



New Vista Society's Dinner Program Volunteers Jol, Eva and Maria



New Vista Society's Volunteer Bingo Caller Ed



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Canadian Tradition of Volunteerism in Burnaby

by Kelina Kwan

Where can you go to meet people of all ages from all over the world, help seniors, and participate in a variety of activities ranging from looking after animals, to bus trips, horticulture, art programs, tai chi, sewing, computer training, and hair styling? Is there such a place?

Welcome to the New Vista Society in Burnaby. If you want to volunteer, this is the place you should check out.

The New Vista Society has a long history in the City of Burnaby. The organization was founded in 1943 by Ernest Winch, MLA for Burnaby from 1933 to 1957. Originally, the Society provided housing for convalescing single women with psychiatric problems. As the demographics and needs of the community changed, so has the focus of the Society. Today, in addition to care homes, New Vista Society provides low-cost housing and support services for a growing elderly population with diverse needs, as well as provides a number of social family housing units. The Society currently has a 236 bed intermediate care facility; 5

apartment buildings for adults aged 55+; and 2 townhouse complexes with 12 units for seniors and 78 units for mixed income families.

But New Vista Society provides much more than accommodations. Staff members pride themselves in also providing care and support for every resident, and that's where volunteers come in.

In order to make the New Vista residences caring and supportive communities to live in, the Society depends on their 200+ volunteers. At the care homes, volunteers provide the main manpower behind the New Vista Boutique, pet care, floral gardening and bingo program. Volunteers also assist in strength training, special events, art, music, bus trips, mending, church visiting, tai chi, walking, exercise, knitting, entertaining, hair styling, manicure service, computer tutoring, translation, medical appointment escorting, visiting and the list goes on. In the apartment buildings, volunteers provide dinner and bingo programs, music, cards, special events, beautification, and gardening.



New Vista's residents come from many different parts of the world. There is a large Korean population together with residents originally from Eastern European countries, England and Scotland, and other parts of Asia. The Korean Social Group, and programs such as the "Java Music Club", a coffee, music and discussion group, and the tenants' dinners, a weekly social event in some of their apartment buildings, are also run by volunteers.

When I asked Margaret Hansen and Louise Joyce from the New Vista Society whether it is true that New Vista depends on volunteers to make things work, the reply was a definite "Absolutely!" Hansen, Campus Coordinator of Volunteers at New Vista, said that they get volunteers from many different backgrounds, and the longest-serving volunteers have been helping out for more than 25 years. In addition to senior and long-time volunteers, they also have volunteers who are high school or college students, new immigrants, and family members of staff and residents. Many family members of residents continue to volunteer when the resident has passed on, and many students come back to volunteer after their studies. So what makes volunteers come back and stay with the New Vista Society?

"Our tenants just love this place," Hansen replied. "Their suites are well maintained, the staff are very friendly and personable. It's a great place to live and to work." It is truly a community, and tenants and volunteers feel the love and support the community provides through the different activities and social events." As Canada Day draws near, I asked Hansen and Joyce what makes volunteering a

tradition in Burnaby. "Volunteering is a not only a tradition in Burnaby, it's a Canadian tradition. That is what successful communities require: a sense of community and helping each other for the common good." The New Vista Society merely continues the Canadian tradition of volunteerism in Burnaby. Burnaby is a mosaic, a stopping off point for new Canadians as well as a city full of history such as the legacy of Ernest Winch. But no matter where people came from, and how long they have settled in Burnaby, the sense of community is within each resident's heart. When people volunteer, "they start to understand what volunteering truly means, and the good feelings they can get from helping others, and the benefits they can give to others. They want to continue in order to give that benefit for others." If you want to carry on the tradition and be part of the Burnaby volunteer community, contact the New Vista Society at 604-527-6000, or visit their website at www.newvista.bc.ca.

HAPPY CANADA DAY TO ALL VOLUNTEERS!

What does it mean to be Canadian? Given that here in Canada (especially in BC) we possess an eclectic and complex cultural mix population, it's a legitimate question. What is that commonality that we all share, what is it that makes us stand out? As Canadians, it's the inherent social responsibility of giving, contributing and caring. It's a tie and bond that spreads across our great Nation. Volunteering exemplifies that social spirit, it helps us form to connect, to form community. It's an intergeneration bond that weaves us all together. So, as you enjoy your long weekend, think about the volunteering that you do and what it means to you. You are an important part of our Country, our Province and our Community.

Volunteer
...you'll be glad you did



Volunteer Opportunity!

BC Seniors Games

Please visit www.2012bc seniors games.org
or email info@2012bc seniors games.org

Volunteer of the Month...



Faye Sherlock

Faye Sherlock is our Volunteer of the Month! Faye volunteers every week at Volunteer Burnaby and at Peter Julian's constituency office. Faye does a fantastic job and always makes us all smile. In addition to volunteering Faye has an avid interest and love for dogs. She recently rescued an energetic young dog she named Rocco. Hurray for Faye!

VOLUNTEER BURNABY

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Since 1943 New Vista has relied on volunteers to help provide support and encouragement for our seniors. We could not do it without YOU!

THANK YOU EVERYONE!

