

THE CITIZEN

Connecting People with Their Community



CLBC Newsletter - September 2006

Volume 2 Issue 5

Home, Sweet Home



What's Inside

Shared Care



Tying the Knot



20 Years of Garbage



Community Living Month



Down Syndrome Congress



Melissa Materi is ready to take orders at The Incredible Muffin Company – a concession stand in Harry Jerome Recreation Centre in North Vancouver. Melissa has benefited from creative residential options. See page 4 for full story.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lois Hollstedt



Community participation in Community Living BC's work is important to ensure we reflect ideas from the people and communities we serve. Currently, there are a number of volunteer opportunities available. We urge you to review these and get involved or suggest the opportunity to someone else you know.

The search for the provincial advisory committee members is underway and we encourage you to speak to people who might be interested in this volunteer opportunity. The committee will reflect on issues related to our work and make recommendations to the CLBC Board where they think it is necessary. The deadline for applicants has been extended to November 15, 2006. The application is on our website www.communitylivingbc.ca.

A program linked to the 2010 Olympics is also available for community involvement so people with developmental disabilities can be fully engaged in activities across the province. Go to www.2010legaciesnow.com and click on the "Inclusion" button for more information.

CLBC is based on community involvement at all levels. We want to ensure we have community input into our thinking and processes and urge people to become involved. ♿

OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY LIVING MONTH

Building on an idea first conceived by members of the Victoria Association for Community Living, the BC Association for Community Living launched a community development initiative called "Celebrating the Spirit of Community Living" in 1996. This project encouraged members of community living associations and their community partners to plan events during the month of October that would celebrate the gifts and talents that people with developmental disabilities bring to their communities. The project

generated great enthusiasm and the idea began to expand. Inspired by the tremendous success of others, organizations across the province and country began to adopt October as a time to celebrate community living.

It is now an annual tradition for municipalities throughout the province. The BC government and the Canadian Association for Community Living have joined with us to proclaim Community Living days and weeks during the month of October.

The BCACL Board of Directors first endorsed October as Community Living Month in June 1998. Designating the whole month for celebrating community living enables groups to choose days or weeks during October that best suit their community, or to host events throughout the month if they wish.

Please visit

www.communitylivingbc.ca or www.bcacl.ca and click on Events for more details on events during Community Living Month. ♿

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INSIDE VOICE

The self-advocate's perspective.

FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS

By Gerry Juzenas

My name is Gerry Juzenas. I have lived in Burnaby for the past 17 years. I have been a self-advocate for 21 years, as of my anniversary date in June.

The first self-advocacy group that I joined was Burnaby People's First. There were approximately 20 self-advocates in our group. The group asked me if I was interested in running for president. I said yes, and then was nominated and elected as the new president for Burnaby People First.

In my first year of becoming president I was asked to attend a conference in Portland, Oregon, where there were self-advocates from Canada and the United States. At this conference, I shared with self-advocates what it was like to be in the leadership role of president and the work our group was doing on learning about our rights. I belonged to this group for ten years.

The most powerful experience I had was when me and some other self-advocates were not allowed to have meals or go into a restaurant because of our disabilities. We decided to learn about our rights and learn how to take this restaurant to court for the way we were badly treated. We won our court case thanks to the support of our community and MLA. This experience changed me because it

made me realize that self-advocates need to get involved by having a voice and speaking up.

Today I am the vice-president of the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, involved in three different committees, starting a self-advocacy group in my community, teaching self-advocates about their rights, teaching people how to be self-advocates, training new staff who work with self-advocates and public speaking about my life story. I connect with self-advocates by being active in my community and attending conferences, even attending the 13th World Conference of Inclusion International in Melbourne, Australia.

This world conference was important for me because I attended a workshop that was done by New Zealand self-advocates who talked about how they got out and closed the institutions. I saw a film that told their story. It talked about how they got a day-pass from the institution and decided to go to see their government. When they got to the office they knocked on the door, and asked to see the head government person, who sat down to speak to them. They told this government person that they were not happy in the institutions, and that they did not want to



live in institutions anymore. The government listened and the next day they were all released and got to live in their community.

After this film I got a chance to talk. I said, "I have a story to tell you people," and shared about how I helped close the Woodlands institution in British Columbia. They all clapped and the speakers hugged me, and gave me a pin from the New Zealand People's First group.

I would like to see every country in the world making sure institutions are closed forever. Being a self-advocate is very important to me because I am hoping other self-advocates can learn to become a community leader, like I have been, and make sure institutions stay closed forever! 🦋

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.

PROJECT GIVES PEOPLE MORE CHOICES

By Andrea Baker & Jacinta Eni, Managers, Residential Options Project

COVER STORY

CLBC's Residential Options Project, which begins mid-September, gives individuals and families more freedom in how they choose their residential support.

The project will give people with developmental disabilities a chance to make informed decisions about where they live. It will help people find homes that are best suited to their needs, wants, and dreams.

However, if people are happy with their current situation, they will not be asked to move. The project provides choices for those who have indicated that they would like a different home and for those who have never been asked about their preferences.

What will happen

We will offer to meet with every person in a staffed residential resource by the end of March 2007. Individuals who, along with their support network, wish to explore an alternative living arrangement will be given an opportunity to have a new plan developed. They do not have to commit to any plan until they are comfortable with the solution.

What this means for individuals

Through consultation and planning, individuals will be supported to develop innovative residential options that maximize their independence and involvement in community life. Individuals who already know that they would prefer an alternative residential

arrangement can contact us directly or get in touch with a service provider or CLBC staff member to discuss their idea.

We will work together to develop systems that help people adjust to the new arrangements. Most importantly, when people choose a new model, a place in their original home will be held for up to four months so they have the option to return.

What this means for families

Many families and their relatives in staffed homes did not have the opportunity to choose their accommodations or design something that would support their unique circumstances.

Instead, they were often required to accept what was chosen for them. We will work with families to remove barriers and to create an ideal home. Together, we will ensure that important safeguards are established.

What this means for agencies

Project staff will work with service providers to identify individuals who might be interested in exploring residential alternatives. Local community living office staff will be available to develop a plan for each individual requiring a different option. Throughout this initiative, project staff will highlight various residential options and creative approaches that have been successful for individuals and service providers.

Many service providers across the province have already developed residential alternatives that are both person-centred and cost-effective. In addition to creating more responsive services, this innovative approach has allowed agencies to provide a broader range of supports to more people.

Feedback

Please visit the CLBC website for regular updates on the project at

Home
Sweet
CLBC's Residential
Options

CLBC's new project will allow
broaden their horizons. *The C*
people who have benefited from

www.communitylivingbc.ca, or
contact the project managers
directly. ✨

Andrea Baker: 604-664-0158 or
Andrea.Baker@gov.bc.ca

Jacinta Eni: 604-664-0751 or
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RESIDENTIAL SUCCESS STORIES

Melissa has an incredibly adventurous spirit and has always lived with her toes facing forward. She is good at asking for support and identifying exactly what she needs. When Melissa announced that she was ready to move from the group home in which she had lived for several years, everyone paid attention. She had experienced big changes in her life and had been well-supported by staff within the home. Her family, and others who cared for her, encouraged Melissa to just wait a while. When she first moved into the home, she lived in a suite by herself

with 24-hour staffing support. Over time, she became increasingly independent and confident. However, she also

started to feel a little lonely and isolated. She began to reach out to her community and found that she didn't need as much staff contact as she once had. Still, the thought of having her live anywhere else was almost unimaginable for those who cared about her.

Not for Melissa. For the past two and a half years, Melissa has lived with a wonderful support person. They have been through a lot over the past couple of years, but both agree that their lives have been enriched by the experiences they have shared.




(left to right) Lynn McGuire, Melissa Materi, and Sarah Chapman take a break from their job at the Incredible Muffin Company in North Vancouver. Melissa's dream of living independently has come true.

me, Home: Residential Project

... individuals and families to
... citizen also takes a look at three
... from a change from the familiar.

Sharon had an unsuccessful experience moving from her family home to a group home. Lack of compatibility with her roommates and a number of other factors led Sharon to react to her environment in ways that were difficult for everyone involved. Sharon's family wanted to try something different. Their dream was that she would live with a roommate just a few blocks from them. It led them to mortgage their family home and put a down payment on a small home just a few blocks away. After much negotiation and planning, Sharon and a friend moved into the home. Their combined disability benefits allow them to pay rent to the trust which Sharon's parents set up to own the home. A young woman lives with Sharon and her friend and provides support, under the supervision of the agency that originally operated the group home where Sharon lived. Both women are flourishing and have a rich life they share with their roommate.

When Jim and his dad, John were first approached by their service provider to consider an alternative to the group home where Jim lived, John was skeptical. Even though Jim and his housemates were not that compatible, John was comfortable because the staff understood Jim's needs. The idea of Jim living with a roommate without a disability seemed fraught with problems. Then they were told that one of the staff members from the home would like to live with Jim as a care provider. This seemed like the ideal solution, and according to Jim and his dad, has surpassed their widest dreams. John has shifted from skeptic to supporter and lately has been thinking of creating a more permanent housing arrangement to secure their future. He has also become a willing spokesperson for this type of alternative to traditional services. 

THE SMILING FACES AT COMMUNITY LIVING BC

When you walk through the doors of CLBC headquarters, you are instantly greeted with a welcoming smile and a warm “hello.” The grin belongs to either Jenny Chang or Cheryl Fryfield – CLBC’s two receptionists. *The Citizen* wanted to give our readers a chance to learn about the faces behind the desk and find out more about these two lovely ladies.

Get to Know

Jenny Chang

Like many people these days, Jenny Chang has had her share of jobs. But after a long and assorted job journey, a bit of luck directed Jenny to CLBC.

Born in Shanghai, China, Jenny came to Canada when she was five years old. She moved around the Lower Mainland quite a bit for the first ten years. And then when she was 15, she moved to Burnaby, where she still lives.

She graduated from high school in 1994 and began her career training at Trend College with a course in office administration. After completing the program, Jenny began a series of jobs, which ranged from a waitress in her grandmother’s restaurant to an office assistant, from a bus-girl to a stock associate.

Meanwhile, CLBC was looking for a receptionist and called Polaris Employment Services to help with their search. Jenny was not working and was filling her time with volunteering. She had signed up with Polaris to help her find a job and because of her education and job experience, they arranged for her to have an interview. She must have made a good impression, because just a few weeks later, Jenny was hired.

Jenny worked at CLBC for more than a year before her contract became permanent this April. She was the first staff member on site when CLBC moved office locations from Burnaby to Vancouver. She remembers her first enormous task – programming all 70 of the

switchboard buttons!

A typical morning for Jenny might include preparing the mail, answering the phones, checking the incoming faxes and distributing packages. Sometimes, other staff in the office ask for her help with projects they are working on.



Jenny said she enjoys all of her duties, but really likes getting the mail ready. “Dealing with upset callers is not my favourite part,” Jenny adds. “It gets a little stressful.”

But despite some stressful moments, Jenny said she enjoys this job the best out of all her jobs. “People appreciate what I do for them,” she says. “I feel like an actual employee compared to other jobs.”

If Jenny seems a bit tired in the morning, it is because she had a late night with her favourite pastime – catching up on soap operas! She said she only watches three now, as she had to cut down.

When Jenny is not glued to her television, she is out with her newest interest – ten-pin bowling. She just joined the team, Lucky Strike, in New Westminster and is training for the Special Olympics.

“When I first started, the ball was always in the gutter. Slowly, I’m improving. But mostly, it’s still in the gutter,” she laughs. ✨

Get to Know

Cheryl Fryfield

One thing is certain about CLBC's afternoon receptionist, Cheryl – she is never at a loss for words. And it is her outgoing personality that makes her perfect fit at CLBC.

Born in San Francisco, Cheryl moved to Vancouver when she was five years old. After high school, she did job training with an employment company, working in various offices throughout Vancouver.

It must have paid off. Cheryl's first job, an office clerk with the Developmental Disabilities Association, lasted for 15 years. There she worked in the mailroom, answered phones and helped prepared the coffee. But unfortunately, Cheryl was laid off because of cutbacks.

She then began volunteering for a silk-screening company and then with the Jewish Family Association's Canes Enable program. There she painted canes and then sold them when they were finished.

But Cheryl knew she wanted to be back in an office, so she went back to school. She actually attended two schools at the same time – Vancouver Community College to take computers and Douglas College to take the basic occupational education program.

Cheryl whizzed through her classes and was able to finish early because she had met all of her graduation requirements. It was right at the same time that CLBC called Polaris once again, as they needed someone for a

two-month receptionist practicum. Polaris immediately thought of Cheryl, and after an interview, she began at CLBC.

After her two months finished, Cheryl was pleased to say that she became a permanent employee of CLBC.

Cheryl's favourite part of the job is doing anything on the computers, such as typing or making labels. She also enjoys meeting different people and loves greeting people in the reception area.

She feels like this job is a step up from all of the jobs she's had before. "When I tell people that I'm a receptionist... it took a while to sink in," Cheryl says.

Part of the reason Cheryl enjoys her job so much is because of the people at CLBC. "I feel like an equal," she says. "I feel like I'm a part of a team and don't feel labelled at all."



When Cheryl is not at work, she enjoys getting exercise, and often works out in the office building's gym.

She is also an avid movie watcher, and her favourites include the Star Wars series, which she has watched since she was 11 years old.

Cheryl is also really looking forward to her graduation ceremony from Douglas College, which will take place next June. The best part – wearing the cap and gown, of course! ✨

PHOTO CREDIT

The Citizen would like to acknowledge the contribution of Gerhard Von Rosen for his photo of the Kids on the Block, featured on page 10 of the July edition.

TERRACE MAN CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF GARBAGE

By Chris Arnold, Director, Provincial Networking Group

This year marks the 20th anniversary for the Greater Terrace Beautification Society. It was created by a group of community-minded business people and citizens, who got together to do something about the litter in the downtown area and develop more attractive green spaces.

One of the first projects this small and hard-working society undertook was to hire someone to do regular litter clean-up on the downtown streets. Twenty years later, that someone, Peter Nisyok, is still working and doing the same job.

Peter works four mornings a week on the main street of Terrace (and some of the cross streets as well) pushing his cart and cleaning up litter. It is a job that he has done reliably for the past 20 years. Peter earns additional income and at the same time helps contribute to the image of our downtown.

Peter is quite well known in town and you will often notice him performing on Lakelse Avenue for people he recognizes. If Peter knows your vehicle and spots you driving by, he will often do something to catch your attention, such as hang a piece of litter up in a nearby tree or drop his wallet on the sidewalk and keep walking. Soon you will hear people honking their horns and hollering, at which point Peter laughs and runs back to correct whatever it was that he had just done. The main street is Peter's stage and he loves having people honk or wave as they go by.

On July 21, Peter's employers, along with representatives from the community, local

businesses, the Terrace Beautification Society, the city of Terrace, the provincial government, and the River Kings hockey team, got together for a surprise party at Pizza Hut. During the lunch hour, everyone had pizza and celebrated Peter's 20-year anniversary together.

There were many presentations, including certificates of achievement from Terrace city counselor Rich McDaniel, and Robin Austin, MLA. The Terrace Beautification Society presented Peter with a framed photo collage with an engraved brass plaque. Peter's employer, the Provincial Networking Group, presented Peter with an authentic Terrace River Kings jersey, complete with his name embroidered on the back, as he is a huge local hockey fan. He also received a beautifully decorated poster signed by many of his friends from the Choices Community Living program, along with a killer whale coffee mug and pen.

But the highlight of the celebration was the arrival of the captain of the River Kings, Mario Desjardins. Peter recognized him right away and was all smiles as Mario congratulated him and presented him with another hockey jersey to wear to the games.

On July 26, Peter had a big photo of himself on the front page of the community section of the local newspaper and a wonderful story written about him.



For more information about supported employment, please contact Chris Arnold or Marg Anderson at 250-635-4479 or pngi@telus.net.

Peter Nisyok at his celebration lunch in Terrace.

INNOVATION

CLBC SETS THE STAGE FOR CREATIVE THINKING

Individuals and families now have a greater chance to have their unique needs met, thanks to CLBC’s Innovation project. And CLBC hopes that those they support will embrace this new way of looking at aid and services.

“The capacity to innovate comes from the commitment and action of individuals, not from organizations and systems,” said Brian Salisbury, CLBC director of strategic planning. “Without the ability to imagine differently, innovation is

impossible.”

Under the Community Living Authority Act, CLBC must try to promote choice and innovation in how it delivers supports and services. In order to uphold this promise, CLBC designed a set of guidelines, which will encourage people to be creative with their planning.

The goal of the project is to support sustainable, person-centred approaches to developing, funding and implementing supports within communities. They also hope that people will choose

generic services more than they had in the past, such as community programs and public transportation.

In order for an idea to be labelled as innovative, it must be new or significantly improved. Each innovative proposal is then classified into one of four categories: product, process, marketing or organizational.

The ideas must also be sustainable, meaning that it must have the ability to

supports and services are identified, funded and implemented are through individual support plans. CLBC analysts are responsible for making sure that the plans are person-centred and flexible.

In addition, CLBC has created the Innovation Support Network – a group of service providers who promote creative support options for individuals with developmental disabilities and families. Some of their roles

include: mentoring, leadership and technical support to anyone interested in carrying out innovative options.

The network’s priorities this year are exploring what innovation is, what factors determine when an innovation is present, organizing a public event that highlights existing or possible innovations, and investigating options for seed money to assist in starting innovative projects.

To find out more about CLBC’s Innovation project and to read the framework in its entirety, please visit our website at www.communitylivingbc.ca.

Seed money: Money used or needed to set up a new business or enterprise.

What is Person-Centred Planning?
 Person-centred planning is a process that helps the individual, or families on behalf of their children, to identify hopes, dreams, needs and wants. Personal goals are created which help people meet their needs and live their life as they see it.

Innovation refers to the implementation of significantly improved ideas, goods, services, processes or practices which are intended to be useful.

be carried out for years to come. It must meet the needs of the present generation, without compromising the needs of future generations.

“By promoting and supporting cost-effective innovation, CLBC can lay the groundwork for supports and services that are flexible and financially sustainable,” said Salisbury. “Innovation requires ongoing investments in people and their ability to advance practice.”

The main way that innovative

ACCEPTANCE: ONE STEP AT A TIME

By Si Stainton

My gorgeous boy, Gus, who was six this June, joined a T-ball team, The Tornados, for the second season. I know he loves to play T-ball as it combines his two great obsessions: balls and motion. I have a great memory of the last game of last year's season – Gus running (well almost) as the final kid in the base-race and all the team shouting "Go, Gus, go!"

But I knew this season would probably be the last for Gus since the pace, skill and complexity of the game becomes more competitive as children get older. What I wasn't prepared for was the awareness and instinct of the team to distance themselves from another child who is different.

I knew this would happen – I just didn't think it would happen so soon. First it was the stares, the sideways looks and frankly, the gawking. I'm pretty much used to it now, but to watch the children purposely not sit next to Gus was a surprise.

Eleven little kids in a row and one on his own. Yes, this tore my heart. Twelve little hands in for the team cheer. Eleven little hands trying not to touch one hand – my son's. Yes, this tore my heart, too.

There will be bigger obstacles to face in the coming years. Crikey, he's starting kindergarten in September. I am sure many of you can relate to my apprehensions about the next 12 years of school.

To watch the children purposely not sit next to Gus was a surprise.

But I still hoped I would see a difference in the team by the end of the season. I was in a fortunate position to help these kids realize that there is nothing strange and nothing to fear about a child who is different. He wants to play T-ball just as much as they do.

He wants to run, to catch and to hit the ball just as much as they do. The difference is he can't do it as well or at all. But I knew that with their help, acceptance and understanding, he might improve.

Mostly, I hoped these kids would have a better understanding and awareness of difference. And most important, I hoped they would be more accepting of my son.



The Tornados gather together for a team cheer.

It took a long time to get to this point. We worked hard. We had a great volunteer, two wonderful coaches and a neat team. It was a difficult balance to assist Gus to play the game without overloading him until he had a sensory meltdown, which was often the case during the first six weeks!

It turned out to be a wonderful season. The team gradually got to know him, some quicker than others. And in the end, all of the children just saw him as one of the team. I snapped a picture near the end of the season that I feel captures the essence of acceptance and belonging.

I was so proud of him and the team. I was proud of Gus for finally understanding what T-ball was about, and proud of the team for their acceptance and support. "This is what life should be about," I optimistically thought. "All sorts of kids, coming together to have a great time." 🦄

REGIONAL UPDATE

By Nancy McNeill,
Transformation Manager, CLBC

The summer months have continued to be busy in CLBC offices throughout the province, as the process of transformation to the new model of service continues. Staff are working hard in their new roles as analysts and facilitators. For many staff members this has included learning new skills, as they've taken on new roles and responsibilities. Offices in several regions have moved to new locations, while other offices have undergone major renovations.

In six of the nine regions, staff have started using PARIS – CLBC's new information management system. The remaining three regions will finish their training and go "live" in the new system by early October. A number of new features that will enable staff to complete some

of their current tasks electronically will be available in PARIS in late September. Changes to the system incorporating staff recommendations will also be made at this time.

All of the regions have now sent Service Satisfaction Surveys to randomly selected families and self-advocates who are receiving services from CLBC. An independent contractor has started the process of analyzing the data from each region. The reports should be completed in the next two months.

The fall will see more staff training in the use of several new tools and the implementation of several new projects, including the Residential Options Project. ✨

KELOWNA AGENCY'S PROGRAMS CARF ACCREDITED

By Jane Fedyk, Quality Services Coordinator, Access Resources

Access Resources has received a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in their community housing, community integration, and supported living programs. Areas that Access Resources were most commended on in the CARF report were input from stakeholders and leadership.

Formed in 1993, Access Resources has operated in Kelowna since its creation. The agency offers a wide range of services for people with disabilities, including community support and integration for youth and adults, professional counselling services, and residential services for individuals with dual diagnoses offering 24-hour care and support.

In addition to their recent accreditation, Access Resources staff were invited by CLBC to

participate in facilitator's training in May. In addition, Access Resources was proud to be the host agency for Mandt Training in March, 2006. The agency now has two qualified Mandt instructors on staff.

In keeping with CLBC's promise of accountability, Access Resources is currently in the process of creating

a parent advisory council. They have built a private office for the Provincial Assessment Centre and community planning professionals as part of their recent renovations.

For more information on Access Resources or to view their CARF survey report, visit their new website at www.accessresources.ca. ✨



Front (left to right): Tamara Papineau, Joseph Leestolz
Back (left to right): Brianne Polovnikoff, Meg Kullman, Carey Earl, Sonja Aelsemgeest,
Jane Fedyk, Opal Blackhall, Heather Morrison, Cliff Andrusko

DOWN SYNDROME CONGRESS INSPIRES

By Kathleen Makuch, *Facilitator, Community Living BC*

This past August, I attended the World Down Syndrome Congress, 2006 in Vancouver.

The conference was an amazing experience. It was a little overwhelming at times, but very informative. Many people from all over the world shared their latest discoveries, challenges, studies, and triumphs with people who have Down syndrome and those who care about them.

The most amazing part was seeing the inspiring performances and abilities of many individuals with Down syndrome, and the work of many people, parents and professionals. It was a wealth of information for anyone who supports people with developmental disabilities, and a tremendous opportunity to connect with others who share a strong desire to make this world a more inclusive and welcoming place.

I was able to find out where to get

the latest books and tools to help individuals with many types of developmental disabilities reach their potential. I learned about the latest Down syndrome research findings and how unique this syndrome is. I was also able to gather a lot of resources for myself as a professional and as a parent of a teenage boy with Down syndrome.

This congress was important for many reasons. Presently, a large portion of people with Down

But most important, they have a voice and are living better lives in their own communities.

syndrome are achieving more than what was ever thought possible. Twenty-five years ago people with Down syndrome in BC may have been institutionalized.

But today, the possibilities are limitless. More people with Down syndrome are living independently, getting paid employment,

graduating from high school and attending post-secondary. Many are getting married, driving their own vehicles, and making decisions for themselves. They are talented musicians, dancers, actors, poets, athletes, and political advocates for people with disabilities.

But most important, they have a voice and are living better lives in their own communities.

Although the abilities of people with Down syndrome differ, the majority of these people need support throughout their lives. Although we know not to place unrealistic expectations on our children, children with Down syndrome should be challenged to do their best and given the opportunity to follow their own dreams, just like any other child.

Two great resources for parents and professionals are www.woodbinehouse.com and www.superduperinc.com. ✨

KELOWNA MAN REPRESENTS CANADA

By George Arambasich, *TIER Support Services*

I recently attended the World Down Syndrome Congress in Vancouver with two self-advocates, Dale and Leanne Froese, and also an ambassador/self-advocate, Kelly Tompkins who all live in Kelowna.

In order to achieve ambassador status for the World Down Syndrome Congress, Kelly was required to complete an eight-

month training program through the National Down Syndrome Society and TIER Support Services. Kelly was one of 44 individuals across Canada who was chosen to become an ambassador for Canada. He fulfilled his ambassador responsibilities in Vancouver by assisting his peers and delegates, while also introducing and hosting various activities at the congress. ✨



Kelly Tompkins at the congress in Vancouver.

FILM ON AUTISM FEATURED AT VANCOUVER FESTIVAL

The Vancouver International Film Festival runs from September 28 to October 13. Featured at this year's festival is the Vancouver-based film, *The Boy Inside*. Vancouver documentarian Marianne Kaplan offers an intimate look at her family as her 12-year-old son Adam, diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, struggles to survive the harsh social climate of the schoolyard. The result is a revealing portrait of a strong, caring family going public with an often private challenge.

Marianne and her son, Adam, will be at both screenings for a question and answer session after the film. The film will also be featured on CBC Newsworld on Tuesday, October 24 on the program, *The Lens*.

Tickets are available on the VIFF website, www.viff.org/home, by phone (604-685-8297), or at one of the following ticket outlets:



- Vancouver International Film Centre (1181 Seymour Street)
- Granville 7 Theatre (855 Granville Street)
- Visa Kiosk (corner of West Georgia and Howe Streets)

Please note: as Visa is the official credit card of the festival, it is the only credit card accepted. Tickets may be purchased with cash at either the Vancouver International Film Centre or the Granville 7 Theatre.

A \$2.00 yearly membership must also be purchased in order to see any of the films at the Vancouver International Film Festival. Please visit their website, www.viff.org/home, for more information on shows and purchasing tickets. 🦋

Ticket Prices:

- Adult \$9.50
- Seniors (65 and over) \$7.50
- Matinees \$7.50

Showtimes:

- Granville 7 Theatre
- September 30 at 12:30 pm
- October 10 at 6:00 pm

SHARED CARE PROVIDES MORE CHOICES FOR FAMILIES

By Susan Graham, Project Manager, Children's Services

The Shared Care Project, as part of children's services, refers to services where the child is cared for by an alternate care provider for periods of time, from overnight up to full time. There is full partnership between parents and alternate caregivers. This may be one part of an individual support plan developed with the family.

For the child, shared care could be a place to visit, a place to live, a home, or a place to receive treatment. For the parent, shared care could

mean having partners in parenting, co-parenting, respite, shared responsibility, a break, or a larger community of support.

The desired outcome for the Shared Care Project is to ensure CLBC has a high quality, individualized, flexible range of care choices for families and children served by CLBC.

Community Living BC supports a family-centred approach so families of children with disabilities can have greater control over their lives.

The main parts of this approach are based on:

- recognition of the family's role
- sharing information
- individualized services
- cultural sensitivity
- evidence and research

For more information or to provide input to the planning process, please contact Susan Graham, Project Manager, Children's Services, at 604-664-0165, or email her at susan.graham@gov.bc.ca. 🦋

PENNY & ROD: TAKING THE LEAP

By Penny Soderena

I would like to share our story about how my fiancé and I came together and what is happening next.

It all started when we were both taking a driving class in our life-skills program, which we both did not finish. In one of the classes, Rod gave me a note asking me out for a coffee date. "Call me if you want to go," he said. So guess what? I called him up and went for coffee. One date passed by and others followed.

Just around that December, he asked me what my plans were for Christmas and New Year's Eve. "I always spend Christmas with my mother and on New Year's we usually just play it by ear. Why?" I asked. He wanted to know if I wanted to go out with him on New Year's. When I asked him where, he said, "Well, there is a dance that is held called Stuess Ball and I thought we could go together." I said yes, and that night we had dinner at White Spot and then went dancing.

Wow! It was such a great feeling being there, seeing all those dresses and everyone having a good time with plenty of food and drinks. Then Rod looked up at the clock and saw that the old year was soon gone and the new year was around the corner. We had just finished a dance when I saw a small box at my spot on the table. "This is not mine," I thought, so I moved it away. I went away from the table, but when I came back, the box was back.

"Are you having fun," Rod asked me. "Yes, why?" I asked. Then he took



Penny and Rod will be married next summer in Prince George.


my hands in his and put that small box in mine. "Open it," he said.

The room began to get warmer and I started to shake. When I opened the box, there was a white gold ring with a diamond. He asked me for my hand. I could not say anything. I opened my mouth, but nothing came out. I put my hands around my mouth. Someone thought I needed first-aid. "No," one person yelled out, "she just had the question asked of her!"

So on December 31, 2005, I said yes to Mr. Rod Sutton.

And now it is time to plan our wedding. We talk about our budget and how big our guest list should

be. We need to stick with it and don't change it. We've put an engagement notice in the paper and have met with our minister, Rev. David Wood, for the past eight weeks about our wedding ceremony. I also have a bride book that I write in – things that we have done and things that need to get done. Plus I have lots of bridal magazines that I pick up or someone gives me. They also give me lots of advice on what to do. Right now I am looking for the right dress and have registered for gifts at the Bay and Sears.

Soon then the big day will hit us and we will be ready to walk out as man and wife! 

CLBC CONNECTS COMMUNITY WITH FAMILIES & INDIVIDUALS

By Doug Woollard, *Vice President, Community Planning and Development*

Community Living BC is recruiting people for community councils. The councils, which will be established across the province, will create meaningful involvement for self-advocates, families, community members and service providers in service delivery and goal achievement.

Each community living centre will have a community council. They will focus attention on how to creatively respond to the collective needs and interests of the people and families CLBC supports.

Having community councils for every community living centre ensures that self-advocates and their families, support network members and professionals have a major role in creating good lives in welcoming and inclusive communities.

The councils will include:

- Families and self-advocates
- Local community members and business people
- Service providers

Councils will vary in size from a minimum of seven members to a maximum of 15 members, depending on the size of the area. They will have three main areas of responsibility: financial decision making, building welcoming communities and sustaining accountability to community.


They will need to receive and review financial information about the budget and how to distribute resources. The council will work with managers to

identify gaps, overlaps, issues and service delivery problems within the area. They will set priorities for new or re-distributed funding and provide feedback on the impacts of financial decisions.

Each community council will act as an ambassador and bridge to an inclusive community. They will collect examples about successful and innovative support and services in community living. They will also recommend ways to expand personal support networks, create safe environments, improve the ways people access community and acknowledge the gifts and contributions of people with disabilities.

In addition, they will help develop and promote creative solutions which improve community access and inclusion. The councils will also identify research that will enhance our knowledge of how best to support people in community.

Finally, the community councils will, through consultation, provide feedback about CLBC performance, results, services and community practice. They will also participate in the recruitment, selection and orientation of CLBC staff and identify issues that require action outside of the community and forward them to the CLBC Board.

For more information and details on how to nominate yourself or someone else for a community council, please visit our website at www.communitylivingbc.ca or your local community living centre. 

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 that is linked to the front page 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. 

PHOTO CONTEST EXTENDED

It has been a very busy summer for most people this year. So *The Citizen* has decided to extend its photo contest. Dig through all of your great summer shots or take some in early fall, and submit them for a chance to win some great prizes.

The contest is free and is open to anyone with a camera. We are looking for photos that best capture the people in your community.

Winning photos will be featured in a photo spread in the November edition of *The Citizen*, and top winners will also win fabulous prizes. Photos will be accepted until November 5. Please visit www.communitylivingbc.ca/newsletter/PhotoContest.pdf for full contest rules and regulations.



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 PFD 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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