

THE CITIZEN

Connecting People with Their Community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

CLBC Newsletter - November 2006

Volume 2 Issue 6

Amazing Grace



What's Inside

Safeguards



Leadership



Autism Training



Photo Contest Winners



Family Focus Conference



Grace Chen, 24, has fulfilled her dream of becoming a published author. See page 4 for full story.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lois Hollstedt



As 2006 comes to a close, I would like to thank you all for your support and involvement in keeping us focused on our vision, on behalf of Community Living BC's Board of Directors.

Our work this year has moved us closer to creating good lives in welcoming communities for people with developmental disabilities and children with special needs in British Columbia.

We would like to extend our best wishes to you and your families for a wonderful holiday season. ✧

NEW LIBRARY WILL PROVIDE VALUABLE RESOURCES

By Joan Kirkbride, Okanagan Foster Parents Association



Joan Kirkbride, from the OFPA, and Jamie Wren, from CLBC, stand in front of some of the materials available the library for caregivers of children with special needs.

Caregivers to children with special needs in the Okanagan now have a library dedicated to their interests. The library, a collaborative venture between several groups, will house videos and books which will be available to all MCFD and CLBC caregivers, as well as families who may benefit from the material.

The Okanagan Foster Parents Association (OFPA) received a grant from the Ministry of Children and Family Development to provide education to caregivers of children with special needs. Several workshops and training events were held throughout the Okanagan. Joan Kirkbride, from OFPA, and Jamie Wren, from CLBC, decided that a special library was needed after conferring with many stakeholders in the community.

The library will be part of the OFPA library system, but will be housed at the CLBC office in Kelowna. Materials may be borrowed by calling or dropping into the CLBC office. A complete listing of library materials is available at

www.okfosterparents.org. ✧

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INSIDE VOICE

The self-advocate's perspective.

HOLD ONTO YOUR DREAM

By Crystal Carson

My name is Crystal Carson. I am a self-advocate from Nanaimo. I have a pet kitty named Cuddles the Famous Carson Cat who lives with me in our apartment; she is my best friend. Cuddles is a beautiful tabby cat, and is always there for me when I feel sad, because I miss my mom. I love living on my own in my apartment, and being able to do things independently in my own time and how I want them done. I have lots of really good friends who I call my family that I like to spend time with.

I have a job at Zellers. I work part-time as a dishwasher. Sometimes it can be overwhelming when it's busy, but it's still fun!

My hobbies are reading, gardening, running, volunteering, listening to music, especially Rick Springfield, and spending time with Cuddles and all my friends.

I have lots of dreams and goals that I am working really hard towards. My mom and dad were my only supporters; they were the only ones who believed in my dreams when I was growing up. They were both my mentors and my guardian angels and they told me it didn't matter that I had a disability they would still love and believe in me no matter what.

I am working really hard to finish my grade 12 so I can go to college to work with horses. My tutor Cheryl is helping me with this to make this dream come true. I want to help children, adults and seniors with special needs of all kinds ride horses.

I have also been studying really hard with my tutor, Brian, to study for my learner's license. I want to get my driver's license so I can drive a car, just like everyone else. I am also training for the 10K Frosty

Foot Race with my two best friends, who are like my big sisters, Eve and Dana. I have been practicing really hard since April to prepare for the race. The 10K race is on December in Nanaimo. I am so excited.

Since my mom passed away in 2001, I have

been really busy raising money for Hospice and Rick Hansen in her memory. I have raised over \$4,000 to help other people.

My biggest dream since I was 13 years old was to meet Rick Springfield and to go to his concert. My big sister Eve made this happen. They got tickets and we all went together. I even got to meet him backstage; I was so excited and nervous. He was everything I dreamed he would be: tall, dark and handsome, just like my dad and my brother.

My biggest dream after I finish my grade 12 and get my driver's license is to meet and marry my Rick Springfield look-alike – tall, dark and handsome. I want to have a family of my own. I want to move to the country and live on an acreage with my husband and children. I want to have lots of animals, horses and a German shepherd dog. I want to have an organic garden where I can grow food.

I know that slow and steady wins the race. I will make all my dreams come true, one baby step at a time. ✨

Inside Voice is published in each issue of The Citizen. If you are interested in writing for this column, please call Karin at 604-664-0187 or email editor@communitylivingbc.ca to discuss.



(left to right) Eve, Crystal Carson, Rick Springfield, Heather and Kathleen at the Rick Springfield concert this June at the River Rock Casino in Richmond.

YOUNG AUTHOR'S DREAM COMES TRUE

COVER STORY

When Grace Chen told her mother, Jessica, that she wanted to be a journalist, Jessica just smiled and said, "Yes, dear." But three years later, when Grace told her that she wanted to be a writer, Jessica thought about it.

"At that time, I didn't think it would happen," says the mother of two.

However, Jessica and her husband David, were willing to do anything to make Grace's dreams come true. In fact, a better life for Grace was the reason the Chens immigrated to Canada from Taiwan 12 years ago.

So Jessica went to their local church and asked if anyone would be able to help Grace with her writing. And as luck had it, their Caring Ministry coordinator was friends with Judy McFarlane, a freelance writer.

And with that first meeting, Grace had begun her journey to becoming a writer. However, the path that lead her here was not so simple.

When Grace and her family arrived in Canada in 1994, Jessica was the only one who spoke English. But despite the language barriers, the Chens knew that whatever struggles they would face in Canada, it would be worth it in the end.

"Things are very different in Taiwan," says Jessica. "Not only

are disabilities not accepted, but the education and welfare are quite behind."

So Grace began grade six without knowing a word of English. But,



Grace holds a copy of the newspaper article written about her this summer.

Grace says, it wasn't really hard for her to learn.

"She's a really quick learner," Jessica laughs.

She completed high school and then took classes at Capilano College and Vancouver Community College.

But when Grace had completed all the courses she could take at both schools, she began to get restless. And that is when she announced her dream of becoming a writer to

her family and Jessica began her search for a mentor for Grace.

Judy and Grace met for the first time just 14 months ago. "I was really intrigued to see what would be possible," says Judy.

They began to talk about what sort of story Grace was interested in writing. "Grace told me that she wanted to write Cinderella," says Judy. "I asked Grace, 'What will your Cinderella look like?' She jumped up and said, 'I'll show you!' She returned holding a beautiful, deep blue, velvet dress. 'This is what I will wear,'" Grace said.

"I knew it was going to be something special," says Judy. "It was her own story."

Grace and Judy began meeting every Friday afternoon to work on the book. They did a lot of brainstorming, but Judy says

Grace mostly had the

story planned out.

The story begins like the classic Cinderella fairy tale, except it doesn't end with the wedding, unlike the traditional version. From there, Cinderella and her prince take an exciting honeymoon on the Titanic, and then go on to become international spies.



Grace also keeps b

"It was the fairy tale of my dreams," says Grace.

Every time they worked on a scene, they tried to imagine what it would actually be like to be there. They debated point of view, sentence structure and plot. In between visits, Grace would work on the next section, make notes of words she wanted to add and brainstormed new ideas.

But then this spring, they found out the World Down Syndrome Congress would be held in Vancouver in August. A push began to get the book finished.

Judy and Grace enlisted the help of Mary Baker, an experienced children's book illustrator, to create the accompanying art. Grace's father, David, did the illustrations for the cover, while her brother Albert, compiled the book on the computer.

When the book, *Cinderella-Grace, Vancouver Princess*, was completed in June, Grace's church offered to host a book launch.

"We had no idea how many copies to print, so we started with 25," says Jessica.

The room was absolutely packed when they arrived and the 25 copies sold before they knew it. It was a complete success, says Judy, and Grace got her

first taste of celebrity as she signed books for her new fans.

She was also well received at the World Down Syndrome Congress. They met Down Syndrome representatives from 20 different countries. Grace is now advertising her book on websites around the world.

"I knew it was going to be something special," says Judy.
"It was her own story."

And she is not ready to slow down. Judy and Grace are now busy transforming her book into a play, while Grace has also begun writing the sequel to *Cinderella-Grace*.

But despite the success, Jessica is just pleased to get their message across. "It was important to show that even people with developmental disabilities can achieve their goals," she says.

"By writing the book, we wanted to encourage people with developmental disabilities to keep going and to make their dreams come true."

For Grace, it was just a way to bring her dreams to life. "I always write through my deepest heart," she says.

"Sometimes I don't like to talk, so instead, I write it down."

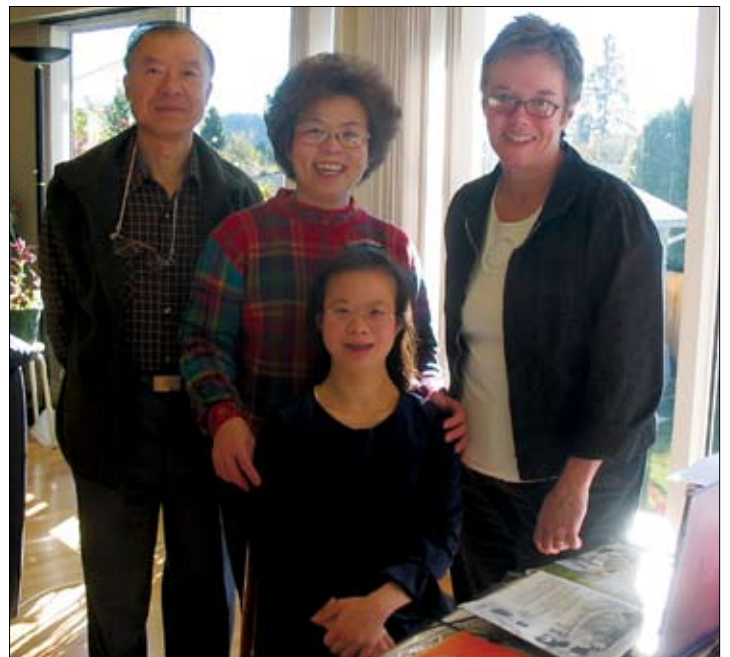
And for Judy, who had never met anyone with Down Syndrome before Grace, it has changed her perception of people with developmental disabilities.

"As she has written her story of transformation, she has transformed my view of her and all others with Down Syndrome," Judy says. "Grace has shown me how to see her as a whole human being, someone who has intelligence, a great range and depth of feeling, and dreams like all of us."

For more information on Grace's book, *Cinderella-Grace, Vancouver Princess*, please visit the CLBC website at www.communitylivingbc.ca and go to the Links to Resources section. 🦋



Grace Chen, author of *Cinderella-Grace, Vancouver Princess*, is busy by playing the piano.



The dedicated team behind Grace's book (left to right): David Chen, Jessica Chen, Judy McFarlane. (front) Grace Chen, author of *Cinderella-Grace, Vancouver Princess*.

CLBC WORKING TOWARDS SAFEGUARDS STRATEGIES

By Jule Hopkins, Manager, Service Accountability & Safeguards

People with developmental disabilities are more at risk of poverty, unemployment, being ignored, having their rights overlooked, and being victims of crime, violence and abuse.

For that reason, advocates, individuals, families, friends of people with developmental disabilities, and CLBC must develop different strategies to lessen these potential vulnerabilities.

We will target solutions to reduce an individual's specific vulnerabilities.

These strategies are called personal safeguards. They can be facilitated by the individuals, their families, friends, and supporters, who may include community members, service providers, generic agencies, employers or advocates.

CLBC is committed to designing and implementing safeguards that will make people with developmental disabilities less vulnerable. CLBC will partner with a number of community members, government, organizations, and advocates in order to implement these initiatives.

Because the greatest chance of long-term success in safeguarding

people with disabilities is through community involvement, these relationships need to be properly supported to realize the most positive outcome for both the individuals and community.

We will work with community partners to improve social conditions and reach out to people experiencing vulnerability. We will also work together to change negative perceptions and attitudes towards people with developmental disabilities. But most importantly, we will target solutions to reduce an individual's specific vulnerabilities, both within community life and services.

As a result, CLBC will implement two types of safeguards: informal and formal. Both have unique features and are essential for the safety and well-being of people with disabilities.

An informal safeguard is a deliberate action or approach taken to address people's personal vulnerabilities. It is created by the actions of ordinary citizens and is a part of everyday life. It is not the product of what organizations do.


An informal safeguard could be as simple as an agreement with trusted neighbours to check in on a person with a developmental disability

during a power failure. The key to success with informal safeguards is a person-to-person arrangement, separate from a formal organization.

On the other hand, formal safeguards are created by systems or organizations, and are meant to reduce a person's vulnerability. This could be through measures taken, either specifically, with a given person, or with the interests of many people in mind.

Examples of formal safeguards include service monitoring, formal advocacy programs, individual planning, medication reviews, independent investigations of service concerns, and staff training.

CLBC recognizes it needs to lead by example. We will conduct a careful review of our own formal safeguards, as well as our role in supporting the development of informal safeguards within community. Because of this, CLBC will seek consultation and will develop an ongoing action plan that converts advice and research into practical safeguard initiatives.

For more information on CLBC's safeguards initiatives, please contact Jule Hopkins, manager of service accountability and safeguards, at Jule.D.Hopkins@gov.bc.ca. 

FOR THE RECORD

The article "Kelowna agency's programs CARF accredited," in September's edition, incorrectly stated that Access Resources "have built a private office for the Provincial Assessment Centre..." They have built a private office for their parent advisory council. *The Citizen* regrets any misunderstanding.

RESIDENTIAL SUCCESS STORIES

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

September and October have been busy months for the Residential Options Project team. Many people told us how much they appreciate their current support. However, some said they're ready for a change. While it may be the best choice for some, the staffed residential model isn't one that fits with the dreams, needs, and preferences of each person.

The stories below are two examples of people who have explored residential options other than the staffed residential model. Though not without a few challenges and some trial and error, both of the women are now thriving in their new environments.

For more information, visit the CLBC website (www.communitylivingbc.ca) or contact the project managers: Andrea Baker (604-664-0158) or Jacinta Eni (604-664-0751).

Candice is an independent, free-spirited woman who has her own studio apartment at the edge of Vancouver's trendy Yaletown district. She lives there with support from Spectrum Society for Community Living. The agency provides Candice with 10 hours of staffing support each day. They help with personal care, homemaking, and transportation on occasion. She is by herself overnight, but has the



security of a "lifeline" she can call at anytime if she needs help.

During her adult life, Candice has had a variety of living arrangements, including a group home with four others and a condo she shared with a roommate who provided around-the-clock support. Each of these arrangements helped her to develop the skills and confidence she needed to make the step to live alone. Although Candice continues to work with her staff to make her new living situation even better, she is very

happy with this model of independent living. When asked if she would consider a return to group living, she says that would feel like moving backwards. Candice is all about moving forward in her life and feels she is doing just that with the support of her community.



Residential Options Project

Amber is a 23 year old woman who enjoys a very full life in the Cowichan Valley. She lived in a number of different group settings in Victoria. As she got older, it became increasingly apparent this wasn't an ideal

situation. She's very sensitive to her environment and to those around her. She was far from her family and wasn't compatible with many of the individuals she was living with. Her mother, Maureen, recognized that Amber needed something different and advocated for her to move to a family care situation that would bring her closer to her home.

The transition was challenging and took a great deal of perseverance, but Amber has now settled into her new life with an amazing caregiver named Chris. Maureen visits at least once a week and has seen big changes in her daughter. Amber spends more time in the community and enjoys riding, swimming, and hiking on her trailrider. She is meeting new people and feels understood. Amber seems secure and has even taken a couple of steps with her caregiver's assistance. She and Chris recently piled into her van (the one with "AMS VAN" on the licence plate) for Amber's first road trip. They visited Chris' sister and her golden retriever puppies in the Slocan Valley. Amber will be getting a trained companion dog when her puppy is ready to leave its mother. These are all huge steps. For Amber, the destination has been worth the journey! ✨

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS CAPTURE COMMUNITY

When *The Citizen* asked its readers to take photos of people in their community, we weren't sure what to expect. But when the entries came rolling in – pictures of people playing, images of people working, and photos of people just living – we knew that what we initially suspected was correct. Although British Columbia is filled with people of different cultural backgrounds and abilities, we are all the same inside. We all take pride in our friendships, families and communities. And we all love the summer!

The photos were judged by three staff members at CLBC headquarters. Each judge graded each photo on composition and how it best represented the people in their community.

And the result for first place ended in a two-way tie! Our first winner is Wioletta Okwieka-Reduch, the Residential Program Supervisor for Richmond Society for Community Living. She captured a tender moment between David and Sheryl Jaud. Our second winner is Tammy Fisher, a care provider from Williams Lake. She snapped a photo of two friends enjoying a favourite summer activity – eating ice-cream! Both winners will receive a \$50 gift certificate from Future Shop.

We have also chosen to show the runners-up in the contest. A big thank you to everyone who submitted a photo. And remember – you can always send photos to *The Citizen* to be included in the next edition. 🦋

Brayden Jardine, who attends the Infant Development Program toddler playgroup with his mom Amanda at AiMHi in Prince George, takes a quick break from the fun. (Photo: Shelley Anderson, Infant Development Consultant, AiMHi, Prince George)



David Jaud and his wife, Sheryl, enjoy a moment together. They have been married for 14 years. (Photo: Wioletta Okwieka-Reduch, Richmond Society for Community Living)



Friends Yolanda Vanhouten (left) and Dwayne N. enjoy ice cream at an ice cream parlour in Williams Lake. (Photo: Tammy Fisher)

TY LIVING



David and Sheryl met in Woodlands and have ch, Residential Program Supervisor, Richmond



Whistle the Clown and Balraj Zimich at the Richmond Society for Community Living's family picnic in August. (Photo: Wioletta Okwieka-Reduch, Residential Program Supervisor, Richmond Society for Community Living)



A gentleman takes some photos from the harbour in the Kitsilano Beach area this summer. (Photo: Adam Doyle, partner of Kirsty Wiik, former administrative assistant for the Burnaby community living centre satellite office.)



ichols enjoy an ice-cream outside of the Flavours ice-Fisher, care provider, Williams Lake)



The Tornados, a t-ball team in Delta, gather together for a team cheer. (Photo: Si Stainton, parent and president of Family Focus Society.)

Get to Know

Residential Options Regional Managers

Jai Birdi, Fraser Jai immigrated to Canada from India in 1976 and spent a few years in northern BC. In 1986, he settled in the Lower Mainland and began his career with



the provincial government. Jai worked in a variety of program areas in both the child welfare and the community living with the

Ministry of Children and Family Development. He was a team leader in the South Fraser Region before joining the Community Living British Columbia last year. Prior to joining the Residential Options Project, Jai worked on the transformation project in the Simon Fraser Region. He lives in Surrey with his wife, two sons, and his parents.

Elizabeth Bulmer, North Elizabeth first came to BC from the Yukon in 1978 after spending six months in a fly-in mining exploration camp. She has worked for the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Community Living BC combined



for 22 years, and recently completed a Masters in Social Work from Dalhousie University. She

is also a board member with the Northern Society for Domestic Peace, a facilitator for Relationship Violence Treatment Programs, presents anti-violence programs for BC Minor Hockey, and fundraises for her local library. Elizabeth is married with three adult children.

Sandra Lawrence, Vancouver Island Sandra started with the Ministry of Children and Family Development in 1987 within child protection in Port Hardy. She became the district supervisor in 1994 and transferred to the Duncan Services



for People with Mental Handicaps office where she was district supervisor from 1996 to 2004. She was Community Living BC's

transformation manager for Vancouver Island from 2004 to 2006. Sandy lives on a five-acre hobby farm in Duncan. She is married to a wonderful guy named Chris. They have four adult children, and a four-year-old grandson named Riley.

Barb Penner, Interior Barb's involvement in the disability field began with coaching Special Olympics alpine skiing in Kelowna. Because of this experience, she went from being a laboratory technologist to a community support worker. Barb did front-line work, including individual

community and residential support, roommate companion facilitation, and vocational support. In 2000, she created the day program, Provision Resources. Last year, it provided individual residential support for an individual who was transitioned to a person-centred society. Barb was instrumental in forming a Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network affiliate in Kelowna. She was the executive director for three years and continues to sit on the board of directors.

Ryck Deacon, Vancouver Coastal Born and raised in Vancouver, Ryck completed both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in BC. He has been involved in the public service sector for 20 years and joined Community Living Services in 1998. Prior to moving to CLBC, he was the district supervisor for the Richmond office. Outside of the office, you can find Ryck volunteering and supporting the



Union Gospel Mission. Last year, his gym raised over \$500 for the organization. He has also recently produced and hosted

a one-hour television special on complimentary medicare.

Missing: Brian Soon, Residential Options Project Regional Manager for Surrey/Delta/Richmond. ✂

FAMILY FOCUS A MEMORABLE EVENT

By Wioletta Okwieka-Reduch, Residential Program Supervisor, Richmond Society for Community Living

The weekend of October 20 to 22 has come and gone, but the events will stay in the memory of those who came to the 11th Family Focus Conference. The provincial conference was presented by and for families who have children who require extra supports.

The theme of the conference was appropriately named "The Voyage Together," as it took place in Richmond, the city connected with the sea. For families of children with disabilities, life is a constant journey, on which they meet challenges, but also joys and people who open new worlds of opportunities to them and their children.

Held at the Best Western Richmond Hotel, it was co-sponsored by Family Focus Society and Richmond Society for Community Living.

In addition, a number of other organizations sponsored the conference: Variety – The Children's Charity, Coast Capital Savings, Ministries of Children and Family Development, Education, and Health, Community Living BC and SickKids Foundation.

Numerous volunteers spent many hours ensuring the events and forums met the expectations of everyone who attended. It took two years to prepare the conference and every moment was worth it. The best reward for those who organized the conference was seeing the smiles, the eagerness to share, and knowing that at the end of the event, people will leave with the feeling of empowerment.

The words of Eleanor Roosevelt will ring forever in the minds of those at the conference: "The future belongs to those who believe in their dreams." ✧

HALLOWEEN HIGH JINKS

Between Community Living Month and Halloween, it seems everyone across the province was celebrating in October! Community living centres and quality service offices, sometimes partnered with local service providers, hosted everything from open houses to dances, from fall festivals to bowling marathons. Let's hope that the winter is just as fun! ✧

(Right) The staff at the Nanaimo quality service office enjoy some frightening fun. (left to right) Carol Shortt, facilitator; Chris Colibaba, administrative assistant; Pat McCue, analyst; Thirza Doyle, analyst; and Kathy Nicholls, administrative assistant.



(Above) The Maple Ridge community living centre celebrated Community Living Month with an open house. (left to right) Jane Rosettis, facilitator; Susan Barker-Voisine, facilitator; Soheila Ghodsieh, community planning and development manager; Gwen Champagne, facilitator; Sherry Wright, administrative assistant.



(Above) Greg Garbutt, who works at McDonald's Restaurant in Terrace, and his employment-skills consultant, Mary-Jo Woodcox from PNGI, enjoyed a festive day, with Greg and most of his co-workers dressing up to celebrate Halloween. Greg lives in his own apartment and works at McDonald's four days a week with some support provided by PNGI through an individually funded component of the Supported Employment Program. Funding for these supports is provided by CLBC.

EVERYONE IS A LEADER

By Susan Powell, PhD, Associate Dean of Community and Health Studies, Kwantlen University College & Brian Salisbury, Director of Strategic Planning, CLBC

The following is an abridged version of a longer piece. For the full text, please visit www.communitylivingbc.ca and go to the Links & Resources section under Innovation.

Community governance can improve the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. But if we don't think and act as a leader, we won't be able to take advantage of this opportunity.

"No institution can possibly survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it," says Peter Drucker, a well-known management author. "It must be organized in such a way as to be able to get along under a leadership composed of average human beings."

Leadership means influencing the people around you. This is different from the traditional approach that says people at the top are the leaders and that they simply have to work hard, tell people what to do and all will be well. The old approach is simplistic and can't help us to move forward effectively on issues.

Instead, we should create coalitions to stimulate creative thinking and learn from each other to help us better understand issues. We should also speak up in order to get our message across more clearly.

Everyone has a role in dealing with change, such as what is happening now in community

living. We all need to develop our leadership capacity. If what is written on leadership is true, this can happen because leaders develop – they are not born.

"No institution can possibly survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it."

But they don't develop by playing it safe, or being silent or pessimistic. The new leadership is embraced and demonstrated when people see themselves as learners and:


- Actively participate and seek to understand shared problems
- Are intentional and take responsible actions that may involve risks
- Are self-aware, curious, reflective and build relationships
- Are willing to engage in trial and error
- Are creative, ethical and learn from mistakes

These qualities and skills are there for us to develop. One way to start is for a few people in an organization to have a focused conversation on leadership. This doesn't need to take a lot of time, but each person needs to answer these questions:

- How is leadership part of your role?
- What challenges and excites you about being a leader?
- What does it mean to be a leader in your role?
- What can you do individually, and collectively, to develop your leadership capacity?

There are many examples of leadership in British Columbia in community living. CLBC came about because many self-advocates, families, community and government members worked together to develop an alternative approach to creating and governing supports and services for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

You've Gotta Have Friends, sponsored by the Langley Association for Community Living, is a group of Langley citizens assisting people with a disability to have people involved in their lives with whom they share friendship and belonging.

"Leadership of the future will be distributed among diverse individuals and teams who share responsibility for creating the organization's future," says Peter Senge, founding chair of the Society for Organizational Learning. 

A NEW ADVENTURE FOR “THE GROUP”

By Lynn Fitzpatrick, Social and Recreational Program Coordinator

For the past 19 years, I have had the good fortune of working with “The Group” – 20 adults with developmental disabilities who range in age from 21 to 65. The Group, as they call themselves, plans and participates in a wide range of social and recreational activities. In their hometown of Kimberley, a small community of 7,000, The Group’s volunteer skills are appreciated, well known, and respected.

“We have a new goal,” I said. “We are going to make a profit.”

One of The Group’s favourite volunteer activities is working at the food bank, under the direction of Heather Smith. Heather also happens to be

a director on the Kimberley Community Fall Fair board. This year, she approached The Group to ask for their much-needed support.

She asked The Group to organize and run the Kiddies Korner at the fair and told them there wasn’t much work involved. The Group was gung-ho. They are a very decisive group. I tried to warn them of the amount of work that would need to be done, but they insisted.

Heather lied. It was a lot of work. But support workers and parents stepped up to the plate and we spent a wonderful two days together.

This was the 24th year for the Kimberley Community Fall Fair. I was told that in the last 23 years, no one had made a profit at Kiddies Korner. I challenged The Group: “We have a new goal,” I said. “We are going to make a profit.”

In the past, 600 prize bags were always made for Kiddies Korner – more than enough for the two days. We decided to double it to 1,200 to be safe.

Some of the games were already pre-made for the fair, but we thought we needed more games for the kids to play. We created new games: Jell-o plunge and ducks in a row. Thankfully, I have a wonderful husband who was able to build the ducks. We also became entrepreneurs

by renting space to a zany face-painting clown for part of her profits.

On the first day, right at 7:30 am, we were asked to run an air bouncer for part of the profits. This is something we hadn’t planned for, but it was a potential money maker. We decided to jump at the chance (no pun intended).

The gates opened and we were bombarded by children and parents. The Group worked the venues, kept the children interested and gave out the prizes. They ate lunch in spurts and covered for one another.

At 3:00 pm, I checked our prize bags. We were nearly out and there was still three more hours to go. So I went to my supplier for more candy and prizes. We were ready for anything.

The next day was just as busy. At closing time, when I checked the number of bags left from the new 900 we made, there was only six left over.

The Group worked so hard that weekend. No amount of money could equal what they gave to their community, and what they received in return: respect, trust, pride, a job well done, acceptance, compliments and a truly satisfying happiness in a community of sharing and caring.

Oh, and by the way – we did make a profit! ✨



David Bell (left) and Scott McLellan take a break from the hectic day with PT the Clown at the Kimberley Community Fall Fair.

FINAL REHEARSALS UNDERWAY FOR PRODUCTION

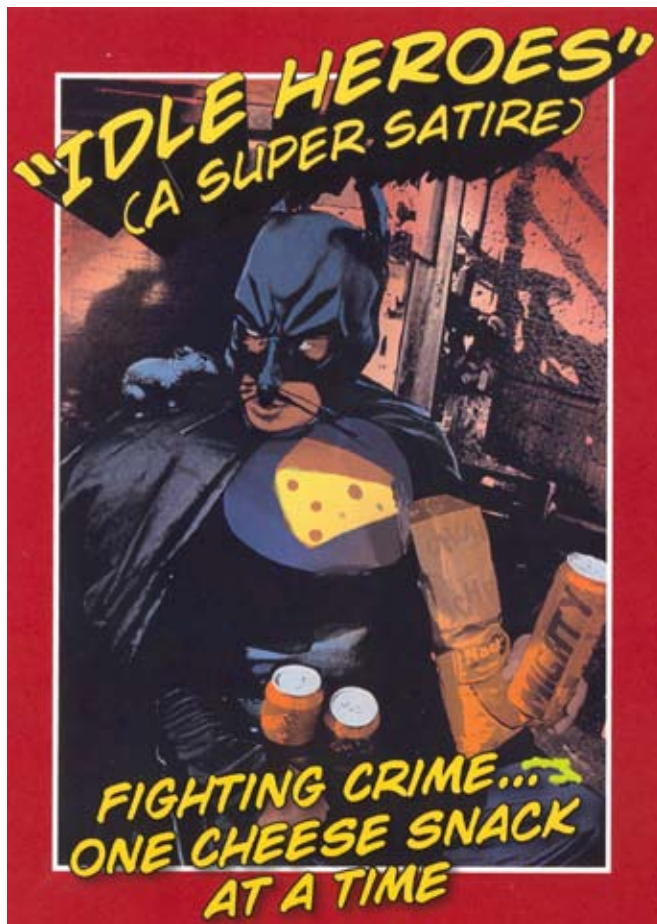
Stage Door Theatre Troupe, a day program within Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living, are getting ready to present their new show, *Idle Heroes (A Super Satire)*.

The script was developed by all the actors and their characters in the story are a reflection of each individual's unique contributions. This year's story is complex, with many layers of dialogue – a challenge that all actors felt ready to face.

Stage Door currently supports more than 20 full-time and part-time actors, who also happen to have special needs. Participants from other residential and day programs also contribute to Stage Door by providing prop work and taking small roles in the show.

The play will mark the start of Stage Door's year-long 10th anniversary celebration.

The show runs on November 23 and 24, and also December 1, 2, 7 and 8. All shows start at 7:30 pm and tickets are \$8.00 each. It will be performed at Heritage Hall in Vancouver, which is located at 3102 Main Street. Please call 604-872-1252 for reservations. ♡



HELP ME

By Bobbi and David Villeneuve

*Submitted by Lisa Sanghera,
MCFD Social Worker*



David Villeneuve at Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living's Roots day program. Photo taken by Kira Stobbe, CLBC facilitator.

I am a person with a Dream
Not a piece of paper or a number
My heart is in my hands
Please don't step on it too hard
I don't want my dream to die
I just want my dream filled

You close your eyes and heart
Where the cold comes in
Please don't kill my dreams
I am a person with a dream

How can you see the gift God gave us
If your heart is like ice?
I am not just a piece of paper or a number
I am just a person with a dream

My heart grew with happiness that
God gave us
But my heart hurts with pain
That you close your eyes to the gift
God gave us
We need to love one another

You close your eyes and heart
Where the cold comes in
Please don't kill my dreams
I am a person with a dream

How can people close their eyes on special needs?
Open your eyes and see the dream they have
They are people too. ♡

FIRST AUTISM TRAINING PROGRAM IN BC

People who are interested in working with children who have autism can now get specialized education. Starting this January, Douglas College is offering the Autism Specialty Behavioural Interventionist citation.

The Behavioural Interventionist citation prepares graduates to work under the supervision of a behavioural consultant. They will be able to implement one-on-one teaching strategies in the family home with a child who has an autism spectrum disorder.

This 18-credit citation will consist of courses in autism, applied behaviour analysis, introduction to practice, positive behaviour support and communication, supporting families, teaching and learning strategies, and a practicum.

Nicholas Watkins, who has developed the courses, says this type of program is necessary, as many families are struggling to find trained behaviour interventionists.

“Parents end up spending their money to train the interventionists,” says Watkins. “Instead, they could target how to best support their child, rather than training their support worker.”

The courses will focus on many issues that are unique to people with autism. For example, the Supporting Positive Behaviour and Communication course will allow individuals to teach children how to replace

problem behaviour with more socially acceptable behaviour.

This program will appeal to a wide variety of people, says Watkins. Someone who works in the field, but doesn't have a lot of experience with autism, may be interested in the course.

“But if people are already in the field and work with a child with autism, then they too would be an ideal candidate,” he says.

This type of program is necessary, as many families are struggling to find trained behaviour interventionists.

They hope to offer this program in the future as an on-line course, to reach as many people in the province as possible. Douglas also offers a two-year Classroom and Community Support program, which prepares people to work as special education assistants. Within the program, they will allow people to specialize in autism.

The courses are offered during the evenings and weekends to accommodate work and family schedules. Registration for January's program has already closed, but the program will begin again in April.

For more information on Douglas College's Autism Specialty Behavioural Interventionist citation, please visit www.douglascollege.ca/autism or call 604-527-5484. ✖

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 email address.

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

CLBC UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE

We are proud to announce the launch of Community Living BC's new website. The address is the same (www.communitylivingbc.ca) but the look, feel and design are completely different.


Great effort has been taken to ensure that information is easier to find and read. The new colours and photos better represent the new CLBC brand and the people who we support.

We have also made sure the new site meets the W3C standards, which are standards that websites must meet in order to be considered accessible. You will be able to choose the size of the words, and also change the background and text colours to make it easier to read. We've also tried to have more of the content written in plain language.

The new features include: a What's New section linked from every page that will highlight new updates; easier to find contact information for all of the community

living centres, satellite offices and quality service offices; an online submission form for news articles and photos for the newsletter; a section on children's information; a Frequently Asked Questions section; and descriptions of the types of support and services CLBC can provide.

Over the months to come we will be adding additional information to the site, specifically we will be looking to expand our coverage of what's happening in your local areas. It is our goal to ensure the information on this site remains up to date and relevant. If you find anything outdated or can't find information you are looking for, please be sure to contact us and we will do our best to make ongoing improvements.

We hope you enjoy exploring the new website and find it to be a valuable resource. We welcome all feedback and hope you will bookmark this site and visit often. Please feel free to email us at editor@communitylivingbc.ca with your comments. 

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 email: editor@communitylivingbc.ca

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

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

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



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