

# RIGHT TO FOOD ZINE

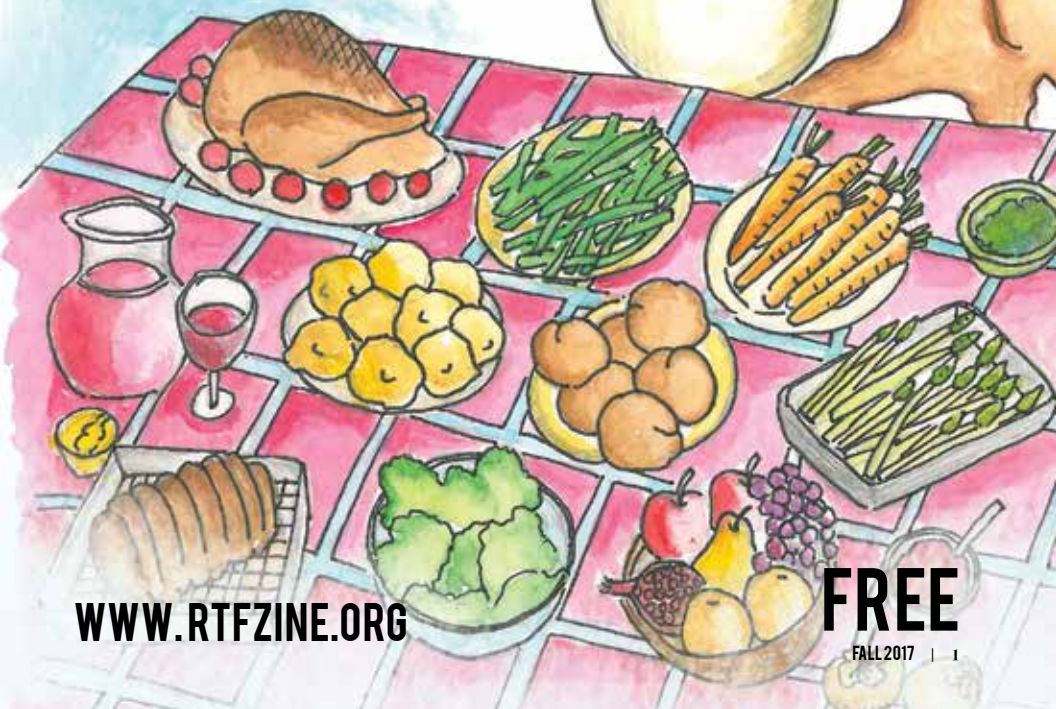
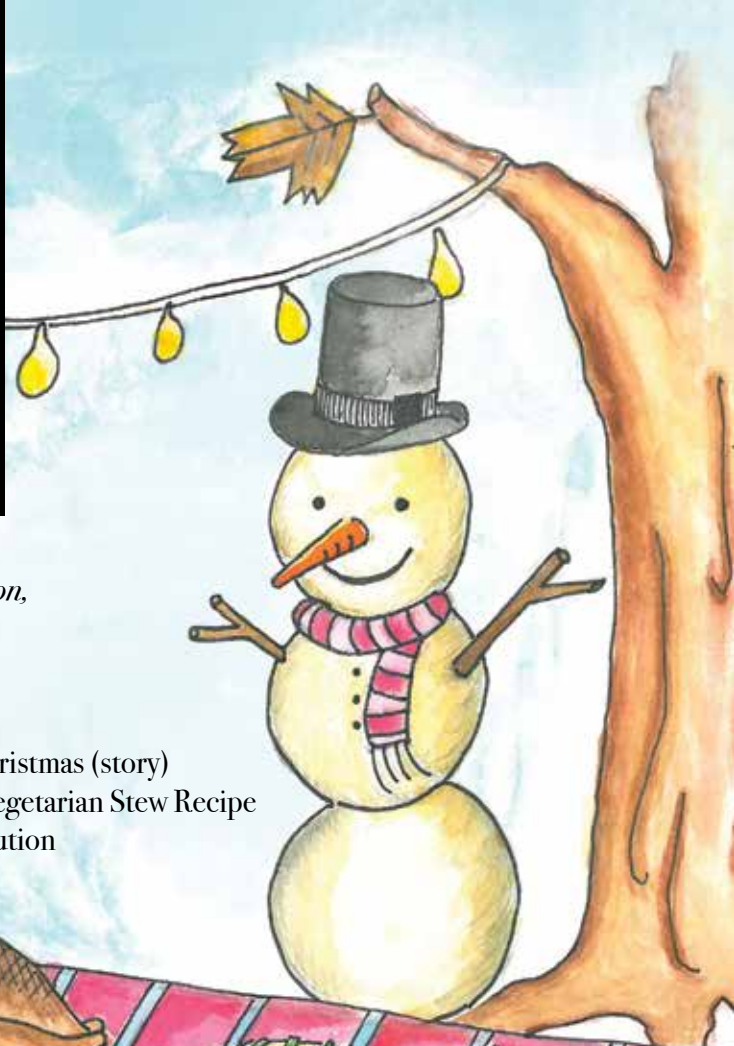
Winter 2017/18

-VOL.18-

*"Winter is not a season,  
it's a celebration."*

— Anamika Mishra

- Why I Farm
- A Snowman At Christmas (story)
- Healthy Winter Vegetarian Stew Recipe
- Coffee Cup Revolution
- ... and many more.



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**FREE**

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© *Binnars Project*; photographer: Lani Brunn-Johnson,  
Hendrick Beune's Article: *Coffee Cup Revolution* on page 16

## RIGHT TO FOOD ZINE

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# OUR MANDATE

The Right to Food zine's mission is to promote the human right to food that is healthy, nutritious, affordable, and presented with dignity. Our voices reflect the diversity that is the Downtown Eastside. Our articles, research, and recipes speak to the DTES residents, social justice groups and beyond. We inform our readers, while fostering the desire to know more and to become more engaged. As part of the DTES community, we strive to be a tool for community building.

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

*“To keep a warm heart in winter is the real victory.” – Marty Rubin*

We dedicate this issue to Carol White, the ED at the DTES Neighbourhood House, who is recovering from hip surgery. Carol has been a champion supporter of the Zine for the past few years, generously offering advice and ideas gleaned from her lengthy experience working with non-profits. And a hearty welcome to Joanna Webber, Carol’s temporary replacement.

Groups and individuals who purchase the DTES NH holiday basket shown on the back cover provide income for the operation’s many activities, including free vegetarian meals twice weekly, family drop-in, kid’s kitchen, Chinese Elders, and many other community gatherings.

There’s a range of articles in this issue, including a compelling short story called “The Snowman at Christmas” by our guest writer-of-many hats, dm gillis, with themes of madness, defiance, bravery, and sacrifice. Matt Kyriakides, our soil expert who is currently pursuing his Masters degree in Holland, reveals his passion for farming. Lauren Brown, the Food Security Coordinator at SCC, warms our winter hearts with celebrations of light in this season of darkness. Shannon Hecker informs us of her recent celiac diagnosis and how she is meeting its challenges. Shannon also recaps her exhilarating experience following the Wild Salmon Caravan in October. My Google research about celiac and non-gluten diets shows a disturbing increase in the disease along with a 15 billion dollar per year burgeoning food fad. Our intrepid coffee cup collector, Hendrik Beune (see the photo inside front cover), explains how the Binners Project is working to reclaim the over two million polycoat paper cups collected in Vancouver’s garbage each week.

Finally, we’re pleased to publish two pieces by UBC social work students doing a practicum at the NH. Jocelyn Gould provides a body-warming winter stew recipe, and Elijah Robinson researches Inuit teen suicide showing its relationship to their dependence on typical North American diets, which have replaced their traditional Arctic food sources.

Despite so many alarming geopolitical events ricocheting around the world this past year, let’s also notice the small, positive efforts to improve life for all beings.



*Stan Shaffer*  
RTF ZINE EDITOR



# WHY I FARM

BY *Matthew Kryiakides*

**F**arming is, on the surface, a pretty raw deal. The work is tough and dirty, the pay is low, the physical risks are high and the profession unglamorous. Work for small-scale organic farmers is especially tough, as they rely on physical labour and a “whole systems” approach to take the place of chemical fertilizers and biocides. They are also in competition with distant industrial farming operations that are able to drive down the prices through overproduction, massive supply chains, government subsidies and cheap migrant labour. Farmers work long hours through all conditions to grow vegetables that can easily be bought for a fraction of the price at the local supermarket. So why do I bother farming?

**I like the work.** Gardening is in my bones. I come from a long line of gardeners and can feel the love for plants and soil pulsing within me. Farming connects and strengthens my body, mind and heart together. Not all days are positive; sometimes I cannot wait to go to sleep and forget about the grueling futility of a series of tasks gone awry. Yet, somehow, I always return to the magic of the fields. It is a cycle that I cannot quit.

Working with life is humbling and a great responsibility: looking up at the approach of a hummingbird, feeling the wet ground between my toes, sticking my finger in the soil to gauge its moisture, fluffing up the earth at the base of a newly transplanted sunflower. Like the garden itself, the tasks and skills required are always varied. I might build a trellis, run a tiller, harvest pounds of salad greens, mend irrigation holes and plant a row of peas in a single day. I cannot afford to be neglectful or absent minded when caring for the garden’s creatures; **beautifully, the more I care for them, the more they care for me in turn.** The boundaries between us start to crumble in the rich garden soil.

**Farming is healing.** Living consciously as part of nature’s cycles is sorely lacking in much of present society. Urban dwellers barely ever see the full night sky, hear bird song, or watch butterflies flit by. The city can be such an overwhelming place that most of us have to cut ourselves off by necessity (myself included). **We move from destination to destination with blinders on without fully experiencing the world around us.** This does not hold true for all of us, but I have taken enough public transit to guess that this is often the case.

I have found so much healing amongst the weeds and  
beneath the great trees lining the fields I have worked in.

.....

This is why I farm – to reach for the stars while  
keeping my feet planted firmly in the earth.

The garden offers a wholly different way of engaging with life. I believe that many of our present illnesses (both mental and physical) can be traced back to a lack of connection with nutritious food and healthy space. I am not trying to say that all the world’s problems could be solved if we planted kale, but I can speak from my own experience of the regenerative and therapeutic effects of slowing down and growing alongside the garden. **I have found so much healing amongst the weeds and beneath the great trees lining the fields I have worked in.** I think the garden could be of great service to many people struggling with depression and other illnesses, combined with time spent in the forests, mountains and beaches of wild nature. Farming is heart work, indeed.

**Farming is necessary.** I cannot think of any other occupation in this world that can provide people with all they need to live, build healthy soil, and care for the habitats we live in. Not all farms reach this goal, but the potential is there. I do not agree with the grim assertion that the best humanity can do is remove ourselves from the natural world. This is going against billions of years of mutual growth leading to this point, and is misanthropic to boot.

We must be able to blend “wildness” and “domestication” in a way that encourages life to thrive in all of its forms.

Farmers are resilient by definition; they adjust from season to season and crop to crop, always paying attention to the subtle variables that promote growth. As the world descends into escalating environmental, health, and political crises, this resilience will be needed more than ever to nourish and heal our populations. The money may not be great but the lifestyle can lessen one’s dependence on the markets, and the benefits are far too many to list. Well-grown food and the people who grow it are at the foundation of resilient communities, which food trucked from fields 3000 kilometers away will never be able to replace. The land can be a potent source of medicine and healing for our troubled times.

Growing food will be near the center of whatever path I may take. The future I dream of has regenerative agriculture at its core, without hierarchy or war. The skills and love of farming will be widely shared and the apathy generated by consumptive urban living absent. **This is why I farm – to reach for the stars while keeping my feet planted firmly in the earth.**



# A SNOWMAN AT CHRISTMAS

STORY & PHOTOS BY  
*dm gillis*

**T**he snowman smiled. He was driving a '72 Lincoln with the windows down and the A/C on full. He smoked Kools and drank frosty cold cans of beer. The Stones played on the eight track. It was December 24th.

The Voice was speaking to him. It had been all afternoon. It was the same Voice he'd been hearing since he'd opened his bottle-cap eyes and walked off of the abandoned lot of his birth. The Voice had told him to steal the car. It was nameless. The one that whispered. Sometimes it even spoke backward, as though in tongues. Now it was saying, "Smoke, drink and drive fast, for snowmen melt

sooner rather than later. We have seen the future, and you are not a part of it."

The snowman accelerated, his wide white frosty foot on the pedal. The speedometer ticking toward 75 mph. Too fast for a snowy, winding rural road. It was 5 pm. The snow-coated dirt farms, billboards and Christmas lit road houses flew by. The crows on road kill flew off in chaotic murders. The tape deck hissed and played *Tumbling Dice*.

He speeded through a highway intersection where a semi had run into the ditch. The driver waved for the Lincoln to stop, but the Voice said drive on.

The landscape rolled in the gentle way of a prairie. The sky darkened. There

were stars and a moon. The Stones tape ended. The snowman pulled it from the deck, and threw it out of the window. He put in John Lee Hooker. Boom Boom came bluesy over the speakers as the snowman observed for the first time an orange glow coming from over the next rise in the road. A glow that distinguished itself oddly from the expanse of cold, dark winter night.

**A snowman has no word for dread.**

And if dread was what he felt in that moment, it was a feeling accentuated by speed, beer and nicotine.

He slowed the Lincoln as the road began to run down into a hollow where a homestead had stood next to a creek for a hundred years. A large white house in flames. He could see, as he approached, a small knot of people standing in the yard, watching. One of them, a woman, ran frantically from one spectator to another, her arms raised. Her clenched fists in her hair, pulling.

“Keep driving,” the Voice said. “We have seen what passes here, and you have no part in it.”

But the snowman slowed even more as he approached the driveway that lead off of the road. He pulled over, killed the engine and turned off the headlights. Then he lit another cigarette. He felt the uncomfortable heat of the blaze. “That’s one hell of a thing,” he said blowing smoke.

“Drive on,” said the Voice.

The snowman’s hand was going for the keys in the ignition when he saw a man run out of a shed with a ladder. The man placed the ladder against the house beneath a window and began to climb. It was the only window not issuing

flame. But as he neared it, there was an explosion of fire. The man fell two storeys to the ground.

“Sandra,” the woman yelled louder. “Somebody please do something, for God sake. My daughter....”

But there was nothing anyone could do. All of the windows and doorways spewed flame. By now, it must have been the same on all sides of the house. They could only watch. The woman took a desperate run at the open door at the top of the porch, but was driven back by the heat. The others pulled her away and held her down. From far off in the distance, there came the faint sound of a siren, still a mile or more away.

The snowman stepped out of the car. He paused and watched. Someone still in the house. A child, maybe.

“Don’t,” said the Voice.

But the snowman didn’t listen. He walked slowly at first, then faster. Then he began to run toward the house.

“You’ll perish,” the Voice said. “You’ll melt before you even get to the door.”

“But there’s so much of me,” said the snowman. “I may not melt so fast.”

When he got to the people in the yard, he said, “Who? Where?”

They stared back at him, bewildered. A large, white grim-faced man of snow. But the woman stopped struggling and gasped, “Second floor. Third room on the right. My God, she’s only six. She can’t save herself.”

The snowy yard was orange and red, reflecting the colours of the firestorm. Water dripped down his forehead.

“You’re melting even now,” said the Voice.

“There’s enough of me,” the snowman said. The people saw him talking to himself. “I won’t melt all at once. If I move fast, and she is easy to find....”

**“I gave you life,” said the Voice. “You’ve no business doing this.”**

“Please,” the woman said.

“These people don’t care about you,” said the Voice. “Get in the car and drive. The night is cold and full.”

The snowman stopped thinking about it. He sprinted toward the house, up the stairs and into the flames through the front door. Inside everything glowed. A once decorated tree in a corner of the main room crackled and snapped. The heat was overwhelming. He felt himself melting, maybe faster than he imagined he would. He turned this way and that, and finally saw the staircase leading up. He ran for it, and ascended to the second floor. Third room on the right. There it was. He entered and saw no one. The flames were finished with the window curtains and were running up the walls and consuming the closet door. He felt himself becoming smaller. For the first time in his short existence, he felt weak and disoriented.

“Sandra,” he called. But all he heard at first was the snarl of flame. “Sandra, please. I know you’re scared....”

“Help me,” he heard a little voice say. “Help me.”

“Tell me where you are.”

“I’m under the bed.”

The bed, of course. He saw it smoking, and then turn to flame. Quickly he crouched and reached underneath. There was a tiny hand. He grasped it and pulled. A little girl with singed hair wearing a

flannel nightgown came out. She held a smoking, half scorched teddy bear.

“Hey, you’re a snowman,” she said. And began to cough.

He pulled her close, stood up and ran. He was thawing fast. His legs felt weak, and there were still the stairs ahead of them. In the hall, the ceiling crumbled and fell. **The girl was a small, coughing ball of humanity in his dissolving arms.** The stairs gave way beneath him as he descended, and only by moving over them very fast did he avoid falling through.

The first floor was so fully engulfed, he finally knew he wouldn’t make it. Even the floor glowed a blackish charcoal red. He sprinted for the door as his legs and arms disappeared. What was left of him fell out of the fiery front door and onto the porch.

Frantically, the people in the yard rushed up the stairs, shielding themselves from the heat. They found the little girl covered in slush, grabbed her and ran, leaving behind some bottle caps, a wet book of matches and a soggy half empty deck of cigarettes.

Her mother cried and hugged her little girl.

“Did you see the snowman,” Sandra asked. Then pointed and smiled at a star falling across the sky.

The roar of flames and the sirens of the approaching fire trucks ruined the quiet of what might have been a nearly silent night.

“Snowmen are damn fools,” said the Voice. But no one heard.



# HEALTHY WINTER VEGETARIAN STEW RECIPE

BY JOCELYN GOULD

It can often be difficult to find a meal that is healthy, affordable, delicious, easy to make and with accessible ingredients. Many meals that are delicious and affordable lack important nutritional value, and similarly, many meals that are nutritious and delicious can be quite costly. The recipe provided below can be made using just one sauce pan (or two, if you'd like to add an egg). It is easily made in around 30 minutes. It is packed with calcium, vitamin C and iron, and there is an impressive 28 grams of protein from the beans, eggs and kale. This vegetarian dish, a perfect stew for the winter season, will leave you feeling full and satisfied, while being delicious, healthy and affordable. The recipe below makes enough stew for 4 big servings, and the ingredients to make this meal cost about \$10 total.



All of the ingredients can be purchased at Sunrise Market, which is a family-owned and operated grocery store located in the Downtown Eastside at 300 Powell Street. Sunrise Market is easily accessible for individuals living near and in the Vancouver Downtown Eastside. Sunrise Market offers a wide range of produce, meat, dairy, packaged goods and seasonal items, at very reasonable prices.

## RECIPE

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 small red onion, chopped
- Two 15-ounce cans kidney or pinto beans, one can drained and rinsed, one can liquid reserved
- 1 1/2 cups (preferably low-sodium) chicken or vegetable broth
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- Salt and ground black pepper
- 1 bunch kale, stemmed and torn into 2-inch pieces (about 10 cups)
- 4 large eggs (optional)
- 4 slices whole-grain bread
- 2 ounces sharp Cheddar, grated (about 1/3 cup)
- Hot sauce, for serving (optional)

Preheat broiler. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring, until soft (for about 4 minutes). Add the beans and reserved bean liquid, chicken broth, soy sauce, 1/2 teaspoon salt and a few grinds of black pepper. Bring to a simmer, add the kale and stir until wilted, bring back to a simmer and cook until the kale is tender and the stew is slightly thickened (for about 15 minutes). Remove from the heat, cover and keep warm.

Top each slice of bread with cheese and broil until melted.

Divide the stew among four bowls, top each with a fried egg (optional) and serve with a piece of cheese toast. For an extra kick of flavour, serve with hot sauce.

# A DISEASE AND A FOOD FAD: CELIAC AND GLUTEN-FREE DIETS

BY STAN SHAFFER

- The Greek doctor Aretaeus first described celiac disease in A.D. 100. When his extant works were first published in Latin in 1552 the Greek word for abdominal, *koliaki*, was transcribed to celiac.
- Humans have cultivated wheat for some 10,000 years, but as is the case with so many popular crops, the number of varieties we used to grow and consume has been reduced to those few that are commercially viable.
- Although many autoimmune diseases are thought to result from an interplay of genetic and environmental components, celiac is the only one for which the environmental trigger is actually known. It is gluten, as well as hordein and secalin, the homologous protein components of barley and rye. For the sake of convenience, foods labeled “gluten-free” are free of these proteins as well. But foods labeled “wheat-free” may still contain them, so these foods are not necessarily gluten-free. Furthermore, some gluten-free products can be higher in fat, calories, sugar and sodium, so be sure to read the labels carefully.
- Non-celiac gluten sensitivity, also known as “celiac-lite,” presents with similar symptoms to celiac disease. It is a relatively new condition without an established definition. It is neither celiac disease nor a wheat allergy, but it does cause symptoms when gluten-containing foods are eaten.
- According to experts, the number of people going gluten-free outnumbers the number of people who truly have a problem tolerating gluten. Roughly 29 percent of American adults are cutting down or avoiding gluten in their diets, according to The NPD Group.
- Gluten-free products have increased 63% over the last two years, according to Mintel, a market research company. They estimate \$10.5 billion was spent on gluten-free products in 2015 and predict it will reach \$15.6 in 2016.
- The last decade has brought us gluten-free phone apps, gluten-free cookbooks, gluten-free pizza delivery, portable gluten-testers, gluten-free meal delivery, and, of course, gluten-free supplements.
- It’s estimated that in the U.S. approximately 1 in 100 people have celiac disease. The prevalence of non-celiac gluten sensitivity is not established but may be significantly higher. Only about 17% of people with celiac disease have been diagnosed.



# NEIGHBOURHOOD CELEBRATIONS BRING LIGHT TO DARK DAYS OF WINTER AT SCC

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BY LAUREN BROWN

STRATHCONA COMMUNITY CENTRE FOOD SECURITY COORDINATOR

The rain is tapping persistently on the roof and the wind is shoving trees this way and that. Autumn's crisp and sunny days have turned soggy and dark as we approach winter, but these external forces seem to facilitate more warmth and connections between us than the loose days of summer.

During these dreary months, our city is lit by community and celebration. Just as the rains descended upon Vancouver in October, the Strathcona Backpack Program Leadership Committee hosted their third annual World Food Day Celebration. The event was opened by Victoria Bull with a traditional land acknowledgment and it was closed by Allan Williams with a circle dance and hand drum song. Aubrey Sixto brought a tropical breeze into the room with his bright and playful steel drums, and the Arts, Health and Seniors group entertained us with a hand-made puppet show. The planning committee was composed of community members collaborating to access Neighbourhood Small Grants funding, engage partner organizations and businesses, bake pies, and recruit peers to perform and run activities. Because of these efforts, more than 200 people came together to celebrate their community!

The celebrations continue through the fall and winter with events such as Diwali, Halloween, Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanza, and various New Year and Lunar New Year events. Groups across the city host activities that bring light to the dark days of winter and create space for neighbours to celebrate together. Here are some fun upcoming events in our neighbourhood this fall and winter:

- **November 25:** Winter Craft Fair (Strathcona Community Centre, \$2 admission)
- **December 2:** Breakfast with Santa (Strathcona Community Centre, \$5/ family of 4)
- **December 21:** Winter Solstice Lantern Festival (in Strathcona and near-by neighbourhoods, check [www.secretlantern.org](http://www.secretlantern.org) for more details)

Just as a lamp glows more beautifully during the night than the day, celebrations warm the soul more during the dark days of winter than other times of the year. **Whether you join existing community events or create your own gatherings, may you find warmth, connections and community this winter.**

# THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS – CHALLENGES AND GAPS IN THE CHARITY FOOD MODEL

BY CAROL WHITE, UPDATED BY MIKE DUBELKO

During to criticize the traditional expressions of charity by giving food and meals during the holiday season may be seen by some as Grinch-like. It is hard not to come off sounding like a Scrooge or even worse, anti-Canadian. Canadians have a long tradition of giving food hampers and seasonal meals in December. The Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House is no exception. Our seasonal fundraising drive is anchored by the sales of a holiday Gift Basket made up of locally-sourced not-for-profit enterprise goods, along with products and produce from local East Vancouver suppliers.

Local schools and other neighbourhood houses often gear up for these events weeks in advance.

**In the DTES the abundance of free turkey and holiday dinners available in the weeks prior to the holidays is unfortunately followed by a relative famine afterward. There seems to be no planning by those same organizations that provide the pre-holiday abundance to help people in mid-January when they are often without any food.**

Exacerbating this, BC Provincial assistance cheques are issued during the week of December 20th when meals are plentiful, but not again until the week of January 20th. DTES residents endure

five long, cold weeks with no money in their pockets and no means to buy food. In past years, there have been time and location lists published for the days leading up to Christmas showing where and when holiday meals will be served to the community.\*

**In some locations, there are three full turkey meals per day during the week leading up to Christmas Eve, but on Christmas day very few meals are offered.**

DTES organizations have proven that we work well together to support food and health by creating projects and holding events such as Homeground, the Alley Health Fair and the Family Fair. Many not-for-profits that provide free or inexpensive food services remain dependent on those who contribute time and money, and these contributions are often concentrated in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Because of this concentration, our ability to manage and provide for in the post-holiday slump is diminished.

Another flaw in the charity model is in the distribution of food during the Christmas and holiday season. For the recipient, this typically involves extremely long line-ups with little or no choice of food and no guarantee of when it will be available. While the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House offers programs to scale with meal options that include

fresh organic foods, we admit that we too are much embedded in the traditional charity model. We provide a winter feast around mid-January to fill the big gap post-Christmas food and have taken some small steps to change this model, such as advocating for better food options, providing community kitchens, and bringing awareness about food security, the environment, and social justice.

According to the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition website, of the five things we should know about poverty in BC, two stand out. First, BC is rated as “one of the most generous provinces in Canada when comparing the average percentage of income we donate to charity.” This seems especially true when we witness international crises. Second, the cost of poverty in BC is about nine billion dollars per year, when considering health care and criminal justice costs and loss of productivity. And the cost of a poverty reduction strategy? Estimates range as high as three billion dollars— and how should we spend this three billion? I will leave you with these words from the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition:

*“Poverty is an underlying social determinant of ill health, so all of the other objectives will have a direct impact on improving the health of low-income people. That said, government provision of essential health services and community health care—home care, home support, assisted living, long-term care, and community mental health services— should be enhanced and expanded. These services are particularly important to lower-income seniors (mainly women) and to people with physical and mental disabilities, and the people who provide these services are primarily low-wage women (a majority of whom are recent immigrants).”*

## Some positive news and hope for the future

**Trish Garner**, community organizer for the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, was recently named a member of Social Development Minister Shane Simpson’s 27-member advisory forum, which is designed to help shape BC’s first Poverty Reduction strategy. She is a founding member of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, as well as the co-author of the ground-breaking Poverty Reduction Strategy formulated by the Coalition. The Right to Food Zine extends our congratulations and best wishes to her for success in helping guide the new government to create much needed legislation which will benefit all British Columbians, especially those living below the poverty line.

Vancouver Coastal Health has been working with DTES neighbours and community organizations to develop for the first time a concrete food policy strategy that incorporates many elements that Right To Food advocates have been lobbying for. This would include definitions of what kinds of food are healthy, nutritious and tasty as well as a delivery model which gives back respect and dignity to the recipients. There is hope that this collective input of Right To Food focused organizations and community groups will be finalized and rolled out in the next year.

\*As this issue of the RTF Zine goes to press, Carnegie Community Centre and bc211, the not-for-profit information and referral service, have told us that the list is still being compiled, but will not be ready until early December.



# WILD SALMON FOREVER

BY SHANNON HECKER

Murray Bush - Wild Salmon Caravan Photo

I joined the Wild Salmon Caravan (WSC) in the fall of 2015 when the Right to Food Zine was asked to do a special edition for the Vancouver Sustenance festival. **The thought of wild salmon becoming extinct is unbearable**, as it would be devastating to a huge array of animals and plants, as well as many Indigenous peoples who rely on salmon for food, cultural and socio-economic well being. Already familiar with the work of elder Eddie Gardner of Sto:lo Nation, founder of the Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance, and Dawn Morrison, of Secwepemc Nation on the working group of Indigenous Food Sovereignty, I was eager to support such critical work being done to create awareness around the very real threats to **wild salmon – a keystone species and climate regulator here on the Pacific Northwest Coast.**

I began cooking a healthy organic, gluten and dairy-free meal for WSC Convergence that took place during the Sustenance festival. From that point

▲ Merrit Parade - Nlaka'pamux Lands and Waters

on I was hooked and dedicated myself to coordinating food donations for the entire WSC in 2016. Little did I know just how time consuming this role would be! However tiring it may have been, it was very fulfilling and in the process I learned a tremendous amount working alongside Dawn and am forever grateful for having this opportunity.

My daughter Sorelle and I travelled along with the WSC, from June 6th-11th in 2016 and again this year from October 7th-12th for the 3rd annual WSC. I'm still feeling the love in the weeks following. So much beautiful energy and countless hours of hard work to coordinate **an amazing week-long parade celebrating the spirit of Wild Salmon, with daily feasts and ceremonies while following local protocols, led by the Indigenous communities that hosted us.**

I'm so overwhelmed with emotions from gratitude, sadness, joy and awe that I've found it difficult to put into words my experience. While celebrating the

spirit of wild salmon through arts and culture, we were also educated about all of the threats to wild salmon stocks and the damage that has already been done in many different communities. **I find a lot of relief in being a part of this stream of consciousness of so many different people working together not only protecting wild salmon, but also bringing the human family together.**

To participate in cross cultural learning and educating people how we all share the responsibility to protect the water and the lands for all the animals and people who rely on them for survival has had a huge impact on me. It truly was a healing experience coming together in such a free flowing artistic expression of unconditional love and dedication to supporting Indigenous peoples and the lands and waters on which we all need to sustain ourselves.

**I feel honored to dance the salmon dance all along the way, singing in solidarity as I unlearn what was indoctrinated in me as a student in the Canadian school system and do my**



Photo by Sorelle Hecker

▲ Chase Parade - Secwepemcúlcw

**best to assimilate to the cultures of the Indigenous peoples whose ancestral lands I walk upon.**

I see this movement becoming something much larger and the possibilities are endless. I'm honored to be a part of the planning team here in so-called Vancouver and look forward to really pumping the next Wild Salmon Caravan! I hope to see 10,000 people attend the WSC Vancouver Parade in 2018 on Unceded and Unsurrendered Coast Salish Lands & Waters. For more information and to get involved visit <https://wildsalmoncaravan.wordpress.com> or find us on facebook!



Murray Bush - Wild Salmon Caravan Photo



Poster by Murray Bush

# COFFEE CUP REVOLUTION: SOCIAL INNOVATION BY THE BINNER'S PROJECT

by Hendrik Beune

The 4th Annual Coffee Cup Revolution (CCR) happened on Monday 16 October 2017 at Victory Square. I “binned,” scavenging the public waste receptacles from Victory Square going east along Hastings to Granville, then south to Davie, east to Burrard, north to Robson, east to Hamilton and north to Victory Square again. It took me two hours to complete the circuit on foot, covering both sides of the street as I moved along. My ‘take’ was not great: 108 cups, which at 5 cents per cup yielded me \$5.40, for two hours of steady walking and picking through trash. Last year I found twice the amount on the same route, because I collected a few days before the CCR and had no competition. This year a lot of the bins had been gone through, evidenced by spilled liquids and leftover lids.

Could I make a living doing this? Not the way I went about it, but I did something useful and it was good exercise! I gave the money I made to a friend too sick to walk.

Hypothetically, if I wanted to make minimum wage (approximately \$11/hr.) the cups would have to net me 10 cents each by last year’s pace and 20 cents per cup at this year’s slower pace. I asked some people who had just purchased their traditional morning office perk, if they would pay that cost. Yes they said! N.B. For a living wage of \$22/hr., a

binner like me would have to collect 20-40 cents per cup. Such a high surcharge as is common in Europe would not be unacceptable: people there are more motivated to bring their own re-usable cup, which is the custom.

Is it reasonable to levy a 10 to 40 cent surcharge for the ‘privilege’ of tossing a recyclable coffee-cup away, just so another person (a binner) can return it to a recycling centre? Makes you think, eh? Pause at this thought and see what other recommendations you may come up with. You can post yours for the City engineers and planners to see on the survey. So while you are at it, why not complete the survey, called Vancouver’s single-use item reduction strategy consultation paper:

<http://http://vancouver.fluidsurveys.com/surveys/covengage/single-use-item-reduction-consultation-paper/> (closes Dec. 15th)

“ 2.6 million so-called ‘polycoat’ paper cups are thrown in the garbage in Vancouver each week. Disposable cups and take-out containers make up about half of the volume of all items collected in public waste bins (Global News). ”

Almost a quarter of litter found loose on the streets is paper beverage cups, including lids and sleeves. They comprise

63 % of industrial, commercial and institutional garbage. Big numbers!

Cities around the globe are taking action to address single-use item waste. Vancouver is committed to becoming a zero waste community by 2040. There is a five-year target to reduce by half the amount of disposable cups and take-out containers going to landfill or incinerator. Ideally all cups are recycled and there are various ways to accomplish this. Cups should be placed in the blue bins, marked “mixed containers,” which are provided at various indoor locations. They are also being introduced at major intersections to facilitate habits of separating litter into its several useful components. The Blue bin is for mixed containers, Green is for compostable (organic) materials, Yellow for unsoiled paper and Black (labeled landfill, trash or garbage) for what’s leftover (Nacho bags, candy wrappers, etc.). The province is urged to establish a province-wide surcharge (deposit-refund) system for paper cups, as there is for refundable beverages containers (bottles and cans). All members of the Binner’s Project and all who brought cups for cash to Victory Square signed a statement supporting such a system.

Coffee shops, offices, residential and street collection bins can assist with the collection. The Binner’s Project has offered to administer the collection and return of the cups to specialized depots (membership is free and open to anyone). This seems like a fair system, where the user pays for the service. Most significant is the social impact—the opportunity for low income earners, many entrenched in deep poverty, to earn some much needed additional income.

Final remarks: as in previous years, there were three roundtables set up at Victory Square, seating 15 people each. A broad diversity of people ensured that different interests were represented and discussions were lively.

A deposit-refund system, mandatory recycling and education/behaviour change programs can bring about marked improvements for a wasteful society. Coffee shops are encouraged to provide reusable cups for in-store use and only provide disposable cups upon request. Recycling/composting receptacles will become mandatory on the shop’s premises, although it is expected that many customers will bring their own re-usable cups. Similar arguments can be introduced to reduce single-use food containers at take-out food kitchens and replace them with reusable containers. Plastic shopping bags are heavily targeted in the strategy: two million are disposed in the garbage each week!

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“ *The aim is to supplant a “dispose, recycle & energy recovery system” with a “reuse, reduce and avoid” model.* ”

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Elements that are severely toxic and have high environmental impact (such as Styrofoam) will be eliminated from use in the near future and they already are banned from some events like the PNE.

Please note: a summary report, following the survey, will be presented to City Council with recommendations in January 2018.

# PREVENTING INUIT YOUTH SUICIDE BY RETURNING TO TRADITIONAL FOOD SOURCES

*by Elijah Robinson,  
UBC Social Work practicum student at DTES Neighbourhood House*

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In the Inuktitut language of Canada and Greenland's northern communities, there is no specific word for the act of suicide. The irony of this predicament is that suicide is one of the worst epidemics facing these communities' next generation today. Inuit youth suicide rates are some of the highest in the world, at 11 times the national average (Health Canada, "First Nations & Inuit Health", 2013). The reason for such a figure does not have a simple answer. For these Inuit youth who take their own lives, the condition that contributes the most is a general poor quality of life stemming from negative trends in Northern communities. One of the most influential factors in quality of life and wellbeing is Food Security. Suicide and mental health issues are deeply interconnected with physical states of wellbeing, which are directly related to diet and nutrition.

These Inuit youth are suffering not only from mental health problems but also from physical health issues stemming from a poor diet. In a 2007 study, the eating habits of 388 Nunavut Inuit preschoolers in 16 communities were observed in order to determine whether they were "food secure" ("a condition in which all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences"). Overall, nearly 70% of

Inuit preschoolers in this study were determined to be "food insecure," while 25.1% were deemed "severely food insecure" and reported events such as "skipping meals" and even "not eating for a whole day" (Egeland). Although these children may be struggling with malnutrition, a great portion of the rest of the Inuit population suffers from obesity. According to another 2007 study on 2592 Inuit people taken by Eggertson, "The prevalence of overweight and obesity was 28 and 36% respectively, with a total prevalence of overweight and obesity of 64%" (Eggertson, pg.5).

These studies demonstrate a health crisis on both sides of the spectrum for Inuit people, with children facing malnutrition and adults suffering from obesity. This can be accounted for by a recent change in the Inuit diet:

“  
What the residents of these Northern communities are eating today comes from much different food groups compared to the traditional diet of raw meat and fish that their ancestors ate.”

The obesity can also be accounted for by what foods are cheapest and what keep the best in these Northern communities. Food in the High Arctic has to be brought in by aircraft, which



Photo by Pascal Mauerhofer on Unsplash

raises its price up to 10 times what it would cost in Southern communities. This economic dilemma means that Non-Nutrient Dense Foods (NNDF) are often most common (preserved, high fat food such as pizza, popcorn, ice cream, sweetened juice, soft drinks) so attempting to maintain a healthy diet is sacrificed due to the retail cost. In a study involving 441 Inuit, it was determined that 34% of money spent on food was utilized on NNDF (Pakseresht, pg. 6-11). Importing typical “healthy” foods such as tropical fruit high in vitamins is often not effective either in these communities; a grapefruit’s nutritional value has little significance to an Inuit person with no cultural knowledge of grapefruit whose primary concerns are spending as little money on food so as not to fall further into poverty. Either way, the poor health related to poor diet among Inuit youth can contribute greatly to the overall low quality of life that these youth have.

One of the simplest ways wellbeing can be achieved is through a direct return to the traditions and practices that the Inuit people most associate with happiness and wellbeing. A study by Professor Michael Kral, a medical anthropologist, found that a return to the traditional practices of hunting and crafting tools and other objects can not only carry on the knowledge that Inuit people have possessed for thousands of years, it can

also bring about a positive change in health (Kral, pg. 429).

“ *The Inuit’s traditional diet of raw meat, fish and “country” food would prove to be much healthier overall than anything that could be shipped in via airplane.* ”

Not only would this approach be more economically viable for these communities as these foods are acquired “on the land,” but it would also help return them to the roots of their culture. This diet change, combined with increased communication between elders and the Inuit youth, would give the next generation a healthier lifestyle and equip them with a pride in their culture and knowledge of their roots.

“Prior to the mid 1900s, the Inuit of Northern Canada had virtually no contact with outsiders and were a completely self-sufficient people. The only factor influencing the diet of the traditional Inuit was the availability of resources in the wild, because they lived entirely off the land and sea. Everything they ate, wore, built with, hunted with and used during everyday activities came from the animal or plant life of the Arctic.”

*(Online: Exploring Inuit Culture Curriculum)*

# GLUTEN-FREE JAIL

by Shannon Hecker

A month or so ago as I was diagnosed with celiac disease. Last fall I experienced intense ongoing stomach issues that caused me a lot of pain and discomfort with no apparent reason. After visiting two different emergency rooms and two specialists, I had no idea as to what was making me sick. This went on for about two months affecting my ability to sleep while I lost a noticeable amount of weight. These symptoms slowly subsided and until a couple months ago I hadn't really thought of it. Now following some tests done last fall, I have a gastroenterologist telling me that the endoscopy taken (tube down the throat & biopsy) showed that I had signs of celiac disease.

“ **Celiac disease** (*gluten-sensitive enteropathy*), sometimes called *sprue* or *coeliac*, is an immune reaction to eating *gluten*, a protein found in *wheat, barley, rye, spelt, kamut, and triticale*. If you have **celiac disease**, eating *gluten* triggers an immune response in your *small intestine*. ”

I've always felt a little bloated to a certain degree depending on how much and what kind of gluten based foods whether it be pasta, breads or crackers I was eating. It wasn't until a friend of mine who is severe on the spectrum of

celiac disease lived at my house, did I really start thinking about how my body feels when I eat gluten. His sensitivity to gluten is so severe that he is affected if someone else eats a sandwich in the room. He can not share food or cooking spaces with others as cross-contamination can cause severe reactions.

It's difficult to tell how gluten affects a person. It must be completely cut out of the diet to feel better. I learned this from my experience with my friend and also from the gastroenterologist. What the doctor didn't tell me is just how many foods and how careful to be when trying to eliminate gluten completely from the diet. My friend has shared their intense struggle with celiac disease while cohabiting together.

“ *It may seem as simple as going to the gluten-free section in the store, but even some things labeled as gluten-free are not fully free of trace amounts of gluten.* ”

Many foods that appear to be gluten free are actually gluten based! Take vinegar for example: white vinegar is wheat based and so are some kinds of vodka. Make sure you know your source! It saddened me to realize that in order to really take care of my body, I was going to have to say goodbye to pickles. I will be looking into the naturally fermented

kind soon. It's stressful to think so hard about what to eat when I'm hungry.

I've also learned that stress around eating at meals can exacerbate the symptoms. Although I'm grateful that my place on the spectrum is much less reactive, consuming gluten can still gradually have adverse effects on other aspects of my health and well-being. The specialist told me that emotional well-being will improve only when gluten is completely removed from my diet. The hardest part for me has been the cravings I experience. I feel very restricted and it's a lot more difficult to go out to restaurants or have quick snacks.

*Sometimes I feel like I'm in a gluten-free jail.*

Some of the research into celiac suggests that very frequent exposures to high levels of gluten can also be a contributing factor to developing the disease, or a more severe form of the disease.

My experience in different places serving food in the DTES is they do not always include a menu indicating ingredients used, which is something that would be very helpful.

“ *Every Wednesday from 10-2 at the DTES Neighbourhood house there is a healthy meal prepared, mostly vegetarian, often including a gluten-free option with all ingredients listed in the menu.* ”

However, attempting to have a completely gluten-free menu items is not possible; unless there is a dedicated gluten-free kitchen there will always be trace amounts of gluten. While I'm grateful that there is increasingly more

understanding of celiac disease in some places, it would greatly contribute to public health to see completely gluten-free options being made consistently across the board.

Certainly gluten-free bread has helped me satisfy my bread cravings, and brown rice pasta and rice vermicelli are delicious alternatives to wheat based pastas. I've found the most comfort in connecting with others who have celiac disease and knowing that I'm eating healthier; for the most part my meals consist of whole foods and minimal ingredients (organic if possible) – something I already strived for before diagnosis.

I've included a gluten-free recipe I came up with recently for a delicious and nutritious gluten and dairy free lentil stew!

### **Lentils 'n Roots Stew**

- 2 cups of dried lentils (rinsed & soaked overnight)
- 1 potato peeled/chopped in cubes
- 1 yam unpeeled/chopped in cubes
- 1 sweet potato unpeeled/chopped in cubes
- 6 cloves of garlic chopped finely
- 6 large tomatoes chopped or two cans of tomatos
- ½ cup of grapeseed oil or olive oil
- Salt, Pepper, Cumin & Paprika to taste
- 2-3 cups of water

Bring lentils boil and simmer on medium for 2 hours. Rinse, then add the rest of ingredients, stirring occasionally and simmer for another 1-2 hours adding water as needed. Add another potato chopped in small pieces in the last hour if desired.

# Zine Winter Quotes

“You think winter will never end, and then, when you don’t expect it, when you have almost forgotten it, warmth comes and a different light.”

– Wendell Berry, Hannah Coulter

“At this season of the year, darkness is a more insistent thing than cold. The days are short as any dream.”

– E.B. White, Essays of E.B. White

“Winter is icummen in,  
Lhude sing Goddamm,  
Raineth drop and staineth slop  
And how the wind doth ramm!”

– Ezra Pound, American poet

“I love winter. The bugs are dead, and the people are indoors.”

– Dennis Ruane

“You have to feel the bite of the wind to appreciate the warmth of a winter coat.”

– Fennel Hudson, A Meaningful Life - Fennel’s Journal - No. 1

“You have food?” Winter scolded. “I thought you said you were hungry.”

I’m hungry for other things besides what I have,”  
[Clover] argued.”

– Obert Skye, Leven Thumps and the Gateway to Foo



We have probed the earth, excavated it, burned it, ripped things from it, buried things in it, chopped down its forests, leveled its hills, muddied its waters, and dirtied its air. That does not fit my definition of a good tenant. If we were here on a month-to-month basis, we would have been evicted long ago.

– Rose Bird, Chief Justice of California Supreme Court (2 Nov 1936-1999)

Stan Shaffer



Mike DuBelko



Elijah Robinson & Jocelyn Gould (USB students)



Shannon Hecker



Mitsue Pierfederici



Hendrick Beune



Rory Sutherland



Carol White



Priyanka Borkar



# JOIN THE ZINE TEAM!

Interested in contributing ideas, articles, poems, illustrations, photos, or other artwork to the Right to Food Zine? As a community partner, we are deeply interested to hear from you and what you feel is important.

Find us at the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House at 573 East Hastings. We meet on Wednesdays from 13:00 to 14:30. Or get in touch with us at [rtfzine@gmail.com](mailto:rtfzine@gmail.com)

The Right to Food Zine relies on generous donations from the community to produce each issue. If you like what we are doing and want to show your support, please visit [rtfzine.org](http://rtfzine.org) to donate or get involved!



We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of:



Downtown Eastside  
Neighbourhood House

# A Gift That Gives Back

This holiday season, give a gift that benefits children, families, and small businesses in the Downtown Eastside



The Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House brings back its Seasonal Gift Basket for the third year.

All profits benefit the several programs we provide for the Downtown Eastside community and details can be found at [www.dteshouse.ca](http://www.dteshouse.ca).

Delivery is free to Burnaby, Vancouver, Richmond, North Vancouver, & West Vancouver.

## Gift Baskets are \$99 and include:

Made with love by the friends and neighbours of the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House:

- Snack mix, pickled harvest, Dijon mustard, jam, tea towel, recipe book, greeting cards, and coloring book.

Delicious gourmet foods from local artisans:

- Olive Oil - *Di Oliva Tasting Bar*
- Chum Salmon - *Skipper Otto's Fishery*
- Chinese Sausage - *Wing Wing Co. Ltd.*
- Bombay Masala Tea - *Trudy Ann's Chai and Spices*
- Coffee - *East Van Roasters*
- Garofalo Pappardelle - *La Grotta Del Formaggio*
- Candied Almonds - *Lisa Lou's Chocolate Bar*
- Honey - *Hives for Humanity*
- Reindeer Christmas Cookies - *Kreation Artisanal Bakery*
- Pistachio Granola - *Terra Breads*
- Tenren Jasmin green tea - *Beijing Trading Company*

Gift Baskets can be ordered through [www.dteshouse.ca](http://www.dteshouse.ca) and deliveries begin in December in our very own reusable totes.

For more information, contact [giftbasket@dteshouse.ca](mailto:giftbasket@dteshouse.ca).

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