



## Message from the Executive Director, Kathryn Molloy

Welcome to the PHC quarterly newsletter! It's that time of year when everything feels fresh and new, from the baby sheep on the farms, to the buds on the trees, to the buzzing queen bees flying busily about the early bulbs and flowers.

Spring is a time of renewal and that is certainly the case at PHC. We have a fresh start on so many fronts; a new strategic plan built by the community; a newly revised website [www.phc-gabriola.org](http://www.phc-gabriola.org); innovative programs; a brilliant new volunteer coordinator, Julie Sperber ([volunteers@phc-gabriola.org](mailto:volunteers@phc-gabriola.org)); new donors and partnerships and a fresh-off-the-press newsletter.

There is plenty of need for the services of PHC on this island. Whether it's the Food Bank, the Soup Socials, the citizen advocacy and job search support or assistance to find affordable housing, we are busy every day. On top of this we help provide wholesome, local organic food through our seniors Dragon Garden, Kids Garden, Food Bank Garden and new Client Education Garden. PHC provides a platform of support for so many of the key social issues on the island and if the amount of volunteer and donor support is an indication of our success, then we are flourishing. Thank you to the 100+ volunteers and 250+ faithful donors — without your support, we wouldn't exist.

But we still need more help. The newly released Hunger Report says there was an 18% increase in Food Bank use across the nation last year – our statistics would agree and of the 90+ people that access our services weekly, a full 30% are children! Please consider volunteering your time or becoming a regular donor to PHC. Find out more by calling our office at 250-247-7311 or you can send me a personal email at [kathryn@phc.gabriola.org](mailto:kathryn@phc.gabriola.org).

## Upcoming Events

### Saturday, April 24 - Fill this Truck

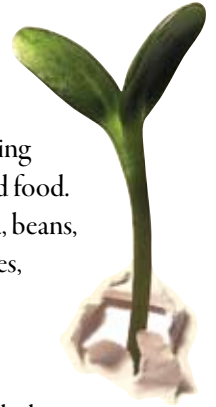
Look for our pick-up truck in the Village parking lot where we hope to fill the truck with donated food. Please drop by and consider a donation of tuna, beans, tomato sauce, noodles, fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese, or...!

### Tuesday, June 1 - World Hunger Day

Please consider a donation to PHC to help with the growing need of our Food Bank.

### Sunday, June 27 - Annual Home and Garden Tour, Gabriola

A fabulous community fundraiser for PHC and a great opportunity to peek into some of the island's wonderful homes and gardens. Watch here for more details coming soon!



### Do You Drink Coffee?

Did you know you can drink coffee and support PHC? Simply purchase your favourite Red Roaster Coffee ([www.redroaster.ca](http://www.redroaster.ca)) by emailing: [info@redroaster.ca](mailto:info@redroaster.ca) or phoning 250-325-3250. If you order by the end of the day Thursday and let them know it's a PHC order we get a donation of \$4 per pound!

Please bring cash or a cheque made out to PHC when you pick up your coffee. Julie at Red Roaster will let you know the pick up spot.

## How to subscribe to the PHC Quarterly Newsletter

If you would like to receive our future quarterly newsletters you have two options:

1. Send an email to [info@phc-gabriola.org](mailto:info@phc-gabriola.org) and request to be on our electronic newsletter list
2. Send us \$10 and your mailing address and we will mail you a copy every quarter for one full year.

# A New Batch of Certified Green Thumbs on the Way

Janina Stajic

With funding from Van City and CIBC, the expertise of PHC's Food Bank Manager, Shirley Peterson, and part time staffer Lynn Wilkins, Gabriola will soon have a few more certified green thumbs. A group of enthusiastic PHC clients are digging their hands into a new project: learning to garden from seed in PHC's Client Education Garden.

"The idea was clients could take this program, then go home, and with very little expense, grow plenty of greens for themselves," explains Shirley, herself a Master Gardener. "The participants are very excited."

The first thing participants had to do was choose what they'd like to grow. "They studied seed catalogs to figure out what grows in this climate. And all of them will be growing things they like to eat — a big motivation for continuing to garden." Shirley and Lynn will be teaching participants a system called square-foot gardening. "In each box you might have a square foot of carrots, a square foot of marigolds, a



square foot of spinach," explains Kathryn Molloy, PHC's executive director. The idea is to produce a high yield, and a nice mix of food, in a very small area.

The best part is participants are involved from start to finish, learning how to build raised beds, determine soil PH levels, encourage natural pest control and grow organically. "They will even learn how to calculate the value of the food they've grown," says Kathryn.

When the produce is harvested, participants will give a portion to the PHC food bank and keep the rest for themselves. At the end of the program the newly-certified gardeners can use their skills to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

"I think it would be great if we could create a vibrant gardening co-op with this program," says Kathryn, "where clients work together to produce food for both PHC's food bank and for themselves".



## Quarterly Volunteer & Donor Profile: Marilyn

We are proud to have a team of more than 100 volunteers. Without the kind and generous support of our community, PHC would not exist.

Marilyn has been helping with the Food Bank on Tuesdays for the past six months. "I love volunteering at PHC. It feels good to make a direct contribution with the folks here and to experience firsthand their gratitude. The PHC clients are friendly and full of appreciation."

Like many of us, Marilyn feels inundated with organizations asking for money. "It's overwhelming when you look at the needs of the world," says Marilyn. "My husband and I make some international donations, but more and more we're choosing to donate locally. I can see the immediate effect of our monthly contribution to PHC and it feels good."

Gabriola businesses, service clubs, churches and individuals are the heart of our funding support with over 55% of our total revenue coming from the Gabriola community and more than 25% of that from individual donors. Please consider PHC when thinking about your charitable donations.

### Contact us at:

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Call us at 250-247-7311 Email [info@phc-gabriola.org](mailto:info@phc-gabriola.org)  
or visit us on the web at [www.phc-gabriola.org](http://www.phc-gabriola.org)

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