

The Secret is Sharing



Santa's Secret Service

www.santasecretsservice.com

3815 29th Street NE | Calgary, AB T1Y 6B5 | Telephone: (403) 257-8339 | Fax: (403) 255-7117

Joining Santa's Team

If I haven't already had the opportunity to meet or speak with you, please allow me to introduce myself—my name is Trina Joevenazzo, and I'm the new Program Coordinator for Santa's Secret Service!

As a coordinator at a care provider agency for the past four years, I have had the privilege of witnessing the '*Secret is Sharing*' in action. I have always enjoyed my role in connecting Secret Santas with isolated seniors, and now as Program Coordinator for Santa's Secret Service, I look forward to contributing to all aspects of this wonderful program. This will require a fine balance of honouring a tradition that spans 22 years and working with our Board of Directors to be innovative as the program grows and develops to meet the changing needs of our community.

In appreciation of the immense magnitude of delivering personalized gifts to over 2000 Calgary seniors, I realize that volunteers are key to the success of Santa's Secret Service. I look forward to working with each of you in achieving our mission to enhance the quality of life for isolated seniors. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns or suggestions you might have.

Our Newest Board Member—Cindy Chambers

Cindy first became involved with Santa's several years ago as a Secret Santa and, in response to our request for Board members, decided to share her many other skills with our organization as a Director. With an MBA and extensive experience in marketing with a number of highly successful corporations, Cindy's expertise will certainly be an asset to our organization. Currently in a career transition, this Fall Cindy will be teaching classes at Mount Royal College as well as at the Calgary Campus of the University of Phoenix.

In addition to her work with Santa's Secret Service, Cindy also volunteers at the CNIB Fragrant Garden, and is an avid gardener, seamstress and novice golfer. She spends weekends with her husband and labrador retriever at their recreation property north of Calgary. Cindy has completed several 5K and 10K runs (generally at a very slow run-walk pace), and has a goal of completing a half marathon sometime in the next five years. Welcome, Cindy!

Bill Ardley, President

Rick Black, Vice President

Stella Parisien, Treasurer

Lorine Stevens, Secretary

Cindy Chambers, Director

Susan Greenaway, Director

Joan Keating, Director

Thank you, Beth!

Earlier this year, Beth Espey decided to leave Santa's Secret Service in order to pursue a new opportunity with Calgary Seniors' Resource Society. In her time with our organization, Beth not only improved on many of the processes related to the Christmas gift-giving season, but she was also instrumental in the development and implementation of the Birthday Recognition Program. Santa's Secret Service would like to thank Beth for her many contributions and wish her well in her new endeavours. We are pleased to report that Beth has decided to stay with Santa's as a volunteer!

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*Shine a little
light in
the life
of a senior*

The good news is—you can help! Please contact Trina at 257-8339 to discuss any of the opportunities outlined below...

Sponsorship

Santa's Secret Service is actively seeking funding in order to expand our Birthday Recognition Program. In order to support our current level of operation, a group or corporation could sponsor one month of gifts for \$600 (at an average of 50 gifts at approximately \$12 per gift). Of course a donation in any dollar amount would be most appreciated!

Volunteer

Do you enjoy bargain shopping? Do you enjoy packaging birthday gifts or making birthday cards? Are you a good driver, physically strong and able to make gift deliveries to care provider agencies throughout Calgary? Any of these opportunities take place on a once-a-month basis and are flexible according to your schedule.



The Birthday Recognition Program

No matter how many candles are on the cake, birthdays are a time to celebrate.

The latter years of life are a time of reflection on a lifetime of memories. Similar to the Christmas season, some of the most vibrant and happiest memories are of birthday celebrations with family and friends. Yet, for many who have lost precious relationships through death, distance or estrangement, birthdays can present a particularly sad and lonely time, often with no acknowledgement of their special day. In response to this reality, a key initiative at Santa's is to extend that spirit of giving beyond the month of December, and ensure that all seniors in Calgary feel remembered and valued by their community throughout the year.

It stands to reason that, for seniors who face a lonely Christmas, their birthday is another occasion that would often pass by unacknowledged. We believe that one is never too old to celebrate a birthday, and for the past fourteen-months, Santa's Secret Service has been working with care provider agencies to deliver birthday gift bags to our clients' homes. It is a simple gesture with tremendous results. In just over one year, we have delivered 668 gifts and while they have been appreciated, we are only reaching a small fraction of the 2186 seniors who benefited from the 2006 Christmas campaign.

Because we have not yet secured funding needed to expand the Birthday Recognition Program, our Board was faced with the difficult decision of how to allocate limited resources—continue with our current recipient sites or rotate recipients on an annual basis. Ultimately, it was decided that other care provider agencies should have the opportunity to benefit from the program. In response to the news that their site would no longer be eligible for birthday gifts, the following is an excerpt from a letter received from one care centre...

It was wonderful while it lasted! *I don't know how we can begin to tell you how much we appreciate the work that you put into providing a variety of quality gifts for all types of our residents. The toiletries were lovely—just what our residents need but often don't have (even our fellas can benefit from them!) The 'treat' gift was loved by our residents who could enjoy candy, a puzzle book or 'goodie'.*

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Thank You Donors!

To all those corporations, groups and individuals who have generously supported Santa's Secret Service through monetary or in-kind donations, you have our most sincere gratitude. We realize that there are many worthy charitable organizations to choose from when you are allocating your philanthropic dollars. For that reason, we are committed to the best possible stewardship of the resources you have presented to our organization. We look forward to working with you in achievement of our mission for the upcoming Christmas season!

The 2007 Season of Giving is Upon Us...

It's that time of year again, when we are faced with the challenge of turning our thoughts to the Christmas season when the warm summer sun is shining. If they haven't arrived already, we will soon be distributing the Secret Santa and care provider agency sign-up packages. We hope that we can count on your support to bring messages of joy to lonely and isolated seniors in Calgary. Please mark these important dates on your calendar...



ACTIVITY	DATE
Sign-up packages mailed/emailed to Secret Santas and care provider agencies	Friday, August 3rd
Sign-up packages and seniors' profiles returned to Santa's Program Coordinator	Monday, September 24th
Seniors' profiles sent to Secret Santas	Tuesday, October 9th
Gifts must have arrived at Santa's warehouse	Friday, November 9th
Gift sort at Santa's warehouse	Saturday, November 17th and Sunday, November 18th
Gift delivered to care provider agencies	Monday, November 26th to Friday, December 14th

If you haven't received your sign-up package by August 15th and are interested in being a Secret Santa, nominating isolated seniors or helping sort/deliver gifts, please contact Trina at 257-8339.

Santa's Wish List

Would you or someone you know be able to help us access the following goods/services?

- Professionally crafted community display board
- Signage for Santa's van
- Volunteer photographer
- Caring, creative individuals to join our current Board of Directors in governing Santa's toward a strong and successful future!

The Birthday Recognition Program Continued from page 2...

The 'soft & cuddly' gifts were given to our less-able residents—who doesn't like a cute little stuffed animal? And all presented with a card in a nice gift bag—a quality program, for sure!

We're a very large facility and many who live in this part of the city do not have the resources (funds or family) to provide such a meaningful gift. Too often we find that many of our residents are pension-poor and without nearby family or friends. We will continue to provide our monthly birthday party and consider what other resources are available to provide gifts for our residents.

We look forward to our next 'rotation' and the '07 Christmas season!

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Attention Corporate Santas Site Coordinators!

We would like to hear from you. From the perspective of someone who is the key contact for a large group of Secret Santas: What works? What can improve? How can we reach out and meaningfully recognize the generous efforts of your group? Would there be interest among the leaders of your corporation and/or enlisted Santas to support our Birthday Recognition program? In the near future, Trina will be randomly contacting Site Coordinators to discuss some of these questions. Thank you in advance for your consideration!

Kindness...

is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

~Mark Twain~

We believe that Santa's Secret Service is fortunate to know some of the kindest folks in Calgary...

THANK YOU volunteers, donors, and all partners in '*The Secret is Sharing!*'

See You at
the Casino!

Application to the provincial government allocated gaming proceeds continues to be a source of funding that Santa's relies upon for year-round operations. **Please support us in this important fundraising endeavour!**

Our casino is scheduled to take place at Casino Calgary (1420 Meridian Road NE) on November 23th (Friday) and 24th (Saturday). We are in need of cashiers, chip runners, and count room volunteers, for daytime (10:30 am to 7:30 pm) and evening (7:00 pm to close) shifts.

It is a fun way to meet other Santa's volunteers and support our mission throughout the year. Training is provided. **Please contact Stella at 240-2853 for more information.**

Membership in Santa's Secret Service Society

Our thanks go out to many of you who have already stepped forward to become an official member of Santa's Secret Service. If you have not done so already, you should know that there are many advantages to membership—you can cast your vote at the Annual General Meeting, remain updated on news/events related to our organization and become eligible to volunteer for any of the positions at the casino.

It's easy to become a member—you must be 18 years of age or older, there is no cost, and all you have to do is send a note in the mail (to the address listed at the top of this page) or send an email to coordinator@santassecretservice.com outlining the following personal information:

Name
Address (including postal code)
Phone numbers (residence, business, and/or cell phone)
Email address

Please note that this information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

Thank you for taking the time to declare your dedication to Santa's mission—to *enhance the quality of life for isolated seniors.*