

Community Matters

stories of connections, hospitality, & reciprocity in the community

Community Matters is a newsletter by the Asset Based Community Development team.
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Meet Your Neighbour at THE MIGHTY OAK



Standing proudly on a residential corner of Vancouver, and serving delicious coffee sourced from Seattle, The Mighty Oak has very quickly become an essential part and a true asset of the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood!

In October 2012, John McLelland opened The Mighty Oak, a neighbourhood grocery store and cafe on West 18th Avenue. When he and his wife opened the store, they had envisioned it to be a hospitable and welcoming place - a gathering place for residents of his neighbourhood to meet and connect. Today, with just one visit to The Mighty Oak, you can see that this vision has come to life!

John has carefully designed the physical space to encourage conversation. While he admits you can't force people to connect, he wishes to "create an environment that encourages connection" and hopes that it happens. When we visited John, he shared with us stories of how neighbours in the area have met at his store, and found ways to help one another. One customer began watering another's plants when he was unable to care for them himself, while others shared midwife recommendations.

We invite you to come and experience the hospitality and community at The Mighty Oak for yourself!
www.themightyoak.ca - 198 West 18th Avenue, Vancouver, BC.

Building Community Through Fun-Based Art: SARA BYNOE

Everywhere you look in Vancouver, you'll find people who are regularly bringing people together, whether it be for a social cause, a show, a movie in a park, a street festival, or a meal. One of these important parts of our community is Sara Bynoe, who is described as a "talented and charming mover and shaker."

We first met Sara Bynoe at Hot Art Wet City, a small art gallery on Main Street where she had just curated a show called Teenage Wasteland ("embarrassing art by adults made when they were teenagers"). In further conversation, Sara's role in Vancouver as a convener became very apparent. Sara regularly hosts a number of offbeat performances and shows, including 'Teen Angst' (adults reading poetry they wrote as teenagers to comedic effect), 'Say Whaa?' (featuring the best of the worst novels Sara and her performers can find), and 'Dance Dance Party Party', a weekly ladies only dance party at the Mount Pleasant Community Center. Through her performances, writing, podcasting - or, what she calls 'fun-based art', Sara is bringing people in Vancouver together and building community.

To read Sara's blog, listen to her podcast, or find out more about her performances, head to www.sarabynoe.com or find her on twitter @sarabynoe.



Learning to Fix Computers, While Giving Back: COMPUTERS FOR SCHOOLS

When Dan's family computer started acting up, he decided to learn how to fix it. Discovering that he had this interest lead him to research how he could connect with other techies in his community. That's when Dan came across a non-profit called Computers for Schools, an organisation that refurbishes old computers and donates them to schools and other non-profits across BC.

The staff at Computers for Schools were incredibly welcoming and invited Dan to become a volunteer. They got right to work setting up his workstation and showing him the basics of refurbishing computers. These gestures of hospitality made Dan feel welcomed and valued and he now volunteers every Thursday. Dan says it's what he looks forward to the most every week, and "I really love it here. I like the guys and I like learning how to fix computers. It's awesome."

To learn the tricks of the trade, Dan was paired up with David. The two instantly formed a friendship. David says he has learned a lot from volunteering with Dan, admiring his strong work ethic and positivity. It's not just David who appreciates all of Dan's hard work; it's all of the guys in this shop who have commented that they love having Dan on their team. Computers for Schools makes a tremendous contribution to the community, but they cannot keep up the good work they're doing without donations and volunteers.

To make a contribution, check out www.cfsbc.ca for more info. Thank you Dan for sharing your story!



Get Connected in Your Community: UPCOMING EVENTS

Homelessness Action Week

Documentary Screening: *Nearly Neighbours*

Oct. 18, 7-8 pm, FREE

Shop Wrong

1192 E. Hastings St, Vancouver

Nearly Neighbours is a short documentary that explores the geographical and psychological lines between affluence and mental illness in the specific region of Yaletown, where condos overlook mental health social services.

Helping Homeless Individuals
in Renfrew: *We Care About You*
Thanksgiving Bag Lunch

Oct. 15, 12-1 pm

Bag lunches will be offered to homeless individuals in the neighbourhood. Lunches prepared by seniors from the Renfrew-Collingwood Seniors' Society and Grade 3 students from Nootka Elementary School.

Experience the Joy of Dancing:
Shiamak's Dance for Good

Oct. 15, 5-6 pm, FREE

Woodwards Building Atrium

111 W. Hastings St, Vancouver

Feel empowered and warm up with an hour of dance before heading to the Dr. Trevor Hancock dialogue on Health and the Lived Environment.

Looking to get more connected in your neighbourhood?
Have a great community initiative you want to spread the word about?
Contact the ABCD team at the HUB: thehub@posabilities.ca.