

# The Secret is Sharing



Santa's Secret Service

[www.santasecretservice.com](http://www.santasecretservice.com)

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Fall 2009 | Newsletter



## Santa's Secret Service board members

Cindy Chambers, President  
Rick Black, Vice President  
Stella Parisien, Treasurer  
Lorine Stevens, Secretary  
Kari Garlock, Director  
Kelly Laverty, Director  
Judy Mahaffy, Director

# Cheer All Year Launch Celebration

It was once said that "teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success", and this equation certainly applies to the official launch event of Cheer All Year on June 2nd. During Seniors' Week, this memorable event would not have been possible without the involvement of several organizations that are committed to the well-being of seniors in our community.

First and foremost, Santa's Secret Service would not be able to offer Cheer All Year birthday gifts to 2248 isolated seniors if not for the sponsorship of Meyers Norris Penny (MNP). One of the largest accountancy and business advisory firms in Canada, MNP staff and management is dedicated to making a

lasting impact on the success of Cheer All Year, with the contribution of both funding and volunteer resources. As a result, staff members were integral in the planning and implementation of the launch event.

Our planning committee approached Metropolitan Calgary Foundation (MCF) Housing for Seniors, Aspen Lodge, to determine if the management at this facility would be willing to host our event. Not only were they willing, but the staff and residents of the lodge were exceptionally gracious and enthusiastic hosts, going above and beyond to create a beautiful and festive atmosphere.

▼ *continued on page 2*

## In this issue:

Cheer All Year  
Launch Celebration

Singing our Praises

Have YOUR  
Voice Heard

Birthday gift  
donations

Birthday Surprise!

Helping to Spread  
Cheer All Year

2009 Christmas  
Season Timeline

Santa's Gift Sort

Did you know...



*Cheer All Year Launch Celebration continued from page one*

Volunteers gathered everything needed to create a traditional birthday party to herald the beginning of the Cheer All Year program. Our guests enjoyed bright balloons, tasty cake and even goodie bags as they departed the event. Hearts On A String, a fantastic musical trio, sang golden oldies and "Happy Birthday", as senior volunteer, Helen, performed the ceremonial cake cutting.

Several dignitaries made time in their busy schedules to join us for the event. Alderman Joe Connelly spoke brilliantly on the history and importance of Santa's Secret Service in the Calgary community,

donning hats to illustrate our growth from Christmas to birthday giving. Alderman Joe Ceci was also present, as well as representatives from Deepak Obhrai's and Wayne Cao's offices. Lauren Rendle (Wellness Nurse for Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta) and Lauren Ingalls (Executive Director for MCF Housing for Seniors) spoke poignantly about the significant impact of Santa's Secret Service programs on the seniors they serve.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the successful launch of Cheer All Year!



## Singing our Praises at Santa's Secret Service Annual General Meeting

On September 10th, our AGM will be held at the Cantos Music Foundation ([www.cantos.ca](http://www.cantos.ca)), which hosts an amazing collection of musical instruments and offers a number of engaging programs to our community. The keynote speaker is Jennifer Buchanan, nationally recognized speaker and owner of JB Music Therapy ([www.jbmusic.ca](http://www.jbmusic.ca)). Jennifer will entertain and inspire us, as well as touch our hearts and minds with stories of music and its impact on seniors. A fitting end to the evening will be an opportunity to participate in a short tour of the Cantos Music Collection, led by knowledgeable Cantos staff.

DATE:  
September 10th, 2009

LOCATION:  
Cantos Music Foundation,  
134 11th Avenue SE, Calgary

TIME:  
6:00 PM

We hope you will join us!  
Please call 403.257.8339 or email Trina at [coordinator@santassecretservice.com](mailto:coordinator@santassecretservice.com) to confirm your attendance.



## Helping to Spread Cheer All Year

Birthday gift donations are gratefully accepted at any time throughout the year. If you would like to purchase and package a gift for a senior, please follow these guidelines:

### **Ladies' Toiletry Gift Bag**

Facial tissue, 2-in-1 shampoo, body wash, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrush, lip balm, bath puff

### **Men's Toiletry Gift bag**

Facial tissue, 2-in-1 shampoo, deodorant, body wash, facecloth, razor, shaving cream, aftershave, toothpaste, toothbrush

### **Treat Gift Bag**

Large-print puzzle book, pen, cookies, scotch mints, chocolate, mug, herbal tea and/or instant coffee

### **Diabetic Treat Gift Bag**

Large-print puzzle book, pen, sugar-free candy, sugar-free cookies, sugar-free chocolate mug, herbal tea and/or instant coffee

### **Purchasing and Packaging Guidelines**

- DO ensure that all gift items are new and unused
- DO be aware of expiry dates on food items
- DO NOT include low-quality toiletries, for example, products purchased at a dollar store (these have been known to be harsh many senior's sensitive skin)
- DO ensure gift items are placed in a birthday gift bag with tissue paper on top
- DO NOT include your personal name, information or photos
- DO sign cards and letters "from Santa's Birthday Elf"
- DO tie a content information tag to the handle in order to identify the type of gift



If you're receiving this newsletter, it's likely that you have supported our organization in some way, whether as a volunteer or donor. We hope that you'll take your important commitment one step further and consider becoming a member of Santa's Secret Service Society of Alberta.

Members of Santa's Secret Service are given the opportunity to shape the direction of the organization, vote on changes, elect the new board, and provide approval or voice concerns. Membership is free, and comes with the knowledge and privilege of making a difference in the lives of isolated seniors in our community.

Many volunteers are not aware that they can make an even greater impact to Santa's by becoming a member. You're already familiar with what we do and the seniors we serve. As a member, you can have a significant impact in the continued growth of Santa's Secret Service. We invite you to become a member today, so that you can have a say in how our organization grows over the coming year.

Contact [coordinator@santassecretservice.com](mailto:coordinator@santassecretservice.com) or call 403-257-8339.



*"She explained to me  
that she doesn't even  
remember the last time  
she was given a gift  
for her birthday."*

## Birthday Surprise!

We recently received the following note from one of our care provider partners...

I just wanted to share a story about what your generous organization does for our residents who do not have family or friends nearby or none at all. I am a recreation attendant so it was my job to give this resident her birthday gift, I entered her room and started in with the happy birthday song at which time I handed her the gift with her name on it. Tears in her eyes and the shock on her face was so touching she explained to me that she doesn't even remember the last time she was given a gift for her birthday, and asked if this was truly for her. I said yes, of course it's for you, enjoy and I wished her well. As part of my job I invited her to a music program, and explained I would be back in 15 minutes to bring her she agreed, when I later returned she explained to me that she can't come with me to music as she wanted to sit in her room and look over her present and appreciate everything in the bag and those tears were still in her eyes which brought me to tears. She was just so thankful. This was an amazing moment for me to see that smile on someone's face. Thank you all who are a part of this organization. Your generosities are truly appreciated by those who receive. God Bless.

**Kaja Henriksen**  
*Bethany Care Society*

## Santa's Gift Sort

In February 2009, our office relocated to a much smaller warehouse space necessitating creative scheduling for the 2009 Christmas gift season. As such, we will be conducting two gift sorts this year, one on Saturday, November 21st and the other on Saturday, December 5th. If you would like to be a volunteer elf for one of these dates, please contact Trina at [coordinator@santassecretservice.com](mailto:coordinator@santassecretservice.com) or call 403.257.8339.

**Please note: OUR OFFICE IS NOW LOCATED IN SOUTHEAST CALGARY!**

Our new address is **#8, 1235-64 Avenue S.E.**  
(a few blocks north of Deerfoot Meadows)



#8 1235 - 64th Ave. S.E.  
Calgary, AB T2H 2J7  
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Santa's Secret Service

# Cheer all year

Want to help the Cheer All Year Program but don't have any time? Here's a way you could be a terrific help with just one phone call.

We're looking for a contact in the retail industry that could provide us the items we place into the birthday bags at cost, or a very small mark-up.

The key is that we are not asking for a donation, we are prepared to pay. We just want a good deal. Total purchases are over \$20,000 per year for items such as body wash, deodorant, cookies, puzzle books, etc.

If you have a contact, please call Trina at 403.257.8339. Thanks for your help!



Santa's Secret  
Service 2009

## Christmas Season Timeline

- **September 25** - Deadline for volunteer Secret Santa sign-up
- **September 25** - Deadline for senior recipient nominations
- **October 9** - Distribution of senior profiles to Secret Santas
- **To Be Announced** - Deadline for gift drop-off at Santa's warehouse and participating Calgary Police Service District Offices
- **November 21st & December 5th** - Santa's Secret Service's Gift Sorts
- **November 23rd to December 18th** - Gifts delivered to all participating care provider agencies and organizations

## Did You know?

Santa's Secret Service is now able to accept donations through CanadaHelps? This online non-profit organization was created to make giving simple. Not only is the process easy to follow, it's also secure and convenient. Donors can designate what their funds will be used for and what personal information (if any) is given, and provide special instructions. Dedicate your donation as a gift or in memory of a loved one. For more information, go to [www.santassecretservice.com/donate/](http://www.santassecretservice.com/donate/) and click on the CanadaHelps.org link. Thank you!

