

Fear Turns to Friendship For Survivors of Torture



It's happier times now for staff and volunteers of VAST, on the staircase that links them to the once-mistrusted CPC below.

To the average Canadian, the words “torture” and “police” don’t really fit together.

But to many who have come to Canada as refugees, just seeing an officer in uniform can trigger horrendous memories of abuse in their homeland by agents of the state – including police.

So it was a tense time in November of 2005 when staff of the Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST) learned that the new tenant moving into offices below them was the Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre.

For Frances McQueen, then executive director of VAST, the answer was clear. One of the two would have to move.

VAST clients would refuse to come in if they saw the centre’s portable sign out front, she told the HSCPC’s Clair MacGougan, or if they saw uniformed police using the walkway shared by the two offices.

She began a search for new premises in case she could not get the CPC evicted.

Meanwhile, Clair kept the sidewalk sign indoors during VAST’s hours of operation, and asked police and volunteers to not hang around in front of the office.

“It was really hurting us,” he said. “We were in a new office that was hard to find.”

About six months later, the VAST director came downstairs to consult the CPC on a personal matter and received help. So did another staff member.

“Then a couple of their clients came in to volunteer,” said Clair. “VAST hadn’t been able to find other space, and finally they just started accepting the situation.”

Since then, the standoff has become a love-in.

“Now, I’m a member of their society,” said Clair. “We share stuff all the time. I go to many of their open houses, we share office space at times, we’ve worked together with many of their clients having crime or safety issues.”

Some VAST clients are volunteering to help with community clean-ups and

outreach activities such as street hockey at the annual Sunrise Summer Kickoff. Others come in to seek assistance from CPC office volunteers.

“We’ve become quite good friends with some of their clients and staff,” said Clair. “I have to smile when I think of how much they didn’t want anything to do with us in the beginning.”

Since September 2008, Christine Thomas has been the executive director of VAST.

She said the proximity of the HSCPC office allows clients to access police services without having to approach police directly, ever since friendly relations were established between the two organizations.

“Prior to that there was just a complete and utter distrust of the people downstairs as well as uniformed police,” she said.

In some ways, her non-profit organization shares key values with those of the CPC. Both rely heavily on volunteers: they enable VAST to offer free English lessons, yoga and mindfulness meditation. There’s a food bank, and organic produce is donated and distributed weekly.

And both organizations seek to empower people, not just to help them.

“We try to assist people so they can make their own decisions about what is important to them, to meet the goals they want to meet,” said Christine.

The caseload has doubled since moving into its East Hastings Street location, to about 625 clients in any given year. The biggest source

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SMILEY FACES – Young fans enjoyed face-painting and a chance to meet Vancouver Giants players at the Big Night community fundraising event March 2

33 HSCPC Volunteers Find Careers in Policing

With policing in the name, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre has been a fertile staging ground for police officers in this community.

Daily patrols, public interactions, community clean-ups – all provide a good



Cst. Ian Mayne

experience for issues that officers will deal with during the course of their job.

Thirty-three volunteers have gone through the HSCPC and moved on to join a police force, including 24 joining the Vancouver Police Department.

Not all volunteers are prospective applicants to a police force but roughly 35-40 percent of those volunteering have such aspirations, according to HSCPC executive director Clair MacGougan.

One current officer, Ian Mayne, hired in 2006 by the VPD, volunteered for roughly two years before being hired as an officer.

"I did just about everything," said Mayne. "Everything they required. I started off with the patrols. I did a bit of administrative work for keeping the office running. Graffiti removal when it was needed. Any of the local businesses that needed to be informed of recent criminal activity, handed out pamphlets."

The daily routine of walking into the office and interacting with the public on

whatever complaints, questions, comments or any issues they might have provided him a good experience for working with the VPD down the line.

A more recent volunteer turned officer (in training), Kerry Horgan, started volunteering in April 2011 and worked with the HSCPC for seven months.

Working with the HSCPC exposed her to interacting with a diversity of people in the community that she would have not worked with in her everyday life.

"As a result, and if you are open to it, it gives you insight and understanding of different cultures, economic and social conditions and addictions," said Horgan.



Cst. Kerry Horgan

Constable Jack Sullivan, part of the VPD's recruiting unit, said "[Volunteer work] shows they are making genuine efforts to make the community a better place.

"Police-related volunteer work in particular is valuable as it gives applicants an exposure to policing they might not otherwise have."

It's not the final step, but being active in the community as a member of a community policing centre provides plenty of experiences that have benefited the 33 volunteers that have gone on to being full-time officers.

■ Bryce McRae



Virginia Downes meets Giants Kiefer McNaughton and Scott Cooke before seeing her first hockey game -- ever!

Big Night with the Giants

The Vancouver Giants didn't win Friday, March 2, but the Hastings Sunrise community won that night.

A Big Night with the Giants featured a pre-game family fiesta with plenty of hot dogs, soda and chips consumed by all. There was face painting, hockey mini-games and chances to get autographs from the Giants' players.

During the game, there was a sense of togetherness as you could look across the stands and see plenty of familiar faces. Not even the 6-4 loss to Medicine Hat Tigers could dampen the spirits.

And with the event, the Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre, the Hastings North Business Improvement Association and the Templeton Community School team sold 794 tickets and raised \$3,176 for afterschool and crime prevention programs.

The HSCPC would like to thank the Vancouver Giants, the Hastings Sunrise community and everyone who purchased a ticket to the event. With the overwhelming success of this spring's fundraiser, another event is being planned for this fall.

■ Bryce McRae

Patrollers Take On New Staff Roles

Like foot soldiers rising in the ranks, two veterans of the street patrol have moved inside to become key members of the HSCPC management team.

Tommy Luong, the senior member of the Sunrise Patrol team, has also become the centre's Program Leader. He organizes, facilitates and participates in Community Clean-ups, Graffiti Paint-outs and Citizens' Patrol – both on foot and bicycle.

William Dai, a part-time member of the Sunrise Patrol Team since 2009, has been named Office Manager.

Tommy has been an active volunteer since July of 2007, and a Patrol Team member since December 2008. His volunteer work would not only help him in his pursuit of a career with the VPD; it would help him fulfill a compulsion he had to give back to his community.

The Community Clean-Up program he now leads is where Tommy started. He found it inspiring to learn that most people involved in the program were not official volunteers, just citizens who wanted a cleaner neighbourhood. This inspiration helped drive him to further involvement with other programs: the foot patrol, outreach, and the bicycle patrol.

Like Tommy, William also hoped to get into law enforcement and saw volunteer work to be a great opportunity to gain experience. He has participated in a variety of programs including the bicycle and foot patrols, the speed watch, and various outreach events.

Last fall, when an opening came up, William took his involvement with the HSCPC to the next level and became the office manager. Although hesitant at first, he has quickly taken the helm of the Information and Community Assistance program, guiding the volunteers who respond to the public concerns regarding crime, safety, and overall health of our community.



William continues to volunteer with the patrol program and leads the Sunday patrol. However, his work as office manager offers him the unforeseen reward of “the feeling of being able to help someone...when the person has no idea what to do and has turned to you for advice.”

Tommy and William help make the HSCPC run smoothly and efficiently. We are lucky to have them as part of the team and the community benefits greatly from the work that they do.

■ Luella Iwasiuk

Tommy Luong, new Program Leader (left) and William Dai, new Office Manager

Protect your Identity at Shredding Day

Almost 1.7 million Canadians were victims of some kind of identity fraud in 2007, according to a McMaster University study on identity theft.

These victims spent over 20 million hours and more than \$150 million to resolve problems associated with these frauds.

You can help protect yourself from this problem by disposing of sensitive documents at the third annual “**Shredding Day**” on **Saturday, May 12, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at Sunrise Square parking lot in the 2500 block Franklin Street, behind London Drugs.

Urban Impact will be there to shred papers

by donation. The suggested donation is \$5 for a file-size box - still a bargain compared to the average cost of commercial shredding or home shredder purchase.

Identity theft is committed not only by computer savvy criminal masterminds. Anyone dumpster diving can easily get enough information to ruin someone's finances, credit rating, and reputation.

For example, ID thieves look for documents that contain your drivers license number, any personal identity numbers (PIN), passwords, and credit card numbers that include the expiry date and/or the last three digits that appear on the back above the signature line.

Last year's “shredding day” raised over \$500 and shredded more than one ton of paper! All donations will go towards the Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre crime prevention programs.

Sponsors are the HSCPC, Hastings North BIA, VanCity Credit Union, Urban Impact and the Laughing Bean.

While you're there, don't forget to pick up more information about other ways you can help keep your identity your own.

■ Luella Iwasiuk

Continued from page 1, Fear Turns...



Christine Thomas, VAST executive director

is Mexico, where, said Christine, "it's not the government perpetrating torture, it's drug cartels - but the government is incapable of protecting them."

Rounding out the top 10 source countries are Colombia, Iran, Honduras, Iraq, Nigeria, Vietnam, Afghanistan, El Salvador and Cuba.

VAST offers free clinical counseling and settlement services, as well as a drop-in centre, advocacy and referrals.

"People who survive or witness atrocities often suffer long term physical and psychological effects which can impede their ability to work, learn and resettle in a new country," according to the VAST website.

"VAST is the only organization with the expertise to provide specialized trauma counseling and therapies for refugees and other newcomers in Western Canada."

It isn't just police uniforms that spook survivors of torture. "It's actually uniforms of any sort - any uniform worn by agents of the state," said Christine.

"That even extends to paramedics. When we have a medical emergency in the office, we have to make sure the client is near the entrance so paramedics don't have to go through the office."

She praised the HSCPC for its work in building community in the area - and appealed to the Hastings Sunrise community to welcome refugees into their midst, helping them find employment, for example, or coping with new and unfamiliar foods.

"We are always happy to have volunteers," she said.

While it can be traumatizing on staff to hear some of the clients' stories, the rewards of helping them can be equally great.

"My favourite part is when I hear people laughing and cooking in the kitchen just outside my door," she said.

"There's a lot of hope here. It can be quite powerful to see how far people are able to go with their lives."

■ Chester Grant

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Announcements

KEEP VANCOUVER SPECTACULAR - Join us for our biggest Community Clean-up of the year - the Keep Vancouver Spectacular (KVS) event on **Saturday May 12**.

Meet at the HSCPC office for a 10 am start, followed by a noon-hour lunch. You don't need to be an official HSCPC volunteer to participate - just bring your desire to help make Hastings Sunrise a better and cleaner place! All equipment will be supplied.

SUMMER KICK OFF - Save the date. Circle **Saturday July 7** on your calendar: that's the date of this year's annual Sunrise Summer Kickoff. Street hockey will again be the major focus, but there will be dozens of other attractions and games for young and old from 10am to 4pm in the Sunrise Square parking lot behind London Drugs.

To register for street hockey, fill out the form on website www.eastvillagevancouver.ca. More information is available on the website or by phone at the Hastings North BIA office, 604-215-2401.

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巡邏者擔當新員工工作

如步兵被晉升一樣，兩個在街上巡邏的老將已經轉職到辦公室成為 HSCPC 管理團隊的主要成員。

日出巡邏小組的資深成員 Tommy Luong 已成為該中心的項目負責人。他組織、促進和參與社區清潔活動、處理塗鴉噴漆和公民巡邏 (以徒步及自行車型式) 等。

William Dai 自 2009 年成為日出巡邏隊的兼職成員，現已被任命為辦公室經理。

自 2007 年 7 月以來，Tommy 一直是積極的義工，於 2008 年 12 月成為巡邏隊成員。他的義工工作，不僅幫助他在 VPD 事業的追尋，也有助他履行義務以及回饋社會。

Tommy 現在所領導的社區清潔活動計劃，也是他開始的工作。他發現參與該計劃的人大多數都不是註冊義工，而是一群希望能有一個更清潔鄰社的市民。這推動他進一步參與其他計劃：如徒步巡邏、外展及自行車巡邏。

像 Tommy，William 也希望參與執法工作而他察覺到義工的工作是獲得經驗的好機會。他曾參與了各種計劃：包括自行車和徒步巡邏、監管汽車車速以及各種外展活動。

去年秋季，機會臨到 William，HSCPC 晉升他為辦公室經理，雖然他起初有點猶豫，卻能迅速掌握資訊及社區援助計劃，指導義工回應公眾所關注的罪案、安全以及整個社會健康事項。

William 仍繼續義務參與巡邏計劃及帶領星期日巡邏。然而，他的經理辦公室的工作給了他不可預見的獎勵 – 感覺到能夠協助別人 ... 對不知所措的人提供建議。

Tommy and William 協助 HSCPC 有效及順利地運作。我們很幸運，有他們作為團隊的一部分，社區亦因他們的工作而得到極大的益處。

新項目負責人 Tommy Luong (左) 及 William Dai
新辦公室經理 (右)

圖片：HSCPC



利用“碎紙日”保護你的個人資料

根據麥克馬斯特大學研究指出 – 在 2007 年有接近一百七十萬的加拿大人因其身份及個人資料被盜用而被捲入身份詐騙案成為受害者。這些受害者因而花費了多於 2 千萬小時及超過 1 億 5 千萬元以解決這些與欺詐行為相關的問題。你可以幫助自己解決這些問題 – 於 5 月 12 日星期六，上午 10 時至下午 2 時，在我們第三年度“碎紙日”把敏感文件處理掉。地點為倫敦藥房(London Drugs)背後的日出廣場停車場 – 2500 Franklin Street 路段。

你只需作少許捐贈，Urban Impact 就會把你帶來的文件碎掉。每一「盒裝文件」的建議捐贈金額為 5 元，仍然比商業切碎或自購一個家庭碎紙機化算。

身份資料竊賊不限於精通電腦的罪犯，竊賊在任何垃圾箱也可以很容易地獲得足夠的個人資料來破壞任何人的財政、信貸評級和聲譽。例如，身份資料竊賊尋找付有你的駕駛執照號碼、任何個人身份號碼 (PIN)、密碼及信用卡號碼的文件：包括屆滿日期和/或卡背面簽名欄的最後三位的驗證碼。去年的“碎紙日”共籌得超過 500 元及碎掉超過一噸紙張！

所有捐款將用於喜士定日出社區警務中心的預防犯罪計劃。贊助人包括：HSCPC、喜士定北商業促進協會、Vancity、Urban Impact 和 Laughing Bean。當你到達現場，不要忘記拿取更多有關保護自己身份的資料。

公告

保持溫哥華的美好 – 請參與今年最大的社區清潔活動以保持溫哥華的美好 (KVS)。於 5 月 12 日星期六上午十時在 HSCPC 辦公室集合及開始，然後午膳。你無須是 HSCPC 的註冊義工 – 只要你有意願讓喜士定日出社區成為一個更美好和更清潔的地方！我們將提供設備。

夏季開球日 – 請謹記此日期。在你的日曆上把 7 月 7 日星期六圈上：那是今年度的「日出夏季-開球日」。街道曲棍球將再次成為焦點，還有許多適合不同年紀人士的活動和遊戲。時間從上午十時至下午四時，在倫敦藥房(London Drugs)背後的日出廣場停車場進行。登記街頭曲棍球活動，請登入此網站 www.eastvillagevancouver.ca 填寫表格。

需更多信息 – 可瀏覽以上網站或致電: 604-215-2401 喜士定北商業促進協會(BIA)辦公室查詢。

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