

THE CITIZEN

Connecting People with Their Community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

CLBC Newsletter - March 2009

Volume 5 Issue 2

Wonderful Winter Activities



Justin Sigal (centre) gets ready to hit the slopes with Karen Truesdale (left), a volunteer with Silver Star Adaptive Snow Sports, and her daughter Claire (right). See page four for the full story.

What's Inside

Ski Programs



Kids Up Front



Inclusive Education



Family Independence
Fund



Community Resource
Database



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lois Hollstedt, C.M.



The 2009-2010 budget allocation for CLBC was announced on Budget day and we are very pleased to have increased funding available in the next year to support the needs of adults with developmental disabilities. As the economy is challenging government revenues, this focus on people services is very welcome and gratifying to see.

This view is shared by the BC Association for Community Living. Rory Summers, BCACL President, said, "This government has shown true leadership by listening to the community and responding to the needs of children and youth with special needs, adults with developmental disabilities and their families. The new funding will make a huge impact on the lives of those waiting for services."

The Province has increased Community Living BC's 2009/10 budget by \$52 million. This \$52-million increase in government contributions is the largest increase since CLBC's first full year of operations. Almost \$40 million of this increase will provide new and expanded adults services for people meeting existing eligibility criteria. An additional \$2.6 million will support the initiative to improve eligibility criteria for CLBC services. In total, government contributions to CLBC will increase by almost \$180 million over the next three years.

The challenge for CLBC will continue to be to ensure all the resources provided by government are spent wisely and that services provided are the kind that support individual goals of health, safety, and participation in communities. However, all of us at CLBC look forward to the increased ability to work with individuals and families to ensure these goals are met.

I would also like to say thank you to Laney Bryenton for her work on behalf of people with developmental disabilities across BC and Canada. Laney is leaving her position as Executive Director of the BC Association for Community Living after almost 12 years in the job. The contributions to the people we serve by dedicated staff and volunteers throughout our system is important to ensure we keep moving toward improved lives for individuals. Laney's leadership has been outstanding and everyone at CLBC wishes her well in her future activities. ✨

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INSIDE VOICE

The self-advocate's perspective.

HOCKEY FAN FINDS FRIENDSHIPS

By Jenna Fowler

I'm Jenna Fowler, a self-advocate from Kamloops. I am a member of the Thompson-Cariboo CLBC Community Council. I have many health conditions that cause me to have chronic pain every day. I'm unable to do a lot of things I'd like to because of the pain and all the medications that I take.

I love hockey, though, and it is one of the things I can be involved in. Hockey opens up a new world for me and leads to many great experiences. Hockey helps me to take my mind off my pain and medical stuff. I feel good that I am accepted by hockey players, other fans and people associated with the hockey world.

I am a Kamloops Blazers season ticket holder. This has led to many friendships with the hockey players, the fans and the people working at the booths during the hockey games. I am also a member of the Kamloops Blazers Booster Club. All the Booster Club members seem to like me and they treat me as just another member. When I was saving money for the Variety Club telethon, a woman from the Booster Club gave me a piggy bank full of change.

My best friend, Jared Aulin, used to play for the Kamloops Blazers. He then went on to play for the LA Kings. When Jared played for the Kings in 2003, he sent my dad and me to Disneyland for a day and to an LA Kings game. I got to meet the players. Jared talked with the LA Kings and the Kings Foundation raised six thousand dollars for my expenses while in North Carolina having implants put in my jaw. Jared still keeps in touch with me. Jared is a great friend and encourages me to keep positive and never give up.

I am friends with Justin, who is a goalie for the Blazers and Jake, who also plays for the Blazers. When I went to Dallas, Texas, for medical reasons, I brought back Dallas Stars hats for Jake and Justin. My dad and I went to Starbucks and met with Justin and Jake to give them



Jenna Fowler spends some time with her friends Ryan Ainsely (L) and Jared Aulin (R).

their hats. We had an awesome time. I enjoyed myself. They are wonderful guys who treat me like a real friend.

While in Dallas, I went to a Dallas Stars hockey game. I met Chris, who is the Assistant General Manager of the Columbus Blue Jackets. Chris and the team sent me a t-shirt, hat, a signed Rick Nash jersey and seven pictures. Two pictures were signed by Ken Hitchcock, the coach. The Blue Jackets are giving my dad and me tickets to a Canucks and Blue Jackets game in Vancouver.

I will be going to the Blue Jackets morning skate before the game and will meet Ken Hitchcock, Rick Nash and maybe some of the other players. Chris told me to bring my camera!

In 2003, I met Trevor Linden. Trevor gave me his cell phone number and tickets to a Vancouver Canucks game. I've met Shane Doan, Jarome Iginla, Mark Recchi, Ryan Smyth, Andrew Ladd and many other class act hockey players.

Hockey makes my life interesting. Hockey helps me to belong.

To read more about Jenna and see some of her pictures, visit www.caringbridge.org/visit/champ291/photos. 

Inside Voice is published in each issue of **The Citizen**. If you are interested in writing for this column, please call Chris Rae at 1-877-660-2522 or e-mail editor@communitylivingbc.ca.

SKI PROGRAMS INSPIRE PARTICIPANTS

COVER STORY

By Greta Cooper, Team Assistant - Vernon Community Living Centre

Poised on a snowy mountaintop located in Canada's highest city, 18-year-old Justin Sigal experiences the all too familiar nervous butterflies in his throat and thinks about his motto, "Try your best and never give up."

It's February 2008 and he's at BC Winter Games in Kimberly. He competed in giant slalom, slalom and a combination, which involve skiing between sets of poles (also known as gates). He would receive a special coach's medal honoring his enthusiasm, dedication and progress.

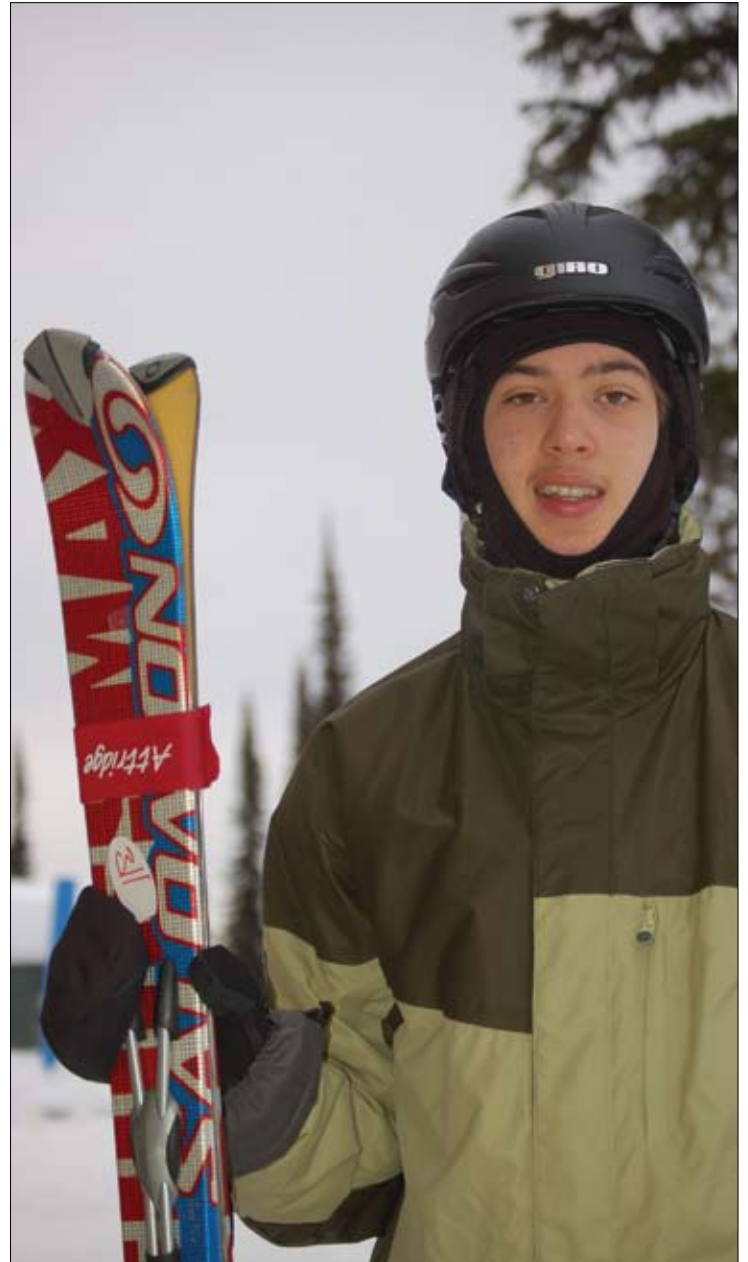
This young Vernon man is outgoing and thrives on competition. Nine years earlier, while swishing along cross country trails with his family at Sovereign Lake, he discovered Silver Star Adaptive Snow Sports (SSASS) high performance programs. He was hooked.

He started competing on a provincial level in 2007 and the following year experienced one of those unfortunate life lessons. During the first run of training day at the BC Disabled Provincials at Whistler, he broke his arm. For the remaining five days he spent his time cheering on his teammates and fighting off disappointment.

His involvement in sports has enabled him to meet a diverse group of people in the community, people of like-minded interest his mother Jackie explained.

Both agree one person in particular whose friendly demeanor and humour has qualified as an excellent role model. Josh Dueck, recent gold winner at the IPC World Championships downhill event in Kangwon Land, Korea. Justin said it's the message he receives whenever Dueck speaks which is "keep at it and keep practicing." Even Dueck's public speaking engagements have made an impression. Justin has joined the local chapter of Toastmasters and shares his own story.

Now in his first year of Adult Basic Education, he's learning all kinds of valuable skills which will enable independence. He's looking ahead to having his own place, perhaps a teaching or downhill racing career.



Justin Sigal takes a break during one of his practices with Silver Star Adaptive Snow Sports.

He's grateful for all the support he's received from his mom, dad and family.

But for now the snow still calls him. In March he'll be off to the Canadian Association for Disabled Skiers (CADS) festival at Sun Peaks and in April the Provincials in Whistler.

"I want to finish the gates, do my best and not crash," says Justin. 🦿

By Jim Knowles, Tammy Leary's realtor and friend who helped her find a home suitable for the needs of people with disabilities.

June 2008 was an exciting time for the young Leary family of Kamloops. Not only were Tammy and Gordon happily dealing with their new son Noah, but they also had a new home and the gift of two young adults coming to live with them. I say gift because this is what Tammy had envisioned for years as she made her way through Nurses College and worked at Ponderosa, a seniors residence in central Kamloops.

The new home, which soon would be called "A Touch Of Home", was perfect for the two new arrivals. The daylight walkout basement was set up with all the proper attachments and aids. The wide doorways, the walk-in shower with its support aids, and the tile and linoleum flooring all provide easy access for wheelchairs. Tammy and Gord immediately added their own touches and installed an elevator to allow access through the whole house.

Kayla, who has Cerebral Palsy, and Andrew, who has Spina Bifida, are the two new additions to the family who let nothing stand in the way. Andrew graduated last year from Thompson Rivers University (TRU) and is working his way to becoming the best he can be at web design and computers. Kayla is finishing her studies at TRU and will graduate next year.

While browsing the web, Andrew found out about the sit ski program up at Sun Peaks, the local ski mountain.

Tammy, Gord, Deb (Andrew and Kayla's caregiver), and I were soon up on the hill ready for our first

lesson on the sit ski. We all participated in a course available through the Disabled Skiers Association of BC offered at Sun Peaks in Kamloops. This program provides opportunities for people with a wide range of disabilities to participate in sports and recreation.

With Andrew and Kayla screaming and laughing all the way down the hill, and all of us trying to keep up, we knew that sit skiing had become the new sport for all of us. Now, some four months later, Tammy, Gord, Deb and I all have our Level 1 instructors card for able bodied persons and also carry our CADS Volunteer cards so we're able to help any people with disabilities that come to the hill.

Recently, the local TV station came to the mountain to do a story about Kayla and Andrew. What brought home to all of us standing listening to the interview how lucky we all are, were Kayla's inspiring words: "Life is like a puzzle. It's hard but just keep trying, and in the end, you will find the piece that's missing." With tears freezing to our faces we, will never forget those words and how inspiring this young lady is to us, and how inspiring she will be to many others in the future.

Recently Tammy and I were talking as we watched Kayla finish her run down the mountain. She told me, "To me, having Andrew and Kayla in the house has not only taught us that life should never be taken for granted, but also, that when you put your mind to it, anything is possible."

To request more information about adaptive skiing in your area, please visit the Disabled Skiers Association of BC's website at www.disabledskiingbc.com. ❄️



(Left) Andrew out for a run on the sit ski with Debi Guillemette, his and Kayla's caregiver.



(Right) Kayla enjoys the slopes with Dick Taylor, the organizer of adaptive sports at Sun Peaks.

FUND HELPS YOUNG MAN LIVE MORE INDEPENDENTLY

With a grant from the Family Independence Fund (FIF), a Westbank family renovated a house to support their son live more fully and independently in his community.

Aaron Paynter, a social and outgoing 24-year-old, has a developmental disability and uses a communications board to talk with his family, friends and fellow citizens.

Last year, Aaron's parents and his uncle helped him buy a house just down the street from their own home. The family received a \$50,000 grant from the \$30 million Family Independence Fund to renovate the home to help meet Aaron's specific disability-related needs. The renovations included building a bathroom, enclosing the yard and creating additional space that enable his caregivers to live with him.

"It is such a joy to see our son move on with his life"

Laurie Paynter

son move on with his life, the Family Independence Fund has helped him to do this."

The Family Independence Fund is administered by the Vancouver Foundation's Giving In Action Society. The fund was established with financial support from Community Living BC.

Since 2006, over 325 families across BC have received \$10.5 million in FIF grants for home renovations and other projects that enable relatives with a developmental disability to live richer lives and participate more fully in their communities.

BC families who have a family member with a developmental disability can directly apply for the grants through Giving in Action. The applications are reviewed by a volunteer advisory committee comprised of representatives from throughout the province.

For more information on the Family Independence Fund, eligibility and how to apply, please visit www.givinginaction.ca. 



(Above) Aaron enjoys using his computer room.

(Below) Aaron spends some time with Jamie, one of his caregivers who shares his home.



UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE PROVINCE

You've Gotta Have Friends Conference

Details: The conference will be two days packed with interactive presentations and information that will arm you with the skills and knowledge you need to make a difference in the lives of those who have yet to find their place in community. Sessions cover a variety of themes including supporting seniors, working with youth, discovering the faith community, practical tips and strategies, discovering your sacred gifts, laughter yoga and much more.

Date: Thursday, May 7 to Friday, May 8

Place: Coast Hotel and Convention Centre, Langley

More Information: To learn more, and to register, please go to www.langleyacl.com or www.youvegottahavefriends.ca.

Customized Employment in BC: Critical Pathways for Moving from Discovery to Career Development

Details: CLBC, in partnership with the Kindale Developmental Association, AiMHi and the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, is hosting three day-long training sessions to update participants on emerging discovery strategies and tactics that are useful in developing employment opportunities in hard economic times. The sessions will feature Cary Griffin, a Senior Partner at Griffin-Hammis Associates which focuses on disability and employment.

Place/Date: In Vernon on Monday, May 25.

In Burnaby on Tuesday, May 26.

In Prince George on Wednesday, May 27.

More Information: For more details on specific times and venues, and registration, please visit the CLBC website under [What We Do > Employment > Overview](#).

For more information on these and other events, please visit the CLBC website under [News & Events > Events > General](#).

THEATRE TERRIFIC PRODUCTION READY TO HIT THE STAGE

Theatre Terrific is proud to present its newest work, "The Secret Son." The play is the story Arthur Miller did not want told, a modern Greek tragedy based on Miller's decision to deny the existence of his son born with Down Syndrome. In the play, The character of the Author is writing the Greek tragedy, while members of the chorus enact his words, and also talk back to him.

Written and directed by Susanna Uchatius, "The Secret Son" runs from April 21 to 25 at the Roundhouse Community Centre at Pacific and Davie Streets in Vancouver. CLBC is one of the financial partners.

Shows will take place at 8 pm each night with two 2 pm shows on Thursday, April 23 and Saturday, April 25.

Tickets cost \$20 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors. Tickets can be booked at www.ticketstonight.ca or by calling 604-222-4020. A special early bird rate of \$12 is available until April 15. Group rates are also available and the 2 pm shows are "pay what you can."

For more information on "The Secret Son" and Theatre Terrific, please visit www.theatreterrific.ca.



EMPLOYMENT BUILDS SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE



I work at In the Beantime on Friday from 4 pm to 5:30 pm, and I like it too. I get paid, and I get tip money too. My jobs are clearing tables, cleaning with Windex, organizing, restocking, dirty spoons, rolling cutlery, and watering flowers (Camille has a photo book with photos and words listing her tasks. She used that book to list her jobs above). And I had my art work there too and I loved it. Me and my worker went to the first staff party. Because she got me that job, I decided to invite her as my guest. People there are really nice.

Written by Camille Marquis

Camille Marquis has received community support from Ladysmith Community Link two to three days a week for over three years. One of the goals of her service plan is to facilitate opportunities to increase her self reliance to reduce her emotional and practical dependence on paid support and develop a natural support network.

Camille has access to group sessions through Community Link's CLBC funding. Other funding sources have also enabled Community Link to provide one-on-one employment support to Camille, which was used to support Camille during a work experience at Pharmasave.

After a lengthy training period Camille did not succeed in gaining paid employment at Pharmasave. However, Camille did develop a variety of skills and gained an understanding of the difference between work and play. She ended her work experience at Pharmasave when she was offered a paid job at one of Ladysmith's most popular coffee shops.

Camille started working at In the Beantime in the beginning of September. Since October, she is working independently with minimal support from her employer. She currently works 1.5 hours a week (length of time requested by her) and is hoping to add a second shift to her schedule in the near future.

Camille is so excited about getting paid that she keeps track of her pay cheques. She has already collected nine pay cheques. She is also receiving a percentage of the tip money, which she is saving in a piggy bank her sister gave her for Christmas. Camille is so happy about getting paid for her work that she feels she owes herself a treat. So she decided to save her earnings to buy a new, bigger bed.

Camille is currently taking tutoring lessons because she wants to improve her reading and writing skills. She is very proud of the fact that she was able to tell her story in her own words. ✖

YOUNG ARTIST ENJOYS THE CREATIVE CHALLENGE

My name is Alex Magnussen.

I am originally from Romania, I was adopted at 2 1/2 years old

I came to Canada and lived in Ucluelet until grade 6.

We moved to Port Alberni where I wrestled for four years, becoming the provincial champ, and then graduated from Alberni District Secondary School in 2006.

Due to the fact that I have Autism, I moved from high school to being assisted by the Port Alberni Association For Community Living where I am happy and pursuing my art career.

At the day program I tried the art class as something to do. After trying a bunch of different stuff, I was able to make it happen and my style was born.

The basic random lines and colour I feel anyone can do but I am trying to develop my own recognizable style.

I like doing art for its own sake, but I would like to also design images for things like skate and surf companies, posters, CD covers and other graphic designs.

Lately, I have been experimenting with scenery and doing special orders. It has been hard to keep up because they are usually purchased before they are completed.

I use Sharpie Markers on canvas because it is much different from what other people are doing.

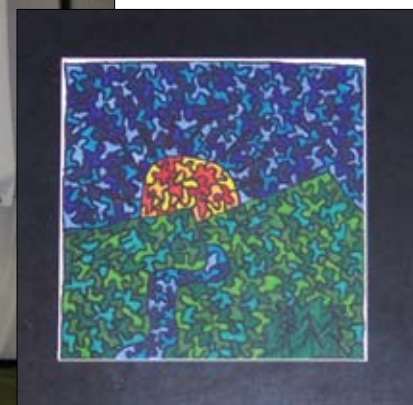
The little random squiggles built up into scenes, then I began leaving blank spots, doing shapes, thick and thin lines and it evolved into much more complex images.

Usually the image pops into my head and I just go for it.

It is very fast to start, to do and to keep organized but I find it very relaxing. Plus I'm stubborn and find the challenge interesting.

The process has been a wild change from the beginning experiments.

I've gotten a lot of positive feedback from people. I love the feeling of people liking my work and having it in their homes and offices. ✨



(Left) Alex Magnussen shows off one of his pieces.

(Inset) Alex created a version of Port Alberni Association for Community Living's logo in his own unique style. He donated this piece to PAACL's administrative office.

SCHOOL RECOGNIZED FOR FOSTERING INCLUSION

Centennial Christian School (CCS) in Terrace has been recognized as a school committed to providing an atmosphere of inclusive education for all their students. The school will be presented with the 2009 National Inclusive Education Award by The Canadian Association for Community Living in Victoria at an annual conference in June.

Caleb, a Grade 12 student, has been attending CCS for five years. He is a young man with Autism. Part of the reason CCS won this award was because of the creative ways students and staff have been able to see Caleb as a valued member of the school's community.

It is very clear that Caleb's Special Education Assistant and the staff at CCS are very good at seeing opportunities to include Caleb in every way possible. Principal Curtis Tuininga explains that "staff and students realize that having students with special needs included is as good for all of them as it is for the student. Each student is loved and respected for who they are and the blessing they are to the school community."

In order to be considered for this award, schools need to provide appropriate support to students and educators, create full acceptance into all aspects of school life, focus on student strengths, avoid labelling, have strong partnership between educators and parents, recognize that students achieve goals in different ways, and have the knowledge and ability of teaching students with varying abilities and strengths so they can learn together.

CCS has done some exceptional things to support students in the best, most inclusive ways. "They are too numerous to mention," says Rita Wacholtz, Caleb's mother, "from creating a position of statistician so my son could attend sports games and be a part of the team, to having a copy of the book he wrote and illustrated as part of the school library, to making modifications in his school life and academics so he could continue to participate in meaningful ways with his age peers."

CCS offers a safe, stable, welcoming learning environment. This included offering the same learning assistant for the entire five years Caleb has attended the school because it was best for him. The whole school did extra fundraising to allow his Special Education Assistant to travel with him on class trips to Queen Charlotte Island and Salt Spring Island.

"Our agency was very impressed at the level of support that CCS and Caleb's Special Educational Assistant, Shannon Kumpolt, were able to offer to help obtain an integrated, paid job at Tim Horton's while still going to school," says Christine Clark, Supported Employment Coordinator at the Provincial Networking Group. "They were involved in helping us understand Caleb's skills and interests. They were open to accommodating his school and work programs and in the beginning provided transportation to and from the job site to make sure his shifts started and ended well." ✖



Caleb Wacholtz and his Special Education Assistant Shannon Kumpolt.

INNOVATION

Connecting through Innovation

These days, Vancouver's North Shore Community is better connected through a publication that CLBC's local Community Living Centre produces.

The well-received newsletter is called GET CONNECTED and is utilized by more than 1,000 households and businesses in North Vancouver.

"It is important to realize that the North Shore is a rich community with an immense variety of resources," says CLBC facilitator Joerg Taylor-Philippin who is one of the creative forces behind GET CONNECTED.

"It actually is a great success here on the North Shore. There are many stories on how this simple tool has helped people connecting with others and with services," he says.

An information gathering visit to the North Shore Resource Society (NSRS) made by Joerg and fellow facilitator Denise Burrowes became the impetus for GET CONNECTED. The NSRS organizes all sorts of resources for varied subjects and interests and is used by the greater community. Joerg and his co-worker were simply overwhelmed by the mass of information and started to think about a tool that would gather, select and bundle relevant and current information for the North Shore community living field.

"CLBC facilitators are in a position to get a feel for what is needed, wanted and relevant. GET CONNECTED is a kind of umbrella newsletter that combines information about both specialized and generic resources on the North Shore," says Joerg.

What gets shared is a direct result of needs that have come to light during planning, requests or phone conversations with families and individuals, as well as things that facilitators and analysts might hear through the grapevine that might be useful for individuals and families.

"Facilitators meet and get to know many people, agencies and generic resources on the North Shore. GET CONNECTED is a tool to facilitate the exchange of relevant information within that community to enable more efficient use of existing resources," says Joerg.

GET CONNECTED has also inspired the creation of some much needed resources.

For example:

- Some families and individuals were triggered by an article and got together to create Aspire, a North Shore Asperger's Syndrome Society.
- After developing a plan with a self-advocate, ads on GET CONNECTED's blackboard helped to locate donated drums, a volunteer band instructor and a practice space.
- People from the community have donated computers for self advocates.
- GET CONNECTED also holds space for advertisements. People have found private respite workers, workshop instructors and even friends.
- Last April's issue focused on Summer Camps (this April's will again) which proved to be very helpful as families and individuals did their summer planning.

"At the beginning, promotion of GET CONNECTED was very time and energy consuming, but now, agencies contact us asking to publish an article," says Joerg.

GET CONNECTED is published and distributed bi-monthly. If you have questions about GET CONNECTED, or are interested in starting a similar newsletter in your community, please feel free to contact Dan Beauvais at 604-981-0110. ✎



CONFERENCE PROVIDES LEARNING AND LAUGHTER

In February, the Cranbrook CLBC office held an Advocacy and Empowerment conference.

The two day conference included a workshop by Planned Life Advocacy Network (PLAN), a theatre workshop led by self advocates from Cresteramics, and a one-day workshop for self advocates to discuss leadership skills and strengthening their community.

The conference was open to self advocates, parents, friends and caregivers. The turnout was great with 80 people registering.

Sandrelle Fraser, a self advocate from the West Kootenays, wrote about her experience at the conference:

"I loved learning different things

from people like Shelley Nessman and Rick Little. They are great people to learn from. Shelley taught us about our dreams and leadership skills. Rick Little taught us more theatre supports."

Susan Does from Cresteramics said she was "a little bit scared" to present at the conference but once she started, she had a really good time.

Marilyn Christensen did a workshop on motivational laughter.

"It was really funny" said Tina Hickman. "We did a lot of different activities as we learned about getting along with other people. It was funny because Marilyn gave out clown noses and everyone got to pick their own nose. We laughed a lot."

The conference was followed by a



Ana Yost and Tina Hickman share a laugh while wearing their red clown noses.

dinner and dance on Friday night. The dinner and dance were put together with the help of CLBC, REALM, and Pioneer Lodge Group. The decorations for the theme, "My Spooky Valentine," were made by the self advocates and looked fantastic.

Tina summed it up well, "The dance was really good and the dinner was great." ✖

CLBC OFFICE SHOWS OFF NEW INCLUSIVE SPACE

On Friday, March 20, CLBC's Castlegar Community Living Centre hosted an open house to let the community come see the renovations that were done to the office space in January and February.

The renovations include a new Self Advocate Room that is designed to be a welcoming space for the community to come and meet with facilitators.

"We've had an extremely positive response," says Rob Wicharuk, "Everyone was very pleased to see that we have a new place to meet. The goal is to make self-advocates feel as though they have their own space they can utilize, and also a place to hold local self advocate meetings."

The space is also being used to display the art work of local self advocates, with plans underway to connect with the local art community.

The event was also a chance for people to see friends from other communities. Among the 60 to 70 people in attendance, there were self advocates, and their service providers, from Trail, Castlegar, Nelson and Grand Forks. ✖



(Above) The staff of the Castlegar Community Living Centre. (Below) Guests enjoy the new Self Advocate Room.



CELEBRATING HEART OF COMMUNITY

An excerpt from a story by Valerie Schillaci, *Trail Daily Times*

Whether it's a wave from a familiar face or a job to go to in the morning, there are many ways to create a feeling of belonging.

And to be included can go a long way, according to Greater Trail residents who attended an event last week that raised awareness about disability issues.

Trail Association for Community Living, in partnership with Career Development Services and Community Living BC, hosted "Celebrating the Heart of Community" on Wednesday night. Sixty people gathered at Trail's Selkirk College to watch "Freedom to Belong," a short documentary that explores inclusion.

"What makes you feel like you belong?" asked Rachel Schmidt, who traveled the province creating the film.

Trail's Tim Pretty says it's his job, his wife Debbie, and the support he has from the community. For Joan Armstrong, it's working in the cafeteria at the college and bowling twice a week.

Warfield's Shari Glover, a star in the film, is a "social butterfly" who works at the Trail Activity Centre. She's out and about in the community - and all are reasons she feels she belongs.

Sheila Adcock, coordinator at Career Development Services, plays a valuable role in connecting individuals facing significant employment barriers with work.



Rachel Schmidt visited Trail to share "Freedom to Belong," a documentary on people with disabilities. Warfield's Shari Glover is seen in the film.

The organization helps people find paid employment while building work skills.

Governed by the Trail Association for Community Living, some of Career Development Services' job activities include the City of Trail clean-up contract, Gyro Park concession and a property maintenance contract.

"I take a lot of pride in our community - what we have done and what we have built," said Adcock.


Trail is leading the province on inclusion, according to Schmidt, and is used as an example of a place that has several employment options for

people with disabilities.

Schmidt hosts presentations on behalf of CLBC. The powerful film, that Schmidt uses as a tool to educate municipalities, brings BC's self advocates - those with disabilities who are out educating the public - to the forefront.

The underlying message is that support from the community brings inclusion.

Pretty, among many of the self advocates in the room, is "very proud to live in Trail."

"I'm a self advocate. I'm here to help those who can't speak up." 

BUSY TIMES FOR SELF ADVOCATE PROJECT ASSISTANT

By Greta Cooper, Team Assistant - Vernon Community Living Centre

When I start something, I go from the beginning to the end." That's how self advocate project assistant Ted Dekker describes his work ethic.

A very thorough individual, Ted arrives punctually at Vernon CLC offices wearing a snappy sportscoat and clutching a briefcase heavy with numerous papers.

Initially hired from September 2008 to March of this year, Ted's role was to continue with the planning process leading up to the Self Advocate Conference.

During October's planning meeting, everyone expressed the need to see a self advocate permanently installed in the office once a week. A proposal was put forth and Ted will continue as contact person. He agrees it only makes sense to keep the flow of communication open and have someone to contact.

The conference itself has been officially booked for October 19 and 20, 2009. Ted is busy deciphering information and organizing conference calls, supported by Joanne Sandekker from Kindale Development Association. She is impressed by the progress she is observing first hand, "What a great thing talking to people, getting people all fired up." ✎



Joanne Sandekker and Ted Dekker keep busy in the Vernon Community Living Centre.

PROGRAM PROVIDES ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATION

Kids Up Front is a charitable organization that provides entertainment and educational experiences to children and families by redistributing unused tickets to events around Greater Vancouver.

Kids Up Front was founded by Calgary businessman John Dalziel, who wanted to fill the empty seats he saw at sports events, theatrical productions and concerts with kids and families who wouldn't normally have the chance to attend.

"Giving kids exposure to great theatre, music and sports is an investment in their futures as well as a fun day out," John said.

Under the slogan, "One Little Ticket, One Big

Lift," Kids Up Front has been filling empty seats at Vancouver events since 2004 and is now a partner agency of Community Living BC. In 2008, CLBC received a total of 571 tickets worth over \$13,000.



Although event organizations and corporations donate the most tickets to Kids Up Front, individuals that send in unusable tickets is the fastest growing segment. The tickets are collected at the four offices across Canada, and redistributed to charities and partner agencies.

To learn more about Kids Up Front, including information about how to participate and donate, please visit www.kidsupfront.com. ✎

RANCH WILL BRING RESPITE TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS

There is a need in British Columbia for a barrier-free respite location where individuals with disabilities and their families can rest, recharge and reconnect as a family and with others, so that they can find strength, hope and inspiration.


The Abilitas Foundation is a charitable organization, which was established with the vision of providing accessible respite accommodation and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Abilitas has acquired acreage at the Cold Water Ranch, which is located 20 minutes West of Merritt. Here, Abilitas will be building a fully accessible respite lodge.

The Foundation intends to foster an inclusive community at the Cold Water Ranch. This community will not only include the Lodge, but also a subdivision, a guest ranch, and a vineyard, which are currently under development. Individuals with disabilities can bring their friends, family or personal support and use these facilities at no charge.

Rather than running a camp or programs, the Abilitas Foundation is committed to creating opportunities that will enable and empower people with disabilities and their families to access nature, view local wildlife, and experience ranch life. To that end, the Abilitas Foundation will create accessible trails and picnic areas. Guests can enroll in therapeutic riding lessons at the guest ranch and accessible equipment will be available for the outdoors. There will be a playground,

a Snoezelen room, and for those rainy days, an arts and crafts room.

The Cold Water Ranch Lodge is scheduled to open its doors in the summer of 2010. Offering a panoramic view of the surrounding area, the lodge is designed to house four families at a time (or a group of up to 24 individuals, including support staff). Each bedroom has accessible bathroom facilities. As you can imagine, the Cold Water Ranch Lodge initiative is welcomed with open arms wherever it's introduced.

To support this important initiative, you can join the more than 170-strong circle of Abilitas Friends. To help make this vision a reality, you can make a donation online, or lend a helping hand in construction, landscaping or any other way you can. For more information and to learn about upcoming Abilitas events, please visit www.abilitasfoundation.org. 



STAY CONNECTED WITH CLBC

It is a major priority of Community Living BC to communicate with the people we support, their families, service providers and stakeholders. We strive to provide the most up-to-date information in a timely and consistent manner.

And we need your help. To provide better communication, we need to collect your contact information. If you are interested in receiving the latest news from CLBC, please visit the 'Contact Us' section of

our website at www.communitylivingbc.ca, fill out the contact form and provide us with your contact details. If you do not have access to the Internet, please call 604-664-0101, to provide our receptionist with your name, address, phone numbers, affiliation and e-mail address.

Free access to the Internet is available at all public libraries across BC. You can also sign up for a free e-mail address at www.hotmail.com or www.yahoo.ca. 

DATABASE A TOOL TO FIND COMMUNITY RESOURCES


The CLBC Community Resource Database is now online and is available through the CLBC website.

Launched on March 30, 2009, the Community Resource Database is a way to find information about activities, volunteer groups, services and supports that are available in your local community.

Many of the listings are available to everyone, while some are specifically for people with developmental disabilities.

CLBC updates the information in the Community Resource Database to keep it as current and useful as possible for children with special needs and adults with developmental disabilities to be part of their communities.

There are two ways to search for activities, groups, services and supports with the Community Resource Database. You can either use a map to find community resources in any community in BC, or you can use the advanced search page which allows you to type in the specific kind of resource you are looking for.

To use the Community Resource Database to locate resources in your local community, go to the CLBC website under [Your Community > Resource Database](#). 



CONTACT US

The Citizen is published every two months by CLBC's Communications department. It is your information source for news that's relevant to the individuals and families CLBC supports. The views and opinions expressed in *The Citizen* are not necessarily those held by CLBC. We are always on the lookout for inspirational stories about people in the community. If you know of an event that others might like to know about, an issue that invites debate, or news worth reporting, let us know. While we appreciate story ideas and submissions, *The Citizen* reserves the right to edit content for accuracy, grammar and space, but strives to maintain the integrity and voice of the author.

If you have a story suggestion or feedback on the newsletter, please e-mail editor@communitylivingbc.ca.

To receive the electronic or paper version of *The Citizen*, please visit www.communitylivingbc.ca/who_we_are/contact.htm and click on either E-mail or Paper Newsletter Sign-up.

If you have a general question about CLBC, please e-mail info@communitylivingbc.ca.

CLBC is a Crown agency of the government of British Columbia and is committed to being carbon neutral by 2010.

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Community Living British Columbia

7th Floor – Airport Square • 1200 West 73rd Ave.

Vancouver, British Columbia • V6P 6G5

Phone: 604-664-0101 • Fax: 604-664-0765 • Toll Free: 1-877-660-2522