



## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LOCAL SURVEY PAINTS PICTURE OF VOLUNTEERS

Victoria —Beacon Community Services today celebrated National Volunteer Week with a special luncheon for more than 200 volunteers, and the release of an overwhelmingly positive report of a recent survey of the local charity's volunteers.

Conducted by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd., the phone survey showed that Beacon meets the needs of over 93 percent of the volunteers surveyed. More than 91 percent of those volunteers also confirmed that Beacon volunteer work well utilizes their skills.

Respondents also provided insight into why they began volunteering. More than half reported they enjoy serving the community while about a quarter identified keeping active or helping people as their primary motivators. In addition, the survey also found that:

- More than 73 percent of the volunteers are female;
- 93 percent of the volunteers are 51 years or older; almost half (47.9 percent) are 71 or older;
- On average, survey respondents have volunteered with Beacon for 6.1 years; and
- Volunteers work an average of 4.7 hours per week with Beacon Community Services.

Survey results were reported at the volunteer appreciation luncheon to more than 200 of Beacon Community Services' 400+ volunteers.

"Volunteers are the heart of our organization – indeed, our community. We've always known how special they are; it's gratifying that the feeling appears to be mutual," said Isobel Mackenzie, CEO of Beacon Community Services, adding that survey results will help inform the organization's ongoing work with volunteers. "This survey gives a snapshot of our volunteers and will be an important planning tool for us."

Each year, volunteers donate over 50,000 hours of their time and talents to a variety of Beacon programs, including in Beacon's seven thrift shops, the Out of the Rain youth shelter, driving seniors to medical appointments, the Meals on Wheels program, serving at the SHOAL Centre in Sidney, helping prepare tax returns, and doing lay counseling.

Today's luncheon especially honoured more than 70 people for their long volunteer service to Beacon.

- 32 people were honoured for five years of service; 28 people for 10 years of service, and five for 15 years of service;
- Eight were recognized for having volunteered for 20 or more years. This included three who have served for 30 years or more. The honourees included a married couple who volunteer as medical drivers and have volunteered at Beacon for 32 years.

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Beacon Community Services is a community-based, not-for-profit, social, employment, health, recreational, housing and volunteer services agency that has offered a wide range of programs and services to thousands of clients in the Capital Regional District since 1974.

More information about Beacon Community Services is also available at [www.Beaconcs.ca](http://www.Beaconcs.ca)

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