

The Ourplace

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Our Place Society

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Volunteer



Take Your Holiday Spirit into the New Year

Description: The holiday season is a time of great generosity as people reflect on the previous year, think about why they are thankful, and look for ways to support those in need. It is important to remember that homelessness organizations need your help year-round. When you feel like donating your time or money this holiday season, consider waiting until another time next year. If you are a provider, don't be afraid to ask volunteers and donors to extend their generosity into the New Year. Here are some ideas.

Consider throwing a holiday party at a local homeless service agency in January, February or March, rather than in November or December. The holidays are often a time of abundance for these programs. Many special meals, donations and services are provided by an army of volunteers that are eagerly anticipated, and soon disappear after December.

If you are considering volunteering during the holiday season, why not put it off until later in the winter, or even in the spring or summer? The months after the holidays can be especially trying for people who are homeless and your volunteer efforts would be a true gift.

At any time of year, join forces with colleagues from work, civic groups or spiritual communities. You could create and serve meals, develop care packages, or raise money to help a family with first and last month's rent and a security deposit.

Not sure what to do and when to do it? Contact your local homeless service provider network. Decide which program you want to support and contact them to determine what they need, and when it would be most helpful.

Livia Davis

Volunteer Absences

A friendly reminder that we appreciate knowing when you are going to be away, particularly for an extended period of time. And if you haven't already let us know, please take a moment to do so. Much appreciated!

Contact Cheryl at:

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or: cherylm@ourplacesociety.com

Personal Belongings

Volunteers are reminded (and strongly encouraged) not to bring personal belongings and valuables with them when they come in for their volunteer shifts. Unfortunately, thefts do occur every now and then, and we are unable to guarantee that your personal items and valuables will be safe here. If you do need to safely secure any belongings, please visit the clothing room, where lockers are provided to volunteers.

MLA Welfare Challenge

Coast Salish Territory, Surrey BC – Jagrup Brar is starting New Year's Day 2011 on the streets looking for shelter and a warm meal as he begins the MLA Welfare Challenge. Brar, MLA for Surrey-Fleetwood, will have just \$610, the welfare rate for an individual, to cover his expenses of housing, food, personal hygiene, transit and other expenses. His month of poverty began at Surrey Central Skytrain at 11am New Year's Day.

Lending Brar moral support at a media briefing were several dozen supporters including family members Rajwant (wife), Noor, Fateh (children) and sister-in-law Baljit Brar. Raise the Rates and a number of Surrey Partners will work together to provide and advise. They will ensure he has a valuable and insightful experience, learning first hand about poverty, inequality and "being on welfare."

Raise the Rate's statement on Jagrup's Brar's month living on welfare rates: "Raise the Rates recognizes Jagrup Brar's commitment in living on only \$610 for one month. We also realize that this will not be the same experience as a person who actually lives on welfare. He will start the challenge in good health and with adequate clothes; and his month on welfare rates will end after a month."

<http://ccapvancover.wordpress.com>

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. - Desmond Tutu"



Ourplace: Hope and belonging