

For Immediate Release

Ten Thousand Villages Calgary Store to Remain Open

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Calgary, AB – The Ten Thousand Villages store is thriving in Calgary’s challenging retail environment and the Calgary store will remain open even as corporate operations, the webstore and 14 retail outlets close down across the country.

“Our store provides unique and exquisite hand crafted items. To have a positive effect on the environment, artisans will often source recycled materials, such as bike chain, newspaper, saris and fabrics.” said Laura Pederson, Manager, Ten Thousand Villages Calgary. “We are passionate about providing our artisans all over the world with sustainable livelihoods.”

This is the only location to serve those in Calgary and Southern Alberta.

Since 1984 the store has been owned and governed by a non-profit society independent of Ten Thousand Villages Canada corporate operations. Through the work of this store, marginalized artisans, including widows and people with physical disabilities, are able to provide for their families.

“I am able to earn better income and work towards my dream of educating my children. Socializing with the other women and sharing my story helps me to lighten my burden and gives me hope,” says Alpa Mistri an artisan from St Mary's, India.

The store is run by committed volunteers and in the last few years has been able to take on new artisans from countries such as Nepal, Peru, India, Indonesia and Ghana.

Evelyn Braun, the longest-serving volunteer says “artisans who otherwise would not be paid fairly can now earn a fair wage because of the variety of items we carry.”

Built in 1951, it was one of the largest outlying buildings located at 220 Crowchild Trail NW, just north of Kensington Road. The two-storey building is distinguished by a large south-facing hand painted mural by local artist Daniel J. Kirk. When Evelyn first started, the store took up one small room. Since then it has expanded to occupy the entire building.

The team includes 60 volunteers who are active members of the community as they host chocolate tastings featuring organic chocolate grown in Ghana, Peru and Paraguay, community celebrations with local henna artists and musicians; and an annual Rug Event featuring over 300 hand knotted rugs from Pakistan. They are also active in many elementary, junior and senior high schools in Calgary as they teach students more about the positive effects of ethical consumerism in the lives of makers around the world.

For more information on the continued success of Ten Thousand Villages Calgary please call Laura Pederson at 403-918-9229, or email calgary.crowchild@villages.ca.