

partners in touch

Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness Newsletter

The weather is colder now and our minds are turning to the weather. At the **Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness**, we are proud of our partners who have now opened the fantastic Rock Bay Landing facility and Queens Manor which will provide 36 units of transitional housing.

In the midst of change often comes confusion. We have created a list of [available shelter beds and transitional housing](#) on our website for you to use for reference and client referrals. We have included **Emergency Weather Protocol** updates on the same list and on our [homepage](#). Please [email](#) us with any changes as we want this to be as current and accurate as possible.

Keep up the good work!



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Many thanks to our funders!

COALITION UPDATES

Project Connect on October 13th was a great success! At least 650 participants and 100 volunteers filled **Our Place** where volunteers gave over 60 haircuts, replaced 110 birth certificates and 90 CareCards, served over 1,400 burgers, vets saw 41 pets, and much, much more. Huge thanks to all our [volunteers, donors and sponsors](#). Thanks to our co-host, Our Place.

The **Coalition** has compiled a list of [emergency shelter spaces](#) available in the CRD, including Salt Spring Island. This is available on our website and in a format that can be printed for clients. If you have any updates, please contact [Maggie Kerr-Southin](#).

Another 178 units of supported housing are coming online in the next year. Download our partners' upcoming projects here.

It's time to renew your **membership** for 2011! The Coalition's membership year runs January to December. If you send your cheque in 2010, you will receive a charitable donations tax receipt early in 2011. Please consider adding a donation to your cheque. Not a member yet? Download the [membership application](#).

Volunteer help is needed in the Coalition office. If you have office skills and can donate one or two half-days a week, we could use your help. General knowledge of filing, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint are needed. Please [email](#) Cathy for more information.

Executive Director Debbie Thompson has been making at least two presentations per week to groups that would like to learn more about the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and the issue of homelessness. If you would like to book a presentation for your organization, staff meeting, youth group, students or club, please [email](#) us today!



PARTNER UPDATES

In the past ten years, the **CRD** has directed more than \$1.2 million towards creating homes for the homeless. Last year, renovations at the **Cridge Centre for the Family** resulted in the creation of eight rental units for single women at risk of homelessness. [Read more](#) CRD housing Fast Facts.

Feeding & Giving From the Heart, hosted by the **Nuu-chah-nulth Nations**, takes place at **Our Place** on Friday, November 26. Special guest will be National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, Hereditary Chief from the Ahousaht First Nation. The event starts at 9am.

[Rock Bay Landing](#), the new shelter and transitional housing facility operated by **Victoria Cool Aid Society**, is now open. It features 84 shelter beds, 2 family units and 23 transitional housing units in a modern, bright building that is LEEDS (environmental) certified. Congrats to our partners **Cool Aid**, **BC Housing**, the **City of Victoria** and the **Province of BC**.

Now is your chance to recognize an exemplary community hero in one of six prestigious categories. Nominations for Victoria's **Leadership Awards** are now being accepted for the February 16, 2011 awards ceremony at the Fairmont Empress Hotel. See link for the full [Nomination Package](#). All nominations must be received by November 30th.

The Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Protocol (EWP) is in place. Triggered by extreme weather, the EWP opens 165 extra shelter mats during temperatures below -2C, snow and rain that prevents getting dry, and during snow accumulation. The [EWP schedule](#) is online.

EWP regional coordinator Jen Book writes: "I would like to put it out to the community that we are trying to find somewhere to have the St John the Divine blankets washed on a nightly basis during activations. If anyone has any suggestions, I would love to hear them. Perhaps someone has a connection with one of the hotel/motels in town." Email [Jen](#) or call her at 250.896.4012.

United Way of Greater Victoria is halfway to its goal, with \$3.1 million raised since September 13th. Donations will be used for a variety of programs dealing with issues that include homelessness, family wellbeing and mental health. Please consider a [donation](#) today.

[Burnside Gorge Community Centre \(BGCC\)](#) is collecting donations for Christmas hampers for families in need. They are looking for donations of food and gifts for children, teens and adults. If you or your business is interested in making a donation, please contact Shauna at 250-388-5251. Family sponsorship is also available.

Burnside Gorge Community Association is partnering with Level Ground Trading for the annual [Active Families Fundraiser](#). All money raised through sales will be used to fund recreation programs for local families that can't otherwise afford them. Fairly traded coffee, dried fruit and natural cane sugar will be available to purchase at the (BGCC) and by telephone with the option of home delivery from November 15 to December 18.

The Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria (Community Council) is working on initiatives to contribute to the Coalition's work on prevention and community engagement. The Council's Executive Director, Rupert Downing, co-chairs the Community Engagement Working Group of the Coalition, along with Chris Poirier-Skelton of the **United Way**. The Council leverages its resources and activities to contribute to Coalition priorities through its four program

Streets to Homes

The Streets to Homes program helps people who live homeless to find housing in private market units. Participants have lived homeless for over a year and have observable mental illness or substance abuse challenges. They are assisted by a Follow-up Support Worker who helps them maintain their tenancy and achieve their goals.

Who Are We?

The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness is a partnership of service providers, non-profit organizations, all levels of government, business and the faith community.

Our mission is to end homelessness by 2018.

Working at Project Connect was a great experience - a very well-run event.

Herb Neufeld
Volunteer

areas: Housing Affordability; Poverty Reduction and Prevention; Community Economic Development, and; Sustainability of the Region and its Communities.

A [report](#) has been completed by **Community Council** on improving the availability of housing for farm workers, funded in part by the municipality of **Central Saanich**. The report recommends a number of improvements to municipal regulations to make it easier to accommodate farm workers appropriately, to respond to affordable housing challenges for seasonal and other farm workers in the region. Employment in agriculture and food grew by 17% from 2001 to 2006, the second highest growth sector in the region.

On November 1, 2010, **Victoria Cool Aid Society**, with assistance from the **City of Victoria, BC Housing, Government of Canada** and **Vancouver Island Health Authority**, opened [Queens Manor](#) - a building with 36 units of supportive housing for adults currently without homes. The building, a former Travellers Inn, is located at 710 Queens Street (corner of Douglas). Single adults, couples and tenants with pets are accommodated at Queens Manor, to a capacity of approximately 43 people. The building will be operated with two Cool Aid housing staff on site 24/7 until the end of January 2011. At that time, renovation work will begin to make the motel rooms better suited for permanent housing.

On December 11, 2010, **Our Place** will host its first ever "non-gala gala," where you can help out without giving up any of your time. Imagine this: no expensive outfit, no lengthy speeches, no raffle, no silent auction! The non-gala gala lets you support those without a home by staying at home. [Click here](#) for more information, or to buy tickets or a table for the best non-event of the year.

The Cridge Centre for the Family fights homelessness by supporting vulnerable people. The Cridge Centre has been providing brain injury services since 1991 as part of an organizational commitment to combating homelessness. By providing a variety of services along the continuum of care, support and opportunity, brain injury survivors are provided the opportunity to move from hospital care to group home living to independent living with community support services. [Read more.](#)

KUDOS

Victoria Foundation released the 5th annual Vital Signs Report. Victoria's most important issues? Homelessness, cost of living, addictions, housing and mental illness. [Download](#) this valuable resource that grades what we're doing well, and what we need to do better.

[AIDS Vancouver Island](#) offers free drop-in ear acupuncture to illicit drug users to ease stress, anxiety, aches and pains. Christina Chan, R.Ac. every Tuesday, 4-6pm, AVI, 3rd floor, 250-384-2366.

Kudos to the volunteers at **St John the Divine Emergency Food Service (EFS)** for their contributions. The following is an excerpt from an article by volunteer Sara Chu: ... *A tall, quiet, and very dignified man from the Gulf Islands, who was new, mentioned to me that he was living in his car. This meant that he couldn't use some of our items that would need cooking. He had to wait for quite a long time before his turn came to be served. After he got his groceries, he was so grateful for the kindness and the food, that he stood up and simply said, "I love you."* Read Sara's full story [here](#).

Access Health Centre celebrated its first year of operation and shares these stats:

- 510 new patients welcomed at the [Cool Aid Community Health Centre](#)
- 76 new volunteers helping deliver [AIDS Vancouver Island programs](#)
- 5,301 dental encounters at the Cool Aid Dental Clinic (up 1,570 over last year)
- 20 AVI support groups and workshops monthly; focussed on prevention and health programming
- 34,677 medical and dental encounters in the first year of operation (up 5,638)
- 8,000 nutritious meals served at the AVI café

Two thumbs up to the **Victoria Chinatown Lioness Club** for winning the Outstanding Philanthropic Service Club Award at the National Philanthropy Day Awards on November 15th. We appreciate your support of the Coalition! Congrats to all the [winners!](#)

IN THE NEWS

Transmission, Testing & Treatment: What Every Service Provider Needs to Know about HIV on Wednesday, November 24, 2010 from 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM (PT) at **AIDS Vancouver Island**. [More info here.](#)

Volunteer Victoria presents Making Tough Conversations Great on Thursday, January 20, 2010 from 9am to 12 noon. For those tough conversations, from telling a volunteer their performance is not up to snuff or a colleague that their actions have adversely affected us, to telling a boss that we just can't juggle that "one more thing" anymore. Email [Volunteer Victoria](#) with your name and agency contact information to hold your seat.

[Third reading debate](#) on [Bill C-304](#) - draft legislation to create a **national housing plan** for Canada - started on October 21st in Parliament, and three of the four political parties in the Commons have pledged their support. Vancouver East MP **Libby Davies**, sponsor of the bill, told her fellow MPs: "This bill is very straightforward and clear. It calls on the federal government, in partnership with the provinces, the territories, First Nations, municipalities and stakeholders, to develop a strategy that could take us forward and move us into a situation where we have a real plan with objectives, targets, outcomes, and deliverables." Debate is now suspended to allow for an amendment by the Bloc Quebecois.

The Wellesley Institute's [Precarious Housing in Canada 2010](#) sets out a detailed analysis of housing need across Canada, and makes pragmatic recommendations about the components of a new national housing plan. Our [Canadian housing e-map](#) provides information on more than 160 housing and homelessness initiatives across the country.

An excellent A-Channel news report on the new **Rock Bay Landing** has been added to www.CoolAid.org/shelter.

MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members:

- Herb Neufeld
- Philip Symons
- Allan McLaren
- Shannon Bedford
- Elisa Djurickovic
- Michael I. Chang
- The Cridge Centre for the Family (effective January 2011)

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