

CHAIR'S REPORT

Our past year was a success. It was a year in which the 11th edition of our Seniors' Services Directory was produced and 25,000 copies distributed. I personally assisted distributing copies to pharmacies and, by doing so, discovered many changes in brand and ownership with pharmacies. Our online version of the Directory will move into a prominent place with the current rebuild of our website. I am proud to tell you that our directory is acknowledged as the 'go to' resource guide for seniors and is viewed as a template in other communities and provinces.

Financially, we came in under budget and continue to diligently apply for grants in an environment where many agencies are competing for the same limited funds. I would like to acknowledge the much needed and valued support we received this year from BC Gaming Community Grants and Sobey's Smile Card Program. I would also like to thank the individual donors and members for their generous support of our programs.

This past year, I attended a leadership course, to understand the attributes of a successful organization. From the information I learned at this course, I gained a greater appreciation for the work the Board of Directors and the Executive Director do. These dedicated women and men are the reason why we are successful. We have nine members on our Board.

We are welcoming Myra Johnson's return in September of this year and we are looking for a new director with a background in marketing/communications & information technology.

Chris Shepherd and I also attended a seminar sponsored by the Victoria Foundation in February, regarding the rules and regulations prohibiting charitable organizations from advocating for Federal and Provincial public policy. Subsequently to this, the Board reaffirmed our practise not to engage in this activity.

I would like to thank Mary Ellen Meunier and her committee for composing and producing the Return to Health Guidebook for Volunteers. This 53 page handbook is an excellent information tool for volunteers, as well as, a referral source for Island Health managers and health care providers.

We are pleased that Island Health has renewed their contract with Marian Templeton for another year. This enables the Return to Health Program, an Island Health/SSS partnership program, to continue. Thank you to Marian and Island Health for all your hard work.

I would like to give my personal thanks and acknowledge the contributions of our Volunteers, Committee Chairs, Board of Directors and Executive Director.

Paul Wickens-Jobling, Chair of the Board

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A steady flow of Canadian retirees relocating to Victoria and long time residents reaching age 65+ is creating a focus on seniors' services in the Capital Region.

As the "go to" organization in meeting the information needs of seniors on southern Vancouver Island, we believe it's essential that a listing of services is available to support seniors to achieve healthy living and maintain independence.

Our Information Services operated at full capacity last year as we carried out the following activities:

- **SENIOR LINK TELEPHONE LINE** - Assisted over 1,700 seniors, their families, and caregivers with referrals to services via our Senior Link Telephone Line and our website.
- The 11th edition of the Seniors' Services Directory was produced.
- Outreach and training on 'Seniors Services and How to Access Them' was provided for 220 professionals, such as, pharmacists, medical office assistants and mobile foot care nurses who connect with seniors on an everyday basis. The initiative was sponsored by the Victoria Foundation and the goal is to provide professionals with greater capacity to inform and connect seniors to appropriate services.
- Education on services for seniors was provided to seniors themselves meeting in various group settings in Greater Victoria.

Special thanks go to volunteers Myra Johnson and Jan Klassen for their greatly valued contribution to the office and SSS Information Services.

We continue to update our database with information on new services for seniors and our goal for the upcoming year is to reach

more seniors. Just as social isolation among seniors is a priority for the federally appointed Minister of State (Seniors), the Honourable Alice Wong, we too are focussed on bringing awareness of seniors' services to the more isolated hard to reach senior. This will be accomplished through more outreach activities in the coming year.

In addition to information services, SSS operates programs that support seniors in transition. These programs would not exist without the dedicated front line volunteers who enrich the lives of the seniors they support. We continually recruit new volunteers and training is provided every year in the fall followed by monthly support meetings. A total of 25 new volunteers trained as Return to Health Visitors and/or Senior Peer Counsellors. Approximately 75 volunteers contributed over 5,500 hours to the community.

Key qualified volunteers who oversee and coordinate Return to Health, Senior Peer Counsellors, and Seniors in Stitches make a substantial contribution of their time and truly make a difference to the organization. Their program reports follow in this report.

Members of the Board provide a wealth of knowledge and my heartfelt appreciation goes to them for their support of myself and the work we do to address the changing needs of today's 65+ seniors.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Sheaff, SSS Executive Director

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Financial Statements for the year ending April 30, 2015 were prepared by Joyce and Dilba, Chartered Accountants. There are no anticipated changes to the signing authority and no changes to the financial institution. We are most grateful for the financial support of our individual donors and the agencies listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Joyce, Treasurer

2014/2015 FUNDERS

BC Gaming Commission

Programs and Operations

Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation

2015-2016 Seniors' Services Directory

Sobey's Smile Card Program

Website Development

The following agencies provide space and refreshments for our meetings:

- **Amica at Somerset House**
- **Glad Tidings Church Victoria**
- **Parkwood Place and The Kensington**
- **Sunrise Senior Living**
- **Yakimovich Wellness Centre**

SENIORS' SERVICES DIRECTORY

The 2015-2016 Seniors Services Directory was printed and distributed in September 2014. As in past years, 25,000 copies will be delivered to both Island Health and a variety of local activity centres, support groups and community agencies. Once again, we are indebted to the TELUS Ambassadors Volunteers who organized the initial delivery to the community organizations.

As well, we are grateful to Lori McLeod and the Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation for their generous contribution of \$10,000 which makes this publication possible.

The directory continues to be appreciated by many professionals in the Capital Region. To date, Island Health has received 9,050 copies and the community agencies 7,100 copies for a total of 16,150 for distribution within the first 9 months of the 2 year cycle.

Rarely does a day go by when our Senior Link Telephone Line does not have at least one request for a copy of the directory. Improvement to the website will include a more user-friendly section of the directory and is expected to be popular.

In October we will hold our first meeting of the new Committee, which will review and update the next edition.

Respectfully submitted,

Myra Johnson, Directory Committee Chair

*Thank You to All Individual
Donors and Volunteers who make
Our Programs Possible!*

SENIOR PEER COUNSELLING

This has been a year of change for Senior Peer Counselling, beginning with the resignation of Beth Trawick, Volunteer Coordinator, on September 1st and my assumption of the position. For me, it's been a steep learning curve, but I am enormously grateful to Beth for her efficient and helpful transfer of information, to Mary Dolan for her wise and gentle advice and to Jane Sheaff, Executive Director, for always being available with administrative assistance. I was also pleased to be invited to attend a meeting of Return to Health and a Board meeting recently. This all added to my knowledge of our program.

From September to December 2014 Mary Dolan conducted a dynamic, intensive and interactive volunteer training course at Parkwood Place, beginning with 12 trainees. Unfortunately, there were numerous dropouts due to illness, incompatibility, other volunteer or job commitments and inability to meet the paperwork requirements. Only 3 of the original 12 remain as counsellors, so we are looking forward to renewing our slate from the new graduates of this fall's training course.

We are enormously grateful to Parkwood and the Kensington at Revera Living for hosting our training sessions each week and also the monthly group meetings. They even provided refreshments!

In September there were 7 requests for counsellors followed by 0 to 3 each month thereafter, for a total of 18 new clients from September to May. This was in addition to the 8 existing ones. At times there were insufficient counsellors to service them all, so 4 counsellors graciously agreed to accept

working with two clients at the same time. Several have dropped out over the year due to illness or family commitments, so we have 17 remaining on the roster. The counsellors have dealt with many issues ranging from financial to relationships to grieving to addiction to loneliness and even to suicide threats. In one case, a natural death occurred but the family was grateful for the counselling that preceded that.

We continue to be aware of the need for our service in the community and for various methods of obtaining new clients. However, we are also aware of the need to balance this with the number of counsellors available. We receive client requests from social workers, doctors, Island Health, the Seniors' Services Directory, newspaper and magazine articles, friends and self-referrals. Jane Sheaff wrote an article published in the Seniors section of the Times-Colonist on April 6th and she has also prepared a flyer to be circulated among various senior facilities when the timing is appropriate. I was interviewed by a reporter from Black Press recently. This produced articles in the Victoria News, Saanich News, Peninsula News and other regional newspapers. It was geared toward recruiting applicants for the next training course.

I conclude with my heartfelt thanks to all those volunteer counsellors who give their time, energy and expertise to so many. I am also more than grateful for the camaraderie that exists among the group and for the unfailing assistance received from Jane, Mary and the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Dutton, SPC Volunteer Coordinator

RETURN TO HEALTH

"Too often we under estimate the power of a touch, smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all which have the potential to turn a life around"

by Leo Buscaglia.

This past year we had 48 active, 13 inactive and 20 affiliated church and organization volunteers who recorded 3,713 hours as they responded to the needs of 254 clients who were referred to our program.

Prior to visiting clients our volunteers take a comprehensive 21 hour training program which is held 3 hours a week for 7 weeks. RTH training is taught by experts in the community who work with seniors. We value these individuals and agencies which provide generous support for RTH. Training is offered to church members and other volunteer agencies assisting seniors.

To support our volunteers there is a 3 hour monthly meeting held during September to May to share information and problem solve. On average 20-25 volunteers attend each month. Various age-related topics are selected by our volunteers and speakers are brought in to increase our knowledge base. In November, Don Evans from Our Place spoke to us about "Homelessness in Victoria". As a result our volunteers gathered together socks and donated money to the cause.

There are many organizations who we would like to thank: St. Michael All Angels Women's Guild for a \$500 donation for our emergency fund for clients in crisis; Yakimovich Wellness Center and Liz McCarter for meeting space; the Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation and Lori McLeod for coffee and tea for training sessions; Home Instead donating 14 gifts at Christmas from their program "Be a Santa

to a Senior". The gifts included gift certificates for personal care and food certificates, and our Volunteers provided 30 plates of homemade cookies to be distributed with these gifts; Janine Hunka from Phillips Lifeline for providing lunch for our Appreciation Day; and the Glad Tidings Church and staff for providing space for our monthly meetings, Christmas celebration and April's recognition event.

The Volunteer Guidebook has finally been completed and published. The purpose of this book is to act as an information tool for our Return to Health volunteers as well as to inform the Island Health managers and health care providers as referral sources. Many thanks to Vera de Haess for starting us on this path, Mary Ellen and Clement Meunier for putting it together, Marie Paterson for proof reading, Peggy Holmquist and Mary Grant our volunteer reviewers and Wanda Montgomery who provided the financial backing.

Special thanks go to Wendy Richardson, Mary Grant, Carollyne Brown and Peggy Holmquist who volunteer with the many administrative duties. We are fortunate to have the ongoing encouragement and support of our Board of Directors, Board Chair – Paul Wickens-Jobling, and SSS Executive Director - Jane Sheaff.

Last but not least thank you to our faithful volunteers who make the program world class, and a special thanks to Marian Templeton for her continual commitment, support, promotion, updating and growth of the program.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Davoren, SSS Coordinator for RTH

SENIORS IN STITCHES

The past year has seen a temporary reduction in membership and output of knitting products. We were able to give 46 toque and mitt sets to the Family Cridge Centre at Christmas, and send a half dozen knitted bandages to Africa. Knitted toques for newborns are on hold due to a surplus at the Victoria General Hospital.

Fortunately, this spring we had 3 new members join and are able to increase our production.

Our sincere thanks to Sunrise Senior Living Residence on Humboldt Street for providing monthly meeting space from January to June and September to November.

We continue to receive donations of yarn from the Beehive Wool Shop and several individuals. Thank you very much!

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Stoeckel
Seniors in Stitches Representative

Profile of Proposed New Board Member

Myra Johnson - Myra was born in Victoria but graduated from Queen's in Kingston with a BA in Liberal Arts and from University of Toronto with a Masters in Special Education. She returned to Victoria in 1995 after retiring from many years teaching in England and Toronto. Myra served on the Board of Victoria Women's Transition House and has volunteered with SSS Senior Link for 17 years and is Chair of the Directory Committee.

2015/2016 Seniors Serving Seniors Board Member Roster

PROPOSED NEW MEMBER

Myra Johnson

BOARD MEMBERS STANDING FOR RE-ELECTION 2015/2016

Bonnie Davoren
Jane Dewing
Art Joyce
Mary Ellen Meunier
Marie Paterson
Christopher Shepherd
Barbara Stoeckel
Paul Wickens-Jobling
Debbie Yorke

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