



The Project Rewild research program at the Grizzly Bear Foundation. Photo by John E. Marriott.

8 Vancouver Charities to Support This Season

STORY: *Lauryn Jamison*

As the 2022 holiday season winds down, so too does the rate of donations to local charities and nonprofits. These organizations often face a paucity of goods and funds in January and February. We've put together a non-exhaustive list of Vancouver charities and non-profits that help out with causes worthy of your support in the coming year.

Vancouver Food Runners



Fifty-eight per cent of all food produced in Canada goes to landfills, and one out of every nine households in B.C. are food insecure. Vancouver Food Runners is tackling the twin problems of food waste and food insecurity. Each month, this charity's volunteers collect excess food from local restaurants, cafes, catering companies, and hotels and deliver it to non-profits that work with food-insecure populations. The Food Rescue Hero app notifies nearby volunteers when food donations are ready for transport and navigates them through the delivery process, to complete each “food rescue” efficiently. For every dollar donated, eight dollars in food—equivalent to two and a half meals—goes to those in need.

Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society





Elder Eugene Harry works on beading during a Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society cultural program.

For over 30 years, the Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society has provided the urban Indigenous population with culturally based healthcare and social services. Supporting thousands of people each year, this not-for-profit organization offers family programs, medical and dental services, and emotional and spiritual support through its circle of Elders and Knowledge Keepers. In January, the society will launch a capital fundraising campaign for its new Healing Centre, opening in the

Downtown Eastside in fall 2023. Donations will help fund this accessible one-stop location for medical, dental, mental health, and social services for the urban Indigenous population, and continue to support cultural sharing and traditional healing practices.

Spectrum Mothers Support Society



Spectrum Mothers Support Society offers caregiving services and mentorship to mothers on the North Shore with children under age five. Mothers supported by Spectrum are often dealing with challenges such as postpartum depression, anxiety, illness, abusive relationships, or drug and alcohol dependency, and their children often live with developmental delays, behavioural problems, or disabilities. Founder Sally Livingstone brings her expertise as a pediatric nurse to the non-profit organization and hopes to one day open a crisis nursery to provide a safe short-term care space during

times of family crisis. Spectrum's services are free and are prioritized to low-income and marginalized families. No mother or child is ever excluded because of cost.

Covenant House Vancouver



One of 34 Covenant House locations in North America, Covenant House Vancouver provides help and support for youth aged 16 to 24 who are homeless. The organization tailors services to the specific needs of each individual youth, providing care for the entire person: mind, body, and spirit. Programs and services—including finding affordable housing, outreach, mental health support, warm meals, and addressing substance use—are all aimed at helping youth successfully transition to independence. Donations are welcome in the form of food, clothing and hygiene supplies, and funds.

Canuck Place Children's Hospice



Since opening its doors in 1995, Canuck Place Children's Hospice has provided pediatric palliative care for children up to age 19 in B.C. A program that includes pain and symptom management, medical respite, education and art, music and recreation therapy, end-of-life care, and grief and bereavement counselling is offered at no cost to families thanks to sponsors, partners, and donors. To commemorate the Lunar New Year and the start of the Year of the Rabbit, all donations made between January 1 and February 1, 2023, will be matched by the Coromandel Foundation. A monetary gift helps ensure that Canuck Place can continue to care for the more than 830 children and families currently on its program across its two locations, in Vancouver and Abbotsford.

The Writers' Exchange





The Writers' Exchange is a non-profit that helps under-resourced youth in Vancouver discover the joys of reading and writing. Every year, volunteers assist more than 200 students from grades one to 12 in completing creative literacy projects to improve their skills and increase their self-confidence. Free after-school, in-school, and summer programs are led by adult role models who create safe spaces—with healthy snacks—to celebrate creativity, self-expression, and storytelling. Over the years, the organization has published nearly 3,500 stories. Monthly donors receive three books written by the kids at surprise times throughout the year.

Environmental Youth Alliance





The Environmental Youth Alliance works to teach the environmental stewards and leaders of tomorrow through free land-based education and paid employment-training programs in the Downtown Eastside. These programs are available to (and often led by) youth aged 14 to 25 who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQ2S+, living with a disability, or facing other systemic barriers. Reaching the organization's \$20,000 winter fundraising goal will help reduce participation barriers for youth and bring in Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to share their teachings on land stewardship, creating a pathway for over 600 young people to be part of a more inclusive environmental movement.

The Grizzly Bear Foundation



Photo by John E. Marriott.

Founded by Vancouver philanthropist Michael Audain, and guided by science and Indigenous knowledge, the Grizzly Bear Foundation supports grizzly bear conservation in B.C. and across North America. Through research, public education, and advocacy, this Vancouver-based charitable organization is dedicated to rewilding one of North America's most vulnerable keystone species. Now

and into the new year, donations will help support Project Rewild, a unique research program dedicated to giving orphaned grizzly bear cubs a second chance at life in their natural habitat.

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