

Simon K.Y. Lee Seniors Care Home goes for Gold with their Mini Olympics

The Simon K.Y. Lee Seniors Care Home located in Vancouver's Chinatown is a sprawling 70,000 square foot modern building built in 2001 that houses assisted living and day facilities for seniors. The Care Home is run on the Eden Alternative concept, founded by Dr. William Thomas, which is about teaching society to see the environments as habitats for human beings rather than facilities for the frail and elderly. It states we must learn what Mother Nature has to teach us about the creation of vibrant and vigorous habitats. Each corridor is appropriately named Pine, Bamboo, Cherry, Cedar and Birch, to reflect the Eden Alternative Concept and has on each level a compassion corner decorated with art made by the seniors along with toys for children where family can visit in a comfortable atmosphere.



Seniors partake in many activities including; arts, crafts, dance lessons, daily exercises and poetry readings. The highlight for many seniors is the Care Home's Mini Olympics. Every two years the staff and volunteers at the Simon K.Y. Lee Seniors Care Home organize a Mini Olympics for seniors to win medals and bragging rights for games such as ping pong, bean bag toss and the card game Go Fish. This year the Care Home will hold a Mini Olympics where seniors are already practicing for the gold. Staff and volunteers talk of fierce competition between seniors when there is a medal to be won. "You will often hear boisterous laughter and cheering from across the building," said Manager of Community Services Jenny Lo "the seniors really get into it." There is a ceremony at the end of the Mini Olympics and the proud winners show off their medals by placing them in memory boxes which are glass enclosures outside of their private rooms or have them framed and mounted in the hall for all to see.

This year the seniors are looking forward to the Mini Olympics even more so since they are just blocks from the action of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games celebrations in Downtown Vancouver. The seniors gathered at the entrance of Chinatown where with flags waiving adorned in red and white to show their support to Athletes. You could see the excitement on their faces as Clydesdale horses pranced by and Chinese Dragons danced and bowed at their heels.

The bi-lingual (English and Chinese) staff at the Simon K.Y. Lee Seniors Care Home provides professional resident care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Twenty one beds are designated for cognitively impaired residents requiring special environmental adaptations. Others are for complex care residents. The Care Home is open to any individual eligible for complex care services under The Ministry of Health Continuing Care Program. The Chieng's Adult Day Centre started its operation in January 2003. This Centre also located in the building of the Care Home provides health monitoring, therapeutic activities and social activities for seniors. Twenty or more seniors are being served each weekday.

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