

September 2010

## partners in touch

### Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness Newsletter

As autumn rains begin to fall, we at the **Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness** are constantly thinking about how changes in the weather will affect people without a place of their own, who live in a car, with family or friends, or who simply sleep rough.

**Project Connect** is one way we can help create connections so people can access some support. On October 13, many of our partner organizations and volunteers will come together to provide services that this population can rarely access, such as medical care and foot care for themselves and vet care and food for their pets, haircuts, massage, acupuncture, bike repair, connections to income assistance, identification replacement and much more, including lots of food. And all under one roof!

We are also thinking about the collective work being done by our [partners](#) who serve their clients with dedication and compassion every day. Thank you for all you do!

Please send me an email with any thoughts, questions or ideas.



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#### In this issue

[Coalition Updates](#)

[Partner Updates](#)

[Kudos](#)

[In the News](#)

[Members](#)

#### Get informed

[Coalition website](#)

[Reports and Studies](#)



#### COALITION UPDATES

You are invited to **Project Connect** on October 13 at **Our Place**. We still need donations of goods for client gift bags. In addition to individual donations, we are asking workplaces or groups to take on an item, for example hand sanitizers, lip balm, granola bars, or chocolate. Please email Jody Paterson, Project Connect Coordinator, at [jodypaterson@shaw.ca](mailto:jodypaterson@shaw.ca) with your interests. There's more info on the Project Connect [Facebook](#) page and the Coalition [website](#). Project Connect is part of **Homelessness Action Week**, October 10-16, 2010, during which time events to bring awareness to Homelessness will be hosted throughout British Columbia.

**Streets to Homes** has placed 7 clients (5 male and 2 female) in housing, 4 in transitional housing (on the list to be placed in private units) and 12 have been assessed and are waiting to be housed. An additional 5 people from **Our Place** are ready to move into permanent housing through Streets to Homes, and the units they free up will be earmarked for people who may have been camping on the Pandora Boulevard. Many thanks to the **United Way** and **Victoria Foundation** for providing core funding for this important pilot program.

We need your help to secure private market units for **Streets to Homes** clients. If you have connections with any landlord, let us know and we will be happy to meet with them to discuss the program and relevant incentives in detail.

## Many thanks to our funders!



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## 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.

Welcome to **Kristi** and **Bela**, the Streets to Homes follow-up support workers. You are off to a great start!

Our summer intern, **Megan Hyska**, has returned to the University of Victoria to continue her studies. Megan assisted the Coalition with developing our Social Media plan, including setting up [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts, and streamlining our website. Thanks to Service Canada for sponsoring her.

The [Loonie-a-Week](#) campaign continues with donation boxes now at several city/municipal halls throughout the region: **North Saanich, Saanich, Victoria, Esquimalt and Oak Bay**. A donation box is also at **St. John the Divine Church** whose Rev. Harold Munn inspired us to start the campaign. This campaign is based on Rev. Munn's premise that if everyone donated a loonie per week, there would be enough money to end homelessness.

On August 11th, **Debbie Thompson** visited [Salt Spring Island Community Services Society](#) to learn more about its services to people who experience poverty, including homelessness. The Society helps people access services and supports in times of need including shelter, food, health, social supports, counselling, education, skill development, recreation, culture, understanding and compassion. [Read more.](#)

## PARTNER UPDATES

Welcome to Linda Hughes, the new CEO of the **United Way of Greater Victoria (UWGV)**. We look forward to working with you!

**United Way** is pleased to present to the community and its donors the [Outcomes Report](#). This report is the cumulative results of three years of funding (2007-2009) to its Community Partners. The three priorities have been housing, mental health and addictions, and family and community well-being.

Help the **United Way** identify the critical social issues that still exist or are emerging in your community. Your input will help the UWGV set the priorities for the next three years. Take part in the [survey](#) by September 30th.

**UWGV** and the **City of Victoria** have contributed \$30,000 each to the **Our Place** Early Morning and Breakfast Program.

**The Victoria Cool Aid Society** invites you to donate gently used professional attire at any Moores Clothing for Men store in September. Clothing will be given away through Cool Aid's [Casual Labour Pool](#).

**The City of Victoria** held a news conference on September 8 where the **Province of BC** and the federal **Homelessness Intervention Program (HIP)** announced [capital funds](#) for the two Traveller's Inns acquisitions. The **CRD's** Regional Housing Trust Fund also contributed to this purchase.

**Cool Aid** is now on Twitter. For those of you who are not yet Twitter-literate, that means you can see all their latest news (and those of their friends and allies) at [www.Twitter.com/VicCoolAid](http://www.Twitter.com/VicCoolAid). You can also subscribe to Cool Aid [RSS](#), or by going to their [home](#) page.

Did you know that **Our Place** provides a wide range of activities including yoga, a vet clinic, writing, music, foot care and more? Please check the [calendar](#) for opportunities for your clients.

**The Mentoring Project** provides community support to people who self-identify as having mental health and/or addiction challenges by pairing them with trained volunteer mentors. A volunteer mentor is able to fill a sustained role in a person's life when other therapeutic relationships are often of shorter duration. This fall's mentor training takes place on Tuesday evenings (5:30-8:30) from October 5 to December 7. Contact Marna at [msmith@coolaid.org](mailto:msmith@coolaid.org) or 250-595-8619 for info or to apply. The Mentoring Project is a collaborative partnership between **Cool Aid's REES Network** and the **Umbrella Society**.

## KUDOS

To **St. John the Divine** staff and volunteers for hosting the excellent City-Street-Church conference as part of St. John's 150th anniversary. Next month we'll have a summary article, but in the meantime, enjoy the [photos!](#)

**Canadian Chamber of Commerce** passed a resolution on September 27 to lobby the Federal government to reallocate funds from the current federal budget envelope to develop a national plan to end homelessness. The **Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce** has committed to working on this issue.

## IN THE NEWS

On September 23, Victoria City Council received public input on the Streets and Traffic Bylaw amendment that would prohibit camping on traffic medians and boulevards. It goes back to council for adoption on October 7. Learn more in this *Times Colonist* [article](#).

[Eva's Initiatives](#) is currently seeking nominations or applications for its Award for Innovation. This award recognizes organizations that are serving homeless or at risk youth. The deadline for submissions is November 12, 2010. Note that projects in the developmental stage can apply as well.

On a warm late-August Sunday, community members and partners attended a BBQ and info fair organized by the Committee to End Homelessness for those who live in poverty. As the *Times Colonist* [reports](#), it was an opportunity for participants to meet with the public and exchange information.

UVic's *Ring* magazine recently [profiled](#) grad student Tyrone Austin, who worked with Dr. Bernie Pauly to collect data for the Coalition's [Report on Housing and Supports 2010](#). Well done, Tyrone!

## MEMBERS

Welcome to our new corporate members!

[Foundation House](#) helps men healing from addictions to once again become leaders in their families and communities.



[South Mid Vancouver Island Zone Veterans Housing Society](#) helps veterans and seniors find affordable and assisted living housing, long term facilities, furnishings and more. The Legion within BC/Yukon Command is the single largest charitable contributor supporting health, housing, independent living and social programs for veterans and seniors.

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