

# On the Road

## What's up *review*

**Litter Receptacles:**We lobbied the City and recently received 9 additional receptacles, had 8 others completely cleaned of graffiti and glue and had 7 relocated to better locations.

**Tree Pruning:**We lobbied the City for tree and bush pruning along the Drive.We will be reviewing the job, but so far it looks complete.

**Sidewalk repair:** We've recently begun the process of inventorying the poor sidewalk conditions along the Drive. We will be lobbying the City for repairs.

**Big Night Out:**This huge musical event will be happening on Commercial Drive on February 15th 2001.See attachment for further details.

*Parade of Lost Souls Performer October 2000*



## *Good Neighbours*

Thanks to everyone that pitched in to help with the impact of the garbage strike. Many business owners took personal responsibility to try and minimize the negative effect the strike had on our neighbourhood . Some put out their own garbage cans to help with the overflow, others hired outside help to clean the sidewalks. Still others could be found picking up litter themselves. One business volunteered the use of their dumpster to an elderly neighbour for their domestic garbage. Thank you to all our good neighbours. We noticed.

## New lease on life

We have a relatively low turn over and vacancy rate on Commercial Drive and we'd like to keep it that way. The Association would like to start a Leasing Committee that would help welcome new neighbours and develop tenancy strategies to help keep a balanced mix of tenants. Of course the Commercial Drive Business Association is always looking for as little or as much volunteer time as a member has to offer. You don't have to make a large commitment to share your opinion. In January, we will be calling to invite members to meetings for the Marketing, Street Enhancement, and Safety and Security committees.If you want to learn more about a particular committee, please call 251-2884.

# Alive on the Drive

December 2000 Volume 3

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## Small town in the Big City

Doesn't Commercial Drive feel like a small town at times? The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker. You probably know them all by name. Most of them have been here as far as anyone can remember. If we had our own Town Hall it would probably be in the middle of Grandview Park. Next time you're walking by or taking in the spectacular performances of the Public Dream Society, squint a little and you can almost see it. What might be one persons nostalgic warm and fuzzy view of our neighbourhood is for many of us a sense

that something is truly unique here. We each have our take on what that means to us. Wether it has been a rally or a soup box derby you can just about expect anything to happen here. We're compassionate. We're edgy. We are alive! The City has a mandate to increase density closer to Commercial Drive and it looks clear that this will continue. The Commercial Drive Business Improvement Association recently hosted a tour of Commercial Drive to begin looking at our street from an architectural and

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# Merry Christmas!



*Grandview Park*

# the Drive

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development perspective. We felt we could help develop an understanding of what works well here and attempt to incorporate that into future planning of the area so there is an integration that is consistent. City Councillor Gordon Price had some interesting comments while on this tour. He acknowledged the misconception that people who don't understand the area confuse it with the Downtown Eastside, which it is not. We are not a demographic. On the contrary we are anything but. Diversity keeps us together and in fact provides us with our charm. We can easily service a variety of income levels, we are all inclusive. Our small town feeling can't be easily duplicated.

Keeping an eye on the present, past and future are important aspects in our shaping who we are becoming. While the City wide strike was on, the Association became aware of an independent project that had us concentrate on familiar issues from a larger perspective. The project considers the impact three Skytrian Stations may have on our neighbourhood. It suggests solutions. It offers us an opportunity to think about the big picture and to pursue avenues, although related to the independent project, that could help the Association meet some of its long term objectives. With an estimated 70,000 people coming through the three stations a day we are looking at becoming the largest transit hub in Western Canada. Will this bring increased parking difficulties? Traffic congestion? Will the future development around the stations be able to blend in to the unique atmosphere of the Drive? Can we help shape a vision for our future keeping a focus on the qualities that maintain that small town feeling that makes us so special? We are currently evaluating this and other mandates of our Association to best ensure a balance of concentration in respect to our resources and obligations to our members. We welcome all feedback, new ideas and offers of volunteer time that members have to bring forward on these or other issues of concern.

## All for one One for all

As an Association we are beginning to recognize our strength as a group. Considering how many of our local businesses advertise in the Georgia Straight, we thought we might be able to negotiate a better rate if we pooled together. As a non profit organization, the Commercial Drive Business Association negotiated a terrific rate on a full page advertisement on behalf of our members during peak holiday publications. We were able to divide the pages up and offer slightly better rates to frequent advertisers and outstanding rates to those who might not otherwise have the budget to use the Georgia Straight. We would like to thank so many of you who saw the community potential of this project and made it possible to highlight the Commercial Drive area as a vibrant destination. If we missed you this round, please make sure we have your fax or e-mail address so we can send out group advertising notices in future so everybody gets equal opportunity to participate. This year we managed a full page ad on November 30th, a double page spread on December 7th and December 14th, and a single page ad again on December 21st. We would appreciate any feedback you can share with us on this project for future consideration of similar partnerships. Speaking of similar partnerships, if this project review is positive we consider doing something for Valentines Day. For feature issues like fashion or food, as well as possibly on a monthly basis if the support is there. In addition we would like to access more tourism markets. To date we are not included in the most popular Vancouver Tourism guide as a neighbourhood shopping area. We will be looking into this cost and if there may be grants available to help us cover them.

## Presidents Corner

By Alexandra Temple

The busy Christmas season is upon us and it is exciting to see so many people on Commercial Drive. Lets show them our spirited decorations, bright colours and our festive style. Keep your eyes and ears alert for the Carnival Band playing Christmas music along the Drive starting at 1pm December 17th. Next the Royal Bank caroling group will be singing along the Drive on Wednesday, December 20th at 5:15pm. If you are interested in singing along, please be at the Bank at 5pm and call Nisha at 665-8185 if you have any questions.

Unfortunately at Christmas shoplifting and theft can also increase. Don't allow any service agency access to your business until you check out their identification and phone their agency. Please warn your neighbours, call our local CPO and 911 if you come across any questionable situations. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday and we look forward to a prosperous New Year together.

## Parade a Big Success

This years ninth annual Parade of Lost Souls, held on the evening of Saturday October 28th, was a huge success. An estimated 8,000 to 10,000 people enjoyed the music, costumes and uniquely dark and magical performance pieces the parade is known for. The Public Dreams Society is the organizer of the event, the same people who bring us the popular annual lantern festival, Illuminaries, held at Trout Lake. Many businesses along the Drive have commented on how good business is during both these events. This year the Parade of Lost Souls was in jeopardy of being cancelled due to resources denied to them as a result of the civic strike. They decided to present the parade anyhow and as a result incurred additional costs that have yet to be recovered. The Commercial Drive Business Improvement Association has become a sponsor for these outstanding events. If you feel your business has benefitted from the energy and draw they create, you can help them out with a donation by calling Michelle Clancey at 377-3584. Let's keep them coming back.