

THE CITIZEN

Connecting People with Their Community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

CLBC Newsletter - May 2007

Volume 3 Issue 3

Information Central

What's Inside

ROP Successes



Staff Conference



Research Project



Self-Advocate Summit



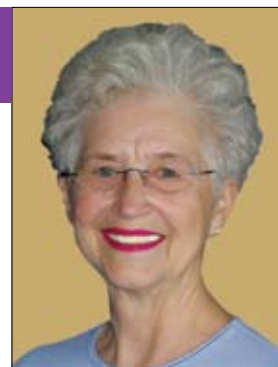
Disability Savings Plan



The Courtenay Self-Advocate Resource Centre is a one-stop shop for self-advocates seeking information, like Cheryl McLellan. See page four for full story.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lois Hollstedt



Over the past month I have had the privilege of attending two conferences in which family members shared the challenges they faced as parents raising children with special needs.

At the CLBC staff conference, I heard the stories of three moms and their children, their families and their lives. The stories were framed around the broad theme of a marathon – about entering the race as a new parent of a child with special needs, the reality of everyday life and the race for services and supports.

Their stories were gripping and inspirational. Each talked about wanting their child to have the chance to be the best they could be. They spoke about the exhaustion of constant worry and caring and the guilt they felt for other children and family members who need their time. They talked about insensitive communities and their frustration with systems that don't know how to respond. The mothers were angry because of a lack of resources to make a difference – but also shared their hope for a better future. CLBC staff in attendance voiced their appreciation for reminding them what their job is about and I sincerely echo that thanks.

Their stories were gripping and inspirational. Each talked about wanting their child to have the chance to be the best they could be.

The second event was the 20th Annual Family Support Institute Weekend – a group of family members who make it their volunteer work to mentor and support parents who have a new child with special needs.

The need for personal support networks is a central theme for CLBC.

Celebrating the selfless sharing of parents in our community, who not only live the marathon but reach out to others to make a difference, is again inspirational. They are role models for all of us in building inclusive, welcoming communities.

Parents have played a leadership role in helping our society to understand how to build supports for people with developmental disabilities and children with special needs and we are grateful for your leadership. Thank you all for staying in the race and helping us to build a world where all can be winners. 🦋

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INSIDE VOICE

The self-advocate's perspective.

A HISTORY OF HELPING OTHERS

By Shelley Marinus

My name is Shelley Marinus and I am a self-advocate from Courtenay. I have been happily married to Ken for 16 years.

I am the Self-Advocate Liaison for Community Living BC in Courtenay. My job is to help support self-advocates in the community to make their own decisions in all areas of their lives. I help other self-advocacy groups stay together and help teach people how to start a group in their area. My area is from Courtenay to Port Hardy North. I will go to their community, if they need me too. I have helped families too. I also have a card, with my phone number on it and a brochure for people to keep, so they can call me if they need help.

Plain language is important to self-advocates in my area. People need to understand what they are reading, so they can make decisions for their life. A part of my job is to help self-advocates understand the letters and information they receive. I believe that all information self-advocates receive should be in plain language. I enjoy my job very much; it makes me feel good that I can help people in my community.

I try to go to lots of workshops, so I can learn more skills to help other people. I went to the Family Focus Conference in Richmond. I met a lot of new people and was able to catch up with people I had not seen in a long time. I just came back from the CLBC staff conference in Richmond. I stayed a few days longer because I went to the safeguards workshop and Innovation Fair.

I have 25 years of experience helping self-advocates in my community. I received a Lifetime Achievement Award for my "many years of contribution towards the vision of full citizenship for all people." It was quite an

honour to receive this award from Minister of Children and Family Development Tom Christensen, and Lois Hollstedt, CLBC Board of Directors Chair. This was an amazing and emotional moment for me in my life.

I will also attend the BCACL conference in Prince George in June. I am very excited to be a part of the conference because I will be learning and meeting more people.

In my spare time I like to do lots of volunteer work and am involved with BC Special Olympics. I belong to the swimming club, bowling and curling teams and I do rhythmic gymnastics. I also bowl with a mixed-bowling league in my community. All this keeps me very busy. I like being busy because if I am not busy, I am bored.

I volunteer my time at the Self-Advocacy Resource Centre, am a member of the Comox Valley Community Advisory Committee, and I help out with our local food bank to help people who are hungry. It makes me feel good to help people to have a better life. I also enjoy working in my garden, visiting friends and spending time with my husband. 🦋



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

FILLING IN THE GAP

COVER STORY

According to Small Business BC, to determine whether a business idea meets the basic requirements for a successful new project, it should be able to answer yes to the following question: Does the business serve a presently un-served need?

In the case of the Courtenay Self-Advocacy Resource Centre, the answer was a loud “yes.”

Several years ago, Susan Bunn, who is the current executive director of the Beaufort Association, met with several local service providers to see if they would be interested in starting a resource centre for self-advocates.

When there wasn't much of a response, she turned to Michael McLellan, who was receiving services from the Beaufort Association and was a member of their board of directors.

Michael enthusiastically agreed with Susan, and with the support of the association, the pair moved forward.

Together they pitched the idea to the Comox Valley Community

Foundation who gave them a \$2,500 grant to start the centre.

And after some hard work, innovation and dedication, they opened in April 2005.

The focus of the centre is to support people with developmental disabilities, their families and their support workers. However, they are still able to help anyone who has a disability.

The Self-Advocacy Resource Centre is a place where self-advocates can receive information about service providers, generic services, employment, volunteering, disability benefits – anything that would be of interest to a local self-advocate.

Many day programs in his area do not have peer advisors, said Michael. So a resource centre for self-advocates run by self-advocates plays a double role. Not only can self-advocates receive information, but they can receive advice from the volunteers as well.

Brad Erhardt, one of the centre's main volunteers, “felt that there needed to be a central location to provide information.”

Brad feels the centre acts as a pointer to information for self-advocates. There are so many service providers in the area and so many people that need to use their services – but often there's a gap between the two, he said.

But if there is something the

volunteers cannot help out with, they will guide self-advocates in the direction of someone who can.

“I feel I'm playing a vital role as a go-between for people,” said Brad.

The centre is located at 536C – 5th Street in Courtenay. The regular



Brad Erhardt at the Courtenay Self-Advocate Resource Centre.

hours are Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no fee to visit the centre or use any of the services. However, the volunteers ask that you call ahead to make an appointment as they are not at the centre full time.

The centre acts under the umbrella of the Beaufort Association, but there is a separate door to the centre with access to the outside.

Finding funding for the centre has been a challenge, but thanks to some gaming initiatives with the association, costs have been reduced.



Cory Pagnoni reads about First Aid at the Self-Advocacy Resource Centre.

But the group realized that they would need to tap into additional resources if the centre was to remain open.

In their first summer in operation, the centre received a grant from Human Resources Development Canada, who provided them with a summer student. Together they created some fundraising activities, which allowed the group to host a few social nights.



A local recycling centre, which recycles old computers, gave them a donation of several computers. They were also able to buy two new ones, thanks to a donation from the Comox Valley United Way.

But in addition to accessing local sources of funding, the group also looked at untraditional methods of obtaining supplies for the centre.

When Susan noticed that the accounting office from across the street was receiving a new photocopier machine, she approached the office and asked them if they would donate their old one – and they did. She was also able to get a greeting card stand from a dollar store that was going out of business.

Michael sees the computers as one of the main draws of the centre. If people don't have a computer at

home, this is a great way for them to become familiar with computers and set up an e-mail account, he said.

Some of the computers have JAWS installed, which is a screen-reading software for the visually impaired. The centre also offer training for those who could use some help learning basic computer skills, or for people who would like to try out the screen-reading software.

In addition, Brad has developed a webpage for the centre. On it, people can learn about the centre, what they do, how they can help and how to contact the volunteers.

He has also tried to make the web W3C compliant. W3C is an international set of guidelines produced by the World Wide Web Consortium, the industry group that defines most of the standards in use on the web.

All of the photos on the website have alt tags, which are descriptions of photos for those using a screen reader. There are also buttons to increase the font size for people with vision challenges.

"We have an ageing population and sight loss is common," said Brad.

Brad feels that the centre can be a stepping stone to independence for some individuals. People can get help writing resumes, accessing the Internet and finding information on work and educational programs.

There is also an on-site library where people can sit at the centre and read information they are looking for. There is also a selection of educational videos that people can watch in the centre.

The resource centre is also the home of the Comox Valley Self-Advocates.

"It's their space," said Susan. "They make their own agenda and they decide what to do."

Susan said the centre has been a tremendous help to the many self-advocates who have used the resources of the centre. "I have seen self-esteem grow in leaps and bounds," she said. "I've seen people work together and listen and support each other."

"The heart of volunteering is wishing to make a better community," said Brad. "I think we're doing that."

For more information on the Courtenay Self-Advocate Resource Centre, please call 250-334-3568 or visit www.members.shaw.ca/centre.sarc. You can also find a link to the centre in the Links to Resources section of the CLBC website. 🦋



The Comox Valley Self-Advocates hold their meetings at the Courtenay Self-Advocacy Resource Centre.

PLAN HELPS PEOPLE SAVE FOR THEIR FUTURE

By Jack Styant, Executive Director, Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network

On March 19, federal Finance Minister James Flaherty, made history. Canada became the first nation to create a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

When the initiative is rolled out, it will provide a simple yet powerful mechanism for families and people with disabilities to secure the future. The plan will benefit an estimated 730,000 people.

One of those individuals is Erin Tesan.

Erin enjoys a rich life with her family and friends. Few families are better prepared to plan for the future. Ric and Pat, Erin's parents, are well-known family leaders. Pat, who leads Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network's (PLAN) will and estate planning workshops, is a provincial authority on trusts, disability benefits and future planning strategies. Ric and Pat are excited about the prospects of the RDSP and the potential that it holds for Erin's future.

Erin recently celebrated her 29th birthday. If Ric and Pat set up a RDSP and contribute \$1,500 a year for the next 20 years, the proposed plan would provide Erin with additional income of \$10,000 per year for 30 years from her 42nd birthday through her 71st year.

The following table elaborates:

| | Contributions | Withdrawals |
|--|---------------|-------------|
| Family (\$1,500/year for 20 years) | \$30,000 | |
| Disability Savings Grant (\$3,500/year for 20 years) | \$70,000 | |
| Disability Savings Bond (\$1,000/year for 20 years) | \$20,000 | |
| Total Contributions | \$120,000 | |
| Approximate Interest | \$183,500 | |
| Pay Outs (\$10,000/year for 29 years) | | \$303,500 |

The example assumes the following:

- The RDSP realizes average returns of 5.6% per year
- Erin's income is less than \$20,833 per year
- Total government contributions are \$90,000.

Alternatively, if Erin, Ric and Pat wanted to use the plan to save for the purchase of a home, the plan would grow to \$223,000 by the time Erin is 50 without withdrawals.

Two obstacles must be overcome before families are able to visit their financial institution to open a RDSP.

The RDSP must come into force – legislation and regulations passed by parliament. PLAN expects this will take one year to 18 months.

The provincial government must make changes so that the RDSP is not an asset under BC Benefits and so that disbursements are not deducted from income benefits. Without making any commitments, Carole Taylor, BC's Finance Minister has responded positively. PLAN's initial discussions with representatives of the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance have been very encouraging.

If you are interested in more information, visit www.plan.ca or sign up for PLAN's quarterly e-zine, ActionPLAN, to receive updates. 

1. The RDSP will have the following characteristics:

- \$200,000 lifetime contribution limit
- contributions permitted by the individual, any family member or friend
- no annual limits on contribution
- contributions grow interest free
- no restrictions on when the funds can be used or for what purpose.

2. For adults with disabilities or families with incomes of \$20,833 or less, the Disability Savings Bond will provide \$1,000 per year for 20 years to a RDSP without any contributions.

3. The Disability Savings Grant will match contributions for 20 years as follows:

- If family income is less than \$74,357 annually, the grant is \$1,500 for the first \$500 contributed and \$2,000 on the next \$1,000 contributed.
- If family income is more than \$74,357, the grant is \$1,000 for the first \$1,000 contributed.

4. People who qualify for the disability tax credit will be eligible.

RESIDENTIAL SUCCESS STORIES

By **Andrea Baker**, *Manager, Residential Options Project*

Phase one of Community Living BC's Residential Options Project has officially concluded. Between the months of September 2006 and March 2007, we spoke with almost 10,000 people regarding the residential preferences of individuals currently living within staffed residential homes across the province. Our team met with approximately 2,500 individuals and spoke with their families, friends, and service providers. Our final report will be released by the end of May, so be sure to check our website for updated information.

Overall, we found that most individuals were satisfied with their existing homes. Many took the opportunity to tell us about how their home meets their needs and provides them with meaningful lives. However, there were a number of people who were interested in exploring residential alternatives. Some individuals have already been supported to move to a new home. Others have started to plan for future and some have asked that we check back with them at a later date.

In general, our findings are in keeping with community living trends across North America. We recently had a chance to meet with service providers from across Canada and the United States (even a few from Ireland and Australia). There is a sense that individuals and their families are looking for residential options that meet their own unique circumstances. There is an increasing demand for personalized planning, broader choices, and customized solutions that allow people to have real independence within their own homes. Leaders within the field are constantly striving to support people in a manner that honours each person's unique circumstance.

Through phase one of the Residential Options Project, we met many wonderful people who have moved to homes of their own and who were thrilled to share with us their success stories. Thai is one such person.

Thai is a very engaging gentleman who lives in his own apartment in a fourplex in Victoria. Thai has a big warm smile and welcomes visitors to his home. He

has lived in his own place for two years now and is proud to say, "this is my house!" Thai likes books, magazines, music, and soap operas. Sometimes in the evening, he goes to a jam in his neighbourhood. He also likes to watch American Idol.

When his nieces and nephews are visiting, he puts on cartoons for them to watch. When Thai is visiting at his sister's home, they put on his soaps for him to watch. Thai works for his sister around the property. He mows the lawn and keeps the grounds of the fourplex neat and tidy. He looks forward to payday.

Thai likes his things to be in the same place and he is very particular about the condition of his magazines

and books. Thai attends a day program where he has one-to-one support to participate in the community.

Previous to this, Thai lived in a group home. It was difficult for Thai and those

around him were extremely worried about the number of upsetting incidents that were occurring in the home. The residents in the home would touch Thai's books or move his things. Thai's sister, Me Kon, was very concerned about him. One day she noticed an ad in the paper for a fourplex and wondered if it could be possible for Thai to have his own apartment. Me Kon and the agency that supported Thai began to look for the right place for Thai. Me Kon bought the fourplex and Thai and two other fellows moved in to their own apartments. The fourth suite is occupied by the overnight staff who provides support from 10 p.m. to 10 a.m.

Life is much more settled for Thai now that he has a place to call his own. ✨




AD CAMPAIGN WILL BUILD COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS

For many individuals, the phrase "community living" instantly brings up a vision of connecting people with developmental disabilities to their communities. However, most people outside of the community living movement do not make the same association or know why it is important. If the public doesn't know what community living means, how can they help or recognize why it is important?

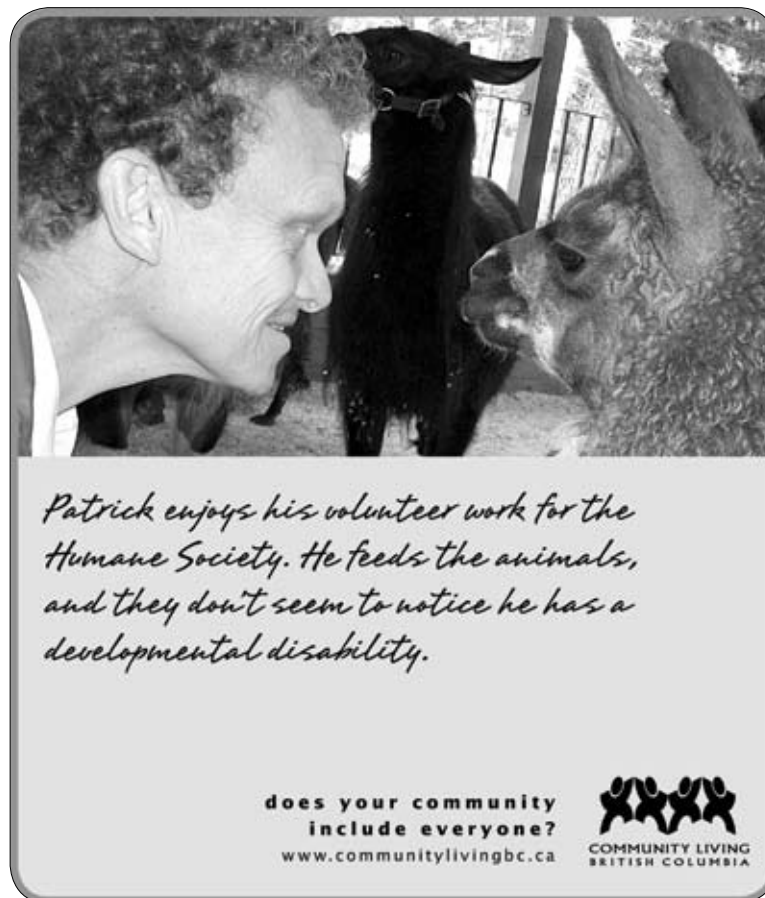
So when the CLBC Communications Department was given the opportunity to develop a one-time, multi-media campaign, they instantly knew that this was a perfect way to make this connection with the general public.

Several pieces have been developed in the past three months: print advertisements, bookmarks, two radio commercials and one television commercial. All of the advertisements feature real people with developmental disabilities, many of whom CLBC supports. The distribution plan is currently under development, but it is hoped that all pieces will be released either in the late spring or early summer.

The advertisements and supported material will be posted on the CLBC website in the near future. 



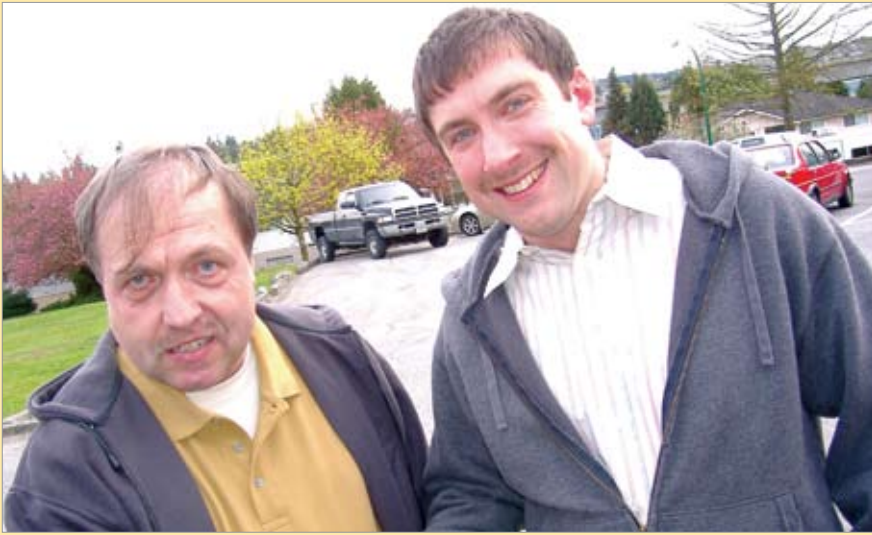
Three bookmarks were created using famous quotes.



Newspaper advertisements were created using three different stories of real self-advocates. They will run in community newspapers across the province.



One of two posters which CLBC and service providers



Gerry Juzenas (left) meets Stefano Giulianetti, the actor who plays him in the television commercial.

SELF-ADVOCATES BECOME STARS FOR THE DAY

Four self-advocates were selected to be a part of CLBC's radio and television commercials. Cliff Stacey and Heather Porteous were the voice talent for the radio spots, while Gerry Juzenas, Gallagher Stevens and Heather Porteous were the stars of the television commercial. A true story of some Lower Mainland self-advocates formed the basis of the television spot. ♿



(left): Heather Porteous and Gallagher Stevens wait patiently for their cue. (bottom left): The behind-the-scenes crew watch the filming off the set. From left: Debby Jenkins, executive producer; Bruce Fraser, creative director; Karin Basaraba, communications specialist; and Sally Greenwood, director of communications. (bottom right): Gallagher and Heather keep warm during a break from filming.



*a will be distributed across the province to
er offices, as well as community buildings.*

SPEAKING UP FOR THEMSELVES

By Christina Toth, Staff Reporter, Abbotsford Times

Although they belong to a group of people who are often ignored or overlooked by society, the Mission Self-Advocacy Group is a proud and busy bunch that is making real changes in the community.

The members of the self-advocacy group are adults with intellectual disabilities, and some have the added challenge of physical disabilities.

But at their last monthly meeting, president Joe Rikley listed a few of the group's many accomplishments.

"We got them to put ramps on the sidewalks to make places accessible," at Mission Hills Shopping Centre, said Rikley, who uses a wheelchair.

A couple of years back, the self-advocates marched to MLA Randy Hawes' Mission office to protest the government's plan to change its public guardian laws for adults.

Disabled people over 19 need advocates to speak for them on medical matters, they say. The government planned to hand decision-making powers over to doctors, but abandoned the proposal after much opposition.

"Another thing we're fighting for is incentive programs," Rikley said.



President of the Mission Self-Advocacy Group, Joe Rikley, goes over topics at the group's March meeting.

Disabled adults can collect \$100 for volunteer work, on top of their disability cheques, but if two people move in together, only one can claim the \$100 bonus, even if they are not a couple.

Couples get penalized in other ways.

Jerry Laidlaw and his girlfriend Laura individually received an \$856 disability cheque, but when they moved in together, their support cheque was reduced to \$1,469. Rikley moved in with pal Tracy Martin, but they had to prove they were not a couple to keep their full disability allowances.

Bryce Schaufelberger began the self-advocacy group 12 years ago, and developed it with the help of support workers like Gregg Schiller and Arlene Schouten, who advise them today.

"I wanted to create something to get people heard. It takes guts to say something. As they learned, I learned something," he said.

"We got some structure and did some fund raising. Then we wanted to help Abbotsford with their group, too."

Over the years, the members have found they can make a difference when they speak up.

Schaufelberger, who works in a computer lab at Abbotsford's Home Society, said he sees participants become more confident.

"It's really needed for the community, especially the leadership conferences," he said.

Abbotsford and Mission groups hold the two-day leadership workshops each fall at Edenvale, and after eight years, it draws people from around Canada. They also hold a self-advocates' day each year at Sevenoaks Alliance Church that draws 200 people.

Their next campaign is called Time to Hire, for which the group received a small grant of \$1,000 from federal and provincial associations for community living.

"It's to raise awareness with employers to give us jobs," said Laidlaw. The group will make a presentation soon to the Mission Chamber of Commerce.

To find out more about self-advocacy, visit www.selfadvocatenet.com. 

INNOVATION

INNOVATION KEEPS SIGN LANGUAGE CLASS ALIVE

By Chris Arnold, *Provincial Networking Group Inc.*

As an agency that provides professional development training, funded by CLBC, we often have requests for various topics from community living agencies. One of the most requested programs is our “Survival Sign Language” six-week training.

We call this training “Survival Sign Language” because the intent is to give people some good basic sign language skills. We are not trying to turn people into interpreters for the hearing impaired, but hope they can use sign to help augment communication for people with developmental disabilities. Being able to express yourself and being able to understand other people around you is such an important skill. Sometimes some basic sign language can improve communication.

The session ran from January 31 to March 14, 2007 and was held at the Provincial Networking Group Inc. (PNGI) offices in Terrace. Past sessions of this training have been offered in Prince Rupert and also for a First Nations group at the Kermode Friendship Centre. In the First Nations sessions some culturally specific signs were taught, like fry bread (bannock) and moose meat.

Each Survival Sign Language class has included

participants that have developmental disabilities who might use or benefit from some survival sign. These individuals had the chance to learn and practice alongside some of their support people. There are also family members, including parents and siblings, at the sessions.

We were not able to offer this training often enough to meet the requests. We had to think of an innovative way to help cover the costs and make it accessible to people in our community.

The result was to open this training up to other community groups outside of the typical community living field who were also interested in the training. The outside groups would be able to send participants for a modest fee and the revenue generated by those paying customers would help fund the program so that community living participants could still attend for no charge.

Without this innovative arrangement we might only be able to offer this training once every two years. Now we will be able to offer it four to six times during the same two-year period. This arrangement also provides a great networking opportunity for people in the community living field to establish closer ties to people in other organizations.



The March graduating class of Survival Sign Language in Terrace, BC.

The partners in this latest training included 14 students representing our local college, the school district, the women's centre and community living agencies. It was a great community-based innovation and a very enjoyable class of people! ✨

CONFERENCE HELPED STAFF BUILD THEIR SKILLS

By Brian Salisbury, *Director of Strategic Planning, CLBC*

CLBC held its second annual staff conference in Richmond on April 16 – 17, 2007. The focus was on building staff skills, hence the title *Combining Theory and Practice: Learning to Walk the Talk*. Major themes addressed in the 30 sessions were communication, community development, quality assurance and children's services. Of the 275 people who attended the conference, 35 were self-advocates, family members, government and agency representatives.

Conference objectives were: to increase staff members' knowledge in areas that are central to the work they do in CLBC's new approach to planning and delivering needs supports and services; help staff to develop new skills and refine already existing skills; contribute to building an organizational culture committed to continuous learning;

and enable staff to learn more about where CLBC is headed as an organization.

The keynote speaker was Dennis Harkins from Wisconsin. Dennis is a leader in the US self-determination movement and the principal of A Simpler Way, a group of individuals working to make human services more human. Dennis also worked as the Director of Services to People with Disabilities in Wisconsin for 10 years. His keynote remarks focused on the need to base system change on the value of self-determination and on integrating the strengths of individuals with disabilities, their families, our communities, and those who work in systems created to provide needed supports and services.

Additionally, a day-long post-conference event, facilitated by Dr. Michael Kendrick, on the important role formal and informal safeguards play in the lives of people with developmental disabilities, was attended by over 90 community members and CLBC staff.

Throughout the conference, self-advocates Barb Goode, Penny Soderena and Gladys Duran interviewed staff to ask them about

how CLBC could collectively build an organizational culture committed to continuous learning. They shared their findings at the closing plenary. As well, a panel of CLBC staff and community representatives reflected on the future practice implications of some of the key messages shared by presenters.

On Monday night, Minister Tom Christensen and CLBC Board Chair Lois Hollstedt presented Lifetime Achievement awards to seven self-advocates who have made a significant contribution to the self-advocacy movement during the last 25 years in BC.

CLBC also launched its employee wellness program and employee recognition program by presenting Unsung Heroes awards to 23 staff members who help make their offices desirable places to work. ✨



Keynote speaker Dennis Harkins talks about microenterprises.



(above): Human Resource Advisors Janice Cook and Terry Dobrozdravich at the headquarters exhibit. (left): Roberta Scott from Integra Support Services Ltd. with CLBC VP of Community Planning and Development Doug Woollard at the staff conference.

STAFF CONFERENCE: A SELF-ADVOCATE'S PERSPECTIVE

By Barb Goode, roving reporter, also known as ice-cream cone

I attended the second CLBC Staff Conference. I was asked for the second year running to be a roving reporter. At the last conference, Penny from Prince George and I asked staff a question and at the end of the conference we reported back the top nine responses.

This year, we asked the question with our new reporter Gladys, "How can we become a learning organization?" A friend of mine helped me. I asked the question and she wrote down the answers. Penny taped her responses and someone typed it up for her. Gladys did it her way – I don't know how she did it. I think it's okay to do it different.

The staff were interested and very helpful when I interviewed them. I was glad we were introduced on Monday morning so staff knew who we were and what we were doing.

I was glad they got papers in their packages to think about and fill out.

I attended some of the workshops. They were very interesting. There were so many workshops to choose from. I liked a lot of the workshop's names. There were different workshops, like one called "Listen! Listen! Listen!" that self advocates put on, and another one was on work. There were other ones too.

On Monday night there was a dinner and dance. After the dinner, there was an awards presentation given to seven self-advocates

called the Lifetime Achievement Award. I was one of the lucky ones. I was very honoured and touched.

It was great to see friends again. Some of the staff got an award also. That is such a cool idea. And there was a cool picture show at the end.

It was a very good conference. I enjoyed it all. ✨



(back row, from left): Richard McDonald; Ludo Van Pelt; Gerry Juzenas; Tom Christensen, Minister of Children and Family Development. (front row, from left): Darryl Harand; Penny Soderena; Shelley Marinus; Barb Goode; Lois Hollstedt, CLBC Board of Directors Chair.

Get to Know Julie Dawson



Community Living BC is pleased to announce Julie Dawson as the new Director of Children's Services who is replacing Jean MacDonald. Julie has extensive experience with the Ministry of Children and Family Development working throughout the province. Julie's most recent position was Director of Aboriginal Services for MCFD in Victoria. Here she learned the value of working in partnership, open communication and inclusiveness. Prior to this she was the Deputy Director for Quality Assurance in child welfare. Julie currently lives in Victoria, but has lived and worked in a number of areas of

the province, including the East and West Kootenays, Prince George and the North Okanagan. This provided not only the opportunity for career development, but also the experience of being a member of a rural community. She has worked in the community living area as a case worker, supervisor and manager. Julie is committed to supporting the areas to consistently deliver high quality services to children with special needs and their families, and to assisting with the move to Shared Care.

SELF-ADVOCATE SUMMIT PROVED INSPIRATIONAL

By Laura Swindlehurst & Jerry Laidlaw

On Tuesday, March 27, we took the West Coast Express bus into Vancouver, and then we went to the CLBC office. Aimee Morry, CLBC's Self-Advocate Advisor, took us on a tour of the office.

After the tour of the office we went to the Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel. We were checked in, unpacked and relaxed until 5:30 at which time we went to make our name tags and checked into the summit down in the lobby.

We enjoyed the ice breaker activity. After that we had the first guest speaker – Dan Collins, the executive director of Langley Association for Community Living. Dan talked about a new program called “You’ve Gotta Have Friends.” We talked about the fact that people need to feel part of their community and friends are important.

On Wednesday after breakfast, Rick Mowles, CEO of CLBC, welcomed us and gave a talk to self-advocates on the importance of leadership, speaking up and keeping safe.

Then Michael Bortolotto spoke. Michael is a gentleman with Cerebral Palsy and a motivational speaker. Michael talked about being a “positive rebel,” which means having self esteem and rebelling against negative thoughts.

Michael talked about a man who was pulling a rope. We made guesses as to why the man was pulling the rope. One of our guesses was

that he was walking an invisible dog, and then he told us the real reason. He was making the point that “you can pull the rope, but not push it.” The same theory applies to people, he said. “You don’t push them, but lead them in the right direction.” It made a lot of sense.

In the last workshop, CLBC Director of Safeguards Jule Hopkins, talked about safeguards and rights and the importance of being aware, prepared and safe in your community. We also talked about what to do if someone tries to hurt you. It’s important to feel safe in your community. Jule reminded us that it is okay to ask for help. We also talked about the many different things we need to do to be safe in our communities.

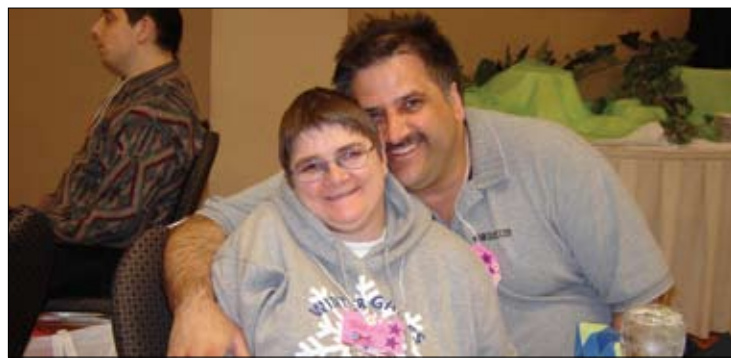
We both enjoyed the summit very much and we learned a lot. We would also like to thank Aimee and Jule from CLBC very much for making it possible for us to be there. Thank you! ✨



Aine Rathwell shares an experience and story on leadership.



Austin Williams and Candice Gates identify and brainstorm the hurdles to having your voice heard.



Tracy Jo Russell and Tony Cuglietta on the first night of the summit at the dinner and icebreaker activity.

COMMUNITY LIVING RESEARCH MOVES FORWARD

By Leah Wilson, *Project Coordinator, Community Living Research Project*

The Community Living Research Project team, based in the School of Social Work and Family Studies at UBC, has been moving forward with their research efforts in the area of community living supports and services for adults aged 19 years and older with developmental disabilities.

The specific focus of the research project is on four topic areas: young adults transitioning from high school, residential options (where people live), non-residential support (things people do during the day), and services for seniors.


Since the project began in the fall of 2005, the team has searched academic and internet databases for articles and reports related to Community Living and prepared both academic and plain language reports summarizing other research in the field.

They have conducted focus groups and individual interviews with 104 self-advocates and family members throughout BC about the supports and services they receive. The team began data analysis on the interviews and started to review policy in key areas (i.e. family model/care homes, seniors and long term care).

They also conducted a brief program review of some programs in BC and began to plan for a larger province-wide survey to be distributed to families and self-advocates in the fall of 2007.

This summer members of the research team will be sharing some of the research findings at conferences in the province. At the BCACL Conference, "Aiming High and Leading the Way," June 14-16 in Prince George, team members will be giving two workshops. One workshop will provide an overall summary of the Community Living Research Project and the second workshop will focus on research findings related to young adults transitioning from high school.

In addition, members of the team will be presenting at a workshop in Victoria, "A Symposium on Aging," on June 20. The team presentation at this workshop will focus on the research findings related to aging with a developmental disability.

For more information about the Community Living Research Project and to access our reports, please visit our website at www.communitylivingresearch.swfs.ubc.ca. The team welcomes your feedback and questions. You can share your thoughts by visiting the website or by contacting Leah Wilson, project coordinator, at 604-827-3494 (fax: 604-822-8656) or clrs@interchange.ubc.ca. 

STAY CONNECTED WITH CLBC

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

But we need your help. In order for us to provide better communication, we need to collect your contact information. If you are interested in receiving the latest news from CLBC, please visit our website at

www.communitylivingbc.ca, fill out the contact form from the Contact Us section and provide us with all of 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. 

UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE PROVINCE

Overcoming Hurdles to Competitive Employment

Details: What changes can be made to overcome the hurdles that still exist for people with disabilities to go to work? In this one-day workshop, Dr. Paul Wehman will discuss his inspiring vision of an inclusive workforce, and present a variety of strategies, approaches and stories that can be used to bridge the gap to employment for people with disabilities. Dr. Wehman is the Director of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Centre on Workplace Supports at Virginia Commonwealth University. He has written about disability-related issues and employment, and is known as a pioneer in the supported employment movement.

Place: 3550 Cessna Drive, Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel, Richmond

Date/Time: June 11, 2007

Family Focus Conference 2008: Call for Presenters

Details: The Family Focus Society is seeking workshops for our 2008 Conference, to be held in Prince George, BC from May 16-18, 2008. We will be playing host to hundreds of family members, service providers, advocates, self-advocates, educators and policy makers. We are seeking presentations and workshops from speakers and trainers who understand the issues faced by people with developmental disabilities, children who have special needs and their families.

Date/Time: Submission Deadline: September 15, 2007

More Information: Family Focus is a provincial society which enjoys a 21 year tradition of organizing conferences for families, by families. For more information on Family Focus, visit their website at www.familyfocusconference.com.

For more information, please visit the Events section of our website at www.communitylivingbc.ca.

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, feedback on the newsletter, or would like to subscribe to a paper version of *The Citizen*, please e-mail: editor@communitylivingbc.ca

To receive a link to a PDF version of *The Citizen*, please e-mail: newsletter@communitylivingbc.ca

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

For the most up-to-date information on CLBC, please visit our website at: www.communitylivingbc.ca



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