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For more information about the work of the Richmond Poverty Response Committee, the Affordable Housing Committee, Richmond Cares, the Transportation Committee or the Faith Communities Housing Group, please visit our website:

[www.richmondprc.org](http://www.richmondprc.org) or leave voice mail at: 604-205-4700

New members are always welcome!



Richmond Poverty Response Committee

#### Mission Statement

The Richmond Poverty Response Committee is a coalition of Richmond residents and agencies working together to reduce poverty and the impacts of poverty with research, projects, and public education.

## Homeless Connect – Community Connect

The first annual Richmond Homeless Connect: Making a Difference event took place Thursday, Oct. 22 at St. Alban Anglican Church, Richmond. The Richmond Faith Communities Housing Group (a sub-group of the Richmond Poverty Response Committee) organized this one-day event to coincide with the 4th Annual Greater Vancouver Homelessness Action Week, Oct. 11 – 17, 2009.

The collaboration of many passionate and energetic local community groups and individuals made this project a great success. Thirty two of the estimated 250 individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond sought professional services, including hair care by the Hair Design Apprenticeship Program at Hugh Boyd Secondary School, flu shots and information on nutrition from Richmond Continuing Health, medical and dental care, pet care, eyeglass and bike repair, and foot massage. Chaplains were on hand to pray with people. Hygiene kits and winter clothing were distributed. Other agencies offering information included Theo Employment & Resource Centre, Richmond Youth Service, Richmond Addiction Services, Ministry of Housing and social development (income assistance) and social services.

Thirteen Richmond faith communities took the lead mobilizing volunteers, who ranged in age from 5 to 75 years. Lunch was provided as was nutritious take-away snack food. The Bruce Marshall and Side Effects band provided day long live music.

Special guests included Ms. Judy Graves, Housing Advocate for the City of Vancouver, who presented an overview on homelessness. Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brody and City Councilor Bill McNulty were also in attendance.



It is exciting to be part of a network of churches and agencies seeking to raise awareness and respond to homelessness. Events such as Richmond Homeless Connect 2009 create hope, promote dignity, provide opportunity for all of us to walk together, and to distribute resources. The Richmond Faith Communities Housing Group is working hard to stay connected and share information. Our focus is to develop effective partnerships between churches and community agencies toward creative and bold action as followers of Christ in God's mission for the world.

Working together in partnership is powerful and life-giving. A common mission unites different and diverse groups. As written in Ephesians 4 "when joined and knit together...each part working properly" we become stronger and more courageous. The

Richmond Faith Communities Housing group and Richmond Poverty Response Committee feel awareness and advocacy on homelessness is gaining momentum. What was once somewhat fragmented is becoming an integrated community orientation toward social justice and compassionate service.

Richmond Homeless Connect 2009: Making a Difference enabled our parish of St. Alban Anglican Church, and many others who participated, to see God's power at work, in responding to human needs with loving service and in mutually supportive community relationships for social justice and affordable housing. We look forward to hosting Homeless Connect 2010 and to continued involvement in collaborative efforts to change public housing policy.

The Reverend Margaret Cornish



## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

### FIRST RICHMOND HOMELESS CONNECT EVENT

It was exciting to see all of Richmond coming together on Oct 22, 2009 to address the issue of homelessness. Volunteers of all ages coming from as far away as White Rock, Vancouver and Delta packed hygiene kits, sorted clothing, served food, helping with preparation and participation on the day of the event.

It is important to acknowledge businesses, individuals and community groups from inside and outside of Richmond who contributed to this event. Coast Capital Savings, Vancity, Biz a la Carte Services Ltd., Sears, Claude & Team – Remax, PEDAL Bike Depot, AMS UBC Bike Co-Op, and Save-On-Foods, CAPS Southshore Cycle, Delta Triathlon Club, Team Coastal Cycling Club, Western Concepts, Safeway, and Krispy Kreme supported the Homeless Connect Day



Richmond community groups and individuals provided valued services and resources for our clients. These included the Richmond Poverty Response Committee, the Richmond Food Bank, McNair High School, Hugh Boyd Continuing Education, St. Vincent De Paul Society, the City of Richmond, Richmond Community Police, Vancouver Coastal Health,

volunteer nurses, physician, dental hygienists, reflexologists, estheticians, RAPS, THEO, CHIMO, Dress for Success, RERC, DESP, PCRS, Richmond Public Health, Mental Health, Turning Point, Richmond Youth Services, Richmond Addictions and Income Assistance (HSD)

The Richmond churches and individual citizens came together with funding, collecting items for distribution and volunteering many hours to make the Homeless Connect Event happen. Broadmoor Baptist and St. Alban Anglican Church volunteered their churches as the drop off locations for many of the donations, The Way and South Arm United loaned items required, and St. Alban hosted the event.

Sandy McLeod, coordinator of the event, believes that working together as a community we achieved these goals. It is anticipated that next year's event will double that number as trust by those who are homeless increases.

It took many people to make the Homeless Connect Day run as smoothly and successfully as it did. It will take many people working together to solve the issue of homelessness and poverty both in Richmond and the Lower Mainland.



Sandy McLeod and Cecilia Hudec

## CHIMO'S OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

### HELPING THE HOMELESS

CHIMO Crisis Service's Outreach and Advocacy service continues its commitment to advocating for the homeless to help them find resources and supports necessary to meet their basic needs. Guiding women who are leaving abusive situations to find shelter, helping secure low cost and/or subsidized housing, connecting people to shelters, and advocating for clients in Residential Tenancy disputes to better their living conditions are only some of the many ways in which CHIMO has been able to assist the homeless and those at risk of homelessness in Richmond.

A man by the name of \*Bob first came to Outreach and Advocacy requiring support with legal problems and access to government benefits. However, after a few months of helping him work through his legal issues, he received an eviction notice. Though devastated, Bob chose not to dispute the eviction due to previously existing unpleasant relationships with his landlord and other tenants. Bob's advocate supported and encouraged him throughout his search for new housing. Bob also had a disability that made it impossible for him to move out without assistance. His advocate even helped him pack up his possessions before the move, and unpack his belongings.

Bob had only settled into his new home for a few months when, due to limited income and poor health, he needed to move again into housing that was low cost and provided easy access because of his mobility difficulties. He wasn't able to do it alone. With the help of several agencies, Bob was recently granted subsidized housing and moved into his new place of residence. As a result, Bob is settling into his new life and is greatly relieved to have affordable housing. CHIMO's Outreach and Advocacy service remains in the picture, by continuing to help him with the paperwork associated with running a household.

With the support of his advocate, Bob was able to get a second chance at building a better life for himself. Now that he doesn't have to worry about homelessness, he can look forward to new beginnings and a brighter future ahead.

Please call (604) 279-7077 or visit [chimocrisis.com](http://chimocrisis.com) for more information about CHIMO's Outreach and Advocacy program. \* Name and personal details changed to protect confidentiality.

## RICHMOND'S EXTREME WEATHER SHELTER

### GEARING UP

The Extreme Weather Shelter at St. Alban Church of Richmond has been busily preparing for the upcoming extreme weather season! We have a volunteer coordinator, yours truly, many volunteers lined up, we have paid staff for the overnight shifts hired, training of both volunteers and staff completed, and even cooked a bunch of meals that are frozen and ready to go!

We can sleep 16 people, will provide dinner and snacks, mats and blankets for the overnight and then cook breakfast and pack a bag lunch in the morning. Evening volunteer shifts will be from 8pm to 11pm and mornings are from 6am to 9am. The paid staff will work from 9pm to 3am and 3am to 9am.

The city of Richmond tells us when to open and when to close. The criteria for extreme weather is anytime the forecasted low temperature is below

-2C or 0C if there is heavy wind, rain or fog.

When 'extreme weather' is declared, the night before, we mobilize to get the shelter ready and doors open by 9pm the night of the extreme weather. We have a fair number of volunteers already for the shelter itself but we always welcome more.

For further information, please contact:

Zachrey Helmberger  
Volunteer Coordinator  
St. Alban Extreme Weather Shelter  
778-896-3276 cell  
778-297-1630 home  
[zachreynm@gmail.com](mailto:zachreynm@gmail.com)

**Newsflash!!!**  
Last week, we got a fun fundraising opportunity with a major retailer in Richmond! We are operating their Christmas tree lot all the way to December 24 and, in return, the Extreme Weather Shelter of St. Albans church will receive badly needed funding! We have an urgent need for volunteers to operate the lot. Please contact Zachrey Helmberger at 778-896-3276 or [zachreynm@gmail.com](mailto:zachreynm@gmail.com)  
**End of Newsflash!!!**

## RICHMOND WOMEN'S

### SHELTER UPDATE

In 2008, the City of Richmond agreed to provide up to \$475,000 to help purchase a house to be retrofitted into a 10 bed women's and children's shelter. At that time, they entered discussions with BC Housing to assist them in capital costs and to provide operating funding. BC Housing advised they would only fund operating costs. In 2009 the City upped their offer and will now provide all the capital costs for purchase and retrofit. The funds are to come out of the Richmond Affordable Housing Fund, which has not been used yet, and is up to about \$10 million. The City advises that BC Housing is expected to provide operating funding for start-up and ongoing costs.

Interested parties, the Richmond Women's Resource Centre (which spearheaded the initiative) and Family Services of Greater Vancouver (which will operate the shelter) are still in the dark about the City's and BC Housing's most recent discussions. For the last two months we have been advised to "be patient" and that an announcement is imminent. A request for an update, made on November 13, 2009 to Richmond's Affordable Housing Coordinator, has gone unanswered to date.

The Richmond Women's Resource Centre had 13 visits about housing and shelter in 2007. In 2008 the number increased to 53. As of October 2009, the number was 40 and we average about 7 per month, so we will likely exceed 2008's numbers. The need for shelter and affordable housing is obvious and it should be a City priority.

De Whalen

## COMMUNITY MEALS

ALL ARE WELCOME

**Tuesday** - except July and August

Dinner at 5:30

St Alban Church

St. Alban Rd south of Granville

**Thursday** - except July and August

Lunch at 12:30

Salvation Army Community Church

8280 Gilbert south of Blundell

**Thursday** - except December. Dinner at 5:30

Gilmore Park United Church

No. 1 Rd and Blundell

**Fridays**

Lunch at 1:00

Richmond Bethell Church

10200 No. 5 Rd.,

South of Williams



# RICHMOND HOUSE

## EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR HOMELESS MEN

The Salvation Army Richmond House is a 10-bed emergency shelter for men who are 19-years old and above. It is accessible to the homeless 24 hours a day and it operates all year round.

The shelter provides a temporary refuge for home-less men to sort out their personal problems and long term housing needs.

The shelter is available to men who become home-less due to eviction, domestic dispute, deportation, unemployment, addiction problems and mental illness.

Services include a bed for the night, three daily meals, shower and laundry facilities. A dedicated staff member is assigned to provide support services and to move residents toward their personal goals and independent living. Residents are referred to and assisted with information on housing, employment, counselling services, rehabilitation programs, income assistance, other social services and community resources.

A person may stay up to a maximum of 30 days, on a week-to-week basis. Other restrictions may apply.

Please call to inquire about bed availability or for more information.

Phone: 604-276-2490

3111 Shell Road Richmond

V6X 2P3

Email: [rhshelter@shaw.ca](mailto:rhshelter@shaw.ca)

Website: [www.SalvationArmyRichmond.org](http://www.SalvationArmyRichmond.org)



We “go the extra mile” for the homeless.

## RPRC BUSY-NESS RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE RICHMOND POVERTY RESPONSE COMMITTEE

### MAY

- STAND for Affordable Housing
- Co-sponsored study circles on Richmond Civic Engagement Network. Issue statement: “What can we do, as a community, to address the affordable housing issue in the City of Richmond, support the current initiatives, and make appropriate recommendations in an effort to achieve housing for all?”
- STATS – 6 study circles held – 4 in English, 1 in Mandarin, 1 in Cantonese. 55 people participated and 12 volunteer facilitators lead the groups

### JUNE

- Study Circle Action forum – 45 people attended and examined 4 action themes
- STAND for Affordable Housing

### JULY

- Attended Steveston Salmon Festival
- More out-of-work people visited our booth than previous years

### AUGUST

- No meetings in August!

### SEPTEMBER

- Awarded VanCity Grant \$7,500 to support the work of the affordable housing task force
- Awarded Coast Capital Grant \$5,000 to complete the start up work for the updating of the Richmond Poverty Report
- Presented to Burnett Secondary school
- Presented to Richmond Christian school

### OCTOBER

- Participated in the 5th Annual World Food Day
- Participated in the 1st Annual Homeless Connect



Richmond  
Poverty  
Response  
Committee

For more information about the work and activities of the Richmond Poverty Response Committee please visit our website:

[www.richmondprc.org](http://www.richmondprc.org)

Sign up for our newsletter - New members welcome!