



Salt Spring Island/Mayne Island Branches **THE GIFT EXCHANGE**

3rd quarter

Issue 46

Most people are aware that the housing situation on Salt Spring Island is very difficult for those who are working poor, unskilled, have a disability or are struggling with mental illness. On a small scale some locals supply emergency housing privately but the only public emergency housing that exists, apart from Women's Transition House, is provided by the Human Exchange Society.

Our totally volunteer Society rents houses from sympathetic landlords and with their consent, sublets to persons in need. **Grandma's House** has offered shelter since 1994 and with the change of address in 2006, it is now owned by the *SS Land Bank Society as a community venture*. Islanders should be proud of their community ownership of this house. It is leased to the Human Exchange at a very reasonable rent.



Even though rent is reasonable at both houses (**Bittancourt Manor**, formerly Charlie Pyott House, has existed since 1996) we are still challenged by operational costs—electric heating being the biggest one in these old, largely un-insulated houses. Community subsidization is necessary. At the moment most of the subsidization comes from our main VHES in Victoria.

What brings people to our transitional type housing?

- Simple poverty—inability to pay the exorbitant rents asked;
- Eviction from present housing for a variety of reasons.
- Unemployment and underemployment or being in between jobs;
- Disability, mental illness, lengthy illness or accident that absorbs savings;
- Chronic disease from substance misuse from which it takes years in a safe environment to recover

The people presently in our two houses are there for all these reasons. Some were living outdoors, even while having low-paying jobs; some were evicted to make way for summer tourists and others are in recovery from chronic illness.

If you can volunteer your time or donate gifts of money or household supplies (laundry and dish-washing detergent; bathroom tissue; personal care packages including feminine hygiene products and so on) to support our fellow human beings to achieve a better life, it would help all our occupants to know that the community cares. Some of you are already doing that and we thank you! Contact numbers are on page 2.

THANK YOUs FROM THE GULF ISLANDS

Mayne Island Branch News. Thanks to all who share gifts with the less materially fortunate; and thanks to the Thrift Store. **Items we could use for low-income families are:** Chests of drawers; blankets; fresh produce; clothing — especially large sizes; firewood; tools of any kind; materials to encourage artistic talents - ie: paints/brushes/paper/ CD's to record music, musical instruments. Anything you no longer need! TAX receipts will be issued for the True Market Value of your gifts. Phone Patricia, 539-5310 or Dawne, 539-3195

Chapel Gatherings:

Please phone for information on dates and themes. The Chapel can be used by any group that needs a spiritual/private space. 9-5310

Our sincere thanks to:

- **Cherie G.** of the **Copper Kettle** and the **United Church** for obtaining a car for our dedicated Volunteer and Advocate Macie P. Thanks Macie for all those months of walking up the hill!
- **Irene C. and friend Rob** who have donated numerous household items and excellent men's clothing. The bed-side lamps were perfect for Grandmas House. Rod also transported donations from **Nancy N.** to Sidney where they were needed. Thank you Nancy for antique dresser; long book-case; single bed with bedding and 3 card table chairs.
- **Kathy R.** for being an advocate for marginalized persons on Salt Spring Island.
- **Financial Gifts:** **Nancy W.** and others at the **Anglican Church Outreach;** **Mark S.** of Pender for monthly donation for persons with mental illness. **Margaret B** for her monthly donation.
- **Macie P.** for advocacy and generous service for persons facing housing challenges.
- **Imagen** for continued free Internet Access
- **All who live at the Houses** for your co-operation in keeping the house free of drugs and alcohol.
- **SS Community Services** for referring and supporting people who need a roof over their heads.
- **All** whose names we have missed but who have 'shared life's gifts'. **We thank you!**

MAYNE ISLAND BRANCH.

- **Colleen F. at ALEA** for donation of 200 more brochures.
- **Dawne C** for always being ready to pick up donations on Mayne Island. Thanks to **Debbie R.** and her niece and sister for a love seat. All others who offered furniture (hide-a beds).
- **Shirley H.** for 213 classic movies and a VCR — many thanks for the hours of enjoyment..
- **Financial donations :** **Lazlo B ; Elizabeth T.;** **The Lions Club** for assistance to the working poor .
- **Pat R** for set of beautiful china and much kindness. **Sylvia I.** for fresh garden produce.
- **Lina B.** for Society Accounting and preparing Budgets for funding applications.
- **Monica of MonicaWorks** for uploading last newsletter and this one and for keeping our web- site (whose design she donated) up to date.
- **Joanna W.,** and the **Mayne Isl. Thrift Store** for further bags of linens and towels.
- **Jacob and Emily B.** for more beautiful clothing and household goods
- **Sue E.** for excellent women's clothing and lots of encouragement and support.
- **Joyce K.** for regular gifts of produce gratefully received by several families with young children .
- **Yvette** for visiting our dear **Edith G** in palliative care, and for pick up and delivery of many gifts to be shared with those less materially fortunate.
- **Pat R.** for set of beautiful china; children's clothes and books; two new saucepans; and much kindness.
- **John and Claire R.** for box of linens; **Sylvia I** for fresh garden produce.

*All who have dropped off goods anonymously or whom we missed. **We thank you all.***

In the Gulf Islands, Monetary gifts (with memo re: usage) may be mailed to:

384 Fulford-Ganges Rd. SSI, BC, V8K 2K1

On Mayne and Outer Islands: Tel: 539-5310

Email: grandmas@saltspring.com

Outside Victoria Society pager: **1-800-691-9366**

<http://www.humanx.org>