



**Downtown Eastside  
Neighbourhood House**

Providing Programs, Education,  
Leadership, Social and  
Recreational Opportunities to  
Residents of Vancouver's  
Downtown Eastside



573 East Hastings St.  
Vancouver, BC  
604-215-2030  
<http://dtesnhouse.ca>

**The  
2015 Annual General  
Meeting  
of the  
Downtown Eastside  
Neighbourhood  
House Society**

**July 6, 2016 6:00 pm**

**573 East Hastings St.**



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6 July 2016

To our members,

We wish to extend a warm welcome to everyone attending this year's AGM of the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House Society. We would like to first acknowledge that our house is on traditional Coast Salish Territory, and extend our gratitude to its people.

At last year's AGM, we were anticipating the beginning of our scoping exercise, which is now complete. This year, we're keen to see the results that come from its recommendations, and the effects it will have in the coming months and years as the Neighbourhood House matures and develops.

This year's highlights include our first foray into the world of social enterprise with a unique fundraising opportunity, the Christmas Gift Basket. The fundraiser was a great success thanks to the extraordinary work of our Board and fundraising committee members, as well as the many community members who helped us make our "hot stuff" Dijon. We wish to thank Face the World for their belief in our efforts to make this project successful.

Our success this year and optimism for the future would not be possible without the dedication of our talented and committed volunteers and staff.

We continue to welcome our students, who work so hard to help us increase our capacity: UBC Ethnography program, UBC School of Social Work, UBC Faculty of Education, VCC nursing, and the VSB high school students. These programs significantly increased our volunteer pool. With hired a new volunteer coordinator, Rasheed, with the help of new city funding, Rasheed has developed our volunteer engagement, and designed ways to make the volunteer experience better than ever.

Our Board has continued to provide an extraordinary amount of committed time to the organization. A special thanks to the Board members who are moving on to other pursuits and new challenges. Thanks to Suzie, who provided guidance as our treasurer. She is currently spending the year traveling and working in Australia. Thanks to Eileen, who guided the fundraising committee. She is developing her business in Pemberton. Thanks to Andy and Roy, who provided keen insights and ideas.

This year we welcomed Terez and Rory to our Senior Management team. Their inspired work has created new opportunities for the house, ensuring it is a vibrant and welcoming space for our community. Our Kids' Kitchen is stronger than ever thanks to Christa and Rachel's leadership. Sarah, Kate, and Stephen round out our peer support staff. Their dedication and commitment to the house is tremendously appreciated by all who engage in our drop-in and outreach programs.

We at the Neighbourhood House are most grateful to our community partners and partner groups who work with us. These include but are not limited to: Aboriginal Front Door, Potluck Café society, NICCISS, Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, Strathcona Community Centre, Carnegie, and the 40-plus organizations who contributed to the Alley Health Fair. We also thank the UBC Learning Exchange for multiple volunteer partnerships, and for helping us launch our Cantonese Elders project "From Hi to Lay Ho," under the talented leadership of Simin. This project is a resounding and continuing success.

We express our gratitude to all who offer us their time and dedication. Our Board and staff honour the trust and faith expressed by those who support us, especially our volunteers, funders, donors, and foundations.

Benita Ho  
President

Carol White  
Executive Director

### **Board of Directors**

Elizabeth Ballantyne –Director  
Susie Chang- Treasurer  
Claudia Freire- Director  
Neil Griggs- Director  
Lisa Hung - Director  
Benita Ho - President  
Eileen Keenan – Vice Chair  
Opal Levis – Secretary  
Josephine Martyn- Director  
Andy Yan- Director

### **Staff Team**

Rasheed Ahmed  
Arlette Akayegu  
Sarah Brittain  
Rachel Chan  
Christa Grona  
Simin Sun  
Rory Sutherland  
Teréz Szoke  
Carol White  
Cate Wikelund  
Stephen Wilcock

### **Our Programs**

#### **Community Drop In**

The Community Drop-In (CDI) is pleased to continue providing nutritious, lovingly, and skillfully prepared meals two days per week in a safe, respectful space that is welcoming to all. Monday and Wednesday breakfasts offer hearty oatmeal, with cinnamon, vanilla, honey, and plenty of fruit. We work hard to make a delicious, healthy breakfast and do not use added sugar. Monday afternoons at CDI are a time for hosting food related workshops, as well as a space for our neighbours to enjoy coffee or tea and socialize. Wednesday afternoons continue to be a busy time at CDI, with full houses being a common event. The space buzzes with conversation taking place over delicious meals. Haircuts are provided for those in need of a trim and the Right to Food Zine meetings are open to anyone with an interest in food justice issues. Our resident Zinesters also serve as quality control – randomly sampling dishes to ensure that the CDI kitchen is producing high quality food that fits with the NH Food Philosophy. The kitchen is a busy place, with NH staff, volunteers, and practicum students giving their all and ensuring that everyone that comes through the door is able to enjoy a delicious meal in a comfortable atmosphere. The CDI volunteer team is a mix of local residents, practicum students, and those with a passion for food justice; they share the common goal of supporting one another and our neighbours. We could not do what we do without their wholehearted effort!

Speaking of outstanding work, the Tuesday Night Prep team continues to show up on a weekly basis, like magical elves, and turn boxes of donated organic produce into delicious, home cooked meals for CDI. Prep Night volunteers bring thoughtfulness, creativity, and fun with them to prepare exciting dishes that are raved about by all that partake.

## Family Drop In

The Family Drop-in program (FDI) continues to welcome families from our neighbourhood into the Neighbourhood House on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 3:30 to 6:30. Young children and their caregivers join us after programs at YWCA's Crabtree Corner (a few doors west of us) and after school at Strathcona and Britannia Public Schools. The drop in space is transformed into a family-friendly environment, set up with nutritious snacks, a play-dough table, a tea and coffee station, play area, arts and crafts table and more. Throughout the year we've had guest visits from our local child librarian, a puppeteer, a hip hop dance instructor, a hula hoop performer, a klezmer duo, a dental health nurse, beekeepers and many others who have generously donated their time to leader engaging workshops and fun activities.

The evenings also include a community meal prepared by staff, volunteers and families. Once the play space is cleaned up, we enjoy a nutritious, kid-friendly, and often vegetarian dinner together as a group. Before heading home for the evening, families help by cleaning up their plates and taking home any food left over from dinner. This summer the families will be completing an ongoing community art project consisting of a collage of tiles that celebrate the presence of families in the Downtown Eastside. FDI will continue to make regular trips to Cottonwood Garden and Briarpatch Garden. DTES Neighbourhood House staff are also involved in planning the One Community Family Festival coming up in September 2016. Stay tuned in the coming months for more information about this exciting week-long community event!





### **Kids Kitchen**

Kids Kitchen aims to introduce cooking skills to groups of children aged 8-12 years of age. The program runs in 12-week cycles on Sunday afternoons, where we plan and prepare healthy recipes and engage participants through food- and nutrition-related activities.

Last year the program was restructured. New changes included introducing a Culinary Passport program where we cooked our way through recipes from around the world. This proved to be a successful way to introduce participants to new types of recipes and cuisine. Additionally, we focused on the development of kitchen skills including kitchen safety, knife skills, ingredient measurement, and how to follow recipes. Each 12-week cycle ends with a parent dinner at the Neighbourhood House. Participants help to select the dishes to prepare for their parents, and assist in preparing and serving food to their families at the dinner.

Our last session saw a record number of participants and all registration slots were quickly filled. Currently, the summer session is underway. Planned activities for this session include a guest presentation on healthy food and nutrition, as well as field trips to the local Cottonwood Garden and a local farmer's market. For the first time this session will conclude with a cook-off competition, where participants will work in groups to create a dish from given ingredients.





### **Banana Beat**

Banana Beat operates on “Welfare Wednesdays” (or cheque day). The first Banana Beat was held in August 2006, and continues to operate to this day, bringing nutritional wealth (in the form of potassium and other nutrients) as well as dignity and the reminder of inherent deservedness to hundreds of our neighbours who line up in the pre-dawn hours, awaiting the opening of offices to access their Social Assistance payments. Created by the DTES NH, the Banana Beat remains one of our most cherished vehicles for grassroots community consultation and development. Thanks to our staff’s continued hard work again this past year, the Neighbourhood House distributed 2 tons on Bananas! We distribute bananas to local housing projects to accommodate some of our more isolated neighbours.

### **Mobile Smoothies**

In 2009, the DTES NH instituted our Mobile Smoothie Project, which was designed to foster community development and to attract those of our neighbours who might never attend our more traditional Community Kitchens. The Mobile Smoothie Project visits a 78-12 partner organizations for approximately 30 minutes every Welfare Tuesday (the day before cheque day). As people mingle and socialize around this low tech activity, the humble blender delivers both a concise nutritional lesson and delicious smoothies to all.

Aside from our trusty Vitamix blenders that go along on our regular smoothie program, the NH recently got its own Blender Bike! This year’s NH blender bike events have been at the Alley Health Fair, HomeGround Festival, and UGM Summer Connect. This aspect of our nutritional outreach program has been very successful and we delivered over 2500 human powered smoothies at community events last year alone!

As a part of the National Good Food Centre project the NH was highlighted this year for their nutritional outreach programs in a feature article in *Community Food Centres Canada’s* newsletter and blog. It was great to be able to share the work that we’re doing nation-wide!



### **Fathers For Thought**

Fathers For Thought has been in operation for over two years now and has established itself as a strong resource for fathers living in the Downtown Eastside. Community interest got this program going and it draws heavily on fathers in the community lending their knowledge, skills and hard work to the group. In this program, group members come together to cook a meal and clean up afterwards, while giving dads a safe place to discuss their experiences and support one another. In addition to formal workshops on wellness-related topics, individual dads take turns facilitating sessions on topics of personal interest. Group members take pride in giving back to their community and were a huge help in preparing the turkeys for this year's NH Mid-Winter Feast and are frequent volunteers on the Mobile Smoothie Project.

This year's program highlight was a drum making workshop – the group is now focusing on painting the drums and some really amazing pieces have been created!





## Volunteers

Over the course of the year, we received support from a variety of volunteers including our neighbours, practicum students from Vancouver Community College, the Vancouver School Board and University of British Columbia, local residents and individuals that we have successfully recruited from online postings as well as through word of mouth. In the past few months, we have been working on strengthening the core operations of our volunteer services, including creating a central volunteer database, streamlining the volunteer application process, updating our volunteer manual and developing powerpoints for volunteer orientations. Over the summer, we will be working towards a more holistic strategy to recruit and retain volunteers for the neighbourhood house.

We are grateful to all our volunteers who have supported us at the Neighbourhood House. We heartily commend the dedicated and reliable volunteers who regularly demonstrate community spirit and commitment to the Neighbourhood House by creating a familiar, warm, safe and inclusive space for all our neighbours.



### **RTF Zine Overview 2015-2016 for the July 2016 DTES NH AGM by Stan Shaffer**

The Right to Food Zine continues into its fourth year of publication in affiliation with the DTES NH with our Summer Issue # 14 due out mid-July. With the supplementary grants and sponsorship provided by the Neighbourhood house, we have ample funding for 2016. The generous NH funding is supplemented as well by a \$500 grant from the Strathcona Neighbourhood Small Grants plus almost \$300 from a fundraiser earlier this year. The extra funding means that this edition will grow to 28 pages from our usual 20 and that we will publish more copies of this longer Zine, increasing from an average of 400-600 copies to 800 or more copies.

Since the last AGM in 2015, we have published three more issues:

--RTF Zine 11, Summer 2015, with a feature article by Laura Track, a lawyer with the BC Civil Liberties Association who produced a report on The Right to Food for Children in BC. Laura led a panel at the Carnegie in June with speakers from across the food security spectrum such as Paul Taylor, Doris Chow, Gil Agular, Curtis Clearsky and Graham Riches.

--RTF Zine 12, Fall 2015, a special edition promoting the 2015 Vancouver Sustenance Festival activities in October.

--RTF Zine 13, Winter 2016, Honouring Vancouver Cantonese Seniors, based on a NH project grant from New Horizons for Seniors led by Simin Sun, which promoted the history, language, culture and food of more than a century of Cantonese contributions to British Columbia and Vancouver.

Our team of writers, artists, and designers has evolved over the past year so that we are capable of producing more pages, more graphics, and dazzling production values. We are proud to continue serving the human right to food movement, especially that of the DTES NH and their commitment to primarily vegetarian fare.

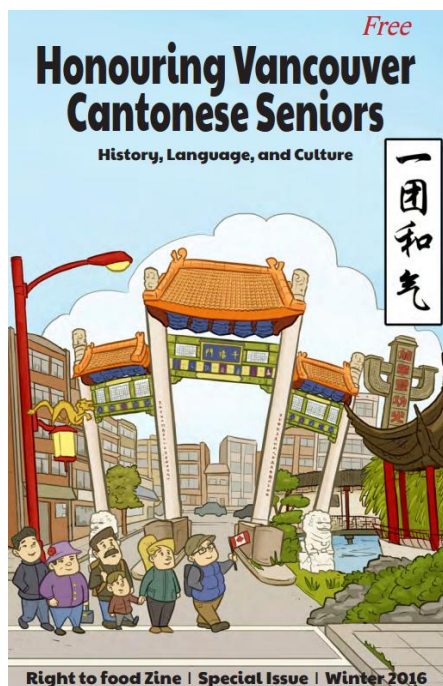
Thanks to Carol White's generous support and to all the Zinesters for their volunteer contributions in helping to sustain the viability of the RFT Zine.

## From Hi to Lay Ho

From Hi To Layho is a seniors program designed by local Cantonese speaking seniors. They worked together to offer five different Cantonese language and cultural tours and events throughout the summer and fall of 2015. The program was a great success! It not only met the original goals set by the New Horizon's grant from Services Canada, but also brought a much broader impact to the seniors, to our organization and to the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Community.

The program has been reported by various media sources. It appeared on the front page of the local newspaper, 24 Hrs Vancouver. Our seniors and program coordinator were also invited to discuss our tours on Vancouver Roundhouse Radio. One of our tours has been recorded by Fairchild TV, and the seniors committee talked about their experience as special guests on the TV show. Subsequent to these initial tours, seniors hosted tours for the Heart of the City Festival, the Sustenance Festival, the Kids Kitchen program and the 2016 New Perspectives on learning in the Downtown Eastside Conference.

As we move forward to provide legacy for the project, we have captured some of the essence of the project on film. The film was screened at our celebration party, in UBC classes, and at a community conference. With the help of the RTF Zine volunteers, we were able to capture the legacy through writing as well. They created a special issue of the program with their reflection and interest in the project. Launching this program originally sought to promote the disappearing Cantonese language and culture in the DTES, but has become more about our coming together as a community with many and varied perspectives. We are looking for partnership with other organizations in the DTES or other funding resources to keep the seniors program running. We believe that such leadership program for seniors will grow a stronger DTES community.





### Thank you: Sponsors and Funders

Alexandra Foundation  
 Cadillac Fairview  
 City of Vancouver  
 Choices Market  
 Ethical Bean  
 Face the World Foundation  
 Greater Vancouver Food Bank  
 Pro-Organics Marketing  
 Province of British Columbia  
 Service Canada – New Horizons for Seniors  
 Telus  
 United Way  
 Vancouver Foundation  
 Whole Foods  
 And our many donors

We wish to thank the many volunteers and partners who worked with us on our Christmas Gift Basket Fundraiser and the generous help from Face the World Foundation. We are looking forward to our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundriaser.

### A Shout Out to Our Partners

Throughout the year we partner with many sister organizations. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to those people and organizations that have partnered with us on programs and events throughout this past year.

Anita Lau from the **Women’s Drop In Centre**  
 Bill Beauregarde from the **Aboriginal Front Door’s**  
 Hendrik Beune and Ross Moster from **Village Vancouver**  
 Els Kushner from **VPL Strathcona Branch**  
 Fabian Low from **Nutrition + Lifestyle**  
**The One Community Festival Planning Committee**  
 Rebecca Dahl at **Briarpatch Garden**  
 The Strathcona Community Centre’s **Backpack Program**  
 40 plus DTES Agencies at the **Alley Health Fair**  
 Terry Hunter and Savannah Walling from **Vancouver Moving Theatre**  
**The many artists, organizers, performer & health practitioners**

