

# THE CITIZEN

Connecting People with Their Community

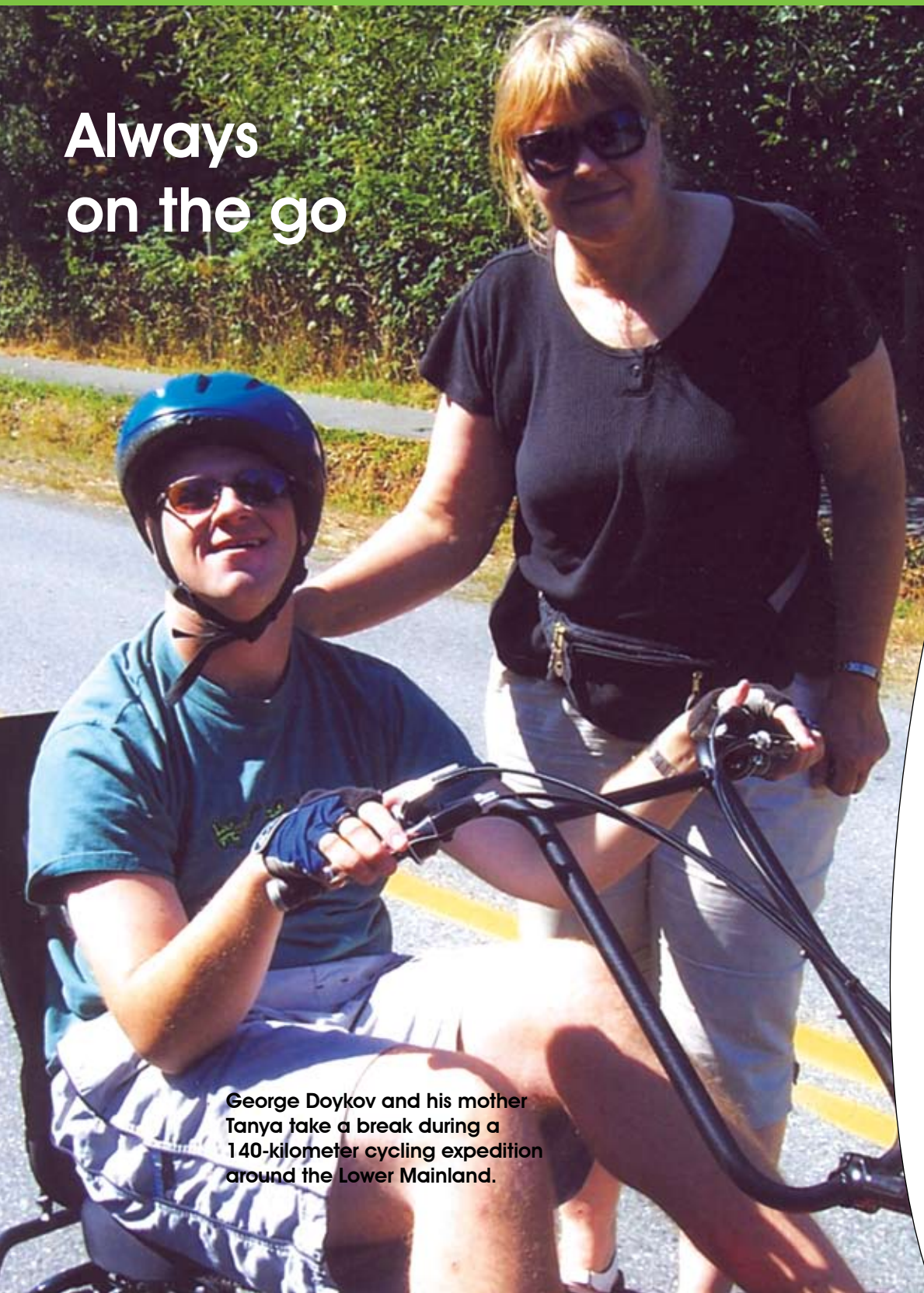


COMMUNITY LIVING  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

CLBC Newsletter - September 2008

Volume 4 Issue 5

## Always on the go



George Doykov and his mother Tanya take a break during a 140-kilometer cycling expedition around the Lower Mainland.

### What's Inside

Community Living  
Month Events



CLBC Film



Theatre Group



Employment Presentation



Photo Contest



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lois Hollstedt, C.M.



October is Community Living month and a time for all of us to talk about our goal of community inclusion for people with development disabilities. There are many events planned across BC that will highlight the ways inclusion is already fully working for many people and speaking to the work still to be done so all people can live inclusive lives.

October will also begin CLBC's next three year planning cycle as we begin discussion on what CLBC must do to support our vision of good lives in welcoming communities for the people we support. The staff and Board will begin the discussion with representatives from individuals, families, agencies and others to create a framework plan for the next three years. We also will be consulting on the plan across the province and meeting with our community councils and other interested citizens to refine its directions. Our first three year plan was focussed on creating the new structures for CLBC to do its work, and the next plan will need to refine our approaches.

The plan will focus on adults as our new mandate directs, but will also include discussion on the protocols we will need to insure a seamless transition to CLBC when children turn 19. The plan will also discuss employment for the people we serve and we look forward to our new working relationship in the new Ministry of Housing and Social Development to support this initiative. We expect the Board to finalize the plan early in the new year.

The transition of children to MCFD is still in the planning process to ensure it is as smooth as possible both for families and for our affected staff.

In the interim, CLBC continues to provide services for families as usual. As the plan is finalized, information will be distributed to families through our offices, on our website, and through MCFD. Once again, I want to say thank you to everyone involved in making the transfer as smooth as possible for everyone involved. ✖



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# INSIDE VOICE

*The self-advocate's perspective.*

## SETTING A SHINING EXAMPLE

By Heather Light

**M**y name is Heather Light. I have been involved with Supported Employment Services at Garth Homer since 2006. I like to swim and do track and field. I also like to hang out with my friends.

In August, my family and I went to Beijing, China for the Olympics because my brother Kevin is on the Olympic Rowing Team. It was an amazing trip and the weather was really hot. I walked the great wall and got to watch my brother compete in the Men's Eights rowing. It was nerve wracking. I hung on to my mum's hand during the final. All we could see was the finish line. My brother's team crossed first and won the gold medal. It was amazing!

*"I want to help people with disabilities and to be a good role model."*

Next, I'm off to my brother's wedding in Canmore, Alberta where I'll be a bridesmaid. I'm taking a plane with my family. There's been lots

of preparation and I think it will be so cool to see my brother get married.

Right now, I am working at Thrifty Foods in Sidney. I am a Courtesy Clerk. That means I bag groceries, help people bring their groceries to their cars and collect carts and baskets. Sometimes I organize paper towels and bread on the shelves and clean the freezer doors. I like working at Thrifty's because I am good with people. I really like to talk to the kids when they come in with their parents. In the future I am hoping to be a cashier. I like working in the community and I like to spend my money on DVD movies and magazines.

In the past I volunteered at Claremont High School in the Learning Resource Center. I helped a fellow

student who was blind and had autism to learn to type on the computer.

Recently I started volunteering at Garth Homer in the Computer Resource Centre. I help people to learn how to work on computers. I like to see their faces light up in a bright smile when they have figured out what they need to do. In the future I would like to continue to help people who have special needs.

I also have some special needs and so I know what they are going through. I want to help people with disabilities and to be a good role model. I would like to see more people with disabilities working in the community. It means that they are like everyone else and they are not left out. ✖



(top) Heather, with parents Terry and Anne, celebrates brother Kevin's Olympic Gold Medal.



(bottom) Heather and her parents pose together on the Great Wall of China.

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

# LIVING A LIFE OF ADVENTURE

COVER STORY

**S**haking hands with royalty, acting in movies and competing in a gruelling bike race are nothing out of the ordinary for 23-year-old George Doykov.

It's been a busy few years for George and his mother Tanya. Since 2002, George has been taking part in the The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program. The program was established in Britain in 1956 by Prince Philip and came to Canada in 1963.

The program encourages youth to be active, to participate in new activities and pursue current interests. The program emphasizes four different areas: Community Service, Personal Skill Development, Physical Recreation and Adventurous Journey. It is open to absolutely anyone aged 14 to 25 regardless of ability, social, economic, religious or ethnic background.

George volunteered and helped out with a recycling program in North Vancouver. He took part in swimming, bowling and camping. He recorded all his hours and activities in a special log book provided by the program.

Participants work their way through three levels of achievement: Bronze, Silver and Gold. They receive awards along the way.

As part of his Silver Expedition, George took on the challenge of horseback riding. With his group leader and her family, George rode a brown horse named Flash through the forest, over rocks and along the Squamish river in Brackendale, BC.

"It was my first time to ride all by myself and I was scared. We walked and trotted on the trails through the bush. It took courage and now I'm not afraid," George wrote about the experience.



*Golf is among the many activities George enjoys participating in.*

George also went canoeing and hiking and spent plenty of time around the campfire during his expedition.

"Reaching for my best with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has helped me work at developing my talents and abilities. Thanks for the challenge," writes George.

To achieve his Gold Award, George was required to go on an adventurous journey. The goal is to develop self-reliance by planning,

training for and completing a journey of discovery.

For George's Journey, he went on a four-day cycling expedition in the summer of 2006. Accompanied by one other rider with a developmental disability and his mother and few friends who followed in cars, George started the trip in Abbotsford.

They slept in tents at night and would wake up bright and early to begin riding each day. It was a tough ride and he had to be careful not to get in the way of all the big transport trucks that would come along the roads.

George's mother Tanya was overwhelmed with pride to see the energy and dedication he put into the ride. For a young man who could hardly walk as a child, it was an incredible achievement. "During the ride his hands and feet would be swollen and painful all the time but he always kept going," she says.

Four days, and 140 kilometres later, George completed the ride.

In October of last year, George's work and dedication to the program paid off as he achieved the Gold Award. George and Tanya travelled to Ottawa for an awards ceremony for all the program participants who were receiving their Gold Awards.

"Reaching for my best with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has helped me work at developing my talents and abilities."

It was their first chance to see the Canadian capital since moving to Canada from Bulgaria in 1999.

The ceremony took place at the Canadian War Museum and even the pouring rain outside couldn't dampen their spirits as George was presented his award by Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex.

"He was so nice," says George, a sentiment shared by his mother who also got to meet and chat with the Prince.



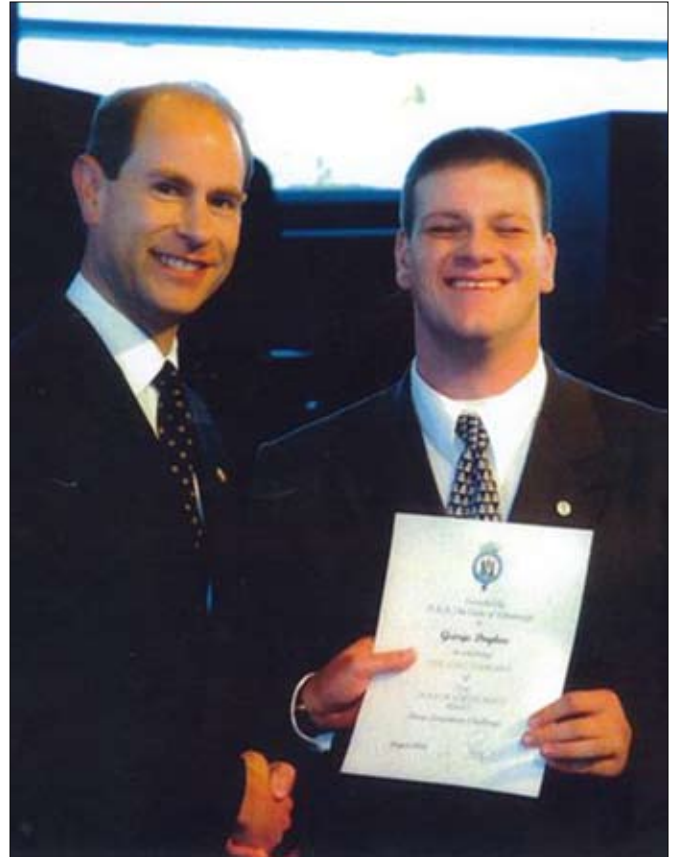
George and his costars appear on the poster for the pirate film "The Return of the Muskrats."

Although it may seem like George dedicated all of his free time to the Duke of Edinburgh Program, he has also been acting in movies for the past few years as well.

In 2004, George heard about the Cheshire Project, an organization that holds camps throughout the United States to get people with disabilities involved in the creative arts. The project exists on the principle that no one ever gets paid to participate. The funding is generated through grassroots fundraising and community support.

George attended the Cheshire Project's acting camp in 2005. Over the course of the camp, all the participants worked on a film called "The Return of the Muskrats." The film focuses on a band of swashbuckling pirates called the Muskrats. By the end of the camp, they had completed the film and had an official poster and trailer.

Along with playing one of the pirates, George also attended the premier screening at the Director's Guild of America in Los Angeles. Along with his fellow actors, he answered questions and talked to reporters who had come to see the film.



George receives the Gold Standard of the Duke of Edinburgh Award from Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex.

George also takes part in the Special Olympics and has competed in bowling, swimming, basketball, soccer and softball.

These days, he's looking for volunteer opportunities and is always ready for the next adventure that comes his way.

For more information about the Duke of Edinburgh Award, please visit [www.dukeofed.org](http://www.dukeofed.org).

For more information about the Cheshire Project and to view the trailer for "The Return of the Muskrats", please visit [www.cheshirela.org](http://www.cheshirela.org). 🦋



# COMMUNITY LIVING MONTH EVENT CALENDAR

Listed below you can find a few of the events that will be taking place throughout BC during Community Living Month in October. To view a full calendar of events, please visit the CLBC website under [News & Events > Events > General](#).

## Film Screening and Essay Contest

**Details:** You are also invited to watch an 18-minute video titled "Freedom to Belong" (see page 12 for story).

**Place:** CLBC Community Living Centre, #220-174 Wilson Street, Victoria.

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 15, 4:30 pm.

The Victoria CLC is also hosting a student essay contest based on the theme of inclusion. The deadline for submissions is November 21. For more information on the screening or to get the details of the essay contest, please contact Nancy Law at 250-952-4203 or e-mail [Nancy.Law@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Nancy.Law@gov.bc.ca).

## Clean Sweep Challenge

**Details:** In recognition of Community Living Month, the Kootenay Society for Community Living would like to challenge all citizens to clean up a part of the community that is in need of attention.

**Date:** Saturday, October 18, 2008.

**9:30 am:** Meet at KSCL's administration office (2224 - 6th Ave.) to pick up your Clean Sweep Package.

**Noon:** Meet back at the M&M Meats parking lot (with all of the collected garbage) for a barbecue.

**1 pm:** For each bag of garbage collected and returned you get a ticket for a draw for some great prizes.

For more information please contact Robyn Rasmussen at 250-365-2624 ext # 6.

## Wine and Cheese Art Auction

**Details:** The Clay Tree Society for People with Developmental Disabilities invites you to a wine and cheese auction featuring original pieces of art created by self-advocates.

**Place:** Estevan Centre, #3, 4-1551 Estevan Road (in Terminal Park Plaza), Nanaimo.

**Date:** Friday, October 24, 2008. Doors open at 7 pm.

For more information, please contact Juli Stevenson at 250-753-5322 or e-mail [jstevenson.claytree@shaw.ca](mailto:jstevenson.claytree@shaw.ca).

## Spooktacular Fall Celebration

**Details:** Come celebrate the spirit of community living and the contribution of citizens with developmental disabilities. The Celebrating the Spirit of Community Living Committee Come invites you to join them by setting up a display table for your organization to share with all the participants. This event will include crafts, entertainment, games, food and fun for all.

**Place:** Hyde Creek Community Centre, 1379 Laurier Avenue, Port Coquitlam.

**Date/Time:** Friday, October 24, 2008, 3 pm - 7 pm.

For more information, please contact Karen at 604-529- 5121 or Helen at 604-525-9494.

## Real Work for Real Pay: Employment for People with Disabilities

**Details:** CLBC would like to invite you to attend a workshop with Dr. Paul Wehman, from Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Wehman is an expert on the latest developments in supported employment.

**Place:** Surrey Museum (Cloverdale), 17710 - 56A Avenue, Surrey.

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 29, 2008, 9 am - 4 pm.

To register, contact the Surrey Community Living Centre at 604-501-8310. There is no cost but seats are limited to 60. Lunch will be provided.

## Halloween Open House

**Details:** CLBC's North Vancouver Community Living Centre invites you and your family to a Halloween open house in celebration of Community Living Month. Pizza, refreshments, crafts and music will all be included. Costumes are optional.

**Place:** CLBC Community Living Centre, 203 - 267 West Esplanade, North Vancouver.

**Date/Time:** Thursday, October 30, 2008, 2 pm - 6 pm.

RSVP to Linda Snow at 604-981-0104 by October 27. ✨

## THEATRE GROUP TAKES A TRIP TO OZ

**W**hen an opportunity presented itself to start a theatre group, Karen Young and Chellaine Franklin, together with 18 eager participants, took up the challenge.

The two staff members for Vernon and District Association for Community Living were responding to wishes of self-advocates who wanted to expand their experiences through self expression. As a result, Chameleon Theatre Group was formed in February 2007.

Staff of VDACL took time to learn the talents and abilities of each of the participants. In the beginning, the group worked on improvisation and role playing. As they built up their experience over time, the group worked together to figure out what their first production would be. After some collaboration, they decided to perform a spoof called "The Land of Oz."

The group took to the stage at the Schubert Centre in Vernon on Friday, June 27, 2008.

Inspired by "The Wizard of Oz", the plot took plenty of unexpected and comical departures from the original. The Scarecrow receives a diploma from Okanagan

University College and the Lion receives a cell phone and the phone number for a crisis line. After visits to McDonald's and the Yellow Submarine, the play ends with the Tin Man being given a heart transplant.

In addition to the actors on stage, there was plenty of action behind the scenes as well. The enthusiastic crew took care of creating costumes and props before the play, and applying makeup and doing curtain calls during the play.

There were some obstacles along the way as the group prepared for the performance. Arnold Bennington, who was going to play the Tin Man, passed away in January. Arnold's passing left a big hole in everyone's hearts and a void in the play. They continued on and the performance was dedicated to his memory.

Through the experience, the group learned to dream big, never give up, expect to succeed and most of all, have fun.

The play was a huge success. The Schubert Centre was a great venue and the Association looks forward with great anticipation to the next production of "Grease" in 2009. ✂



*The cast and crew of Chameleon Theatre Group's production "The Land of Oz".*

## Get to Know Shelley Nessman



Shelley has worked with individuals with disabilities and their families for 30 years, including working with organizations such as People First of BC and the Richmond Self-Advocates. Most recently, Shelley worked as a facilitator with the Vela Microboard Association of BC.

As one of three members in Strategic Planning, the Self-Advocate Advisor supports staff at CLBC to identify issues and explore solutions that affect self-advocates. Shelley sees her role as a linking position, identifying opportunities to support the development of an organizational culture that is sensitive to the needs and issues faced by self-advocates and their families. Another exciting part of the role is to create opportunities for self-advocates in the province to develop their leadership skills.

Shelley is excited about the challenges and possibilities that this new role presents.

If you are at Headquarters, please drop by to see Shelley, or you can give her a call at 604-664-0195. ✖

## UPCOMING EMPLOYMENT EVENTS

### Employment Now: What Does It Take?

**Details:** CLBC invites you to attend a day-long workshop with Dr. Paul Wehman, an internationally recognized expert on the latest developments in supported employment. The workshop will focus on answering some of the questions that are critical to creating an "employment first" culture in British Columbia.

**Place:** Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel, 3500 Cessna Drive, Richmond

**Date/Time:** October 28, 2008, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm.

### Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) 2008 Working Matters Conferences

**Details:** The Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE), in partnership with BCACL, is hosting the Working Matters 2008 Conference. This conference attracts leaders in the field of supported and customized employment, and is highly valued by leaders in the field as a high-quality networking and professional development event.

**Place:** The Westin Bayshore, 1601 Bayshore Drive, Vancouver.

**Date/Time:** November 13 and 14, 2008.

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



## PRESENTATION GIVES FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**J**ustin Forseth has been working at Denbow Transport since April 1, 2006.

Denbow Transport is a Chilliwack company that installs biofilters, green roofs and green retaining walls and is a BC leader in landscape, erosion and sediment control.

Justin's job at Denbow is to sweep up the shop and to clean up the yard areas every Monday.

Recently, Justin was asked by his employer Bill Boesterd to attend an early morning breakfast meeting and do a presentation. Because of the nature of the business, not a lot of the other employees have had a chance to meet Justin or to learn what his job is about. Denbow hosts regular Saturday breakfast meetings as a way of connecting with staff.

Justin, along with the help of the Supported Employment Program staff, prepared a Power Point Presentation that he presented to all of his co-workers at Denbow. He talked a little bit about himself, his likes, dislikes, interests, hobbies, education, the vocational program that he's a part of, his employment path and of course, his goals.

"I enjoy having Denbow in my life because it has helped me to reach my goals for the future," says Justin.

Although Justin was nervous, he did an awesome job and gave everyone at Denbow a little more insight into who he is.

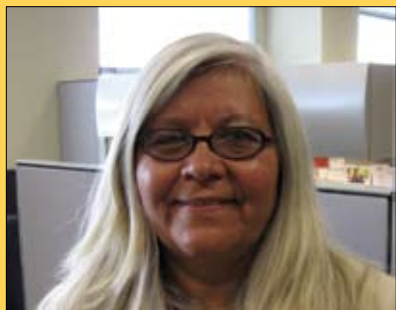
In his closing remarks he left everyone with some food for thought: "I want everyone to know that, as you can see, I am just like all of you. My disability does not hold me back. I want to be treated just like everyone else. I have a very full life and I am a very busy man." 🦄

*(top) Justin Forseth poses with the Denbow Transport sign.*

*(middle) Justin gives his presentation to coworkers with the assistance of Gizelle Debad, a Vocational Counselor with the Chilliwack Society for Community Living's Supported Employment Program.*

*(bottom) Keeping the Denbow yard clean is one of Justin's responsibilities.*



*Get to Know***Donna Good Water**

Donna Good Water, CLBC's new Aboriginal Advisor, is an Aboriginal social worker and advisor. She received her Bachelor's degree in Social Work from the University of Victoria before moving on to the University of BC Okanagan to complete her Masters of Social Work. She is currently working on completing an interdisciplinary PhD with a focus on developmental disabilities.

Donna participated on both the BC Aboriginal Network for Disabilities Society and the National Aboriginal Network for Disabilities, and has acted as an advisor on the First Nation Social Development Society which dealt with social issues on First Nations reserves. The primary focus of her role on these boards ensured advocacy for First Nation's children and adults with developmental delays.

Donna also teaches Social Work 454 at UBC Okanagan. As an educator she uses an Aboriginal perspective in teaching social work practice.

Donna has developed an understanding of both the Federal and Provincial policies and procedures for Natives with a disability who live on and off reserve. Donna gained this knowledge working for Community Living Services at MCFD and for a number of First Nations Bands in front line and management roles. Donna's life mission is to raise awareness about the Aboriginal experience as it relates to disability. ✖

## ART SHOW PROVIDES VENUE FOR CREATIVE TALENT

**O**n Thursday, October 16, the Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living presents its fourth annual Art Show for BC Artists with Developmental Disabilities.

The show provides an opportunity for artists with developmental disabilities to exhibit their art work in various mediums.

It will also let the community at large see the abilities, gifts and talents of the artists on display.

For many of the artists, it will be their first time participating in a public display of their works. As well as meeting people interested in their works, they can also network with fellow artists from around the province.

In addition to all of the artwork that will be on display, food and wine will be served. The evening will also include music and prizes.

The show will take place at Heritage Hall at 3102 Main Street in Vancouver from 5 pm to 9 pm.

For more information, please visit [www.communitylivingcolour.com](http://www.communitylivingcolour.com) or check the Events Section on CLBC's website under [News & Events > Events > General](#). ✖

## CLBC BOOKLET HELPS SELF-ADVOCATES OVERSEAS

A booklet created by Community Living BC is gaining some international exposure.

The booklet, titled *Rights & Safeguards: A Guide for Self-Advocates*, was created in summer 2007 using the ideas and advice of a group of self-advocates. It features simple yet eye-catching images that effectively illustrate the most important rights and safeguards selected by the self-advocates.

In March of this year, Bridget Snedden attended the Family Voices Conference in Edmonton hosted by the Alberta Association for Community Living. Bridget is the Centre Director of the Parent & Family Resource Centre in Auckland, New Zealand. It was at the conference that she first came across the “little yellow booklet.” She was impressed by the high-quality presentation, size, pictorials and information.

Bridget thought her 20-year-old son Alex, who has Down syndrome, might be interested in the booklet. She took a copy with her when she returned home to New Zealand. She was pleasantly surprised by her son’s response.



*Alex Snedden shared the Rights & Safeguards booklet with his coworkers and friends. He thinks it is a great resource.*

“Alex very quickly took full ownership of the booklet and he also made sure his mates read it. For those who couldn’t read, he read it to them,” says Bridget.


Alex, who works at the Auckland Catholic Diocese Office and for a company called Drake Recruitment, made sure to show the booklet to his employers, co-workers and job coach. He asked them to read it to make sure they understood he has rights just like anyone else.

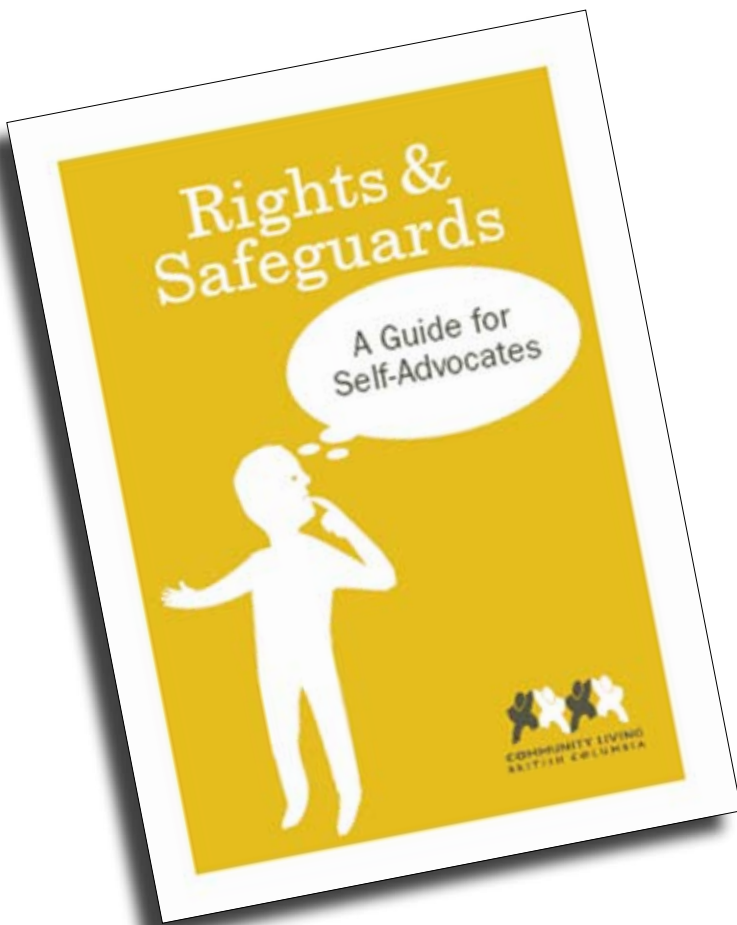
“It’s good because it’s easy to read and I understand it,” says Alex.

For Alex, being safe is very important and he wants to make sure his friends with disabilities are safe too.

“This booklet is a fantastic resource,” says Bridget, “this was confirmed by my son’s response to it. What makes it different is that the message it conveys is holistic. It’s not only about a person’s rights, but also about safeguards which I believe are of equal importance.”

Seeing the value of the booklet, and the response of her son and his friends, Bridget began thinking there may be an opportunity to have the book reprinted in New Zealand. She contacted CLBC and has made arrangement for the booklet to be reprinted with support from People First New Zealand.

“It’s a valuable tool for people with disabilities, parents and family members,” says Bridget. 





## CLBC FILM PROMOTES THE FREEDOM TO BELONG

Community Living BC celebrates Community Living Month with screenings across the province of “Freedom to Belong.” Produced by CLBC, this documentary follows the stories of people who champion the rights of people with developmental disabilities.

The film includes the stories of Cindy and Erika Frostad, a mother and daughter who advocate for inclusive communities; Bill Macarthur, a former Woodlands resident and spokesperson for the We Survived Woodlands Group; and several self-advocates who speak passionately about a future that includes all of us.

“Freedom to Belong” was filmed over the last six months and features locations like CLBC’s Self-Advocate Leadership Conference in Nanaimo, an annual CLBC Picnic in the Park in the West Kootenays, interviews at CLBC Head Office with Jenny Chang and Cheryl Fryfield and an on location shoot at the old Woodlands site in New Westminster.

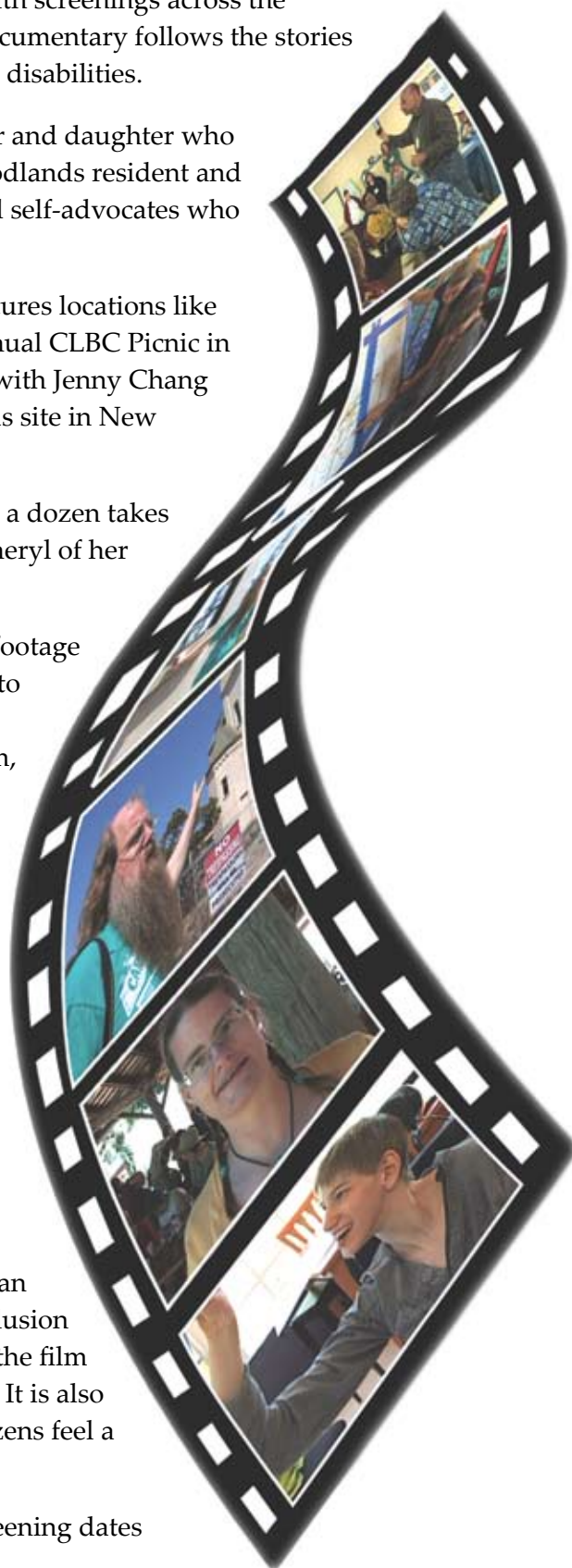
“It was hard to bring up my past on film. We had to do about half a dozen takes but in the end, I thought it was great to be noticed again,” says Cheryl of her on-camera experience.

Rachel Schmidt, CLBC Community Relations Specialist, shot the footage while traveling the province. She met with several self-advocates to ensure the issues that are most important to them are reflected in the film. Cindy Frostad assisted with the creative vision of the film, Erika Frostad designed the art work for the DVD label and Bill Macarthur provided historical information on Woodlands.

CLBC’s radio public service announcement starring Heather Porteous’s voice is also featured in the film. One of the songs in the Community Speaks section is called “007” and was written by Francis Laitin in collaboration with Charlie Haze and Mr. Steve Woodyard’s Grade 10 jazz band class in 2005, at Carson Graham Secondary School in North Vancouver.

With the help of staff in our Community Living Centres and community council members, CLBC is engaging community television networks with the hope that the film will be broadcast in October during Community Living Month on free community programming channels province-wide. “Freedom to Belong” has an important message that will help shape conversations around inclusion and inspire dialogues on citizenship. The most important goal of the film is to amplify the voices of people with developmental disabilities. It is also a call to action to the general public to take steps to ensure all citizens feel a sense of belonging.

Contact your local Community Living Centre in your area for screening dates during Community Living Month. 



## FINDING INCLUSION

By Rick Thorpe, MLA Okanagan-Westside

Recently I had the opportunity to meet with some folks from Community Living BC.

I want to acknowledge the outstanding work of this organization and its staff. Very important to Community Living BC is the goal of inclusion. I want to share some thoughts to help define inclusion, and also comment on a recent change in ministry responsibility.

British Columbia has a bold public policy agenda to build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk and seniors. Promoting and fostering inclusive citizenship is a pressing social issue. To be successful, every community across the province will need to champion these issues. Inclusion means all people—including those with a developmental disability—have a variety of opportunities to contribute to their communities.



*Rick Thorpe, MLA  
Okanagan-Westside*

There are many examples of people being successfully included in their communities in ways that enable them to be a socially valued part of society through key roles like employee, friend, spouse, volunteer and leader. People with developmental disabilities want real work for real pay, which means competitive wages and benefits equal to the job's responsibilities, and opportunities that encourage them to work to their maximum potential.

Successful inclusion means that people with disabilities have the income, aids and devices, personal friendships and family supports, medications and environmental accommodations that make social, economic, cultural and political citizenship accessible to all. The result is that people with disabilities benefit from society in ways that are equal to others. By being included, individuals with developmental disabilities can also "include" others into their way of seeing and understanding the world.

The Ministry of Housing and Social Development became responsible for Community Living BC's adult community living services in June 2008. First and foremost all individuals and families can be assured there will be no disruption in services for adults with developmental disabilities as responsibility for the programs transfer to the new ministry.

The individuals, families and dedicated employees at Community Living BC are welcome to the new ministry. This change will create new opportunities in the way we deliver services to adults with developmental disabilities

Under one roof we are combining financial, housing, medical and employment supports for low-income British Columbians and people with disabilities. We are doing this because we know every person requires a different combination of supports to meet their unique needs. By integrating services, we are well on our way to making it easier for adults with disabilities and their families to access the right services when they need them.

British Columbians with developmental disabilities, their families and Community Living BC will continue to play an important role in shaping provincial disability programs and supports. As the new ministry takes shape all stakeholders and individuals are encouraged to provide input on how we can improve our province's system of support for people with disabilities.

Through our government's Disability Strategy, we want to be a leader in providing integrated disability services and supports, enabling all British Columbians to live the life they chose—whether at home, at work or in their communities.

Simplifying the way our government works is key to achieving the strategy's vision—and our government is confident the creation of the Ministry of Housing and Social Development will truly make a positive difference in the lives of British Columbians with developmental disabilities and their families. 

## PROJECT WILL DELIVER REAL WORK FOR REAL PAY

In July 2008, the Ministry of Housing and Social Development (MHSD) and Community Living BC announced the awarding of contracts worth \$1.1 million annually for three years to deliver customized employment services to British Columbians with developmental disabilities.

"The BC Association for Community Living (BCACL) is very pleased to see CLBC and the provincial government making a mutual commitment to workforce inclusion. This is a need that people with developmental disabilities and their families have been expressing for a long time. This partnership bodes well for the future of youth and adults with developmental disabilities," says Laney Bryenton, Executive Director of BCACL.

The Customized Employment Demonstration Project will work with individuals with developmental disabilities who typically find that the traditional labour market approach of matching people to existing job openings does not result in jobs.

Over 60 per cent of individuals served will be young adults aged 15 to 30 who will receive assistance transitioning from an educational environment to a work environment.

Customized Employment is real work for real pay. It is an individualized employment relationship between employees and employers that is designed to meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs and interests of each person, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer.

Over the next three years, eight service provider agencies will not only deliver customized employment services, they are committed to sharing results, lessons learned and working together to establish best practices. This sharing of knowledge and the building of leaders in the community will help develop a blueprint for services to assist people with developmental and other disabilities in the future.

The official launch of this exciting project was held on

July 10, 2008. Representatives of the eight participating agencies, MHSD and CLBC met to discuss project objectives, the roles and responsibilities of each party and clarify expectations.

In the afternoon, Kim Brown, an acknowledged expert on customized employment provided a very informative training session focused on the discovery process, the first step in truly understanding the individual.

Over the first three months, participating agencies have been busy setting resources in place and working in their communities to identify individuals with whom they will work to achieve their employment goals, using the principles of customized employment. Over the term of the project, participating agencies will meet regularly to share information, celebrate their successes and increase their knowledge base on customized employment.

The project team's plan is to be open and visible to the community and share everything they learn. The Customized Employment Demonstration Project will be presented in one of the concurrent sessions at the 14th Annual Canadian Association for Supported Employment Conference, which will be held in Vancouver on November 13 and 14, 2008.

The Customized Employment Demonstration Project participants are:

CBI Consultants

Delta Community Living Society

Ladysmith & Area Community Link


The Langley Association for Community Living

POLARIS Employment Services Society

Powell River Association for Community Living

Semiahmoo House Society

Vancouver Island Vocational & Rehabilitation Services

For further information, please contact Barb Penner, CLBC's Employment Initiative Project Manager, by e-mail at [Barb.Penner@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Barb.Penner@gov.bc.ca). 



# PERSON CENTRED PLANNING A STYLE OF LIFE

By Shelley Nessman, CLBC Self-Advocate Advisor

In her position as a Peer Advisor for Semiahmoo House Society, Gladys Duran uses a variety of skills. One very important part of her job is to do training for self-advocates in a person centered planning process called People Planning Together (PPT).

"I ask self-advocates, 'Is what you want to do important to or important for you?' This helps them to know if they really want to do the work to achieve a goal."

Gladys and her colleague James White have been working in Oregon with Self Advocates, teaching the PPT process. As a person who receives supports herself, Gladys talks about how important it is for her to be completely involved in her own life planning.

"A couple of years ago, I wanted to make some big changes in my life and I was able to take a leadership role in making it all happen. I also had some support from people at Semiahmoo and from friends too, but it all started with me and my plan," she says.

"It took some time to make the changes but I knew what I had to do and who could support me."

People Planning Together teaches self-advocates to take a leadership role in developing their plans for a good life. The process itself is taught by self-advocates who have had "train the trainer" courses. Support staff who attend the training learn to listen and communicate better with the individuals they support, which enhances their ability to do their job as well.

Individuals learn ways to identify what they want to do in their lives and what having a good life means to them. They also learn how to take steps to make a change in their lives, as well as practice thinking about the pros and cons of any change they wish to make.

"Person Centered Planning is a style of life," says Gladys.

When asked about her favourite part of her job at Semiahmoo, Gladys says that she loves the one-on-one relationships that she has with people. She works hard to create trusting relationships with self-advocates and supports people to come up with their own solutions to problems.

"I don't have the answers to someone else's issues" she says, "but I can make suggestions to them about what to do and then they choose what works best for them."

One thing that she is working on right now is connecting other Peer Advisors around the province. Gladys knows the value of communicating. She is currently thinking of ideas to bring advisors together to share ideas, stories and explore ways to do her job in the best way possible.

If you are interested in learning about being a peer advisor or the People Planning Together process, you can contact Gladys at Semiahmoo House Society in White Rock at 604-536-1232 extension 244. ✖

## STAY CONNECTED WITH CLBC

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

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

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

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

## LAST CALL FOR SHUTTERBUGS


As you head back to work or school after the summer break, you're reunited with friends and colleagues. October is also Community Living Month when plenty of events will be taking place around BC. We'd like to capture those moments.

*The Citizen* is accepting final entries for its third annual photo contest. 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 great prizes.

For full contest rules and regulations, please visit [www.communitylivingbc.ca/news\\_and\\_events/PhotoContest.htm](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/news_and_events/PhotoContest.htm).

The contest deadline is **October 31, 2008**.

So when you head out the door this fall, don't forget your camera – the winning photo might be right before your eyes! 



## CONTACT US

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

If you have a story suggestion or feedback on the newsletter, please e-mail [editor@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:editor@communitylivingbc.ca).

To receive the electronic or paper version of *The Citizen*, please visit [www.communitylivingbc.ca/who\\_we\\_are/contact.htm](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/who_we_are/contact.htm) and click on either E-mail or Paper Newsletter Sign-up.

If you have a general question about CLBC, please e-mail [info@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:info@communitylivingbc.ca).



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

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