



Christmas Party Celebration

DATE: Saturday, Dec. 4th, 2010 TIME: 1.00pm to 3.30pm

**PLACE: Centennial United Church- Entrance to Hall: 612 David St,
Bus stops nearby. *Parking on David street, Rock Bay Ave, and Ellice St.
Ramp at the Gorge Rd entrance for persons with disabilities***

If possible, bring finger food and a gift for the gift table.

If you sing, play an instrument or have art and crafts—please share!

ALL WELCOME to enjoy entertainment, food and gift



At this happy time of year, celebrated in many ways by many different religions and spiritual traditions, we have to say a fond farewell to Mary Gordon who has moved to Ontario to be closer to her family. Her many friends in the Society that she helped to initiate back in 1992, send their wishes for a Happy Birthday on December 1st and for a joyous Christmas in Mary's new home in London ONT.(Call if you need Mary's address)

PHOTO: Mary Gordon and friends

What an exciting year we have had with many new people offering tremendous gifts of time and goods and financial help.

- **Special assistance, from which we still benefit came from Cam, Linda, Lauri, Lori, Cathy, Jennifer, John, Joan and David. A sad farewell to you!**
- **The present Board Members, who don't give up easily when the going is tough. Special thanks to Linda our chairperson and Wes M. who makes important connections for us in the Community...especially with Shaw Cable.**
- **Shaw Cable for producing programs about the need for our transitional houses and for offering a package to our Society which will combine telephone, cable and internet at a very special low cost for 12 months.**
- **All the hard-working facilitators who make such sacrifices to keep the houses open and who see that the Guidelines are kept.**
- **Our generous Landlords who enter in to the spirit of the exchange of life's gifts allowing us to sub-let their buildings to men and women in transition. Thank you all for maintaining the properties and keeping costs down for our society while even raising more funds in the community.**
- **Above all, the incredible grass roots financial support that has kept our Society true to it's original philosophy of being simply a totally volunteer Family of Friends—not a top down agency with paid staff. Our overhead is negligible and every donation is used to keep the houses going for people in transition.**

REPORTS FROM MEN'S HOUSES:

"Thanksgiving" is Never Behind Us.

Even though one of the fellows in the **Francis Thibeau House in Sidney** earned a turkey for our Thanksgiving Supper, we try to give our thanks on a daily basis. And, I don't know if it's because autumn has arrived, but, the fellows in the house are pretty focused these days on getting their careers going.

This IS big news for us because if it weren't for the Victoria Human Exchange, the guys know & appreciate that they would be frantically scrambling to find any housing & just the basics of food.

So, "Thanksgiving Day" is EVERY day for us at the Francis Thibeau House & now there IS a "tomorrow" to be thankful for.

Thanx, D.

The Father Michael J McGivney House

Regarding the guys in McGivney House: W. is doing well. He was in the hospital for about a week...more tests for his medical condition ...and is continuing with his hep.c therapy. W. is a very positive influence in the house. One occupant has left due to addiction problems, we are working together to get him into treatment or a recovery house. C. is doing well..attending meetings regularly ...has working sponsorship...is tied in well with his family...is working on a semi-regular basis...2-3 days a week. S. is doing well..addressing his health issues in a proactive way; attending counseling sessions and is also a good influence on the guys. ..a very active participant in the house. And finally E. is doing well...attending his Lifering meetings...has just embarked on some

work in his field of psychology..and is a very active participant in the house. E. takes it upon himself quite often to do house cleaning and other house activities and is always available for the guys to bend his ear. We are grateful to Owner Ken G. for quickly tending to any maintenance needs of our 6 bedroom house, an initiative sponsored generously by **the Knights of Columbus**.
With gratitude, K

Charlie Pyott House:

The House has a new Facilitator who has brought order, safety and compassion to the men who seek shelter in this Victoria House. The House seldom has a vacancy and any that come up are filled quickly. Due to the generous Owner putting in a new Oil tank and enabling special rates for Oil, our heating costs should be lower. A computer has been donated by Coast Capital Savings and other donations, including laundry machines and a tv, are gratefully accepted. We wish everyone the blessings of the beautiful Season!



Thank you to Patrick Schnerch for your positive approach to the challenges of homelessness in our rich city. Patrick laments the senseless violence to the Mayor's home. You can find Patrick's peaceful and informative literary contributions at:

www.humanx.org/publications

REPORTS: THE WOMEN'S HOUSES

We are happy to say that things are going just fine at our **Edith Gulland house** for women. We have had 3 women move on to long-term housing; and, 3 others move in to replace them. The house is full; and, each of the residents is busy attending programs, seeking out employment, & volunteering. All are moving forward positively in their lives.

We have heard so many, many times - that if it hadn't been for the opportunity given to these men & women to live at the VHES houses on a short-term basis - where would they be?

They would be in shelters, sleeping in doorways, backseats of cars, under a bush in a park - that's where they would be; and, that is why we keep on doing what it is we do for the homeless and low income in the Victoria, Sidney & Saltspring Island areas.

We are finding it harder & harder to provide a safe, comfortable home for the person trying to better their lives because economically the cut-backs, lack of funding for non-profit societies; and, high cost of maintaining these homes is hampering our efforts to not only maintain the existing 7 houses we have for men & women but, does not financially allow us to open another home at this time.

We ask all people who care, if they are able, to assist us in our endeavours to help as many as we can with a "hand up" instead of just a "hand out".

Thank you,
Linda.

Judy-Thomas House - Sidney

Here at Judy Thomas House we have had a turnover of residents in the past couple of months. Two of us are old-timers who now work well together and will be in each other's lives long into the future, S has now been here a couple of months while L is in the process of moving in. Hopefully everyone will be settled in and comfortable to enjoy the christmas season.

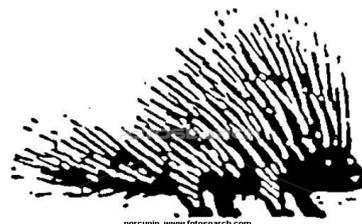
I would like to take the time to say "thank you" to VHES for their ongoing good works and their support to each resident. Thanks also to our generous Landlords ; the Town of Sidney that has supported this house for many years; Sidney businesses and Churches, especially Holy Trinity and St Vincent de Paul Society who provide us with vouchers and regular help. May everyone find peace during the Christmas Season.

Maria

FABLE OF THE PORCUPINE:

It was the coldest winter ever. - Many animals died because of the cold. The porcupines, realizing the situation, decided to group together to keep warm. This way they covered and protected themselves; but the quills of each one wounded their closest companions.

After awhile, they decided to distance themselves one from the other and they began to die, alone and frozen. So they had to make a choice: either accept the quills of their companions or disappear from the Earth.



Wisely, they decided to go back to being together. They learned to live with the little wounds caused by the close relationship with their companions in order to receive the heat that came from the others. This way they were able to survive.

Moral of the story: The best relationship is not the one that brings together perfect people, but when each individual learns to live with the imperfections of others and can admire the other person's good qualities.

SINCERE THANKS TO:

- Congratulations to the **City of Victoria** on housing over 200 more people in new units this year; the successful **Project Connect- the Church, City and Street Conference** and the total count of over 600 homeless people housed within 3 years.
- **The Knights of Columbus Councils** for ongoing funds to support the men living at the Father Michael J. McGivney House in Victoria.
- The third year of our **Direct Access Grant** is in our Account. *We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.*
- Financial support from the **Sid T., Lois M.; John T.; Paul R.; Roger S.; Annley K.; Irene T.; Helene** and **Gene D.**
- **Salvation Army family services** for Christmas toys for children and **Catherine C.** for bringing them to us for distribution.
- **Patrick J.** for publishing the account of our AGM in the **Island Catholic News**
- **Mayor Jack Mar** of **District of Central Saanich** for invitation to apply for a Grant in Aid, and for much encouragement. **Danny D.** and **Margaret L.** for interest in our Society's needs. **Wes M.** for all his work in Public Relations for VHES.
- **Roger B. of BC Housing** for gift of laundry machines for Charlie Pyott House , and Jody for baseball tickets much appreciated by the guys.
- Designated funds through the **United Way** from the **Naden Military band** and **Federal Superannuates.** **PECSF** for designated funds
- **Thrifty Foods** for monthly funds arising from people using their VHES Smile Cards when shopping.
- **Coast Capital Savings** for gift of 2 computers for use in two of our houses.
- Tradesmen and professionals who give us discounts and donate services including **Price Locksmiths; Crest;**
- **Jean V. and daughter Gail** for Electrolux Vacuum cleaner. **Sid W.** for area rug.
- **Marian S.** for laundry Machines. **Frances G.** for Couch and chair. **Wayne T.** for cartage from Mayne Island.
- **Our Landlords and all the Facilitators** without whom people could not receive the blessing of housing.
- **Reverend Alanna of Centennial United** for letting us know of useful donations and networking possibilities.
- **The Unitarian Church** for your Lifeline project for rent for persons without funds.
- **Jim B and Larry for their computer project** which helps low income persons obtain working computers.
- **Thanks to all those who prayed for and visited our dear Lois M. during her serious illness. Lois is back home and doing well.**

DONATIONS to Victoria Human Exchange Society : Box 8534 - Victoria BC - V8W 3S1

Pager # GREATER VICTORIA : 361-2762 Anywhere else in North America: 1-800-691-9366

Cell phones 250-920-5056 250-857-3905 Web-site: www.humanx.org

Please note that anyone who wishes to donate to our Society on line may do so through Canada Helps—button on the Home page of our Web-site.