



peers

VICTORIA RESOURCES SOCIETY

Busy Fall at Peers, RV Fundraiser Success



From left: The Tuesdays perform at a Rolls 4 Strolls fundraiser, enjoying the sun at the Peers block party

It has been a very busy fall season at Peers. With colder and wetter weather we are seeing more people than usual (as many as 25 a day); some new faces, many familiar faces, and some that we haven't seen in a while. Everyone is craving hot drinks and comforting food; many are looking for warm clothes and dry camping equipment. Given the time of year, everybody is looking forward to our Turkey Feast – an event that comes with plenty of delicious food, small holiday gifts, and importantly, a festive atmosphere. What is great about working for a non-profit, grass-roots, social service agency like ours, is working with all those who volunteer their time, money, and ideas all year, and especially how everyone pitches in as the season gets cold and dark.

We have seen this tremendous generosity of spirit and money in our Rolls 4 Strolls campaign. That campaign began in September with the goal of raising \$25,000 by December to purchase a used RV or camper-van to enhance the delivery of our Night Outreach Program. With concerted effort from the board and staff the campaign has been a major success. To date we have raised \$26,000, well in advance

of our deadline. We have done this with the help of those who made large and small cash donations (some as high as \$11,000 – thank YOU to the Lake family), but as importantly through a lot of creative and collaborative mini-fundraising initiatives. We are thankful to the Tuesdays for their major efforts, former board member Carolyn Showler for donating the proceeds from her annual jewelry show, and all of the local businesses who pitched in too. While we have met our goal, we continue to fundraise for this project to in order to ensure that we do not have to divert money from our programming towards the longer term operation of the vehicle – for all those boring things, like insurance, maintenance, and the like, that no one really thinks about, but that end up costing a surprising amount.

This generosity can be seen elsewhere as well. Those volunteers who come in each day to cook hot food, organize our donation room, and give us flu shots. The staff

members who do little extras outside working hours because they care so deeply for the organization. People like those from Shoreline Roofers who came out in the rain and patched our roof when it was leaking, for free! There were the folks from Saanich Baptist Church who launched our Rolls 4 Strolls campaign with their well-organized and executed BBQ, and the small army of women from the Gateway Baptist Church who scrubbed the drop-in centre from top to bottom. Peers is a resourceful and resilient organization but

we couldn't operate without these countless acts of generosity. If you would like to support us over the holiday season please consider putting a donation to Peers under the tree for your friends or family. You could include a note, telling them why Peers is an important organization to support. Our clients are also always happy to receive food, warm clothes, socks and underwear, toiletries and the many other little necessities of life. I thank every one of you for your support and generosity, every little bit counts.

Happy Holidays!

-Leah Shumka



Small Business Program now underway

At the start of the program we brainstormed goals that we would like to achieve by March of 2016. One goal is "Be fearless when talking about money." What a great goal!

At this point we have covered personal foundations and are now tackling money: personal and business. This month we discuss taxes, debt, credit (good and bad), risk analysis and dive into dealing with banks and creditors.

All of us are working toward "Being fearless when talking about money!"

We attended the Community Micro Lending fundraising gala on November 25th, where we met CML entrepreneurs and heard from inspiring guest speaker and Mayor of Victoria, Lisa Helps!

-Julie Higginson



Happy 20th Birthday, Peers!

On November 27th, we celebrated two decades of peer-led social justice work. Thanks to all who attended and shared their stories of Peers and the impact it has had on their lives.

Peers Volunteers

Volunteers continue to be an important part of Peers programming. We have had some turnover this fall with many new applications coming in to join the volunteer team. We now have wonderful kitchen volunteers daily, as well as a designated clothing donation room volunteer which greatly helps the drop in program as staff have more time to focus on client support. Our "head" lunch volunteer is continuing to bring us Mustard Seed donations.

Bi-monthly and fresh fruit and veg from the Rainbow Kitchen on a weekly basis, which is greatly appreciated.



One of Peers' kitchen volunteers serving up a fresh meal.

A Healthy Success

Since the start of the health program, Peers has hosted eight specially tailored, health-related workshops. We have also helped connect a number of people with one on one medical appointments in the community and supported them with acute medical needs in and out of hospital. We had a small group who attended a meet and greet with the Special Victims Police Unit and we also hosted larger monthly sexual health testing sessions in collaboration with Cool Aid clinic. We held an info session on Hep C with a facilitator from AVI in addition to

hosting two Naloxone (overdose prevention) training sessions in collaboration with AVI. We had a medical marijuana workshop hosted by Trees Dispensary and they have generously donated their space to Peers for all of the health workshops in order to make attending more accessible to those working downtown. Our health program also continues to support people seeking treatment, care, and emotional support around sexual health and other health-related issues.



Last newsletter, we misidentified the folks who built our planter boxes. Thanks to William Head for these lovely planters and apologies for our mistake.

Checking in on Drop-in



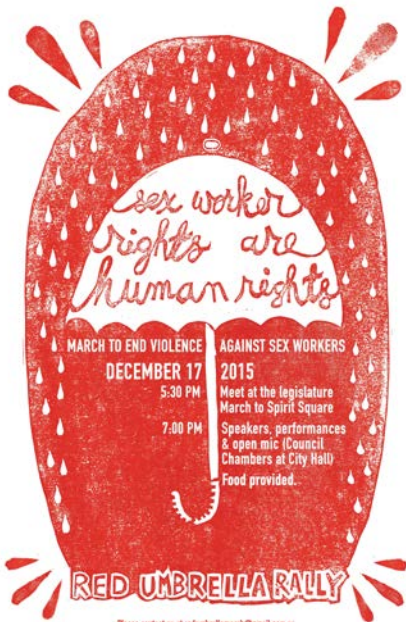
Radical Buttons on display at a Peers fundraiser.

Drop In at Peers is as busy as ever! We have recently welcomed Carin as Co-Facilitator of the Drop In Center, and together we make a wonderful and efficient team. This fall season we have celebrated many client birthdays and, as always, our lovely volunteer Anna provides us with tasty homemade

cakes to complete our celebrations. Our workshop sessions have been very informative with Angela for The Umbrella Society speaking to the many ways they can assist our clients, and Chaw-win-is eloquently spoke about the importance of territorial acknowledgments in all that we do here on unceded Coast Salish lands. Chaw-win-is will be joining us again toward the holidays to further connect us in this cold and wet winter... she is a true force of nature whom we cannot get enough of! In other news we have a button making workshop with Radical Buttons to help us prepare cool propaganda for the upcoming Red Umbrella March on December 17th, and our amazing Hair Stylist Stephanie continues to beautify our clients with her magic touch. Thanks to everyone involved with Peers Drop In and we look forward to a healthy and productive new year!

-Sarah Smith

Red Umbrella: Dec 17



2104's Red Umbrella March.

Planning for the annual Red Umbrella March to end violence against sex workers on December 17th is well underway! The event will start at 5:30pm at the legislature and will be followed by a march to Spirit Square (City Hall) where there will be speeches and entertainment. Custom t-

shirts will be available for purchase at the event with all proceeds going to Peers. The University of Victoria's Students Society will be hosting a special after-event called the Red Umbrella Ball with performances by a number of local bands. Wear red and join us for this very important event!

Night Outreach Update

Night Outreach continues to serve people seven nights a week on stroll and has been quite busy this fall. In the last quarter (July-Oct), over 120 separate individuals accessed the van with close to 1,300 visits in total. We have also benefitted from the continuation of monthly educational workshops for night outreach clients held at Trees Dispensary on Rock Bay, which are very well attended. We have had more testing clinics with Karen from Cool Aid, a medical marijuana workshop put on by Trees staff, a Hep C info workshop facilitated by Hermoine, and a couple more Naloxone trainings done by Heather of AVI. We have had at least one client report to us that she has saved a life because of the Naloxone training she received. All workshops have been well received and we are happy to have this additional prevention education initiative as part of the night program. Thanks again to Trees Dispensary for allowing us to use their wonderful space to host these workshops. Thanks also to the community partners—Heather, Karen, Hermoine and Trees—who have been part of the workshops. With the cold weather upon us we are in constant need of gloves, scarves, umbrellas, socks, hand warmers and coats.

-Tammy Arnault



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VICTORIA RESOURCE SOCIETY

Date: _____

I want to support PEERS Victoria Resources Society through donations.

Donation type:

One time Monthly

If monthly, please debit my bank account: (attach VOID cheque)

\$20 \$50 \$75 or Other Amount _____ (specify)

The debit will be processed to your account on the 16th day of each month or the next business day.

Signature: _____

Donor Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

This donation is made on behalf of: an Individual a Business

I may revoke my authorization for pre-authorized donations at any time, subject to providing notice of 10 days. Cancellation can be done by emailing finance@peers.bc.ca or by phoning the number below.

PEERS Victoria Resources Society

1-744 Fairview Rd

Victoria, BC V9A 5T9

Tel: 250-388-5325

E-mail: finance@peers.bc.ca

I have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, I have the right to receive reimbursement for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this PAD Agreement. To obtain more information on my recourse rights, I may contact my financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca.