

# The Anawim News

T H E A N A W I M C O M P A N I O N S S O C I E T Y

## Growing Pains and Gains

**Shannon Whissell,  
Board Member**

Last year Anawim House celebrated 20 years of service to ‘God’s blessed poor’ in Victoria.

Highly regarded in the community and located in a beautiful welcoming home, Anawim’s drop-in services are in ever-increasing demand. This is a great blessing, and also a cause for concern.

Anawim’s core services for Day Program guests include meals, laundry services and showers. The costs for each of these have steadily increased and donations have not been able to keep pace.

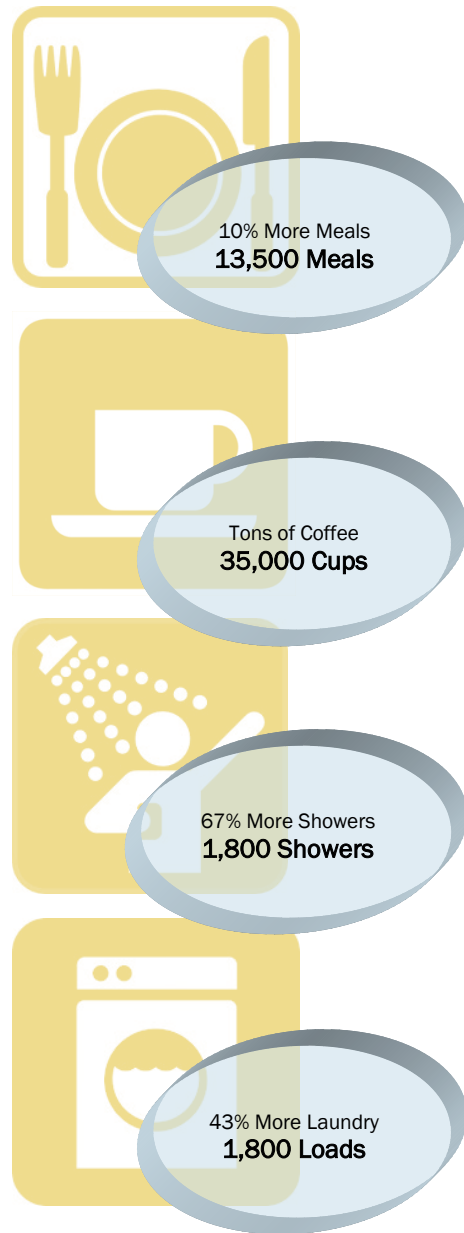
Growth is something to celebrate. The house is frequently at capacity for guests, and both the number of loads of laundry done and the number of showers taken in the first 9 months of 2012 are up more than 125%. People are being cared for in ever greater numbers, fulfilling Anawim’s mission of compassionate care.

Growth in service is not the only thing worth celebrating, however. As Anawim has faced mounting costs, the community of Victoria has stepped up to support the house, and the many people it serves.

The United Way of Greater Victoria has committed to \$40,000 over two years towards operational funding.

The Victoria Foundation’s multiple donations prompted matching funds of \$25,000 from an anonymous donor who is committed to Anawim’s long term success.

Esther’s Dream Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Sisters of St. Ann, has committed a second year of support.



Not all gifts received this year are direct cash donations. For example, the Royal Oak Rotary Club and the Saanich Rotary Club each donated industrial washing machines, ensuring that Anawim’s free laundry is efficient, environmentally responsible, and reliable. These machines make a daily difference for guests and residents.

In most areas of life, growth presents both challenges and blessings. At Anawim, it’s a blessing to have such strong community support at all levels.

## Special Donor Acknowledgements

**Victoria Transmission & Auto Care**  
Helps us out with our vehicle service requirements

**Teacher Tom Vickers & the Students of Kelset Elementary**  
Each year these young people have made over 100 Christmas Stockings that they give out at Anawim’s annual stocking giveaway to adults in need

**Aegean Café**  
Provides us weekly with “Deli” quality home-made soups that are nutritious & delicious

**Thrifty Foods - Fairfield**  
4 days every week, this Thrifty’s store donates Breads, Desserts, Fruit and Produce

**Starbucks - Fairfield**  
4 days every week, this Starbucks location Donates a selection of baked goods

**Keela Mountainwear International**  
Donates brand new outer-wear apparel to augment our Used-Clothing offerings

**Ministry of Health**  
Donated 2 new computers



**Anawim Christmas Tree Fundraiser Starts Dec. 1st**

## OUR HISTORY



*The original Anawim House...*

This is a very special time for us at Anawim. As we head into our 22nd year of service to those less fortunate, it is worthwhile to reflect on where we began.

The Founders of Anawim had a goal: to help people realize that they were capable of living a more fulfilling life. Their unique vision was to provide a home where those in need could contribute, rather than just be provided for, to restore their self-worth and function in a family setting, and to experience true compassion and support.

In 1991 a little house was purchased on the corner of Vancouver St. and Caledonia Ave. This house soon proved to be too small to meet the needs of Victoria's "street community".

In 1994, through fundraising and community support, the present Anawim House opened its doors.

Over the years our service model has continually evolved. Our residents and Outreach Guests now enjoy an environment free of the effects of drugs and alcohol. They find that the house is a safe, peaceful haven - away from the violence, substance abuse and dysfunction that is all too common when living in poverty or dealing with homelessness.

Now, in addition to our Day Program and our Residential Program,

we have expanded our reach further into the community.

We are using our resident-volunteers to pick up over-stock and date-sensitive fruit & produce from local grocery chains, and re-purposing it to other shelters, community agencies and food banks...adding more nutrition to the diets of those who need it the most.

Today, the Big Blue House is proud to be recognized by all as a good citizen, and as a good neighbour.



*...and a proud 20 years later*

## VOLUNTEERS HELP US EMPOWER PEOPLE

### Creative Writing

Over the past few months, leading the creative writing group at Anawim, Julia has had a chance to grow as a leader and as a part of an important community. She enjoys sharing something she likes to do with others who are so enthusiastic.



*Julia (c) shares a laugh with her Creative Writing group in the Anawim Library*

The bi-weekly writing group creates a safe place where Residents & Day Program

Guests can come together, try new things,

create their own writing goals, and hone their creative skills. "We write in silence, and talk in laughter". Each week we look forward to hearing the poetry, stories & songs that come to the table.

*"We write in silence and talk in laughter"*

### In The Kitchen

We are fortunate to have five volunteers who help with meal prep, bake mouth-watering treats, and teach

state-of-the art cooking skills to our resi-

dents & guests. Friday night dinners are always "classics", and are prepared using basic budget-conscious food items.

We'd like to thank Drew, Dasha, Simone, Ted & Kaley for bringing such great joy to our home, our kitchen and our lives.



*Friday Night Chefs - Ted and Kaley*

## ONE AMAZING JOURNEY



*The faces of the homeless are many and varied*

I moved to Victoria in the winter of 2011. I had just lost my sister, and due to addiction, my home.

I was in an abusive relationship and living in Beacon Hill Park. I woke up every day cold, wet, tired and hungry.

Anawim House gave me the strength to endure...a hot meal, a kind face, a place

to shower, to warm up and to do laundry. Those simple things were invaluable to me.

I quickly came to rely on the support and encouragement of my new and valued friends and still do.

I have come a long way since that winter and today, I have been "clean" for 18 months.

I have completed several University courses, and I have found safe, affordable housing. I am loving life and looking forward to the future.

Without the professional and personal kindnesses from the people in and around Anawim, I would not be where I am today.

I particularly remember one of my first visits to Anawim. The previous night had been extremely cold and wet and the forecast was for more of the same.

I had met one of the residents who introduced me to a gentleman named Mark. We talked about the coming weather and the possibility of locating a tarp for protection from the elements.

Mark drove me to his house and was able to provide me with the tarpaulin and then return me to Anawim.

It was only later that I found out that Mark was the President of the Anawim Companions Society. It says a lot about the Anawim organization that the people at all levels are prepared to give of their time and their resources the way Mark did in this case.

I still have that tarp and it has become kind of special to me. Like a "touchstone", the tarp is a reminder of the day that my life started moving forward again, and of the beginning of many new friendships with people who have become like family to me.

*"Anawim gave me the strength to endure..."*

## A SOLEMN VOW - A NEW BEGINNING

We had been slowly killing ourselves with drugs. We were severely underweight, massively depressed and had given up any hope for a good life.

We had been robbed and beaten and had hit "rock bottom". We had to leave our home with nothing but our lives...and the clothes on our backs.

On the bus to Victoria the next morning we made a solemn vow to each other that we were done with drugs and we were going to search for a better life.

We chose to sleep on the streets rather than expose ourselves to the drugs and behaviours that are prevalent around many of Victoria's shelters.

We knew that things were different at Anawim - that it would be a safe place to go during the day, a place where people would care, show concern and not judge our situation. And so we have been able to get

daytime shelter there, nourish our bodies, acquire clothing, do laundry and shower.

It has become our new home and has greatly helped us in our recovery. The people at Anawim have become our new family - people we can trust and rely on.

We now have the confidence and the knowledge that we are "good" people and that we are "worth it".

Anawim has helped us find housing, helped us find good used items to outfit our new place, and a couple of the residents even helped us out with some

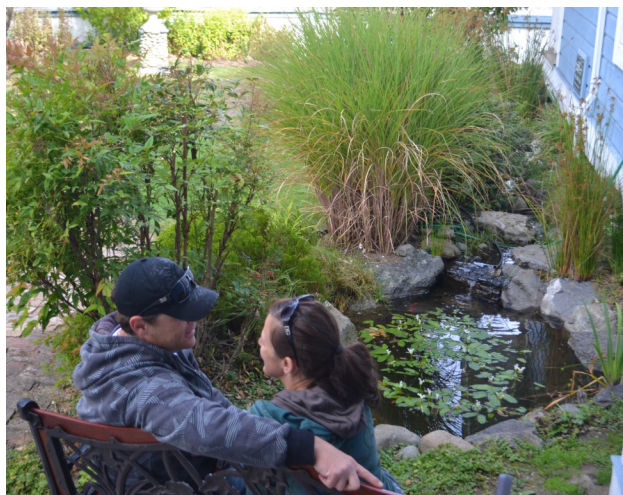
refurbishing of those items in the Anawim shop.

We are so grateful to Anawim,

its residents, staff and all the people that go there. We would never have gotten back on our feet without their help.

They will never realize just how much they have given us so that we could develop the confidence to pick ourselves up and start the journey to a better life.

*...made a solemn vow to each other that we were done with drugs...*



*On Anawim Pond  
A couple reflects on their journey*

## A NEW RESIDENT REFLECTS ON THE ANAWIM EXPERIENCE



*Rock solid places of safety are as rare as they are invaluable*

After 20 years of sobriety, I fell into a deep hole when I lost my job. Soon after, my family life, my house, and everything I had built over a lifetime - was gone. With nowhere to live, no job, and no income, I spiraled into a deep depression.

Friends from my church family & workers from the Umbrella Society helped open my eyes, and I was able to see the lighthouse ahead of me. That lighthouse was the Anawim House.

I set a new course and headed towards it, hoping for calmer waters and getting out of the storm of mental turmoil I had been sailing in.

It was with some anxiety that I pulled in and tied up in a new port. New place...new people...new life. The new place, Anawim became home; the new people became friends. From my first day here, I felt accepted and I began to feel a new life growing in me. It indeed was a family feeling, a warm, loving and

understanding environment where I was safe. Through good counseling and help in all areas, I received something I could build upon again.

A new self-worth and dignity gave me

renewed hope for being reconciled with my family and building new values into my future.

*“...a warm, loving, family environment...”*

Even at 63 years of age, I will leave this port and set sail on a new course - a course that I could not have plotted without Anawim’s help.

Well done, friends...there is indeed help and hope for everybody who is willing to change. I thank all of you and Anawim House for my new direction. J.M.

## OUR SENIOR RESIDENT PEPPER THE CAT

Hi Folks. Well it’s been quite the journey for me as well.

I was homeless, had nowhere to go, no food to eat, and I was so dirty no one would pet me. Winter was coming and I needed to plan for some serious shelter.

I decided to crawl through the window of this Anawim place they’re always talkin’ about, and hey... the place isn’t too bad.

Seven guys live here, and a couple of coordinators come by during the day. I figure SOMEBODY will remember to feed me.

Well that was 16 years ago, and it’s all worked out pretty well. There’s about 20 to 30 people who come to the house for meals. I like the “new” guests the most.

They didn’t get the memo about “don’t feed the cat” - so the new folks are definitely my favourites.

I do try to treat all of our guests the same - ‘cause that’s what we do here. Some of them pet me and talk to me; some of them kind of ignore me at first.

That’s okay, I just meet them where they’re at and we go from there.

After all, they’ve got the same problems I had 16 years ago...and they’ve just begun solving them.

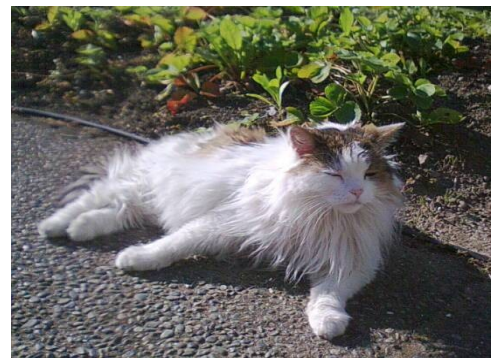
But once they’re here and we feed ‘em, set them up with some new clothes, get ‘em a shower, then they just settle in like the rest of the folks.

They’ll maybe play a little music on the

piano, play a game of cribbage or chess with a new acquaintance, or help prepare a meal and help out with the chores.

I don’t understand this “cookin’ & chore” stuff. I’m Pepper...I eat...I rest...I sleep!

That’s okay. I’ve been here 16 years.



*Pepper the Cat  
For 16 years, a constant in a world of change*

*“I just meet them where they’re at & we go from there...”*

## ANAWIM FIELD TRIP - ON THE ROCKS



Early in September, an expedition was organized to spend a half-day touring the Greater Victoria area to observe some of the interesting aspects of geology that exist in our beautiful part of the world.

We were led by a well-known local geologist and had the opportunity to view rocks that were between 42 million and 370 million years old.

We saw geologic environments that ranged from the core of volcanic island arcs to slices of oceanic crust.

"The weather was glorious, the scenery beautiful, and the presentation well prepared", said one participant.

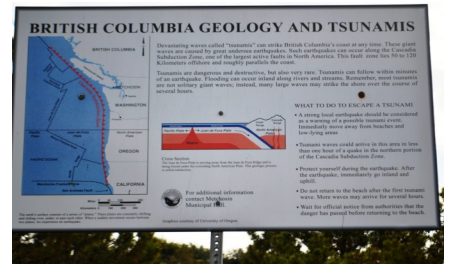
A particularly exciting discovery was a natural staircase leading down to the ocean.

"We all enjoyed the outing and learned new and interesting things about the evolution of our island", said another.

The geology trip was so highly thought of, that a 2nd outing has been planned for those who missed out.

The day ended nicely with a pit-stop at the local DQ.

*"...to view rocks between 42 million & 370 million years old..."*



Renowned local geologist explains the evolution of our island

## UP TO PAR...OR ON THIN ICE?

Each year the Anawim staff schedule a variety of Community Outing opportunities for its Residents and Outreach guests to get a taste of experiences that they would not otherwise be able to afford.

Some are culturally or intellectually themed as seen above, and others are more recreationally focused as depicted here. Our guiding principle is: "Empowered People Engaging Life".

We see this empowerment and engagement as a key part of our recovery and personal-growth strategies.

*"Empowered People Engaging Life"*

There is nothing like friendly competition, in the arena, to foster leadership skills,

team-building, and solid interpersonal relationships.

The outings are entirely funded using proceeds from our Annual Christmas Tree Fundraiser (see Pg 8). Travel is provided using the Anawim van and staff's personal vehicles.

Whether it's swimming at Sooke Pot-holes, golfing at Juan de Fuca, or curling at Victoria Curling Club, the one constant is that it's always a darn good time.

This year we skated at the Arena, played the full 18 holes at Matticks Farm mini golf and putted our way around Beacon Hill Park.

We are always grateful when citizens & businesses in the community help us to create more of these growth and entertainment opportunities for the Anawim residents and our Day Program guests. Give us a call if you feel you can help.



Novices & skilled skaters feeling like kids again.



This was a hole-in-one, on the 18th hole, for a come-from-behind victory...  
...Priceless!



## REFLECTIONS BY SISTER JOYCE



**Sister Joyce Harris**  
**Board Member & Liaison**

What a fantastic year this has been! I have the privilege of being the "liaison" Board member who meets with Residents and Staff weekly at Anawim.

I'm in the fortunate position of experiencing the struggles and joys; hopes and dreams; challenges and growth of each family and staff member.

We begin our Monday gatherings with a

wonderful meal together prepared by the Residents followed by a family meeting, prayer and sharing time.

Each of our weekly meetings has its own particular character depending on presenting needs. However, there always is a rhythm of spiritual reflection; personal progress reporting with opportunities for teaching, learning and integration. And of course, as in any family we share the challenge of adults learning how to live cooperatively together!

Our conversations are often lively and engaging. I must say that I am overwhelmed by the energy and commitment arising from the group.

After every session I leave a wiser woman - deeply moved by the depth of self knowledge and respect so evident in the sharing. And I really appreciate the gentle humour expressed when someone owns their "stuff"... it so encourages

support and compassion from others. Transformation isn't easy but each step is worth it. Sometimes there are setbacks which demand that we move forward with renewed courage and trust.

My favourite experience is the way in which we celebrate Birthdays. Each person's Birthday is honoured with a beautifully decorated cake, a family Birthday Card and a small but significant personal gift.

The highlight of the evening is the sharing that takes place. Each person shares a quality possessed by the Birthday person that is special and uplifting for the group. Frequently, I am brought to tears by the gift we celebrate in each other.

Truly, I am a privileged woman among a very special group of guys who want to make a difference in their lives!

*Each of our weekly meetings has its own special character...*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - 2012

The Anawim Companions Society has successfully operated Anawim House for 21 years. The proof of success is in its continual growth. To keep pace during the years, our budget has more than doubled to \$170,000.

Over the last 36 months the Board of Directors has sought alternative sources of funding to augment the generous contributions of our individual donors.

This additional support often takes the form of "grants", which can only be used for specific projects - and they are important. They have provided us funding for

new washers & dryers, a roof-replacement plan, and a badly -needed perimeter fence for our property.

They cannot however, be used to address the increased costs in the day-to-

day operations of the house, emergency expenditures or wage increases for our Director and his staff.

We get tremendous mileage out of our current annual budget and we thank both new and long-time do-

donors, our companions on this journey, for their past support.

I urge you to please continue your sup-

port of Anawim House again this year, so we may serve the *anawim* - the poor, the homeless, and those facing mental health issues and addiction challenges.



**Anawim Board President**  
**Mark Lemay**

*"We get tremendous mileage out of our current annual budget of \$170,000..."*

**13,500 Meals Served**

**35,000 Cups of Coffee**

**1,800 Showers Taken**

**1,800 Loads of Laundry Processed**

**1,000's of Clothes & Toiletries Distribute**

*...and these statistics do not include our*

*Residential Program.*

**YES!**

**I WOULD LIKE TO HELP THE ANAWIM COMPANIONS SOCIETY  
CONTINUE ITS MISSION**

Single Gift Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cash

Cheque



Monthly Pledge Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Post-Dated Cheques Enclosed

Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD)

NAME <sup>MR.</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>MRS.</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>MS.</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PROV \_\_\_\_\_ POST CODE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**Anawim now accepts Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD). If you have selected the PAD option, please fill out the Contact Information above. The appropriate forms will be sent to you. Charitable Tax Receipts will be mailed annually.**

- I would like to become a member of the Anawim Companions Society
- I would like to volunteer at Anawim House
- I would like to receive the Anawim newsletter via E-Mail.
- I have groceries, goods or services that I would like to donate

**PLEASE DETACH & MAIL THIS FORM TO:**  
**ANAWIM COMPANIONS SOCIETY**  
**973 Caledonia Ave. Victoria, BC V8T 1E7**



**E-Mail: [anawimhouse@shaw.ca](mailto:anawimhouse@shaw.ca) Phone: 250.382.0283**  
**Visit us at [www.anawimhouse.com](http://www.anawimhouse.com)**  
**Registered Charity No. 119212256**

**IN ADDITION TO THE CONTRIBUTORS RECOGNIZED HERE  
ANAWIM THANKS ALL OF ITS COMPANIONS FOR THEIR SUPPORT**

Access Records & Media Management  
BC Hydro Power Pioneers  
Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island  
Christ Church Cathedral  
  
Church of the Advent Ladies Guild  
CIBC Employee as Ambassador Program  
Cote Family Memorial Foundation  
CUPE 947  
  
Esther's Dream Foundation &  
Sisters of St. Ann  
Gala Van Rentals  
Hillside Mall Administration  
Holy Cross Church

Kiwanis Golden K Project  
Knights of Columbus  
Our Lady of Fatima Church  
Royal Canadian Legion, Britannia #7  
  
Saanich Peninsula Catholic Parish  
Sacred Heart Christian Charities  
Sacred Heart Parish  
Schneider Electric North American Found'n  
  
Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Sisters of St. Ann  
St. Andrew's Catholic Cathedral  
St. Andrew's Elementary School  
St. Joseph The Worker Parish

St. Joseph's Elementary School  
St. Michael's University School  
St. Patrick's Church  
St. Patrick's School  
  
St. Rose of Lima Parish  
The Rotary - Royal Oak  
The Rotary - Saanich  
The Victoria Foundation  
  
United Way of Greater Victoria  
VanCity Victoria Community Branch  
Victoria Choral Society  
Victoria Volunteer Bureau



Monthly and yearly pledges help balance our ever-increasing costs of providing food and services. If you missed contributing this past year, perhaps you will think of Anawim for your next charitable donation.

Many of our donors include a bequest for Anawim House in their Estate Planning.  
Please contact us for information on "Making a Bequest".

Please remember that no donation is too small. Regular donations of cash, food, household essentials help keep our much-needed community operation alive.

Please think of us on your next shopping trip, maybe pick up a few extra groceries to help stock our shelves and join us for a coffee.

# ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE FUNDRAISER STARTS DECEMBER 1ST OPEN FOR TREE SALES 7 DAYS A WEEK

Since 1987, Anawim has been raising funds through its Annual Sale of Christmas Trees.

Each December the residents of the house donate over 400 hours of their time to help local families choose a tree and cut it to size on-site.

Our trees are Island-grown Douglas Firs and are of the highest quality and are available in 5 different sizes and price categories. You will find our prices are competitive and the service excellent.

Sales proceeds are used to fund recreational outings and educational programs that are so vital to the growth and development of Anawim residents and our Drop-In guests.

This Christmas, bring your family to pick out a tree, meet some hard-working people and help out one of Victoria's great charitable organizations at the same time.

Anawim House is located in Victoria at 973 Caledonia Ave. (at Vancouver St.)  
Call us at 250.382.0283 for more details.



*Since 1987, Anawim has been raising funds through its sales of over 500 Christmas Trees each December.*

Anawim Companions Society  
973 Caledonia Ave.  
Victoria BC V8T 1E 7

POSTAGE

TO:

