

# Volunteer week

## National week of recognition focuses on the importance of lending a hand

Monique Tamminga  
Black Press Media

National Volunteer Week (April 18-24) is a time to celebrate, recognize and thank volunteers.

The theme for this year's week is the Value of One, the Power of Many. This reflects the awe-inspiring acts of kindness by millions of individuals and the magic that happens when we work together towards

a common purpose.

National Volunteer Week recognizes the value of the caring and compassion that each volunteer has shown another and it recognizes the power of people, organizations, and sectors working together.

When one volunteer gives their time, skills and knowledge, this is extremely valuable.

This week is a special time set aside to appreciate the work of vol-

unteers. Volunteers ensure our region's most vulnerable are not left behind and increase our region's capacity in hospitals, shelters, food banks, schools, festivals, and sport, among others. If paid, that work would exceed more than \$150 million every year.

Every year, National Volunteer Week draws attention to volunteers and their contributions that every person benefits from in some way.



Matthew Campbell (left), director of the new Fraser Valley Regional Food Bank, hands out food along with volunteers Linda Wing and Kelita Haverland. April 18-24 is National Volunteer Week. (Photo: Malin Jordan)

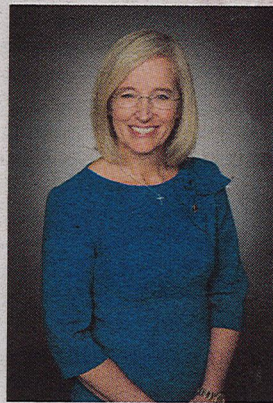
**TAMARA JANSEN**  
CLOVERDALE - LANGLEY CITY  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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## The Other-Centered Spirit



Tamara Jansen  
MP for Cloverdale-Langley City

Human beings are wired for relationship. We are happiest when we are serving our communities. Often, the people who live the best lives are those who are dedicated to others. If being self-centered is a vice, to be other-centered is a virtue. One of the highest forms of this virtue is the act of volunteering. Volunteers offer themselves for the good of those around them, motivated not by compensation, but strictly by a passion to make the world better by the fruits of their labour. The way we have all made significant personal sacrifices during the past 14 months to protect the most vulnerable reveals to us the undeniable other-centered spirit of man. We have all been willing to accept the disruption to our lives for the common good.

The pandemic has also given us all a renewed recognition of the value of volunteers. It has been truly inspiring to see so many organizations and individuals in our community step up and offer to help. The faith-based organizations, community organizations, and their volunteers who have accepted the burden of duty deserve more appreciation than can properly be expressed. At the same time, however, there are many areas of life that depend on the selfless work of volunteers that have been unable to operate normally due to the current conditions of the world. I'm thinking especially of long-term care homes. Safety concerns have made it the regular use of volunteers, whether they be family members of residents or caring members of the community, near impossible. This puts an even greater burden on the caregivers who work in these facilities. Workers in long-term care homes and other front-line healthcare workers have offered to take on extra, unpaid responsibilities to manage the chaotic and unpredictable nature of the pandemic we're living through. What is already often a noble and thankless job, has in some respects also become a form of volunteering. This week, as we thank and recognize the value of volunteers in all of their forms, let's also be inspired by the other-centered spirit that makes human beings unique. May it motivate us all to find this spirit within ourselves.

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