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## The West Coast Chocolate Festival - the sweet side of volunteering



The West Coast Chocolate Festival - a week-long celebration of all things cocoa-related - wrapped up last week in Coquitlam, Port Moody and Port Coquitlam.

Now in its sixth year, the Festival is planned and managed entirely by volunteers. A core team of coordinators oversees the 100+ event volunteers who make the Festival happen.

"Many of our volunteers are students, both high school and post-secondary," said Linda Baker, festival coordinator. "It's our mission - besides celebrating chocolate and all that it inspires - to create mentored work experiences for youth.



"It's never been a big problem to get people to show up and work, but it's harder to find people with good event production, marketing and managerial skills to work with and mentor the students - and that's where VolWeb.ca has been most useful."

Sandra Dick was recruited through VolWeb.ca and coordinated one of the signature events of the Festival: the All Things Chocolate trade and tasting show, where guests sampled the many products on offer and learn about the fine art of chocolate appreciation.



"The entire experience was memorable, and it was the first event of its kind that I have been involved in," said Sandra. "The projects that I am usually involved with tend to be more technical, so this was a refreshing change.

"I was originally researching 2010 volunteering opportunities, and came across VolWeb.ca," continued Sandra. "I had volunteered for many years, but was looking for a more organizational role, and the Festival was the perfect fit."

Share your own volunteering story by e-mailing [volwebsupport@2010legaciesnow.com](mailto:volwebsupport@2010legaciesnow.com).