

JANUARY 2020

THE BEAT

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR THE
SENIORS SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

As a new year approaches, I reflect on the past year and appreciate the learning opportunities, the challenges, and the successes.

This year I went through the same process. I feel privileged to work with my team at Seniors Services Society of BC for the past few months, the staff, board, volunteers and partners. They are a trusted resource in community, a committed presence and an engine for creativity. I am humbled by the dedication, creativity and commitment of our team.

This year has been a year of change which brings with it new opportunities. We are excited about what 2020 brings, opportunities to learn and lead in seniors supports, work with partners to serve seniors in BC, share our learnings at community events, host a 5K walk "the Grand Parade" in June in New West and a fall extravaganza "Age is just a Number" to support the programs that help seniors thrive. We welcome the opportunity to connect with you or your organization if you would like to participate as a Sponsor for one of our events or partner with us in the delivery of services to seniors.

SANTA FOR SENIORS

2019 was a record year for our Santa for Seniors program, with nearly 150 seniors receiving gifts! The community stepped forward in a huge way, with donations of cash, gift cards, chocolates, and clothes! Century House's 'Tuesday Crafts' donated a ton of knitting (hats, scarves, tea towels, etc.), and a private donor provided a wealth of home-knit hats. In fact, community support was so great, two of our three trees ran out of ornaments within the first week, and had to be replenished!

The local business community also stepped up, with Rokstad Power, Benchmark Building Systems, Landcor Data Corporation, Essence Hair Design, and Harmony Court Estate all contributing gifts!



We'd also like to give a huge shout out to the residents of Mayfair Terrace, who came together to raise \$1,385.15 for the cause! An amazing show of support! And a special thank you to New Westminster Rotary for donating gifts and a delivery volunteer!

Thank you to everyone for your support of Santa for Seniors!



THEGRANDPARADE*SENIORSSERVICESSOCIETY.CA

Save the Date

FUNDRAISING WALK FOR SENIORS
JUNE 6, 2020 | NEW WESTMINSTER



VOLUNTEER VOICES

Hannah

Reception and Grocery Volunteer



Q: How long have you been volunteering for the Society?

A: For about 4 months; I started in October of 2019.

Q: What kind of things do you do as a volunteer?

A: On Fridays I volunteer one day a week as a receptionist, answering phones, taking messages, and stamping the occasional large stack of envelopes. Every other Wednesday I do grocery order, which entails calling a few friendly seniors and ordering their groceries online to be delivered to their homes.

Q: Why did you decide to volunteer for the Seniors Services Society of BC?

A: Besides having the extra time as a new resident of Canada, I have always felt that it is important to help those who cannot help themselves; to make time for altruism. In the past, my volunteer work has been with children or individuals with special needs and I thought this might be a nice change of pace.

Q: What is your favourite part of volunteering for the Society?

A: I truly enjoy chatting with my new friends on the phone during grocery order and getting to know them, bits and pieces of their stories, and hearing about their cats.

THE HIDDEN FACE OF HOMELESSNESS

A portion of the clients that approach the Seniors Services Society of BC for help come from difficult and traumatic situations. Recently Alissa, one of our Seniors Housing Outreach Workers, came to the assistance of “Mary”, a woman fleeing a 25-year long abusive relationship. Leaving all her worldly possessions behind except the clothes she was wearing, she found refuge on a friend's couch in a single occupancy apartment. Unfortunately the tight living arrangement took its toll on both of their physical and mental health, and created a risk of the friend being evicted.

With Alissa's help, Mary learned to create a monthly budget, something she never had the opportunity to do before, as her ex-spouse had controlled the household income and expenses. With a budget in place and a newly acquired rent supplement, Mary was able to move into a new apartment, a space where she finally feels safe and secure. Her journey has been difficult, to say the least. However with Alissa's help, she now looks forward to integrating into a new community.

Another client, “Joan”, had previously lived with her son until his death. Joan spent a few years after bouncing among her family members' homes, without ever having a place she could call her own. This situation came to a head when her sister moved out of the country, and she found herself sleeping on her nephew's couch. With the house being very busy with children and pets, there was little in the privacy for Joan, or her nephew and his family. She however was on disability, and was not bringing in enough money to afford a place of her own.

Alissa was able to secure a housing subsidy for Joan, and provide her with outreach services, including finding her a new home. Now Joan lives in a basement suite a mere three blocks from her nephew- the only support she has left in Canada.

For many seniors, stories like Mary's and Joan's are all too familiar. Fortunately, Alissa and the Seniors Services Society of BC are here to help.

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY

Karen Mann

Helping Hands & Heart Owner/Proprietor

Karen and her staff members started delivering Light Housekeeping services to the Seniors Services Society's Better at Home clients in 2018. When staff first met with Karen, her warm smile and genuine caring attitude toward seniors captivated everyone. She understood what was needed to assist older adults in the community through various non-medical supports and agreed to work with our agency.

Since then, her company and staff members gained the trust of the Society's clients and many clients have been referred her way. Currently her company serves approximately 40 clients of the Society's on a regular basis.

In 2019, at the Society's request, Karen decided to go even further with her service delivery for our community. She agreed to provide free Light Housekeeping Services for seniors with life-limiting illnesses. So far, two clients benefited from her compassion and generosity.

We at the Seniors Services Society of BC value the partnership established with Karen, and we jointly look forward to contributing to the well-being of the seniors we serve in coming years.

Thank you Karen.



From left to right: Karl San Ramon, Better at Home & Support Services Coordinator; Kyoko Takahashi, Operations Manager; Karen Mann, Helping Hands & Heart Owner and Proprietor; Alison Silgado, CEO

MEET THE BOARD

Betty McIntosh

Board President

Q: How did you come to be involved with Seniors Services Society of BC?

A: I become involved with the Seniors Services Society of BC by a long relationship with the organization. Ken McIntosh (my husband) was recruited to the Board and served 8 years.

Q: How long have you been a board member?

A: I am now in my fifth year as a Board member.

Q: What inspired you to run for the board?

A: I was inspired to run for the Board as I know of the wonderful services the Society provides for many people. As a former registered nurse, I support activities to promote health.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish in your role?

A: My hope is to encourage others to support the Seniors Services Society of BC with a positive Board.





Why do we ask for your tax-deductible donation during our **Give 60+ Campaign**? Because your gifts support Seniors Services Society's efforts to assist seniors 60+ with housing navigation, temporary housing, and individual supports to help them remain healthy and independent in their own home.

5,804

The number of seniors who were assisted with housing support and social programs in 2018.

3,399

The number of seniors who were provided one-on-one housing support and information in 2018.

859

The number people in our community who were educated about seniors housing navigation, so they can help seniors and their caregivers, housing providers and housing agencies in 2018.

This is the work your philanthropy funds. I cannot thank you enough. There is, however, much more work to be done. I urge you to make a tax-deductible gift to our **Annual Give 60+ Campaign** today.

www.seniorsservicessociety.ca/autodonate

Thank you,

Alison Silgardo
Chief Executive Officer
Seniors Services Society of BC

P.S. For more information on these and other Seniors Services Society initiatives that your support makes possible, I encourage you to look at our 2019 Annual Report at: <https://tinyurl.com/rjg97og>, or email us at info@seniorsservicessociety.ca.

Registered Charity Number #80138 8547 RR0001

OUR DONORS

We couldn't do the work we do without our amazing donors. Thank you to all who donated in 2019; you've had a huge impact on the lives of the seniors we serve! We'd like to start recognising our donors on a quarterly basis; below are those individuals and organisations who contributed in the final quarter of 2019 with a donation of \$500 or more. Thank you, to ALL of our donors.

October -December 2019

\$500+

Alison Silgardo
Astoria Retirement Residence
Benchmark Building Systems
British Hydraulics
IATSE Local 891
Mayfair Terrace
Rotary Club of New Westminster
St. Vincent de Paul Society
Susan Schmidt
TELUS Community Ambassadors

Thank You!

SERVICES WE OFFER

Housing Information & Referrals
Housing Outreach Support
Seniors Loan Program
Temporary Housing
Housing Navigation Training
Light Housekeeping
Meals on Wheels
Medical Transport
Grocery Shopping
Form & Tax Completion
Social Programs
Support Calls
Santa for Seniors
Volunteer Opportunities

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