North Vancouver School District
SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

December 11, 2007

Spirit of the Season

A Collection of Stories Highlighting Our Generous and Caring Community

Sutherland Secondary School's Project Warm collects adult-sized winter clothing, blankets, and sleeping bags that are in good condition for the North Shore Lookout Shelter. Tina Hopkins, a Sutherland teacher, organizes the project.

The entire Sutherland School is involved in the Students' Council Food Drive. All Period-2 classes are collecting non-perishable food items for donation to the Harvest Project. Cynthia Bunbury and the Students' Council have organized the Food Drive.

Sutherland's Planning 10 classes have begun their Random Acts of Kindness initiative. The goal of the project is to recognize individuals in the school community that selflessly contribute to Sutherland. This group has helped raise the esteem of staff and students by providing small gifts of acknowledgment. Examples of gifts are homemade cookies for the custodians and thank-you cards for the office staff. Judy Ireland is the sponsoring teacher.

December 12, 2007 was Volunteer Day at **Keith Lynn Alternate Secondary School**. The students and staff collected clothing for the homeless. Eight students and three staff members took the clothing to the First United Church at Hastings and Gore on Volunteer Day. This group also sorted clothes and set up and served lunch for the day. Another group of eight students and two staff members handed out food care packages and participated in activities with people at Oppenheimer Park.

Other students and staff have helped to shelve food at the Salvation Army, prepare meals and set up for Christmas, doing various jobs at the Homeless Shelter, setting up for lunch at the Mount Pleasant Community Centre, working at the SPCA animal shelter, working at the Salmon Hatchery, selling Christmas trees for the Lion's Club, volunteering at the North Shore Youth Safe House in preparation for start up, making crafts and doing storytelling with seniors at the Burrard Recreation Centre, and baking cookies at Keith Lynn for the First Nations' Tea.

The Keith Lynn school community is excited about Volunteer Day and the eagerness with which students signed up for volunteer opportunities.

At **Sherwood Park Elementary School**, the staff decorated a mitten tree. They collected mittens and socks for homeless people and will be delivering the items to them. Some classes are putting together Christmas hampers to be distributed to families through the Christmas Bureau.

The students and staff at **Argyle Secondary School** have sponsored the "Twelve Days of Christmas," a Grad Class Challenge. Students collected 1000 non-perishable food items that they donated to the Harvest Project. They have organized a Santa's Breakfast with all proceeds going to their Schools for Africa fundraising quest for this year. The Civics Class has already raised over $6200! Students will also be collecting food and toys at the event and donating them to the Harvest Project and Christmas Bureau.

As part of the Health and Careers' unit, the Physical Education 9 classes will go out into the community and volunteer in areas/places for those that are less fortunate. The Senior Physical Education classes are holding a Food Drive with all the divisions in the school.

The Senior Vocal Ensemble sang carols at the Lynn Valley Seniors Christmas Party. The Alumni of the Vocal Ensemble joined in to sing at the Grand Opening of the Lynn Valley Library. The Concert Choir will be singing at Lonsdale Quay and the Grade 8 and 10 choirs will be at Lynn Valley Center caroling too. They are spreading the spirit of the season and sharing Christmas cheer through song.

For the past five years, students in **Handsworth Secondary School's** Senior Foods Class have created gingerbread scenes for entry into the very prestigious charity event sponsored by the Hyatt Regency Hotel's Gingerbread Competition. The Hotel's display brings in money for charity as guests and visitors vote for "the people's choice" right up to the end of December. Patrons pay $1 per ballot to vote on their favourite gingerbread creation. This year the money is going to the Make a Wish Foundation.

This year, six Handsworth students took on the challenge of designing a "Venice at Christmas" theme. The Handsworth entry won First Place in the Hyatt Regency Hotel's Gingerbread Lane Competition. There were over 30 entries from secondary schools, including entries from Seycove and Windsor Schools. Seycove won a prize draw for entering the competition before the early bird deadline date. The students have won $500. During the second term, the entire class will travel back to the Hyatt for a presentation by the Hotel's head chef and a special luncheon.

The students who created "Venice at Christmas" are Michelle, Jean, Cayley, Sydney, Aaron, Nathan, and Marita. The students learned a lot about the "art" of working with food, both from practical and artistic perspectives. It is one of the most difficult and challenging tasks during the school year.

Credit goes to Marianne Macario, the Senior Foods teacher who tirelessly and passionately brings all the necessary "ingredients" together to cast the students in the spotlight of their own success.

Handsworth School started the Coats for the Homeless Project in November of 2006. A small group of students wanted to help those who were less fortunate than them. The project started when a small group of students started to talk about people who die on the street due to the cold weather.

Out of this conversation, the students started brainstorming ideas for helping others. One of their ideas was to ask the Handsworth community for coats and warm clothing for the homeless. Piles of warm clothing and coats were donated. The students were then driven downtown to a place called "The Living Room," a shelter that provides a warm place to sit, meals and warm clothes (if available), options for sleeping arrangements during the cold weather, and services for people in need.

The students were given a tour of "The Living Room" and told about the services provided. The students saw the supply shelves sitting three-quarters empty; they saw the bread and butter lunch; and they met people who frequent "The Living Room." The impact of visiting "The Living Room" left many students speechless. It was days before the students could articulate their feelings. The talked a lot about humanity and the little they had felt they had done. "The Living Room" sent the students a letter to thank them for their visit, their contributions, and to let them

know that no matter how small the contribution, without it someone would be cold. The number of students and teachers involved this year has doubled. Helping others is contagious and heartwarming. Credit for organizing this wonderful gesture of humanity and charity goes to Laura Terness, the L.A.C. teacher, plus the staff and students of Handsworth who so willingly give to those less fortunate.

At **Blueridge Elementary School**, the community is collecting non-perishable food items for the Harvest Project. In addition, two classes are hosting a Blueridge Santa Mall where students bring in gently used items for purchase by the rest of the school community. All of the proceeds go to a local charity.

The Global Awareness theme for Blueridge's Christmas concert this year supports the school's initiative to communicate through music and dance the messages of personal reflection, thoughtfulness, respect, peace, and care for the environment.

A couple of merry, giving things are happening at **Seycove Secondary School** this month. Seycove sponsored a school-wide food drive for the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. Over 3,738 items—cash and cans of food—were collected. The school is also making a donation to the Canuck Place Children's Hospice.

On Sunday, December 16, 2007, Seycove's Planning 10 class headed downtown to hand out Winter Survival Bags to the homeless. The students have worked really hard on this project and were able to get many donations from local businesses—200 fleece blankets from Mountain Equipment Coop, 200 towels from the Holiday Inn, toques and socks from the Army and Navy Department Store, as well as toothpaste and toothbrushes from a local dentist. Some students even arranged to have their hairdressers come down to give out free haircuts to the homeless! The students really appreciate the support that they received from local businesses and members of the Seycove community who purchased coffee, bought baked goods, or donated coats.

The staff at the **Third Step Program** continues their work in developing a sense of purpose and belonging in students. Greater self-esteem leads to greater compassion for other members of society.

The **Larson Elementary School** community has been celebrating the season with random acts of kindness throughout the school, following the Tribes Agreements. Examples of random acts include Grade 7 door greeters welcoming the students and parents into the school and at recess/lunch, helping younger students, doing chores at home without being asked, thanking people who help you with a smile and a kind word, and creating and colouring bags for the Westview Liquor Store to put purchases. The bags remind people to be safe drivers over the holidays. The Grade 6 students did a Poetry reading at Starbucks and shared their poems with the patrons as they sipped coffee. The community is doing its second collection this year of food, gifts and clothing for the Harvest Fund. In January, the community is doing a clothing drive for the homeless. Each class will be bringing in clean clothes the family no longer needs for distribution to needy families.

Cove Cliff Elementary School creates a "Santa's Workshop" in the gym. Families donate gently used items and students purchase them for a dollar to provide a gift to a parent or family member. Students with no money are still able to participate. The monies collected are then donated to the Empty Stocking Fund. In this way, the Cove Cliff community is recycling and helping those less

fortunate. The students love it. The event has a positive effect on both the environment and the community.

During the Thanksgiving season, Cove Cliff families completed a food drive for the Harvest Project.

In early October, three Grade 7 students at **Westview Elementary School** asked if they could run some fund raisers to assist in the purchasing of needed sports equipment for outside play. The students developed a clear plan and time frame. They raised $75 with two small noon hour fund-raisers. Their example has rubbed off on other students and more senior students are asking what they can do to help. This is just a very small example of how Westview students are taking responsibility for their community.

Westview's Christmas Concert, like most, collects for the Food Bank each year. The community does an outstanding job of collecting, often providing many boxes of food. The community also reaches out to its own families to offer assistance. Those who may need support through the holidays are provided with hampers and Safeway store vouchers.

Westview is a little school with a very big heart. The students look out for each other. Never a day goes by when Yolande Martinello, the School Principal, doesn't feel proud of the staff and students. The halls echo with kind words and compliments from kids to kids about each other and about the school that they share.

The **Carisbrooke Elementary School** community, students, staff, and parents, exemplify the spirit of this season all year long. A few examples just from this term are:

- In September, the whole community was involved in the Terry Fox Run. This year the school raised $420
- During October, canned goods were collected at the Harvest Festival and donated to the Harvest Project
- In November, 220 students, their teachers, and many parents participated in YoGo24, raising over $200 to support the UNICEF's Children with Aids in Africa Campaign. The Carisbrooke Parent Advisory Council collected coats and winter wear for a clothing drive for local families in need of support.
- During December, Carisbrooke partners with an inner-city school in Vancouver. This year, classrooms have adopted five families and are collecting items from each family's wish list. Last year, five filled to the brim with gifts and goodies were delivered to the school. In addition, one of Carisbrooke's classroom teachers does a yearly cupcake and cookie sale with all proceeds going to World Vision.

Canyon Heights Elementary School is filling six baskets for less fortunate families. Family Services of the North Shore connects the school to the families. The Canyon Heights community has embraced this practice for several years and each year it seems to surpass what it has been able to do the year before. A couple of staff and parents work to organize the event and then the community quickly gets on board to fill the baskets. As students dismissed early for interviews this past week, a group of Grade 7 students gathered in the foyer to sing carols, ring bells, and remind everyone to take a paper ornament from the Christmas 'giving tree'. The ornaments are labeled so that the giver provides whatever is written on the ornament; e.g., a book for an 8-year-old boy, a gift certificate to a drug store, dollar amounts to put toward food certificates, a sweater for a 14-year-old girl. Giving can vary from $2 to $20 items. This enables all of the families to

participate. The school even has families who make up their own ornaments and purchase gifts that are over and above those suggested on the ‘giving tree’ ornaments.

After the parent volunteers have wrapped the gifts and assembled the baskets, staff members at Canyon Heights volunteer to deliver the baskets in time for Christmas. Everyone involved is left feeling that they have had an opportunity to make a positive difference in the Christmas of others in our community.

The **Montroyal Elementary School** community holds a craft fair each December. The vendors are a mixture of for-profit and charitable groups. Many classes in the school make items to sell; e.g., Christmas crafts, baked goods, hot chocolate, etc., and man a table at the fair. Each class' proceeds are donated to a charity chosen by the class.

The Montroyal Student Council held a raffle to raise $314 for basic food and shelter for the victims of the recent Bangladesh cyclone. The parents of student council members and their businesses donated the draw prizes.

The Montroyal Parent Advisory Council is undertaking a Sponsor-a-Family project. They are collecting gifts, groceries, and food vouchers for four North Shore families in need. They have erected a lovely Christmas tree in the foyer. Each decoration on the tree is labeled with an item on the wish list of one of the members of the four families. Donors take the decoration away and bring in the item named on it. The beautiful and bountiful hampers will be delivered to the special families before the holidays.

At **Highlands Elementary School** during the past week a ‘hug’ number of intermediate students selected themselves as Ambassadors for Hug Week. Everyone supervising on the playground, in the halls—everywhere—was the delighted recipient of hugs!

Highlands’ Grade 5 students have each secretly adopted a staff member, for whom they do random acts of kindness anonymously. The Grade 3s have had bake sales and raised hundreds to support "their" foster child James.

Through the leadership program, 43 Grade 7s have cumulatively put in over 1050 volunteer hours since school started. The majority of the Grade 6 students have volunteered to give up their recess and lunch hour for the remainder of the year in order to become Playground Peer Counsellors.

In November, the Highlands’ Student Council organized a thoughtful, reflective, and touching Remembrance Day Assembly—entirely on their initiative.

The Highlands School community is sending the Christmas Bureau over 30 boxes full of age-level toys and gifts collected by all classes.

During Book Week, the parents researched and posted a little list of each teacher's "favorite books they wish they had in their classroom." During the recent parent-teacher interviews, several surprised and grateful teachers received coffee or a snack from their parents.

The **Fromme Elementary School** community raised nearly $1000 at a recent PAC-sponsored Christmas Thrift Sale in the school gym. Families were asked to donate "gently used" toys and any other items that would be suitable for students to purchase as gifts for others. The money raised will be used to purchase hampers for Fromme families in need. In addition, the school community will be doing a food drive collection on December 20th for the Harvest Project.

Each year during the holiday season, **Braemar Elementary School** students, families, and staff generously give to a number of charities. Teachers share information about different charities with their students and then the class decides which charity they wish to support. Letters are sent home to indicate the charity that the class is supporting and giving a list of the items that are most in need. The charity collection boxes are then placed in each room. The students choose between the Family Services of the North Shore Christmas Bureau, the Harvest Project, Sage Transition House, the Lookout Emergency Aide Shelter, and La Boussole (an organization that helps people of Francophone origin in the Greater Vancouver area who are in need.)

Under the guidance of Kathleen Patterson, their school librarian, several Grade 7 students at **Dorothy Lynas Elementary School** paid a visit to Covenant House as the culmination to the school-wide "Soup and Socks" campaign. The three Grade 7 classes challenged each other to see who could collect the most for Covenant House. The result was a total of 1700 soup and socks collected by the Grade 7s alone! The school total was 4350 cans of soup and pairs of socks. They needed a truck to deliver all of the donations. Last year, the entire school collected about 1500 cans of soup. Their donation fed the kids at Covenant House for six months. The students at Dorothy Lynas can't wait to hear how long this 'batch' of soup lasts.

The current endeavour for students at Dorothy Lynas is to collect for the Holiday Store. The entire school community bands together to go through what they already have at home and collect new-ish knickknacks to give to the Holiday Store. The Grade 7s organize the items and make a 'store.' With a $2 donation, the Kindergarten and Grade 1 and 2 students have the opportunity to 'shop' for the special adults in their lives. After the little ones 'shop' with a Grade 7 helper, they wrap and label the gifts, ensuring a true Christmas morning surprise for the big people they love. All proceeds go to Covenant House.

Carson Graham Secondary and its feeder schools, like **Norgate Community School**, are working hard to build a sense of community among their family of schools. They are creating a more positive image within the community at large. The schools have discussed at great length a variety of issues and ideas. There has been lengthy discussions and planning, but Marianne Smee, our District's "Dancing Behavior Support Worker," just went ahead and organized such an event without any of the administrative level preamble or fanfare!

Marianne organized a dance festival that included Norgate, Queen Mary, and Carson Graham Dance students. She devoted her own time to sewing costumes and organized many parents to assist with different aspects. Right behind her was Glenda Danson-Brassey, Norgate's Community School Coordinator, making sure all was in place for a smooth run. It was a wonderful event that showcased developmental levels from ages 5 to 17, and even included Marianne dancing in a soc-hop skirt, sneakers, and her own real, vintage 50s fluorescent pink ankle socks. Afterward, there was time for cake and refreshments before the Norgate students went up to Carson to dance the morning away with the high school kids. Coralee Clark, Carson's Dance Instructor, facilitated the success of the event.

Marianne Smee is a very special woman. She is all heart and throws herself into events like this that build a sense of community in more ways than we commonly understand. She deserves the standing ovation that she received from the Norgate community.

At **Cleveland Elementary School**, a group of students on the CARE committee and Ariel Doyle, their sponsor teacher, have decorated boxes for a Christmas train. They put together a red decorated train of boxes at the front lobby of the school where they are collecting non-perishable

food items for food banks and the Harvest Project for Christmas. Cecile Galpin, one of Cleveland's CUPE staff, must have spent all night putting together an engine for the train. It is absolutely spectacular! It heralds "All aboard" in the spirit of the season of giving. The entire school is thrilled with the train.

During the last food campaign, the Cleveland School community raised enough food to feed 230 families! The school community supports acts of kindness and goodwill to others. Dedicated teachers, parents, students, and members of the community put in countless hours to make this world a better place for all.

The **Upper Lynn Elementary School** community is targeting its community resources and goodwill toward the SOS Children's Villages. SOS in BC provides community-based family care services to improve and sustain the quality of life for foster children, foster families, and children in needs. They take donated items and sell them through a thrift store. The new SOS Thrift Store, the Treasure Cottage, recently opened on lower Lonsdale in North Vancouver. To support their mission, the Upper Lynn community is collecting fall and winter clothing, jewelry, china, household goods and accessories, books, linens, and furniture. The school has collected over 100 boxes/bags of goods for donation, with over a week still to go till delivery.

Last March, students and staff at **Ridgeway Elementary School** started to visit North Shore Stroke Recovery Out-Patients who meet at the North Shore Neighbourhood House. To date, three classes have visited. Students have danced, sang, and put on skits. At the November visit, the Grade 5 students incorporated a Remembrance Day theme into their visit. They recited "In Flanders Fields" and shared their Canada Projects with the patients on a one-to-one basis. Ridgeway's Grade 3 class will be visiting in the New Year. The school plans to make a class visit every other month on a regular basis.

The Ridgeway community donated bags of used clothing and household items to the Developmental Disabilities Association for the first time last year, and will make this an on-going, annual project.

This summer, students and staff planted vegetables in the Refuge. During the summer months, families tended the gardens and in October, the students and staff harvested the vegetables and donated them to the Harvest Project. Every year during December, the Ridgeway community collects and donates food items to the Harvest Project.

At **Queensbury Elementary School**, the community used to hold a couple of food drives for the Harvest Project each year. Instead of collecting a couple of times a year, they have made it an on-going activity. The school has established a schedule whereby each week a different class is responsible for going outside and picking up litter. The same class is also responsible for collecting for the Harvest Project. Gerri Karr, a staff member, spearheaded the idea and usually delivers the donations. It has been very successful.

Brooksbank Elementary School raised $1660 in Pennies for Patients for the Leukemia Society of Canada. They collected so many pennies that the bank had to send out an armoured car to pick them up because the bank did not have storage for all of them! Special thanks to Mrs. Rocchio, Mrs. Acton, and Mrs. Greenlees, parent volunteers who helped roll and count 16,600 pennies!

The school community has planned a Brooksbank Jingle Bell Walk through the neighbourhood. The children will walk through their neighbourhood singing Jingle Bell Walk and ringing bells. They will leave doorknob notices about leaving out non-perishable food items for the Harvest

House. A few days later, the students will walk the same route again and pick up the donations, singing, and jingling as they go!

Each year, as is the tradition at **Balmoral Junior Secondary School**, the students and staff collect food and money for the North Shore Harvest Project in hopes that they might contribute to those who are not as fortunate. Each Block A class is provided with a box to collect donations and peer counsellors collect these on a daily basis and tally each class's contributions. At the end of the campaign, the Balmoral community hopes to be able to provide an abundance of food to the Harvest Project. To recognize the students' enthusiasm, a pizza lunch will be provided for the winning class.

Balmoral's peer counsellors have been in contact with the Union Gospel Mission and have coordinated a plan to collect small gift boxes filled with personal care items and small gifts for children up to the age of 16. Each Block A class has chosen the age and sex of a young person to whom they wish to provide a Christmas gift. Students have collected age-appropriate personal care items, small toys or gifts, school and art supplies, and snacks for their chosen young person. Each class will have a box of special items for fourteen children who would not have otherwise received anything this holiday season. The Balmoral School community wishes to reach out and give to others.

Carson Graham Secondary is a school community that cares! Its students demonstrate through their actions each day that they have H.E.A.R.T.—working Hard in all their endeavours; striving to create a positive Environment; working towards consistent Achievement; demonstrating Responsible citizenship and showing Respect for themselves and others; and displaying Teamwork in their school community.

During September and October, the Carson staff and students collected and filled two cargo containers with used books, learning resources, bikes, clothing, and personal items for students in Kenya. In November, Carson students, staff, parents, and community members gave the "gift of life" at three blood donor clinics that were organized and facilitated by the Grad Council. During December, Carson's Grad Council raised funds for gift cards and food supplies to assist North Shore families in need. The Grad Council invited all of the Grade 1 students from Carson's feeder schools—Norgate, Capilano, Westview, and Queen Mary—to Santa's Breakfast, a morning of festive cheer, games, crafts, and a special pancake breakfast.

Roots and Shoots, a Carson Graham environmental and social justice group, is committed to making contributions within and beyond the school and its community. Members of Roots and Shoots have coordinated the collection of prescription lenses and frames for distribution to developing countries. Carson's French Club and members of Roots and Shoots held a cakewalk and raised $200 for Doctors-Without-Borders/Docteurs-Sans-Frontiers. Every two weeks, Roots and Shoots cleans litter from the Westview Interchange on the Upper Levels Highway. They organized, collected, and shipped over 45 personalized shoeboxes filled with toys, treats, school supplies, and hygiene products for young children in developing and least developed countries. In conjunction with the Carson Students' Council, Roots and Shoots organized a clothing drive to benefit the North Shore Lookout Homeless Shelter. The Shelter, which provides services to homeless men and women on the North Shore, needs warm clothing during the winter season. The students have collected clean, used, adult-sized ski jackets, coats, sweaters, hats, mitts, scarves, heavy socks, boots, blankets and sleeping bags. During the week before the Winter Vacation, Roots and Shoots is collecting a donation for World Vision by playing music over the public address system at lunch each day. When they reach their daily campaign goal, the music stops. The music has been chosen to motivate students to want it to stop playing!

Thanks to two motivated Grade 12 students at **Windsor Secondary School**, a number of students with intellectual disabilities have some new friends. Rebecca and Parker found out about a national nonprofit organization with a goal to introduce high school students to students of intellectual disabilities. The organization is called Best Buddies. Each hosting school student is assigned a "buddy" with intellectual challenges. Each pair will commit for the year to attend the planned group activities as well as several one-on-one activities planned by the hosting students. It's not an easy task as many of the challenged students have difficulty communicating. It takes patience from everyone involved.

After attending the Best Buddies conference held this past summer in Ontario, Rebecca and Parker decided to make the program viable at Windsor. Elizabeth Bell, Windsor's Principal, and Heather Peacock, a staff member, are in full support of the program. Nicole Girman, the Western Canada Program Manager for Best Buddies Canada, assisted the students in setting up the program. It did not take long for them to find nine buddy volunteers who were willing to meet with the partnered students on a regular basis. The first event planned was a meet and greet night that was a huge success. A movie night was held and a night of bowling is currently planned. Each student is responsible for meeting twice a month with his/her buddy, whether to meet for coffee at the mall, take in a movie, or perhaps to see a sporting event. It is a win-win situation. Everyone takes and gives back—both discovering something about him/herself along the way.

The Parkgate Community Services Society has joined forces with Windsor Secondary School to help North Vancouver teens learn valuable life skills. Outreach workers employed by the Society noticed a few trends in some of the youth attending their drop-in program. Many come from families that have limited access to prepared food at home and that several of the unemployed youth find it difficult to gain the necessary skills to get hired.

A twelve-week program was designed and developed to help youth learn to design, prepare, and cook nutritious meals. Its title is Food 2 Eat, Skills 2 Live, and is attended by students from Seycove, Windsor, and Keith Lynn Secondary. In short, the program provides the youth the opportunity to learn valuable life skills thus empowering themselves. The teens involved in the program meet weekly at Windsor Secondary where they create meals, eat them and take any extra home to their families. Meals that have been made to date include: spaghetti; ravioli—made from scratch; sushi rolls and tempura; chow mien; soup, salad, and tuna melts; and pita pizzas.

Funding for this program comes from Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) that enables PCSS to offer the program free of charge. VCH also provided the opportunity for each youth participant to become Food Safe certified at no cost. Proudly, each youth who attended the first day of training passed and received their food safe certificate. Depending on what they have available each week, the Harvest Project supplies certain food products for the program which helps keeps the costs of the program down. Brian Aesebo, a Parkgate Youth Outreach Worker, has commended Windsor Secondary staff for its generosity and cooperation. "Principal Elizabeth Bell waived the costs of the foods room usage and Foods teacher Alec Lewis has warmly and openly welcomed the program's use of his room, equipment, and dry goods." Community chefs have also stepped up to showcase their talents in the kitchen. Notably, Richard Simonss, a local chef working out of the Seymour Golf and Country Club, has volunteered countless hours of his time to team up with PCSS staff and youth to deliver a program with rave reviews from everyone involved.

Windsor's student-knitting club has made numerous hats and scarves for distribution to the Downtown Eastside community. A group of Windsor staff members took sandwiches and distributed items to those in need on their visit to Oppenheimer Park. The school's Poverty

Pounders conducted a book drive for the Downtown Eastside and are currently collecting personal care items such as hotel soaps and shampoos for distribution.

To get teachers, parents, and students in the seasonal mood, **Capilano Elementary School** has decked the halls and school office with decorations. Christmas music is played over the public address system in the morning when students arrive at 8:45 a.m. and for the 9:00 student-led announcements. Capilano's choir and band held a concert in the school gym and the whole school participated in a Christmas concert at Centennial Theatre. On the last day before the Winter Break, the students will hold a school sing-a-long.

The Capilano community has been collecting food and new clothing for a Norgate family that lost everything when their home was destroyed by fire.

On a regular basis, a group of students at the Windsor House Alternate Program research, write, and publish a magazine about animals. They are very concerned about endangered species and have held fundraisers to send funds to groups who are working to save endangered animals.

Eastview Elementary School's Student Leadership Council has collected 15 boxes of food for the Harvest House. The Grade 7 students have been working with students in the Kindergarten classes sharing ideas, laughing, listening, and creating a common bond. The Eastview choir is performing for the seniors at the Cedarview Lodge, connecting young and old through the magic of music.

The Eastview community has been fundraising and providing moral support to a family whose child is recovering from radiation treatments. The winner of a turkey draw donated the turkey back to a family in the community. Secret Santas will bring Christmas to a family that did not think that they would be able to do Christmas this year. Everyday, the "gift of Christmas" appears throughout Eastview School. People stop to say hello, taking the time to acknowledge and celebrate little successes and show that they care when someone needs their support.

During the past year, **Ross Road Elementary School's** students, staff, and parents have fundraised and donated more than $2100 to the Terry Fox Run and over $3400 to UNICEF. With recycling funds and student council money, members of the Ross Road School community have decided to distribute $400 to the following charities that make a difference to the community and the world: BC Children's Hospital, Canuck Place Children's Hospice, and the Stephen Lewis Foundation. The Student Council also oversaw the collection of food for the Harvest Project and sent two boxes of supplies to a family in the Norgate area who lost their house in a fire several weeks ago.

Christmas Candygrams will be sold at Ross Road School and all profits will go to the North Vancouver SPCA. A special thank you to Sarah, a student in Grade 3, who spoke on behalf of the SPCA. Another special thank you goes to the Younger family for donating the candy canes for this year's candygrams.

At **Seymour Heights Elementary School**, a group of six exceptional Grade 5 girls have continued their annual tradition of holding a Christmas sale of goodies, crafts, and Christmas decorations to raise money for the BC Children's Hospital. This year, they raised over $580 to donate to the Hospital. The students started this sale when they were in Grade 2 and have continued every year. They organize donations of goods to sell, hold a raffle contest with prizes, and work with the Seymour Heights' staff to help organize the events and keep track of the funds they raise.

This December, the students and staff participated in their annual Christmas Cards for Seniors project. Everyone works together in multi-aged groups to make Christmas cards for the residents of local seniors homes. It is a popular event for the students and the seniors.

Seymour Heights' students demonstrate their kindnesses to each other. An example of their kindness was demonstrated during a recent Grade 6/7 gym class. The students were playing indoor soccer while a student with Cerebral Palsy was waiting for her Special Education Aide to arrive from another class. The ball was moving around the gym at a very fast pace and the girl with CP was right in the middle of it, holding hands with her teacher to maintain her balance. Every time the ball came near to her, the nearest student stopped the ball, the whole class froze, and then cheered her on to kick the ball. When she scored, everyone clapped and cheered while she celebrated scoring. The game resumed its fast pace, until the next time the ball went her way, when, once again, everyone stopped, and she tried to score again. This is one of the wonderful examples of inclusion and kindness between students.