



Agassiz-Harrison Senior Peer Support

President's Report for 2015

For the first time I am able to begin my report on a pleasant note with the announcement that we welcome 3 new members to our group. Bonnie Bozak, Sonya Boizard and Dianne Conroy all became members early in 2015 which was a great boost to our morale. Although Bonnie lives in Hope she has taken over the cooking for the *Senior & Teen* and *Seniors Only* lunches with rave reviews, from everyone, over the food which is, apparently, much better than our soup and sandwiches.

Our three projects (*Seniors Only* lunches, *Seniors & Teens* lunches and the *Knit and Natter* groups) are progressing satisfactorily although we have to keep an eye on the financial side due to the increased cost of things. To this end it was decided to combine the financing of the *Seniors & Teens* lunches and *Seniors Only* lunches when we applied for a grant from the *Kent Harrison Foundation*. We were very lucky to receive a grant of \$1200.00 which enabled us to continue with these projects and for which we are truly grateful.

In a further attempt to raise funds a letter was sent to the *Lions Club* requesting assistance and we received a cheque for \$200.00. We also received a commitment

from the *Red Apple* store to provide coffee, tea and sugar for the lunches. Thank you letters were sent to both organizations.

Once again the *Knit & Natter* groups rented two tables at the local *Christmas Craft Fair* and raised an amazing \$750.00 which was a great boost to the ladies in the group. The *knitted hedgehogs* and *gift baskets* were the best sellers. The location of the tables also made a big difference, being closer to the entrance made us more visible than in previous years. We still have many items to donate to the *Chilliwack and Hope Transition Houses* or wherever they are most needed.

In February a course, on *Hospice and Palliative Care*, was held at the hospital in Hope. This course was attended by Betty, Carolyn, Eunice and Sonya and proved to be extremely interesting. The emphasis was on the needs of the patient and family to help them through this most difficult time. One session gave in depth information on many of the burial rites and rituals used by different ethnic groups. Another session included a visit by a representative of the *Seabird Island First Nations* and included some of the requirements for their burial ceremonies. It was a very enlightening and worthwhile course.



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The *Intergenerational Day* was held June 1st; some of our members attended and agreed that it was a great success. They were especially impressed with the *Kent Elementary School* students assisting seniors in wheelchairs. It was decided that we send a letter to the school complimenting their students on the care and concern they showed for the seniors.

In September we were notified that the *Chilliwack Senior Peer Counsellors* had been re-vamped. They now have 2 paid part-time employees and are actively organizing fund raisers. Training sessions for new member are to be held in September and October for anyone interested. Sonya Boizard contacted them and will follow up on this.

Although we are few in number we continue to strive to provide the best possible services for the seniors in our community. Our *Friendly Phone* program, organized by Sheila, reaches some of the 'shut-ins' but it seems that the general public are not aware of this service. Maybe we should try getting the word out to more people. We also feel that there are many

seniors 'slipping through the cracks' for one reason or another. Unfortunately we cannot help them unless we are made aware of their situation.

By attending the various meetings i.e. *Healthy Communities* etc. we are able to keep up to date with information on the many changes taking place in the *Health Care* system and using this information whenever necessary.

With the start of a New Year we hope to encourage more people to join our group. I know that has been our objective for a long while but now we have 3 new members. Who knows maybe there are 3 more waiting to join us (ah).

Thank you all for the conscientious efforts that you have put into everything we have done this past year. Fortunately, as a group we manage to pull together whenever necessary, which shows true comradeship. I hope 2016 is a good year for everyone.

Eunice Royal 2015