

The Anawim News

winter 2017

the Anawim Companions Society

Anawim and HeroWork: the Power of Community

HeroWork descended on Anawim House for four weeks this fall, and the results are stunning: beautiful new spaces for our day programs and offices, a dramatic renovation of our garden, a freshly painted and repaired house, and much, much more. The photos on pages 2-3 show better than words how much was accomplished.

Over 350 volunteers from every walk of life took part—men and women, UVic students and retirees, skilled tradespeople and volunteers who cleaned and cooked to keep everyone fed. Dozens of businesses generously donated building materials, furniture, and other supplies. Besides the truly awesome amount of work and materials donated, hundreds of people discovered Anawim House for the first time, working side by side with our staff, residents, drop-in guests, and board members, and learning first-hand about the valuable work we do at Anawim.

Our “radical renovation” was about more than transforming our big blue and white house. It was about what a community

of willing people can accomplish when they work together. Right now in Victoria, the need for community has never been greater. Each day, more and more men and women find themselves struggling to survive in a society that seems to have turned its back on the needs of the poor. Every day, we see the importance of our mission: **to support people in poverty to make empowering changes in their lives**—in simple terms, to help people help themselves.

The message that HeroWork puts into action is that when we support those in need, we build a stronger community for everyone. As the season of giving approaches, we thank our generous donors, volunteers, and members of the Anawim family, and we ask you for your continued support in helping the most vulnerable and marginalized members of our community.

Thank you, HeroWork volunteers, for showing us the power of community. Your legacy will make a difference in the lives of Anawim guests for many years to come.



mark
the date!

NOV

30

Anawim
Christmas trees
go on sale



Herowork Lifts Up Anawim's Day Program





wellness room



transformed garden



expanded art room



new offices



and a fresh coat of paint



Anawim Art Department

Empowered Life Art Show 2017



of snacks and beverages, fine tuning lighting and media, organizing creative activity tables, and creating a positive and beautiful community atmosphere for our guests.

The hours flew by and before long it was time to take a deep breath, wipe the sweat from our brow, and open the doors. Members of our Anawim family were at the door to greet guests with the big smiles that come with great accomplishment. Soon our inviting space at the market was alive with the bustle of community. Bids were placed on many paintings, with two paintings sold right off the floor. Visitors shared conversation while reading through each painting's story and its list of painters. Visitors also had the chance to express their own creativity at our tables equipped with a colour-your-community opportunity including crayons, stickers, and other fun art supplies. We also had a canvas set up featuring a sketch of Anawim house that welcomed a warm hug of colour and expression from many of those in attendance. A broad selection of snacks and a beautifully executed three-tier cake added to the festivities. All in all we are happy to report that our second annual Collaborative Community Art Show: Empowered Life opening night was a success.

Following opening night, the paintings remained at the Victoria Public Market at the Hudson until September 10, and people continued to stop in to take a look and chat with our volunteer on duty and place bids on the paintings. Money raised from the sale of the paintings was enough to sustain our community art project for another year. We made so



What a busy summer we had here at Anawim Art! We set up canvases outside the house, at the Pride Festival, on Moss Street at the Paint-In, at a Harbourcats baseball game, with our welcoming local community at the North Park Festival and at our beautiful final art show venue, the Public Market at the Hudson. Members of our Anawim family, our community partners and supporters, and the general public all came together to create art with us and bring the colour of community to our canvases. Paint was splattered, stories were shared, connections were made, and in the end we were left with 34 beautiful and original pieces of community art.

On August 31, the day had finally come for us to proudly display our community art at the Victoria Public Market at the Hudson. We were incredibly lucky to have many wonderful volunteers spend their afternoon carefully hanging, numbering, and labelling the pieces for their big debut. Our volunteers and staff were also busy setting up a delicious selection



Please stay tuned for news about the many great ideas and plans for Anawim Art that we want the community to share in. If you would like to get involved through volunteering, donating, or just chatting about possibilities, please don't hesitate to contact us: info@anawimhouse.com or phone 250.382.0283.

many wonderful new connections within our community and are already toying with some incredibly exciting ideas for next year's program!

This event could not have been a success without the support of our amazing community. Our hearts are filled with gratitude following generous donations from supporting businesses. A big Anawim thank you for the stunning and delicious cake from Cakes Galore, beautiful fresh

Members of our Anawim family were at the door to greet guests with the big smiles that come with great accomplishment.

flowers from Petals Plus, delicious coffee from Level Ground, refreshing iced tea from Silk Road, fresh quality ingredients for our food offerings from Thrifty Foods, more delicious supplies from The Market on Yates, display and hanging hardware and wonderful advice from Castle Building Supplies, and to our amazing and wonderfully accommodating host, the Victoria Public Market at the Hudson. We also want to thank St Andrews School for starting this year's program off on such a lovely note and to the Greater Victoria Art Gallery for their continued support and thoughtful gift. And, of course, last but not least, a million thank yous to all of our dedicated volunteers who make everything possible.

House Director's Report 2017

I am continually asked if it's been a good year at Anawim, and I have the same response: If I still have a job, then, no, it hasn't been a good year. Unfortunately, the street has gotten harsher over the 23 years that I have been involved at Anawim. I'm not sure why, but what I do know is that there is a bigger need than ever for Anawim. We have been humming along, helping the marginalized in our way for a long time, so it is interesting to see that other organizations are taking lessons from us. Lessons like, keep the home small so that everyone can be seen and heard. Keep the home clean and safe to have an atmosphere that embraces change. Most importantly, be flexible on how you help people—everyone is so different that we need to stop trying to putting a square into a circle.

As Anawim expands its day programs (art, yoga, life writing, as well as foot care, nurses, chiropractor, and hair stylists) we are quite busy. In addition to our usual seven residents, we have an average of 35 people coming in every day for meals and to use our services. This was one of the big reasons that we were very happy when HeroWork offered to do our reno. The main purpose of the reno was to increase services to our drop-in guests. Before the reno, we had only one office and one quiet room upstairs where staff could connect one-on-one with guests. With HeroWork's help, we now have two



offices and two quiet rooms to give us more options and privacy for our guests. Over the last year, we have had nurses, barbers, and health care practitioners offer services to our guests. We were putting them in the arts and crafts room, the clothing room, or wherever we could find some space. Now we have a wellness room that they can use. This gives so much dignity to our people. We were also able to create a bike repair shop that will be home to the Shifting Gears program, which will give bikes to the homeless but most important will teach people how to maintain and fix their bikes. The arts and crafts room was always a beautiful room, but now it is large enough to hold workshops, fitness classes, movie nights, and to rent to other organizations.

This is also a challenging time for our organization. We have been listening to the needs of the street and we are now in the early stages of planning a second home, this one for women. But we still wonder how we will raise the money to sustain it. The reality is we are going to need to fundraise for the new house and then we will need to increase the yearly donations to keep us afloat. We ask that our generous supporters remember the increasing need for help that we see each week on the streets of Victoria and at Anawim.

I am always amazed at the generosity of our donors. We would not be able to empower the poor the way that we do if it wasn't for your kind donations. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Terry Edison-Brown, House Director



in their own words

Arriving in Victoria in August, I ended up homeless, manic, and destitute. I resorted to using hard drugs while in the shelter system. I was fearful and mistrustful of the people in the social system and the community. Being here has been a big challenge for me. I often feel overwhelmed or disheartened at the pace of my progress, but this program has been working. The broad spectrum of support here has facilitated my recovery in many areas of life, and while that process is incomplete, my confidence to persevere and dream of a worthwhile future has returned.

- Ali -

The Anawim program is exactly what I needed. I have the feeling of stability again, which in turn gives me the drive to make the next steps to being able to do this on my own. It is great that the house allows me to take the time I need to make goals and achieve them, because we know that change happens over time. The support from staff is more than I had dreamed of. The staff as well as the volunteers are always going above and beyond, and it makes Anawim House feel like a home to me. It is very rare to be given an opportunity like this, and I feel that I have been blessed.

- Craig -

Over the past six months, I have gained a lot of motivation and new skills. I have been sober for over 11 months, and have learned a lot in my time at Anawim. I am in the process of getting my high school diploma, and I started full-time work a month ago, which is all part of the process of putting my life back together. I feel hopeful, grateful, and excited for the first time in a long time and can see a future for myself other than on the street. If I had to name one thing I love most about Anawim, it would be the sense of human connection I have developed and received in my time here.

- Joe -

Anawim House has truly been a saving grace from the monotony of not having a safe environment, a place where I can focus on creating a happy life for myself. I am now able to create music and art and make healthy friendships. I am very grateful to the whole Anawim family for receiving me with arms wide open, and I look forward to what the following years will bring. I have finally found a home, and that is truly the greatest gift anyone can receive.

- Saulo -



illustration by Saulo Davis —2017

our residents at Anawim



I've never been happier in my entire life. I celebrated my year clean and sober recently. I've never had such a sense of peace. I love myself—I can say that today—and I love my family, and I'm working on developing meaningful relationships. I just got my driving licence for the first time. I reconnected with my family after five years of not speaking to them. Now I see at least one of them once a week. My family is a big part of my life now. I wish there were more places like this. It would take a lot of the power away from addiction. People could get treated like human beings again. I love this house. I think there should be an Anawim house in every community everywhere. It's a format that works and it should be a blueprint for [treatment centers] everywhere.

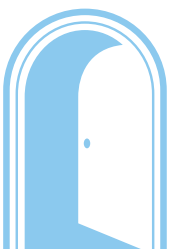
- Jack -

Anawim is a Hebrew word meaning "God's precious poor." As a resident, I cannot imagine a word that better represents the spirit of my home—the operative word being precious. Fundamentally, it is Anawim's core value. That is how we are treated. From the moment I entered, I was made to feel that I mattered. Once again, I was precious to someone. I cannot overstate the importance of this point ... When you are down and out, nothing is more life changing than to be succored by someone who genuinely cares about your well-being.

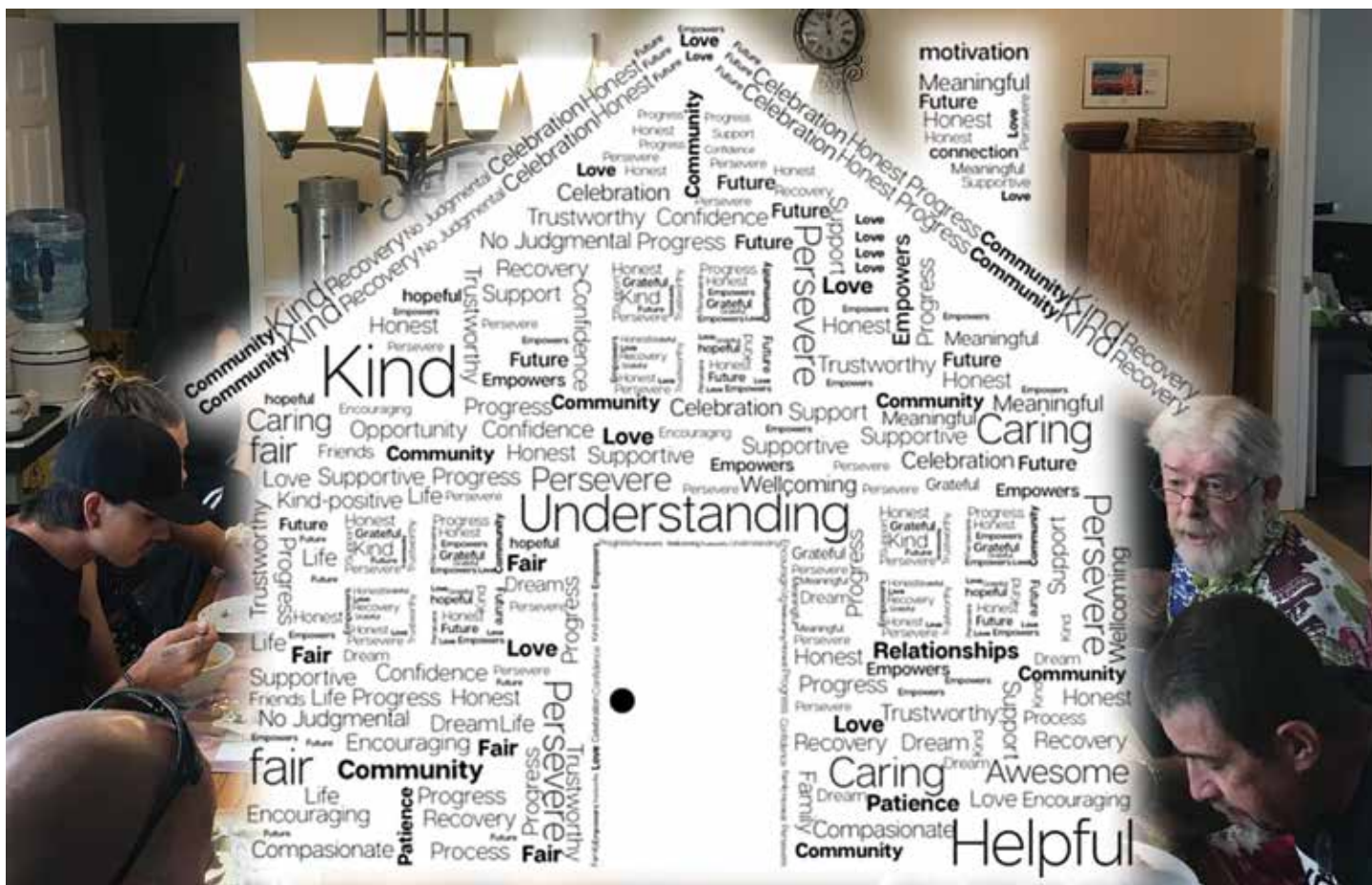
- Greg -

I had been homeless for over a year, living in a tent in Beacon Hill Park and eventually in a shared room at Rock Bay Landing. I had heard about a blue and white house that was safe, drug-free, understanding, and helpful. After a few months, I was offered a room of my own at Anawim House... I enjoyed having the chance to serve others by doing laundry, cleaning bathrooms, and cooking meals. I learned how to cook a pretty good soup from scratch... After six months, I started volunteering once a week at REES and through the help and guidance of the house staff and members of the board of directors, I found a job. Anawim House helped to restore my confidence, dignity and self-respect. I have been working for a year ... [and] am ready to move into my own place. I will be eternally grateful to Anawim House, especially to Terry Edison-Brown and Jim Ross for their extreme compassion and unrelenting drive to help others.

- Jim -



Saulo, who created this illustration from photos of last summer's residents, died of drug poisoning shortly after he finished the collage. Fentanyl does not give people a second chance... His death reminds us that the road to recovery is not always a smooth path and that relapse is a common part of it. Anawim believes in helping those that want to be helped. If people fall along the way but still have the desire to change, we challenge them to make the changes they need and we support them even more. We are deeply saddened by the loss of our brother, but it has strengthened our commitment to our mission and our family.



Highlights of Kristin Atwood's Survey Findings

The words say it all. The word cloud above shows the terms our drop-in guests use to describe Anawim House. They come from this spring's survey of drop-in guests, residents and others carried out by Dr. Kristin Atwood, a sociologist (and the spouse of our house director, Terry Edison-Brown). Dr. Atwood generously volunteered her services and time to survey our staff, board members, volunteers, residents, and day visitors about their experiences with Anawim. While all the information is helpful in telling us how we are doing, the responses from our residents and guests are especially valuable in telling us what makes Anawim unique, what we do best, and what we need to keep working on.

Most visitors to Anawim experience one or more conditions associated with poverty:

- 77% are homeless or live in unstable or unsafe housing
- 59% have ongoing health issues
- 53% have mental health issues
- 41% have substance use issues

Many people felt more emotionally healthy after coming to Anawim

- 77% felt more hopeful
- 77% felt more connected to others
- 59% felt more confident
- 59% felt safer

When asked what they liked about Anawim, people often mentioned the support and respect they received, the clean/sober house, Anawim's personal approach, and the safe and peaceful environment.

- 94% said they preferred Anawim to other services in Victoria
- Over 80% of respondents said Anawim was welcoming, caring, and respectful

Since coming to Anawim, many people had made positive changes in their lives, and most felt that Anawim had contributed "a lot" or "quite a bit" to these changes:

- 53% had gotten help with mental health
- 41% had found housing
- 35% had gotten help with substance use
- 35% had gotten medical help
- 29% had prepared for work or school
- 24% had reconnected with family

Many of the survey comments captured what the numbers don't show: "They have consistently treated me with respect. They have shown trust and faith in me at all times." "When I first relapsed, [he] was the first person to give me a hug; told me to keep moving forward. I am now seven months sober." "I truly wish that the house helps many more to come." "Anawim is the model other drop-in centres should emulate."

Highlights from the President's Report (Anawim AGM, June 2017)

2016 was a monumental year for the Anawim Companions Society. We undertook a much needed \$110,000 renovation. Under the guidance of Jim Ross, not only did the renovation go as planned, it came in \$20,000 under budget. Thank you, Jim, and all the contractors and volunteers who made this happen.

In 2016, we updated our constitution and bylaws, as required by the new BC Society's Act. As part of those revisions, the board settled on a new purpose statement for Anawim:

- To support people in poverty to make empowering changes in their lives by incorporating the following values: Family, Healthy Living, Addressing Poverty and Compassion.
- To advocate for the vulnerable with loving compassion.

For many years, there has been talk of creating a women's version of Anawim House. Beginning in the fall of 2016, we heard the calling loud and clear that now was the time to start seriously putting the wheels in motion. Coupled with significant donations as potential seed money for this project, your Board spent many hours discussing the opportunity, risks and challenges in undertaking this project.

In March and April, board members interviewed many of the front line service providers. Their overwhelming message was that there is a HUGE, HUGE need for an Anawim House for women.

As a board, we discussed whether the Anawim model was the best one to address this need. Our conclusion is that the

Anawim model would work very well to help those that want to help themselves.

Finally, we looked at whether we have the capacity to take on this project. We agreed that if we were going to do it, we would need to enhance the skills and expertise of the board. I am very pleased to announce that we have attracted three additional Board members: Sharon Cartmill, Karen Wysiecki and Marilyn Turner, whose backgrounds will help move our goals forward and support the Anawim women's house project.

The next steps of the project is to draft a vision and business plan. Once your new board settles in, we will start on the next phase to move this project forward. Rest assured that your board will be deliberate, focused and keep you informed on the progress.

If we are to move forward with the Anawim's House women's project and the continued needs of Anawim House itself, we are going to need a lot of help. So this is my ask: If you have not done so already, please consider using your talents, time and treasure to assist us in any way you can, even if it is a little bit. Join a committee, volunteer some hours, spread the word about who we are and what we do or simply donate what you can. I know that if we can have people pulling the rope with us, nothing will stop us.

Dan Greco,

President Board of Directors, *Anawim Companions Society*

ANAWIM moments



Joe's Story

Joe was a resident of Anawim from June 2016 to September 2017

I have been a member of the Anawim family for over a year, and a resident for the last eleven months. When I first came to Anawim as a drop-in, I hadn't showered in two weeks. I had been struggling with addiction and couldn't meet my own basic needs. A friend I had made on the street told me about Anawim and how I could get good food and other services there. When I arrived at Anawim, Terry, the house director, took notice of me right away and offered to help. He gave me a clean pair of socks and shower supplies. When he gave me these basic things, I could see that he was a person who really cared about who I was and how I was doing. After spending a short amount of time there and having people around who seemed to notice me and tried to get to know me, I began to feel a sense of hope. I had been on the streets of Red Deer, Vancouver, and Victoria at that time for about a year and a half after leaving a job and a life that I could no longer sustain and that no longer served me. When I was struggling on the street, I could see myself many years down the road still in that same spot, still struggling to know who I was and what I was doing. I was lost.

I began to recognize that I needed help, and after being at Anawim, I started to think that maybe it was a place where I could find what I needed. When the staff and volunteers approached me, I started to open up. There was a vacancy in the house at that time, and I started taking the steps necessary to become a resident and part of the internal Anawim family. When I realized they were considering me, my mindset and attitude completely changed. I began to stay sober even though I was still living on the street, and in an environment that did

Joe left Anawim in September to return to Alberta where he would meet his son for the first time. Very soon Joe was sending pictures back to Anawim of a very proud and happy dad.

Joe got busy and found not one but two jobs and had to make his first independent decision. One would pay more but would require that he be away from home and his new son. The other paid a little less, but gave him the bonus of being able to develop his new status as "Dad." Joe chose the latter and reached out once again to his "home" at Anawim on the first night he had his son for a sleepover. Joe was nervous and scared that he wouldn't know what to do. With encouragement from his friends and family in Victoria Joe had a triumphant weekend with his son.

Joe is back home redeveloping his relationship with his father and growing into a strong example for his own son. We all wish you the very best life has to offer, Joe. Remember, "You've got this."



not yet support me moving beyond addiction. Moving into Anawim was the turning point where I was now in a place that not only supported me being sober, but was also able to help me build a life where I could find direction and stability. And still, it took time for me to feel safe and like I was in a position where I could regain a sense of normalcy and daily routine. It took me two weeks after moving into my new room to even be able to sleep in my own bed, as I was so accustomed to sleeping on the ground.

So to everyone, Board members, staff, residents, drop in guests, volunteers, and donors: Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I am in the process of undoing/fixing all the damage that I have done during the addiction phase of my life, which includes mending relationships with family and friends that I hurt, getting in contact with the mother of my son, and through my dedication to sobriety and turning my life around, showing her that I want to be a part of my son's life. It included fixing my legal issues, which included a ton of paperwork and money (to pay fines, etc). And getting healthy again, which included doctors visits, exercise, proper diet and dental work. For the dental work portion, I ended up being faced with the choice of getting all of my teeth removed at 23 years old and having dentures. When the dentist told me that, my heart sank. But I knew it was for the better! So I agreed to have my remaining 16 teeth removed (which were in bad condition already). I had them removed on February 10, 2017, and I got my dentures put in on May 25. What a wait that was! But with all the support I got from the lovely people at Anawim that I am proud to call family, I made it through that waiting period, and now I have a full set of beautiful teeth.

Last year, Anawim celebrated its 25th anniversary where past family members shared their stories of struggle and recovery, and I could see myself, 25 years from now, also sharing my story of hope and recovery.

So to everyone, Board members, staff, residents, drop in guests, volunteers, and donors: Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Our Corporate and Agency Donors

- Access Records & Media Management
- Anonymous Donor thru Victoria Foundation
- BC Hydro Power Pioneers
- Catholic Foundation of Vancouver Island
- Christ Church Cathedral
- CIBC Employee as Ambassador Program
- Cote Family Memorial Foundation
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- St. Rose of Lima Parish
- T.P. Connolly Medical Inc.
- The Rotary Club - Saanich
- The Victoria Foundation
- Thrifty Foods
- Tops B.C.
- United Way of Greater Victoria
- Victoria Harbour Cats

Our thanks to **Bernard LaVie** and **Erick Ortiz** for the layout of this newsletter

Special Donors Acknowledgment

Bows and Arrows Coffee
25 pounds per week

Aegean Café
Daily home made soup

Food Share Network
Fresh fruit and vegetables

City of Victoria
Exemption of property taxes

**Open Door
Spiritualist Church**
Grocery gift cards



YES! I would Like to Help the Anawim Companions Society*

☐ **Single Gift Amount:**

☐ **Monthly Pledge Amount:**

☐ **Post-Dated Cheques Enclosed**

☐ **Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD)**

Anawim now accepts Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD). If you have selected the PAD option, please fill out the contact information below. The appropriate forms will be sent to you. Charitable tax receipts will be mailed annually.

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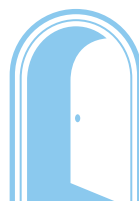
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☐ Yes, I want to save paper and postage and receive the Anawim newsletter by email

Email:

www.anawimhouse.com
info@anawimhouse.com



Leaving a Legacy

Planned giving is not something we think about every day, but how we will be remembered after we're gone is worth thinking about. How can we continue to support the homeless and the working poor of Victoria when our lives are over?

This is an important question that can be a part of a good family discussion about our broader family—our fellow citizens and the community in which we live.

A "legacy gift" to Anawim ensures that its work continues and that its future is securely funded for the hundreds of people who rely on our help.

Whether a bequest in a will, stocks or mutual funds, life insurance or RRSPs, a legacy gift is a way for your charitable work to continue after your lifetime. Please call us if you would like to discuss planned giving.

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM TO:

Anawim Companions Society
973 Caledonia Avenue
Victoria, BC V8T 1E7

*Tax Receipts are mailed annually. Registered Charity No. 119212256 RR0001

Annual Christmas Tree Fundraiser

Since 1987, Anawim has been raising funds through its 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 of the highest quality. They are available in five 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 Avenue** (the big blue and white house on the corner of Caledonia and Vancouver Streets). Call us at **250.382.0283** for more details.



Starts November 30th
Open for Tree Sales
Seven Days a Week



Anawim Companions Society
973 Caledonia Avenue
Victoria, BC V8T 1E7

