

# The Citizen

Connecting people with their community



COMMUNITY LIVING  
BRITISH COLUMBIA



## Home sharing: A perfect fit

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Robert Mitchell has a new place to call home with Lianna Jones and her family.

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Lois Hollstedt, C.M.

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**AT THE END OF JUNE 2010, I WILL HAVE COMPLETED FIVE YEARS AS A** Director and Board Chair of CLBC and will retire from these roles.

In 2004, when I was asked to take on the role of Chair of a newly conceived Crown Corporation to serve people with developmental disabilities, I was enthusiastic about the challenge of changing the approach to supporting this group of people in our society. As I worked with people in the community, people on CLBC's Board and staff, and the people we serve to develop our vision and mission I continue to be impressed by the commitment toward improving the lives of this group of people. Along the way we have tried some approaches that did not work perfectly, but we have made adjustments based on feedback and we continue to improve.

In the five years since our official creation in July 2005, we have come a long way towards our vision of good lives in welcoming communities. Our focus on renewal and accountability has created new ways of measuring our success and greater equity in the distribution of services. Individual life planning is a foundation value. We have a focus on real work and new housing options. Inclusion and innovation in service delivery are part of our evaluations. New systems are in place to provide information for good decisions. We have invested in training for our staff. We get annual feedback from the people and families we support. Our relationship with community and government partners continues to grow. We continue to improve our communication with stakeholders. We have lived within the budgets provided and expanded the numbers of adults served.

Five other Board members will be retiring in June. I want to thank Teresa Azak, Rod Gunn, Colleen Hay, Maurice Mourton and Harvey Venier for their leadership. Each has brought their personal wisdom and experience as parents or business people to the table as we crafted policy and structures to support people and be accountable for public tax dollars. Ken Crump, Darryl Harrand and Joan Rush will continue as board members and have been joined by two new appointees, Denise Turner and Ernie Malone. I thank them all for their work and for making my job as Chair a satisfying one.

I also want to thank our CEO Rick Mowles, his management team and all of the CLBC staff for their work toward changing the way we serve the individuals we support and how we do our work. The word "change" is daily present at CLBC and the staff who have had to lead and live the change have been outstanding in their ability to make it so. They have lived through major policy, system and structural change and have moved CLBC to be more responsive and more accountable. And as the change continues, the individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who we serve still report high satisfaction levels with the service we provide.

It has been my privilege to be involved in these changes. The opportunity to work with so many people toward our common goal of building good lives in welcoming communities has enriched my life. Thank you all. ■

## Musical expression

By Todd Oseki



Cherelle and Todd share a friendship and a passion for music.

### MY NAME IS TODD OSEKI.

I live in Richmond with my mom and dad. I started taking singing lessons about 18 years ago. My parents thought it would be good for me because I have a rare seizure disorder that affects my memory. Singing is a great way to exercise your brain and to help the parts of the brain that contain memory, so the lessons were a kind of therapy for me. I love my singing lessons!

I have to admit that singing was a learned skill. When I started, I couldn't hold a note to save my life. Through singing I got interested in writing songs. I took a course at night school through continued education with Cherelle Jardine and Doug Smith who are two local singer/songwriters. That was about 10 years ago. Before taking that course, the people I met through the music industry were pretty much doing their own thing and not so interested in me as a person.

That changed when I met Cherelle. I took the course and started writing songs. Cherelle invited me to come to a community music evening that she produces every month called Musical Expressions.

Musical Expressions is an evening of music played by local musicians, with different ones every month. I have met so many people because I go to that event. My circle of friends has grown, especially lately.

For the last few years, I have been concentrating on my health and getting stronger. I am finally feeling better and can go back to these wonderful evenings. I see old friends like Cherelle and always go out for coffee afterward with them.

Cherelle remembers me as a feisty kid when I took the course, and that I was really eager to learn. After that course I collaborated with a songwriter to create a couple of songs and have recorded one of them on a CD.

I think all the music in my life and the people that are part of that have helped me to get healthier in the last couple of years.

My facilitator from CLBC, Jennifer Wheadon, helped to connect me with the Vancouver Adaptive Music Society (VAMS) and that was great. She knew about my love of music and songwriting and she found out about a new recording

studio that VAMS has created. I had a tour of it and also met some really old friends there. It was great to reconnect.

My ultimate dream is to write songs for the movies. I love rock and roll and I love Cherelle's music. She continues to encourage me to pursue my passion, that is a good friend.

Like my mom says, it takes time to make the right connections and a lot of trust, but it is worth it.

To read the lyrics of a song written by Todd, you can visit the CLBC website at [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca) and go to News & Events > Newsletter > Current Edition.

You can find out more about Cherelle's music at [www.cherellejardine.com](http://www.cherellejardine.com) or [www.thejardinesband.com](http://www.thejardinesband.com). ■

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# Focus on Community Councils

**COMMUNITY COUNCILS ACROSS BC ENSURE THAT SELF-ADVOCATES, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND** service providers play a major role in achieving CLBC's vision of fostering good lives in welcoming communities. Community Councils help communities have more meaningful involvement in how services are delivered and in the outcomes achieved for eligible adults and their families.

Community Council members volunteer their time, experiences and expertise to build relationships that help raise awareness about the importance of inclusive communities. Councils want the people that CLBC serves to have opportunities for employment, social connections, housing and to participate safely in their communities.

The following stories, which are meant to inform and inspire, demonstrate how Councils have been engaging their local communities.

## Networking is key

**COUNCILS HAVE MANY** opportunities to make a positive impact on the families and individuals in their communities.

Carol Richards, Co-Chair and Treasurer of the Thompson Cariboo Community Council says it is important for the Council to work on activities that will create real change in the lives of families and individuals with developmental disabilities.

“The Thompson Cariboo Community Council is made up of 50 percent family members. We know from our own experiences where families may need support, and we want to be active in building inclusive communities,” says Carol.

One tactic the Council used was to organize a workshop that provided practical tools and community supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. Council members worked with a CLBC facilitator to offer a workshop on building Personal Support Networks. The group invited experienced service provider staff to facilitate the workshop in Kamloops. Carol says four individuals agreed to share their stories, and over forty people attended

the workshop to brainstorm ideas and community resources.

“I felt so excited to see people from the community pulling together to support one another and see it unfold in front of me,” says Carol. “The workshop had great outcomes and ended with action questions like, ‘What are we going to do in the next 24 or 36 hours to make these ideas a reality?’”

Carol says follow-up with the workshop participants is a priority for the Thompson Cariboo Community Council. They are also excited to be offering another workshop designed to give information to people with disabilities on how to become entrepreneurs in their community. ■



Members of the Thompson Cariboo Community Council.

## Connection to families



Members of the South Island Community Council.

**COUNCILS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN HELPING** connect families, and communicating the local needs of individuals and families directly to CLBC.

“Last spring, our Council identified the need for a family subcommittee to guide work on a communication exchange with families,” said Bev Kissinger, a member of the South Island Council. “The subcommittee looked at how to create this information exchange, and began hosting ‘Meet and Greet’ sessions to gather input and recommendations from families.”

Meet and greets have been held in three South Island communities to date, and there are plans for at least two more. At the meetings, Council members ask families for feedback, input and recommendations to be shared with CLBC to help strengthen local supports and build family connections. Families have brought forward discussion items that have included creating a greater

focus on transitioning youth, more localized supports, and building a webpage or a similar forum so families can connect regularly to share information about events, plans and activities.

“We use our contacts with CLBC and the community to get the word out on meeting dates,” says Mary Valeriotte, a Council member, and part of the sub-committee. “We’ve had good turnout to meetings, and it’s helped to connect families to each other, and connect the Council to community.”

Once they’ve completed the next scheduled meetings, the subcommittee will write a report outlining the recommendations and actions taken so far. This will help the group determine what meetings will be held next, including perhaps a focus on seniors and Aboriginal communities, and what recommendations still require further action. ■

## A new resource

**COME TOGETHER IS A SHORT VIDEO** about inclusion and community. The video was produced by CLBC and developed by a committee of Community Council members from around the province and CLBC staff. The committee’s vision was to develop a tool to inspire community leaders and groups to step forward and create meaningful opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

Come Together includes a brief overview of CLBC, the role of Community Councils and examples of participation and contribution to community life on the part

of people with developmental disabilities. The video is a community engagement tool that shines a light on what inclusion looks like, and encourages conversation about the issues most important to people with developmental disabilities, such as employment.

The video has been distributed to all CLBC Offices and Community Councils and will soon be available at [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca) under Your Community > Community Councils. ■



Chris Joynson is featured in the video “Come Together”.

# Home sharing: A perfect fit

By Greta Cooper, Team Assistant, Vernon Community Living Centre

**“IT WAS A PERFECT FIT FOR everyone,”** says Lianna Jones. In November, her family began a home sharing arrangement with Robert Mitchell and it wasn't long before Robert became a natural part of family “wing night,” summer camping plans and day to day living.

Robert's journey to the place he now calls home has taken many years. “I've had to be patient,” he says.

Robert, now 60, was an army kid who moved around a lot. Pinned to the wall in his room is a large pencil sketch he created from a small black and white photo of his father in uniform. His family moved from the Lower Mainland to St. Laurent, Quebec in 1956, then to Ottawa and eventually overseas to France where his sister Marlene was born. Three years later, the family returned to the Lower Mainland once again.

Robert was around 12 years old when he was admitted to his first group home and then to Woodlands School. In 1963 he moved into Chris Home Society, a working farm for the people with disabilities in Langley. He smiles fondly, “I remember rows and rows of vegetables.”

In 1967, he turned 18 and craved independence, so he moved to Vernon to be close to his widowed mother. Although he did well living independently, the fact he is a brittle diabetic created complications. Unable to maintain the strict diet needed to avoid serious health issues, he once again returned to a group home environment at Edgehill Manor.

Darlene Orr, the manager of Edgehill Manor, speaks fondly of Robert. He was only supposed to stay for three weeks but it turned into 17 years. Still, Robert yearned for more independence and a new living environment.

For Lianna, who had been a children's respite provider for the past 15 years, the opportunity to welcome Robert in to her home was met with excitement. In preparation for Robert coming to live with the family, her husband Bryan learned how to administer needles and they were trained to monitor blood sugars and diet.

Although their home in Falkland is about 50 kilometers away from the resources and people Robert has known in Vernon for over 20 years, the location has not prevented his continued access at all. A Falkland

resident who travels to Vernon on a regular basis ensures Robert can participate in Vernon & District Association for Community Living programs twice a week. But of paramount importance is Thursdays. Robert grins from ear to ear, “I have lunch with Betty.” Betty is his girlfriend of 22 years. They bowl together and sometimes she even beats him.

Today most people in Falkland know Robert and he's often out and about, volunteering or visiting the library. On Wednesdays, he can be found in the Learning Centre, learning about e-mail and how to download all the digital photos he's taken with his digital camera, a going away present from Edgehill Manor which he keeps with him at all times. Robert also has his own mail key which gives him the perfect opportunity to visit the post office to shoot the breeze with postmistress Karen.

He loves shopping and is learning about bargains and the value of money, and he also loads his own Starbucks and Tim Horton's cards. The community newspaper, which had published an introduction to the community, has also hired Robert to deliver issues.

He plans to spend some of the income from his job playing golf this summer. On a recent trip to Vernon to buy socks at Sportsmart, Lianna discovered the store was having a huge sale. She ended up walking out with a set of golf clubs for both her 15-year-old daughter Emma, and for Robert, “because I’m thinking, we’re all together.” Robert, who has been told he’s a natural golfer, has offered to teach Emma the proper stance for swinging her new clubs.

“My old friends at bowling and dances tell me they’re happy I found a home I love,” says Robert. He loves the peace and quiet and finds great joy in working on water colors in the privacy of his rooms and listening to music. He speaks fondly of his Aunt Olive and her daughter who live on Vancouver Island.

They’ve always remained in close touch. Darlene, who also remains a constant in Robert’s life, provides respite and is really pleased to see him in his new home, “The Jones are amazing folks and Robert is happy.”

Robert is now comfortable making his own breakfast with the appropriate foods, and chooses to spend time alone when he wants to. “We’re so happy that he loved us and wanted to live here. It’s a huge feeling,” says Lianna. ■

Lianna Jones and her family have welcomed Robert Mitchell into their home.



# Developing literacy skills

By Joey Sahli, Literacy Coordinator, Surrey Association for Community Living

**IN MARCH 2009 I WAS** hired by the Surrey Association for Community Living (SACL) to facilitate the development and implementation of a literacy curriculum for adults with developmental disabilities. I have worked as a principal at every level of the school system, but never have I had a more rewarding experience working with a group of learners than working with the adults in our literacy classes. Their determination and joy for learning has been infectious.

SACL received funding from Human Resources Social Development Canada to conduct a two-year literacy pilot project. This is the first initiative of its kind in Canada. As the literacy coordinator, I have the privilege of working with an Advisory Committee, including representation from a self-advocate, a parent, the Surrey School District, the City of Surrey, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, SACL and Community Living BC.

Drawing on the expertise of every member of the committee, we completed a draft of the literacy

curriculum by December 2009. The focus of this curriculum is on the literacy skills that contribute to the quality of daily living as a member of a social network, a community member, a resident, and an employee or volunteer. In January 2010, we hired a teacher, and with a support worker from SACL, we started our first six months of classes.

The development of confidence and the growth in independence displayed by the adults in the two classes exceeds our expectations. For example, on the first day of class, one woman was afraid to walk unaided to the classroom at L.A. Matheson Secondary School. By the end of the week she was navigating the busy hallways independently. She now rides Handi-Dart at the beginning and end of each day by herself.

Another example is an individual with bipolar disorder whose caretaker was reluctant to send him to class due to severe anger management issues. This individual has not displayed a single incident of aggressive behaviour in the classroom over the past five months.

The adults who came to us speaking in single words are now speaking in phrases and sentences. Other adults have read their first novel, and some are asking for help with spelling to write the grocery list at home.

This is a unique literacy opportunity for individuals eager to continue learning, as it includes a curriculum, an assessment protocol, and most importantly a qualified teacher. One of the outcomes that will be stressed in this pilot project is that adults with the most severe learning challenges deserve highly qualified instructors.

An application form for our second semester of classes, which runs from September 2010 to February 2011, can be found at [www.commliv.com](http://www.commliv.com). We invite you to visit our classes to see the potential of these often forgotten learners when in an engaging learning environment. ■

*For more information on this project, you can contact Joey at [jsahli@commliv.com](mailto:jsahli@commliv.com) or 778-988-3145.*



# Recognizing community contributors

**FOR THE SECOND YEAR, CLBC PRESENTED THE** WOW!clbc Awards to recipients from across BC. Launched in April 2009, WOW stands for “Widening Our World” and the awards recognize the exceptional contributions people have made towards ensuring community inclusion and full citizenship for the individuals CLBC serves.

The WOW!clbc awards are presented to individuals and groups in four categories: Self-Advocate, Family Member, Service Provider and Community Partner. Nominations were received from February 1 to April 4, 2010. A volunteer panel of seven individuals from different parts of BC and from a cross-section of the community living sector, reviewed the nominations to select two winners from each of the five CLBC regions – Vancouver Coastal, Fraser, Interior, Vancouver Island and the North.

The winners were presented their awards at “PLAN Connecting for a Better Future” forums held during the first two weeks of May in Surrey, Vernon, Nanaimo and Prince George.

Each year, the winners of the WOW!clbc Awards are featured in videos on CLBC’s recognition web page. The winners, along with their nominators, talk about the contributions they’ve made and the positive impact they’ve had on the lives of others in their communities and across the province. Through showcasing and celebrating their achievements, CLBC hopes to inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

To watch the videos of the award winners and to hear their stories, please visit [www.WOWclbc.ca](http://www.WOWclbc.ca). ■



Tracy Gill and the members of Victoria Opportunities for Community Youth Leadership (VOCYL) were recognized with a WOW!clbc Award.

## WOW!clbc Awards Recipients:

### Fraser Region:

Barb Goode – *Self-Advocate*  
Gregg Schiller – *Community Partner*

### Vancouver Coastal Region:

Richard McDonald – *Self-Advocate*  
Tiffany Baker – *Service Provider*

### Vancouver Island Region

Keith Pennock – *Service Provider*  
Tracy Gill and the members of Victoria Opportunities for Community Youth Leadership (VOCYL) – *Community Partner*

### Interior Region

Carol Richards – *Family Member*  
Jane Green – *Community Partner*

### North Region

Chris Arnold – *Service Provider*  
Melinda Heidsma – *Service Provider*

# A new take on Quality of Life

**QUALITY OF LIFE IS SOMETHING WE ALL TAKE FOR** granted in our lives. This is no different for people who have a developmental disability. Recognizing this, CLBC is leading a quality of life demonstration project in the Fraser Region in which self-advocates will interview other self-advocates who are receiving supports and services about their quality of life. Knowing this information is important for many reasons. For example, it can help a service provider know what they can do to improve their approach. This is known as continuous quality improvement.

The quality of life framework being used in the demonstration project was developed by Dr. Robert Schalock in the late 1980s. His framework, which has been used and validated internationally over the past two decades, is represented by eight domains:

- Emotional well-being: contentment, self-concept, lack of stress.
- Interpersonal relations: interactions, relationships, supports.
- Material well-being: financial status, employment, housing.
- Personal development: education, personal competence, performance.
- Physical well-being: health and health care, activities of daily living, leisure.
- Self-determination: autonomy, personal control, personal goals, choices.
- Social inclusion: community integration and participation, roles, supports.
- Rights: legal, human, respect, dignity, equality.

Together, these domains provide an indication of an individual's quality of life in three broad areas: independence, social participation, and well-being. This fits well with CLBC's overall vision of good lives in welcoming communities. Another advantage of Dr. Schalock's framework is that it applies equally to all people – it does not presume a two-tiered approach to quality of life in which people with developmental disabilities have a different standard than others.

Over the past two years, the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Edmonton Region Community Board has worked closely with Dr. Schalock to establish a valid, reliable way to assess and monitor the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities. Through this process, they have developed a valid questionnaire that can be reliably implemented by surveyors, including self-advocates, who are trained to use the tool. Service providers who participated in the Alberta pilot study have reported that the information they gained from this process has helped them to clearly identify the strengths of their organizations and areas that can be improved. CLBC has negotiated a licensing agreement with PDD Edmonton that will allow free use of their materials in order to replicate their work.

There are seven participating service providers in the CLBC Fraser region demonstration project: Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, Langley Association for Community Living, Milieu Family Services, H.O.M.E.S., Community Living Society, Community Integration Services Society and Semiahmoo House Society. Self-advocates will be trained as paid interviewers. Research demonstrates that self-advocates are as reliable as surveyors as those who do not have a disability. Interview questions will be in plain language with words and icons used for responses.

In early May, Dr. Schalock shared information about the quality of life framework including how it was developed, where it is being used throughout the world, and the positive impact it has already had within the community living field.



Andrea Baker, CLBC Manager of Quality Service Initiatives, talks with Dr. Robert Schalock about the Quality of Life framework.

Beginning in the fall, training for self-advocate surveyors will take place and the interview survey will be field tested. During the winter and spring of 2010 and 2011, a total of 300 interviews will be conducted. An evaluation of the data will help to determine next steps for how quality of life might be used in the province.

The project is guided by a reference group that includes CLBC staff, and groups representing self-advocates, families and service providers. To date, the project has met with real excitement from everyone involved. Service providers will play key roles by engaging in project problem solving and being part of as a “learn as we go” process of change.

As Maryjo Gariano, a PDD surveyor from Alberta has commented, “It’s not just another form to fill out. It’s a form with meaning. You are capturing the essence of someone’s life.” ■

## Eight Domains of Quality of Life:

- Emotional well-being
- Interpersonal relations
- Material well-being
- Personal development
- Physical well-being
- Self-determination
- Social inclusion
- Rights



## The joy of art

**FOR BO MILLER, ART AND ILLUSTRATION** has always been a passion. Since he was a child reading comic books and watching cartoons, he was fascinated with the way artists created characters.

“I learned about art by going to the library and studying different drawing and shading techniques and reading books about how to draw,” says Bo. He creates many of his drawings in pencil but also works with ink and has done oil painting.

While receiving support at the Provincial Assessment Centre (PAC), Bo has worked on many pieces ranging from fairies and superheroes to robots and Greek gods. PAC is a part of CLBC and provides inpatient assessment, support and planning for eligible individuals through a multi-disciplinary team approach. On a table near the entrance of PAC, a number of Bo’s drawings are on display with a short write up on his artistic development and interests.



“People enjoyed seeing it. They said it’s really good and they had never seen anything like it before,” says Bo proudly of his work.

In addition to drawing and painting, he is interested in the culinary arts and loves to cook. He is also connecting with his First Nations heritage. While at PAC, Bo, who is one quarter Blackfoot, took part in a cleansing ceremony called a “smudge”.

After his discharge from PAC, Bo plans to continue working on his art during his own time and in classes, and is also interested in studying animation. There may even be an opportunity for him to provide lessons for young artists who are just starting to develop their skills.

“It’s just satisfying to create something,” he says. ■

## Promoting inclusive employment

**THE BC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HELD THEIR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND** Conference from May 27 to 29 at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The premier event of the year for the business community in BC, the conference draws members from across the province, with three full days of speakers, panel discussions, presentations, and networking opportunities. Located in a different host community each year, the event is a forum for new ideas and opportunities, and increases in popularity and exposure every year.

Community Living BC participated in the event as an exhibitor, sharing information about inclusion and employment for the individuals CLBC serves. Between workshops, many of the hundreds of delegates in attendance visited CLBC’s booth.

“Attending this event was a tremendous opportunity to share information with delegates about CLBC, especially the desire of people with disabilities to work,” says Barb Penner, Manager of CLBC’s Employment Initiative. “Delegates were also interested to hear about the Start with Hi initiative and took posters to hang in their chamber offices or businesses.”

Barb talked with many delegates about possible employment opportunities for people with disabilities. “Personally, when I talked with employers, I explored the possibility of connecting them with an employment service provider in their area to learn more about hiring people with a disability. The majority gave me their contact information which I’ve passed on to local service providers to connect with them.” ■



Barb Penner, CLBC Employment Initiative Manager, shares information with delegates at the BC Chamber AGM.

## On the job

**CARLO LIVES IN THE COMMUNITY OF LADNER IN THE FAMILY HOME WITH HIS PARENTS,** brother and sister. Like many young adults he likes to spend time playing racing games on the computer, going to the gym, watching sports, going swimming and hiking, watching TV and hanging out with his friends. He has a special interest in bird watching and enjoys reading bird facts.

Unlike most 19 year olds, Carlo has survived many devastating health issues. Diagnosed with AML leukemia in 1995, Carlo relapsed in 1999. Full body radiation treatments were followed by a bone marrow transplant to save his life. Complications from treatments caused chronic health conditions that have defined most of his young life.

Carlo experienced the emotional and physiological challenges of coping with serious illness and the limitations he has acquired in his life. Carlo faced difficulty in managing impulsive anger and resulted in Carlo running away from home and school on many occasions. Frequently the Delta Police were contacted to locate him, de-escalate the situation and return him home safely.

With his strong family support network, Carlo began to mature, learn new coping skills and completed high school in 2009. Carlo and his family looked to a future that included working in his community. Customized Employment engaged in the discovery process to uncover Carlo's preferences, needs, skills and passions. Employer visits, informational interviews and job shadowing opportunities allowed Carlo to explore several vocational themes.



Ideal working conditions determined that Carlo preferred work with a high degree structure and routine, opportunities for social interaction and to work independently in a clean environment. Carlo's expressed his desire for a job that would have importance and where people were respectful and followed the rules.

Contact and job development with the Delta Police Department identified an opportunity to provide new services that would benefit the department. Shredding confidential documents and vacuuming police vehicles matched Carlo's skills and provide ideal conditions that are well suited to Carlo's preference for routine, order, structure and a naturally supportive environment.

Carlo is very excited and proud that he is working at the Police Department where he can make a positive contribution to the Police Officers and staff that have helped him in the past. ■

# Canoe for a cause

By Juli Stevenson, Executive Director, Clay Tree Society

**ABOUT A YEAR AGO, HANS EBELING,** past president and active advocate for Clay Tree Society in Nanaimo, approached the Arbutus Program to see if we would be interested in building a cedar strip canoe from the ground up. We got a pretty good response from a number of core participants so it was settled.

Clay Tree Society has supported individuals with developmental disabilities in the Nanaimo area for fifty three years. The Arbutus Program is one of Clay Tree's seven programs.

The first thing that needed to be done was to build a boat mould. When the mould was finally done, some people felt that they had already built a canoe but Hans was quick to point out that all good things take time and patience.

Each week, a few cedar strips were glued and applied with clamps. It was a slow process but we were able to appreciate the beauty of each step. Slowly but surely the canoe started to take shape.

When the shell of the canoe was completed, everyone looked at our accomplishment in amazement. More time was spent on laying the fibreglass and epoxy. In between each application of fibreglass and epoxy, there was sanding.

Dan Bateman drilled all the holes for the woven seats. Terry and Wayne were responsible for many important components involved with the canoe.

Finally, over a year later, this magnificent canoe made of cedar and mahogany is now ready for its maiden voyage. The plan all along has been to raffle the canoe off. The tickets are on sale now until July. Now that our vision has become a reality, it will be hard to let this work of art go.

We are ready for someone to appreciate this masterpiece as much as we do and are ready to take on our next endeavour, whatever it may be, because we know that we can do anything we put our minds to.

We would like to thank Hans Ebeling. If it was not for his vision, we would have never had this experience. ■



(left to right) Doug, Lorne, Long, Orrin, Richard, Mark, Willie, Pat and Dan stand proudly with the cedar strip canoe they built from the ground up.

## The art of Taekwondo

**WHEN LERA-LAN THOMSON SIGNED UP FOR A FREE WEEK OF TAEKWONDO CLASSES** in her hometown of Surrey, her father Alan was supportive of her new interest but wasn't sure how long it would last.

"She's interested in everything and wants to try everything," says Alan. "She tried it for the week, enjoyed it and wanted to join."

Three years later, Lera-Lan is still going to Taekwondo three days a week, often twice in a day. "She's been fanatical about it," says Alan.

"Every day that I go to Taekwondo, I have to take off my shoes and put on my uniform. When I come out we say 'Hello Sir, Hello Maam' to show respect. Before we practice, we do a lot of exercises like push ups, jumping jacks and running in place," says Lera-Lan who has already earned her red belt and is now working on her black belt. "It's hard but it gets easier."

Besides all of the physical aspects, Taekwondo is also social activity says Alan, "It's very interactive and Lera-Lan gets to meet a lot of young adults and older adults."

In April, Lera-Lan competed in a Taekwondo tournament at Capilano University in North Vancouver. She competed in three different areas: forms, weapons and sparring. "I won three medals there and I had the chance to see some friends," she says.

As well as practicing Taekwondo, Lera-Lan also works with her dad on a magic act. The two have performed at day cares, schools and care homes for elderly people. Recently, Lera-Lan took part in a talent contest at the Surrey Arts Centre and performed an eight-minute magic act on stage on her own.

"She can do anything that anyone else can do, if she puts her mind to it," says Alan. ■



Lera-Lan Thomson practices before a Taekwondo tournament at Capilano University in North Vancouver.

## Woodlands settlement notice

**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE WOODLANDS CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AND DETAILS ABOUT** up-coming information meetings, please visit the Klein Lyons web-site at:

[www.kleinlyons.com/class/woodlands/woodlands-settlement-index.php](http://www.kleinlyons.com/class/woodlands/woodlands-settlement-index.php)

If you have any questions or referrals or need more information, please feel free to contact Fred Ford at 250 216-6403 or [jfford@shaw.ca](mailto:jfford@shaw.ca) or Laney Bryenton at 604 760-5005 or [lbryenton@shaw.ca](mailto:lbryenton@shaw.ca). ■

## New resource for self-advocates



**“MY PLAN – SELF-ADVOCATE WORKBOOK” IS A NEW RESOURCE DEVELOPED BY CLBC** to help self-advocates take charge of their life planning.

The book was created by Sue Hill with ideas, suggestions and feedback from self-advocates, CLBC staff, service providers and community. The idea for the workbook began with feedback from self-advocates who wanted a practical tool to help them lead the development of their own person-centred plan.

Written in plain language, the workbook helps self-advocates write down and focus on what is important. The book is full of ideas and exercises to help guide the planning process.

Facilitators in each CLBC office have been oriented in the use of the booklet as an important planning tool.

“My Plan - Self-Advocate Workbook” is available in CLBC offices and can also be found at [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca) under News & Events > What’s New. ■

### CONTACT US

#### Submit

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

#### Questions

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

*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 submission, *The Citizen* reserves the right to edit content for accuracy, grammar and space, but strives to maintain the integrity and voice of the author.

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

