 FUNDING PARTNERS:

City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, The Province of British Columbia, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, The Greater Vancouver Food Bank, Face the World Foundation, Central City Foundation, Wheeler Family Foundation, and you – our loyal individual supporters.