



Salt Spring Island & Mayne Island Branches

GIFT EXCHANGE

1st. Quarter , 2011

Issue 60

Thank you to all the Salt Spring agencies and individuals who are contributing to the establishment of dignified and comfortable transitional housing for persons who have not been able to locate suitable permanent accommodation on Salt Spring Island.

Grandma's House

The SSI Land Bank Society is finalizing the renovations on Grandma's House (for males) which will ultimately have a facilitator suite. We hope that the house will be back in service by Easter,, so we are accepting calls from persons who would like to be on the waiting list and we are considering who to place in the house as facilitator. A facilitator

- must be free of drug and alcohol use;
- is not paid a salary but pays low rent;
- may hold an outside job;
- is guaranteed longer term housing . There is an annual review of this responsibility.

Please phone our pager --**1-800-691-9366** --if you wish to speak to someone about living at the new Grandma's House, either as a temporary guest or as a facilitator.

News from Bittancourt:

The house is full and the women who are there are so appreciative: One wrote an article to the Driftwood which was also printed on the front page of the StreetNewz in Victoria and is enclosed with this Newsletter.

This occupant also writes: *"I would like to express my profound gratitude for the lovely room and kind environment you have provided me with during this difficult time. The gentle welcome, compassion and understanding shown here have touched me. There has obviously been much generosity, and undoubtedly countless volunteer hours that have made this the dignified residence that it is; a place to call home. I would also like to say thank you for the Christmas hat, scarf and gloves that greeted me when I moved in- they were much appreciated during that cold snap!*

God bless & kindest regards, V. T.

Please remember to save your **Country Grocer tapes** for the **SS Branch of the VHES**. And please remember to use your **VHES Thrifty Foods gift card** when shopping.

If you are able to help with the ongoing endeavour to expand and improve our transitional housing services to homeless persons on Salt Spring Island or to support low-income families and individuals on Mayne Island, please send your donation to:
VHES, Box 8534, Victoria BC, V8W 3S1 Memo to SSI or Mayne.

MAYNE ISLAND BRANCH:

Many thanks to all who sent funds to assist with the insurance on our chapel meeting place and retreat centre on Mayne Island. We are working hard to obtain funds to recommence the hosting of Day Retreats for folk living in our Houses.

More Info: 250-539-5310

Every Meeting of persons can be an exchange of life's gifts – a Human Exchange.

SALTSPRING BRANCH -- SINCERE THANKS TO:

- **Island Opportunity Fund** and the **SSI Foundation** for assistance with maintenance of the Women's house which can now house 5-6 women.
- **The Land Bank Society** for renovating Grandma's House to finally accommodate more homeless males. Thanks Neddy for all your hard work!
- The **CWL of OLOG** and the **Anglican Church Outreach** for welcome funds.
- **Financial Gifts: Mark S.** for monthly gift for people living with mental illness; **Margaret B.** for monthly cheques; **Sally B., Irene C..**
- **Russ H.** for completing winterizing of Bittancourt and for doing recycling and dump runs.
- **Teresa F.** for making great contacts for us on SSI and filling the house with women in need.
- **Counselors and staff of SS Community Services Society** and the **Salt Spring Transition House** for networking with us and for supporting our occupants. **Food Bank** for being there!
- **Margaret B.** for lovely art work and many useful gifts, as well as monthly cheques.
- **Irene C.** supplies for the Houses, furniture and household items from an Estate and for collecting **Country Grocer** tapes.

MAYNE ISLAND BRANCH – THANKS TO:

- Financial Gifts from **Laszlo B., Yvette B.,** and **other Chapel users.** *Many thanks to those who helped with Chapel Insurance costs.*
- **Joyce K.** for jars of crab-apple jelly and strawberry jam; continued gifts of veggies and fruits, kindly delivered.
- **MonicaWorks** for hosting our Web-site free; maintaining our Web-site and uploading the newsletter. **Lina B.** for accounting and much support and advice.
- **Pat R. and several other kind donors** for more gifts delivered to the door. **Donna P.** for gifts for the gift table at our Party. **Judy W.** for sincere support.
- **Bonnie and Bob** for the many gifts they delivered to our Sidney Houses.
- **Malcolm & Kathy at Remax** for photocopying; **Gulfport Realty** for free mail drop.

FOR RENT

I have a small trailer for rent off-site or, as a home on site, on Cortes Island, beginning right away. It is nearly 12 feet long inside, by nearly seven feet wide inside. It is home -built in 2009 with plywood, rather than fiberboard or other offensive materials. It is in good condition, with no mildew. It is a shell only, with no furnishings. Rent is \$375. per month. Utilities are an additional \$150. This is affordable to a person on income assistance. Or, it is available off-site for \$185. per month. Contact Nancy at: peacesingtogether@yahoo.com

In the Gulf Islands, Monetary gifts should be mailed to:

VHES, Box 8534, Victoria BC V8W 3S1 Email: grandmas@saltspring.com
Cell:250-920-5056 *Outside Victoria* pager: **1-800-691-9366**

Every Meeting of persons can be an exchange of life's gifts – a Human Exchange.

on the idea that flowers may form a language...

"You may quarrel, reproach, or send letters of passion, friendship or civility, or even news -- without inking your fingers. "
(Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Turkey, 1716)

If I wrote this in the language of flowers, I'd say:

- **a big crystal vase of yellow roses (friendship),**
- **with Agrimony (thankfulness, gratitude),**
- **Almond Blossom & Snowdrop (hope),**
- **Black Bryony (be my support),**
- **nasturtium (patriotism) and**
- **Travellers Joy (safety for travellers).**

But today I needn't ink my fingers to send a letter to our newspaper, and I need words along with the message from flowers.

For the past several years, I have been self-employed. Until last January, I was not allowed to pay into Employment Insurance. Though opportunities were promising at times, it wasn't very much a guaranteed thing. Still, I managed to hop, skip and jump from rock to rock above the rushing river.

However, life being what it is, I developed a condition that required me to have medical attention, interrupting my ability to earn money. I haven't any employment insurance. I'm single and therefore, it's dicey financially. I hadn't quite expected to be in this bad of a situation.

As it is for many residents, Salt Spring is my home, the last stop of a journey a long time ago. I don't want to leave the relationships I have found here, or the life I love.

I answered an ad in the paper for a room, and found out this room was in a big house with a small number of ladies in like circumstances as myself; temporarily unable to see their way clear, and facing real problems. Imagine my relief at finding wonderful accommodations available for a few months at minimal rates, everything included. Until I can recover and integrate myself back into the working world.

My finding out this was a not-for-profit organization of people who cared enough about me, though they never met me and did not know my name, to offer me a safe, lovely home with the great people I've met, for just a while; no year-long lease or big financial demands for the sake of a bed, a shower, a kitchen and a laundry room. But this home has so much more than that, dignity and peace being first and foremost.

This is the reality of the Victoria Human Exchange Society. And they did not let me fall through the cracks...no, the abyss, the chasm that awaited.

Most people just have no idea. But these people did. Since I found out this was a charitable organization (to say the least) I concluded I could do no less than to say thank you, and affirm their efforts and the good cause they serve through donations and fund-raising.

So for all of us here, I'd like to say Thank You to those who put this welcome home together; who have in the past so kindly donated, helping us now. And for anyone who would like to donate to something that helps, really helps people, the VHES does that, I can testify.

**To those of you inclined to philanthropy that makes a difference within your community, and who have financial resources but no time; who would like to contribute to assisting those of us who need help during difficulty, please consider this cause. Those rocks have become stepping-stones, the roar of water now just a hushed stream, because of the Victoria Human Exchange Society.
signed,**

Joyful Traveller

Traveller's Joy

**Traveller, traveller, tramping by
To the seaport where the big ships lie,
See, I have built this shady bower
To shelter you from sun and shower,
Rest for a bit, then on my boy!
Luck go with you, and Traveller's Joy!**

(Cicely Mary Barker, Flower Fairies, The Meaning of Flowers 1923)