

## 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



VCN's AGM was held on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 on the second floor of the Woodward's Heritage Building. The meeting reached quorum with 4 board members, 7 staff, 2 volunteers, and 17 regular members.

### Highlights of 2014-15:

- Long-time Board Chair, Jim Sayre, sadly passed away in August 2015 after a long battle with cancer. VCN will move forward with the values and goals he instilled. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.
- In 2015, VCN connected 1000+ people to our WiFi networks across the city.
- VCN showed appreciation to our volunteers at the AGM. The leadership team, headed by Chris Chanhsamone, mentored and provided work experience to over 30 volunteers.
- A social enterprise strategy, known as VCN Innovation Labs, was developed and launched this past year to provide low-cost technical services through VCN's tech|team and web|team.
- Refurbished laptops for \$25 annual lease are available to members.
- Canada Helps' fundraising campaign raised money to keep VCN's programs available to the community.
- This past year saw a significant increase in new and renewing memberships.
- Telus commissioned a short film on the Street Messaging System and awarded \$10,000 in funds to advance the Street Messaging System.
- In participation of 2015 Homelessness Action Week, The City of Vancouver awarded a grant to hold a series of community consultations to feed into the development process of the Street Messaging System.
- VCN partnered with Lu'ma to offer Community Voice Mail for people who are homeless, phoneless, in crisis, and/or in transition.
- VCN submitted a bid to the City of Vancouver for more space in the Woodward's building. We are currently engaged with the opportunity to be a lead tenant in the 312 Main redevelopment project as a Tech and Innovation Centre envisioned for the community.

## LONG TIME BOARD MEMBER, TRAVIS KEYWORTH, RESIGNS

At the end of this AGM, we had to say good-bye to long time Board Member - Treasurer Travis Keyworth.

He joined VCN in July 2009. For 7 years Travis used his accounting designation and skills to guide the society with his eye to strategic planning and financial management.

He will be sorely missed and we thank him for his years of devotion to social justice and digital literacy!



## SUCCESS STORY: GLORIA CARRILLO, FOUNDER OF PAYING IT FORWARD TO MOTHER EARTH FOOD TRUCK



Carrillo is a mother, an award-winning chef, community organizer, and activist, as well as founder of Paying It Forward to Mother Earth Food Truck Program, Pachamama's Natural Rights, and Quinoa's Ambassador.

When she discovered VCN, Carrillo was living out of her van, without permanent housing, and moving from shelter to shelter. She would commute from a women's shelter in Surrey to the Downtown Eastside to the Woodward's Building to access VCN's computers and services Monday to Friday.

Over the last several months, VCN witnessed remarkable progress with Carrillo's project despite being faced with what seemed like insurmountable odds. Carrillo's resilience and tenacity coupled with VCN's resources has helped to further her personal and professional goals.

Through the difficult months, VCN staff particularly Executive Director Tracey Axelsson, supported Carrillo in moving forward with her dreams. With limited resources, Carrillo utilized VCN's web|team services to create her own website to spread her vision.



From editing materials to providing input on a business plan, developing and updating website content, assisting with a crowd-funding campaign, and emotional support, Axelsson and VCN staff have strived to encourage Gloria in her work. She says, *“The assistance of the volunteers and staff at VCN have been absolutely very supportive, I don’t think there is any place like this in the whole city.”*

When asked the ways in which VCN helped in her mission, Gloria replies: *“How one could not be happy this organization’s breadth of empowerment.”*

*In my eyes, VCN truly represents the Canadian spirit. That the Canadian Government and sponsors should recognize that VCN truly works to empower spirit and minds... they are very supportive and they don't hold back.”*

**Read Gloria’s full story here:** <http://www2.vcn.bc.ca/success-story-carrillo/>

## **VOLUNTEER, PAY DUES and/or DONATE TO VCN**

As VCN approaches its 23<sup>rd</sup> year of operation, help to keep VCN’s open and inclusive program by donating what you can - including your time! We are continuing to seek volunteers who speak Aramaic, Farsi, Kurdish, or Arabic to help with the resettlement of thousands of refugees.

To volunteer, please fill out our online form:  
<http://volunteer.vcn.bc.ca/apply/>

Remember VCN counts on you to either pay your yearly membership (\$25) and/or make a donation helps us to support the entire system. Please commit to keeping this valuable resource available into the future!



Please give: <http://www2.vcn.bc.ca/get-involved/donate/>