



Project Reach Out is expected to literally roll into Langley this fall, in part thanks to this year's Langley Central Rotary Club wine festival.

Charity

Rotary wine festival will help fund new program

Langley Rotarians are helping out youth with their annual wine festival.

by Roxanne Hooper

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A new youth outreach program is on the verge of bursting onto the street scene in Langley.

And that program is going to be possible, in part thanks to a Rotary Club fundraiser coming up in early November – about the time the new youth initiative is expected to commence in Langley.

Who knew wine-tasting could prove so lucrative for local charities?

Counting down to this fall's Fraser Valley Wine Tasting Festival, organizers from the Rotary Club of Langley Central are boasting that the event has generated more than three-quarters of a million dollars for local charities and projects in its 22-year history.

But club president Grace Robertson is more excited than ever about what the money from this year's Nov. 5 event is going to achieve in the way of helping Langley's youth.

Part proceeds from the wine festival will support an award-winning mobile outreach program – like the one in Port Coquitlam called PoCoMo – that is coming to Langley to provide prevention and early interven-

tion services to this community's youth.

With the use of modified 24-foot-long shuttle bus operating Friday and Saturday evenings from 7 p.m. to midnight, Project Reach Out meets youth where they are, Robertson explained.

The youth buses travel to areas of the community where youth naturally hang out – parks, recreation facilities, convenience stores, drop-in centres, malls, and other hot spots, she elaborated.

Staff engage youth through the bus or walkabouts offering support and services such as one-to-one counselling, early/crisis intervention, drug and sexual health education, community information and referrals, follow-up support, and a safe place to go after-hours.

This program's mission "to provide outreach support and services to youth in our community" fits well with the Rotary Club's focus on Langley's most precious asset... kids, Robertson emphasized.

"As a community organization the Rotary Club of Langley Central's main area of concern is Langley's youth specifically those at risk due to poverty or life circumstance beyond their control," she said.

The club has built playgrounds, supported inner-city schools with program funding, and supported local organizations working with youth.

Robertson said the result is a safer com-

munity and a chance for youth to grow up healthy, happy, and become productive citizens.

The "saying it takes a village to raise a child" comes to mind for Robertson when considering the support her Rotary Club gives to Langley's youth.

"For each of the past 22 years the club has also hosted one of the most unique and entertaining social evenings of the fall season, the Fraser Valley Wine Tasting, as a means to raise money for these projects."

Keeping with tradition, the event is once again being held at Willowbrook Shopping Centre, starting at 7 p.m. on Nov. 5.

Guests will again be able to sample wines from more than 30 different wineries and wine merchants, sample signature offerings from five Langley restaurants and caterers, enjoy live music, and have a chance to win a trip for two to Las Vegas.

"We are expecting over 1,000 people again this year so everyone is urged to buy their \$50 tickets ahead of time when they go on sale because they sell out very quickly, said Rotarians and festival organizing chairs John Morgan and David Taft.

"Join us for a night of great food, great company, and great wine – all in the name of raising money for local charities."

Tickets are available now, online at www.fvwf.com or to be reserved at 604-309-4242.

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