

The Citizen

Connecting people with their community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Finding community through employment

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Karly (front right) has found a greater sense of inclusion through her job as an Aquatic Fun Leader at the YMCA.

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Rick Mowles, CEO

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THE COMMUNITY LIVING MOVEMENT IS A CHANGE MOVEMENT.

Research, practice and policy are constantly evolving as we learn from the experiences of adults with developmental disabilities and their families, and hear about their needs and goals. Over the years, this has included options for living more inclusively in community.

Our homes are the base from which we all connect to our communities. In the last 30 years, the community living sector has shifted from housing people with developmental disabilities in institutions and isolation towards more inclusive housing. This direction is based on the hard work of families and advocates to move communities towards full inclusion.

Home sharing is one option that helps people live more inclusively in community by enabling an adult and provider to live in the same home and share many aspects of their lives. Providers are qualified, trained and experienced people who offer support and assistance based on the needs and goals of the person they are caring for, while still providing a level of independence, and connection to community and family for the individual. Relationships between individuals and home sharing providers often last for many years (many providers have been supporting the same individual for 15 years or longer). Currently, over half of CLBC supported adults receiving residential services have chosen home sharing or semi independent living to meet their needs.

Home sharing is not a new option, but has been known by different names since the 1970s when it was first introduced. In this edition of *The Citizen*, you can read about a family's experience moving their son from a group home into home sharing. Over the coming months, we will continue to share stories to show the successes and the challenges that can come with living more inclusively in community. We will also soon be posting an information sheet for families about home sharing on our website to provide more information to families about this option.

It is an exciting time in the community living movement as we continue to build on the decades of progress made towards community inclusion. As we near the close of 2010, let's acknowledge and celebrate that progress - and prepare ourselves to continue to make the necessary changes to help people live "good lives in welcoming communities".

I wish you all the best for the holiday season, and a happy and healthy new year. ■

Growing through experience

By Tricia Lins



Tricia Lins has gained confidence and experience through presenting to others.

HI, MY NAME IS TRICIA

Lins. I just moved to Langley from 100 Mile House. This was a big deal for me. Langley is a much bigger city than 100 Mile House. My life has changed a lot because of the move.

You might be wondering why I made such a big move. I followed my heart down here. I fell in love with someone and wanted to be nearer to them. I have a wish list, and meeting the right guy and moving down to the Lower Mainland was on it! Two down... lots more to go.

About two years ago, I was a very shy person, especially in front of people I didn't know. I was working for Community Living British Columbia in 100 Mile House as a self-advocate project assistant. One of my duties was to work on a conference for self-advocates in the Interior Region. The conference was held in Vernon in October 2009. I was part of a working committee of self-advocates and we met for 18 months to plan and do the conference. It was an awesome experience but a hard one too. We had to work out a lot of details.

I decided I wanted to work on my shyness so I asked to present with my friend Mandy. That was scary but I was really glad I did it. We created a workshop about leadership and we had a lot of fun presenting to 42 people. Before that I wouldn't have spoken in front of four people, so I really overcame my fear.

After that, my life really began to change. I was asked by the self-advocate group in Courtney/Comox to present a keynote for their one day conference. A keynote is kind of a speech you make at the conference to talk about something that has to do with the conference. That was another experience that was scary but wonderful. Then after that, I was invited to help out the Victoria self-advocate group to share my experiences in planning the Vernon conference. I worked as a consultant for that event and then my partner Sky and I did a workshop on leadership.

So when I moved from 100 Mile House, I had to leave my job which was the hardest thing to do. I loved my job and the people I worked with at CLBC.

I learned so much there. It was a hard decision to make. But the happiest day was when I learned that I could apply for another job at CLBC on the lower mainland. I did that and now I work at the Langley office and am now working on another conference for self-advocates.

Lots of the wishes on my wish list have come true... What's next? Skydiving anyone? ■

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 email editor@communitylivingbc.ca

New home creates broader horizons

JIM HUSTLER IS A 58-YEAR-OLD MAN who moved to Victoria in 1997 with his parents, Bill and Mary Hustler. His family is very involved in his care, as is his “Circle of Support”, a group formed in 2000 that includes family, friends and experts who are committed to helping care for Jim in the short and long-term.

In 1999, Jim began living in a four person group home run by a provincial agency. He also attended a day program run by Community Living Victoria (he calls this his “work”), which was a requirement at that time from the ministry. At first, Jim was quite happy with the group home, and found the other people there compatible and the manager supportive. However, this changed over time with staff turnover, changes in the people living in the group home, and the death of his best friend who had been living at the home with Jim since 1999. By 2007, Jim was finding it extremely difficult to manage living at the home.

Jim was still happy at work, so Bill and Mary knew that the difficulties

stemmed from his living situation. They had always dreamed that Jim would live with a family, so they took the required steps to develop a plan with CLBC and Community Living Victoria (CLV) to find a safe place for Jim to live. At that time, resources were not available so they were placed on the request for service list.

In 2009, CLBC developed host agencies to help connect people with safe housing options. Bill and Mary approached CLV, a newly appointed host agency, to redevelop their plan using CLBC’s new guidelines. Once the plan and funding were approved, CLV put his family in touch with people who were qualified to provide home sharing support. Through this process, Jim and his parents met Kim and Carl Bergenstein and a good match emerged. Over the next several months, Jim visited the Bergensteins and their two teenage daughters so they could get to know each other.

“The first night Jim visited the Bergensteins he wanted to stay,” says Mary. “We knew then we had chosen well.”

Jim has now been living with the Bergensteins for a year. Kim has a background in respite and is Jim’s main caregiver. The Bergensteins have a broad social circle, and through them Jim has made many new friends, and been introduced to new activities. For example, Jim and the Bergensteins spent several weeks this summer camping on a local beach where Jim got to know their neighbours who own a local French restaurant. The relationship has continued beyond the campground, and Jim’s new friends cooked him a six-course French meal to celebrate his recent birthday. Jim recently joined the Bergensteins on a trip to Edmonton to visit family, who were delighted to get to know him. Jim is getting to be known at the local

shops, and is often greeted with a “hi”. He also has taken on responsibility for answering the cell phone when he and Kim are driving, and for setting the table for meals. Kim and Carl are also now valued members of Jim’s “Circle of Support”.

“It is a lot of fun to watch Jim grow, change and expand and become more socially independent,” says Kim.

“Everything has changed for the positive since Jim moved to the Bergensteins,” says Mary. “Jim has turned into the person he can be, and has expanded into the world with grace and delight.”

“We’ve gained new family members through this placement,” says Bill. “It’s been positive for our family and for Jim. We’ve all enjoyed inter-family parties with Jim as decorator.”

For Bill and Mary, Jim’s home is the realization of a long-term dream for their son, but they recognize other families may have concerns about safety and about the possibility that home sharing situations may change over time. Though they previously shared the concerns about safety, Bill and Mary feel now that CLBC has the appropriate policies and procedures in place to help safeguard their son, such as making sure agencies match caregiver skills to needs through rigorous interviews with the individuals, families and home sharing providers.

“Families need to be brave and accept a new way of having their son or daughter supported,” says Mary. “They also have to accept that change happens and there is the possibility that another home share may need to be found in the future. But if this happens, families will be building on a foundation of their son or daughter’s home sharing experience, and on their own experience in finding a placement.” ■



Art works

ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, posAbilities proudly presented the 6th Annual Art Show for BC Artists with Developmental Disabilities at Heritage Hall in Vancouver. Drawing the largest crowd to date, this show featured 365 pieces of art and 143 artists. Sales were brisk and the artists continued to astound regular participants with new offerings and expanded portfolios.

While many of the artists on display have taken part in the show for several years, there were also some new ones exhibiting their work. Rebecca Nosella, 19, is one of those artists.

Rebecca first began expressing herself through art in Grade 7 with the assistance and encouragement of her education assistant, Leah Drumm. As she finds it difficult to use brushes, Rebecca's work is done using everyday objects such as pot scrubbers, feather dusters, squeegees and other items. She also enjoys using her hands, fingers and arms too. She has taken a class at the Shadbolt Centre in Burnaby where students from middle school up to university work on their own projects with the support and guidance of an instructor. She has framed and sold several of her pieces and is beginning to sell greeting cards featuring her art. She is currently making 150 of the cards for the holiday season.

The art show provided Rebecca with a chance to showcase her work to the community. "It was such an inviting environment," says Rebecca's mother Vicki. "People would just walk off the street and were amazed with the work they were seeing. A lot of people there were really intrigued with Rebecca and what she could do."

Many of the guests recognized Rebecca from the biography and picture next to her work and made a point of finding her and telling her how much they liked it. "The acknowledgment from person to person and artist to artist was amazing," says Vicki. "It was a great way of showing what Rebecca can do. She really got a feeling of the evening."

For Ray Tai, another artist displaying his work at the show, art plays an important role in his life. Ray is in his third year of studies at Emily Carr University of Art and Design and has also attended the art show for the past six years. He paints in acrylic and sometimes with oils and enjoys doing landscapes and abstract paintings.

"When I'm working on my art, I feel calm. I always listen to music at the same time and it helps me focus and concentrate," says Ray, who is inspired by the works of Picasso, Jackson Pollock and Georgia O'Keefe.

For Ray, the art show provides a chance to meet with people and also to see the works of his fellow artists. "I've learned from other people's work but I try to make my paintings my own," he says.

Ray says he'll be busy next year completing his final year of studies at Emily Carr but still hopes to have time to attend the show with some new work.

The annual art show was made possible through the contributions of the artists, guests, sponsors and many volunteers. To learn more about the event, please visit www.mapcl.org/Artshow. ■



Rebecca Nosella displays her greeting cards for sale at a recent event in Vancouver celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



Ray Tai shares two of his new landscapes at the 6th Annual Art Show.

In the Friendship Zone

By Meaghen Taylor-Reid, CLBC Facilitator

COMMUNITY LIVING MONTH 2010 WAS CELEBRATED by CLBC Simon Fraser Region on October 19, at the Shadbolt Centre. Over 25 self-advocates attended our pilot project Friendship Zone Event.

This event was a networking activity for individuals who wanted to make new friends and try new things. Groups were based on location and discussed their likes and things they wanted to try. Common interests like hockey, swimming, hiking, cars, movies, animals, travelling and skateboarding came up. One self-advocate even offered to refer a new found friend to an employer.

For the second half of the evening, community members joined us for some incredible speeches about inclusion and employment. At the end of the evening, our Friendship Zone self-advocates each went home with coffee gift cards, contact information for their new friends and some very lucky folks even won prizes. Our Friendship Zone event was such a success that we'll make sure to see you all again next year! ■



(above) Self-advocates and community members connect over conversation.

(right) Carla Thiesen, Director of Regional Operations (left), and Soheila Ghodsieh, Manager of CLBC's Port Moody office (right), join guest speaker Chris.



Tyze: Online personal support network resource

TYZE WAS CREATED BY PLAN (PLANNED LIFETIME ADVOCACY NETWORK) INSTITUTE AND IS AN ONLINE resource for people to develop personal networks of support. Tyze links people together and helps them to share stories, track to-do tasks and schedule events. Tyze online networks never discloses your information, there is no advertising, and your network is only open to the people you invite to join. Tyze has been internationally recognized for its innovative approach and has received many esteemed awards for its leadership.

CLBC is committed to developing a provincially coordinated demonstration project for adults under the Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI). Adults supported by the PSI, (who have both significant limitations in adaptive functioning and either a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder or a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, officially known as Pervasive Developmental Disorder) can often be isolated and living without a supportive social network of family and friends. CLBC recognizes the importance of relationships to individuals' health, quality of life and personal safety. The development of personal support networks is a key initiative to ensure informal safeguards are in place to reduce the vulnerability experienced by individuals.

CLBC has contracted with Tyze, whose goals and objectives are in line with CLBC's approach to personal support networks. Tyze and CLBC are working with six service providers, Community Living Society, PLEA, Chilliwack Society for Community Living, Spectrum Society for Community Living and HOMES, to create Tyze sites for individuals supported by the PSI to build their own personal support networks.

For more information on this project, please contact Jule Hopkins at Jule.D.Hopkins@gov.bc.ca or Jacinta Eni at Jacinta.Eni@gov.bc.ca. For more information on Tyze, please visit their website at www.tyze.com. ■

Building independence

FOR DAVID BROYLES, LIVING IN HIS own apartment has meant a newfound sense of independence and community. “I like the place and the neighbourhood,” he says.

The opportunity to live independently arose through a new partnership between CLBC and BC Housing. Through the partnership, BC Housing has made six units in designated buildings available for individuals supported by CLBC. CLBC ensures that individuals who are interested in, and capable of living independently, are a good match with other tenants and have the support they need to live more independently. David is among the first four people to move as part of the pilot project. Previously, he was sharing a home with others but was interested in moving to a place of his own.

“As facilitators, we refer individuals who we think are a good match, and help with the referral application,” says Meaghen Taylor-Reid, a facilitator in CLBC’s Burnaby office.

Before an application is submitted, there is a lot of vetting to make sure the individual would be suited for the



David enjoys the independence of living in his own apartment.

situation. When the CLBC Manager is satisfied that the person’s needs can be met in this supported living arrangement, and that the person is interested in the new situation, they will contract with a service provider to assist with life skills support. For David, CLBC connected with Spectrum Society for Community Living to provide support hours required to assist with his transition to more independent living.

“This means the individuals are really set for success, and a strong foundation has been laid to provide them with support in the transition,” says Meaghen. Once this preparation has taken place, the facilitator refers the individual to BC Housing. Next, a BC Housing coordinator meets with the individual and their support network to determine if they are suitable for the vacant apartment.

“The interview is very supported and BC Housing has been really receptive to the needs of individuals supported by CLBC,” says Meaghen.

As David was living in Surrey and moving to Burnaby, his application also involved coordination between two CLBC offices, “It’s such a well supported partnership, it goes quickly if the person is appropriate,” says Meaghen.

In March of this year, David moved to his own apartment in a BC Housing building in Burnaby. “It’s a great place,” says Meaghen. “There’s a really nice common room where many community activities like holiday parties take place. I see it being a really positive thing for him.”

David was supported through the moving process by Spectrum and had some help from friends with packing,

moving and unpacking. Informal safeguards were put in place, such as introducing David to his neighbours, as well as defining expectations around guests and curfews. Spectrum has also provided support such as familiarizing David with laundry facilities in the building and helping him learn the local bus routes and nearby Skytrain stations.

To ensure everything is going well, there is a follow up interview two weeks after moving in. BC Housing, CLBC and Spectrum monitor the situation to ensure the new living situation is working. Since this is a new partnership, at the end of one year, CLBC and BC Housing will review satisfaction of each individual who has moved.

David is really enjoying his new place. He’s comfortable with the transit system and travels back and forth between home and the Simon Fraser Society for Community Living in New Westminster. He also takes part in inclusive sports and recreation classes through the City of Burnaby. When he’s having computer problems, he has a friend who comes by and gives him assistance.

“David has some really strong relationships. He’s taking care of himself, and he’s also looking at finding employment,” says Meaghen.

Celebrating his first Christmas in his new apartment, David has his tree and decorations set up and is planning a shopping trip to the nearby mall to get a present for his girlfriend. “I like it a lot. I really get along well with my neighbours and they all like me. I learned the area and all the bus routes for getting around. I’m very comfortable here now.” ■

Making a difference at City Hall

By POLARIS Employment Services

NOT MANY PEOPLE CAN SAY THEY HAVE BEEN WITH the same employer for nearly 20 years, but Lisa Culpo can. In 2011, Lisa will be celebrating 20 years of employment with the City of Port Moody.

Lisa's desk is situated in the department known as Legislative Services. This is where Lisa sorts the in-house, inter-office and outgoing mail. Lisa then delivers the mail, a job that takes her to most areas of the building. As a result, Lisa knows just about everybody at City Hall. Her fellow workers look forward to her cheerful greeting and friendly smile when she brings along the mail.



Lisa Culpo's job at Port Moody City Hall takes her all around the building.

Lisa also works for several other departments at City Hall. In the Library, Lisa looks after the returned books, making sure they are reshelfed properly. She also monitors and refills supplies for the photocopiers. Every week she checks office supply levels, reports reordering needs and puts supplies away. In Finance, she matches the invoicing paperwork and files the documents. For Fire-Rescue, she collates and fills bags for student handouts. Sometimes there is a lot to do, but Lisa is a great multi-tasker and works well under pressure.

On October 12, 2010, Lisa received a certificate of recognition for her hard work and dedication. Mayor Joe Trasolini presented Lisa with the award during a Council meeting. Lisa's friends and family were on hand to help her celebrate. It was a great night.

When Lisa first started her job back in 1991, City Hall was located on St. John's Street in downtown Port Moody. There have been many changes over the years, including the building of the new City Hall in 1995 to serve the growing municipality. In 1991, Port Moody's population was 17,756. Today it stands at around 30,000.

Along with the new building, Lisa has seen many other changes over the years in her job as office assistant. Lisa's job coach, Debra Caron from POLARIS Employment Services Society, has been on hand since the beginning to encourage Lisa through the opportunities and challenges that come with change.

Lisa's coworkers appreciate her, and the feeling is mutual. When asked what she likes best about her job, Lisa says, "The people are nice and friendly and always get me something for my birthday and I like that. I want to thank them for supporting me and helping me to do a good job." ■

Recognizing contributions

BEING HONOURED WITH A WOW! (WIDENING OUR WORLD) AWARD IN 2009 WAS a humbling and inspiring experience for Tiffany Baker. Tiffany lives in Powell River and supports a young woman named Rebecca with her day to day experiences in life. The 20-year relationship that they share is a perfect example of exemplary support.



The WOW!clbc awards recognize the contributions honourees have made and continue to make towards ensuring community inclusion and full citizenship for the individuals CLBC supports.

“My first reaction,” says Tiffany, “was a feeling of being so privileged to be shown that the time I have known Rebecca, and the work we have done together has had an impact. The award is a tangible way to reflect that.” Tiffany was nominated by Rebecca’s mom, Maria. “When Maria asked me about making the nomination, it was such an honour to just be nominated. When I was told I actually won, I was happily shocked.”

WOW!clbc Awards are presented to individuals and groups in four major categories who work with creativity, compassion and commitment to foster “good lives in welcoming communities.” The 2011 WOW!clbc Awards will be launching in the new year. For more information on the upcoming campaign, and if you would like to nominate someone you know, please check the CLBC website under Opportunities > Recognition Awards. ■

Creating safer communities

SAFE HARBOUR: RESPECT FOR ALL is a national diversity initiative being implemented in BC by the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMMSA). Active in 26 communities around the province, Safe Harbour creates opportunities for businesses, institutions, agencies and communities to better understand and celebrate differences, and helps build safer and more welcoming communities. Their mandate of “respect for all” fits well with CLBC’s vision of “good lives in welcoming communities”.

Building informal safeguard networks for self-advocates requires having community members respect diversity. With this in mind, the Courtenay CLBC office recently joined the Comox Valley Safe Harbour program, which currently has 42 organizations and businesses as members. Through CLBC’s involvement, staff will raise awareness with self-advocates and caregivers that when they see a Safe Harbour

sign in an agency or business window, it means it is a place that respects diversity and where you can get help if needed.

“By joining Safe Harbour, we are connecting to the broader community,” says Barb Legg, a CLBC facilitator with the Courtenay office. “It’s a great opportunity. Our next step is to make sure self-advocates and caregivers are aware of this option. We are planning on sending a message about the program to service providers. Presentations have also been made to self-advocates.”

Staff of businesses and organizations involved in Safe Harbour are given the tools and knowledge to provide help through training from expert facilitators. On October 27, Courtenay staff took the Safe Harbour workshop, which was facilitated by Kathie Landry from Creative Employment Access Society (CEAS). CEAS is the lead agency for Safe Harbour in the Comox Valley.

“CLBC staff already practice the principles of understanding and accepting diversity,” said Barb. “Where the workshop was really helpful was getting us to think about how exactly we’d handle and help in situations where discrimination is taking place.”

Safe Harbour is a made-in-BC initiative that began in Nanaimo in 2004, and has since been expanded to three other provinces. There are currently over 800 Safe Harbour locations throughout Canada. The program receives funding from the federal and provincial governments. Locations of the program and more information can be found on their website at www.safeharbour.ca.

Information on other ways CLBC is helping to build safeguards can be found on the CLBC website under Individuals & Families > Safeguards. ■

Finding community through employment

AMONG THE MANY BENEFITS OF EMPLOYMENT – EMPOWERMENT, INDEPENDENCE, significance – one of the most powerful is the sense of community and connectedness that comes with it. Our work environments are primary and natural sources for our network of relationships. Karly Fraser has been experiencing this in her job at the YMCA's H2O Adventure and Fitness Centre in Kelowna.

Karly was referred to TIER Support Services in Kelowna, through CLBC. Through the discovery process, a relationship was fostered that highlighted Karly's strongest interests in working with children and her leisure activity of swimming.

Her support worker at TIER was also able to identify Karly's natural abilities, strengths and preferences: mainly that Karly was very social, enjoyed being around children, and was very involved in Special Olympics swimming and other sports. Karly was also very eager to learn, to become increasingly independent, and to become part of a larger community.

TIER had established a working relationship with the local YMCA/H2O center and initiated a volunteer opportunity at the H2O Centre helping out with birthday parties and supporting swim instructors in their classes with the goal of attaining paid employment .

The hours spent volunteering there gave Karly confidence, enabled her to learn some transferable skills, and brought her into contact with many of the staff. After a few months of volunteering, TIER approached the director of the H2O Centre regarding the possibility of creating a paid position for Karly. The management team saw that Karly was reliable, punctual, great with the staff and the children, and that hiring her would be of value to their staff, programs and guests.

Karly is now an Aquatic Fun Leader at the H2O Centre. She assists with the swim classes, helps get the classes prepped, and monitors the users of the Flow Rider and the waterslides.

Karly's mom Tami talks about the impact this has had, "Being supported by TIER and the YMCA has afforded Karly the ability to find new friends, a larger community and a higher quality of life. The staff and guests at the YMCA are Karly's community and her friends. She finds people to care about and who make her life richer. The staff include her as often as possible and this job is helping her on the road to independence."

"A little caring and being included in daily situations means everything to Karly and that is why this job means so much to her. We are truly thankful." ■

Karly (right) assists with swim classes at the H2O Adventure and Fitness Centre in Kelowna.



Fashion that makes a statement

BUILDING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES REQUIRES CREATIVE THINKING AND

partnerships which bring people together from all walks of life. Kootenay Society for Community Living (KSCL) celebrated Community Living Month this year with an exciting event which helped build community. Co-sponsored with Community Living BC, and inspired by AimHi fashion show events in Prince George, KSCL hosted their first annual "Fall Fashion Show" in Castlegar BC.

Over 120 people attended the sold-out event and more than 40 community members with different abilities hit the runway to model clothes from Bourbon Street Boutique, West's and JJ's Fashions.

"We have received such positive feedback about the Fashion Show," said KSCL Executive Director, Betsy Goolieff. "The event raised about \$760 for the local Community Harvest Food Bank and grew to approximately \$2100 when Shaw Cable & Campbells matched the donation."

Goolieff said she felt the event was such a success because it included and celebrated many different community members in Castlegar and Nelson, "This is the spirit of community we are all looking for, events where we can all laugh together, and leave feeling happy and connected." KSCL staff are already planning next year's fashion show. ■



Sandrelle Fraser models at the Fall Fashion Show.

Inspiring leadership

by James Janzen, President of the Abbotsford Self Advocacy Group

FOR THE LAST 11 YEARS, AN ANNUAL Leadership Retreat for self-advocates has been held at the Edenvale Retreat and Conference Centre in Abbotsford. Everyone who comes here loves this place. It has a lot of hospitality, excellent staff, very comfortable and relaxing environment and the food is always delicious, healthy with very generous portions too.

Police Detective Mike Macfarlane gave a presentation on Internet and Community Safety which was interesting and also very funny. I also attended a workshop called "Who's the Boss?" This was a workshop by Counsellor Dorothy Hyslop about how to stand up for yourself. I thought the video presentation of different situations about being taking advantage

of by other people, and the discussion afterward, were useful and informative.

Gregg Schiller did his workshop called "Expression Through Music" where we listened to him play the piano and we drew pictures and then we had a chance to talk about our pictures. Everyone had interesting drawings and stories to tell on how the music made them feel.

I also took part in the Self-Advocates Seeding Innovation (SASI) Group Project where I acted out skits. I was a little nervous acting in front of the crowd, but once each skit started I was fine. I also really enjoyed "The Self Advocacy Game Show" on Saturday night which made me laugh hard too. Each time a self-advocate picked

a category on the wall, they had to answer a question or act something out. I thought the whole experience was pretty cool.

I saw everyone at breakfast and we talked about how much fun we had the day before. We also met some great friends from all over the province who still keep in touch regularly through the internet and phone calls.

I am already looking forward to the 12th Annual Leadership Retreat at Edenvale next year which is going to be on the Thanksgiving long weekend from October 7 to 9, 2011. I hope to see more new people again from everywhere in the province. Thanks to Gregg Schiller for organizing this fantastic event every year for us. ■

Welcome Minister Krueger



The Honourable Kevin Krueger,
Minister of Social Development.

THE HONOURABLE KEVIN KRUEGER

was appointed Minister of Social Development and Minister responsible for Community Living BC on October 25, 2010. He also serves on the Cabinet Committee for Early Childhood Education Innovations. He has served as Minister of Community Development, Minister of Small Business and Revenue, Minister Responsible for Regulatory Reform, Minister of State for Mining and most recently as Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

Kevin Krueger was re-elected as MLA for Kamloops-South Thompson on May 12, 2009 after being elected in 1996 and re-elected in 2001 and 2005 as MLA for Kamloops-North Thompson. While in Opposition, Kevin served as the BC Liberal Critic for Labour. He was Caucus Whip as well as a member of the Select Standing Committee on Education. Kevin was named to the Legislative Standing Committees for Committee of Selection and the Special Committee for the Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform. He was also a member of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee. He previously was a member of the Small Scale Salvage Committee and

the Government Caucus Committee on Natural Resources and Economy, where he previously served as chair.

Before becoming an MLA, Kevin worked with the Insurance Corporation of BC for 20 years, and at the time of his departure was a road safety regional manager.

His community work includes the Kamloops Chamber of Commerce, Kamloops Community Counterattack Committee, Rotary Club past-president, coordinator with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and secretary of the Protocol Committee for the 1993 Canada Summer Games. He arranged the twinning of the Rotary Clubs of Kamloops and Uji, Japan. He is a former board member, executive councillor and shop steward of the Office and Technical Employees Union, Local 378. He was a director of the Prince George & District Credit Union.

Kevin and his wife Debbie, a school teacher, have six children including two daughters-in-law and a son-in-law. They are the proud grandparents of seven children. ■

Sharing the power of stories

CLBC'S SELF-ADVOCATE ADVISOR

Shelley Nessman, Family Partnership Advisor Sylvie Zebroff, and Aboriginal Advisor Donna Good Water are holding community meetings on "Sharing the Power of Stories" throughout the province from October 2010 to March 2011.

The meetings will include information sharing and Q&As on CLBC policy

and practices; engaging self-advocates, families and community members to collect feedback for ongoing best practice; and sharing stories of innovation and experiences.

Upcoming meetings will be taking place in North Vancouver on January 13, Vernon and Kelowna on January 27, and Penticton on January 28. For more information about times, locations, and

other upcoming dates, please visit the CLBC Events Calendar at www.communitylivingbc.ca under What's New > Events.

If you have any questions, please contact Sylvie Zebroff at 250-470-8327, or by e-mail at Sylvie.Zebroff@gov.bc.ca. ■

Dreaming your possibilities

“It was an awesome workshop with a great awakening about myself. I learned a lot.”

— Tanya Norman (workshop participant)

BARB GOODE, AARON JOHANNES, AND SHELLEY

Nessman know how to dream. All three know the value of having a vision for the future and a plan about how to get there. “That’s why we came up with ‘Climb Every Mountain - Dreaming your Possibilities,’” says Barb. “We wanted to create a workshop that gives people some time to think about what their gifts and talents are and how they might use them to help other people.”

In October, a National Family Conference was held in Whistler, BC. The conference had over 550 participants and was co-sponsored by the British Columbia Association for Community Living, Canadian Association for Community Living and Family Focus.

Barb and Shelley thought this would be a great place to begin to talk with self-advocates, service providers and family members about what they do well, what they love to do and how to turn those gifts into something that can help the world be a better place.

“We want people to know that they are here for a reason and that doing something you love or are very good at is a perfect way to become a contributor in your community,” says Shelley.

Barb, Aaron and Shelley are passionate about inspiring people to stop focussing on the things they can’t do and to pay attention to the things they love to do.

The workshop was an interactive time with people talking in groups about what they love to do, what they are good at and how they might change the way they do things so they can help others.

Barb and Shelley also created a “wall of abilities” that was covered with words that people could use to describe themselves. Words and phrases like honest, enthusiastic, loves food, funny, makes people feel calm, were chosen by participants who then shared with their table mates the reasons they chose them.

Aaron listened to everyone and turned people’s words into a giant mural at the front of the room. At the end of the session, participants were given the challenge of going out that evening and asking at least two people what they thought their gift or passion was.

The next morning, people gathered again and talked about their experiences of asking their friends and co-workers about their gifts. They recorded their responses on a sheet of paper that asked them to finish the sentences: A mountain I have climbed is...; Something I want to do is....

Everyone’s responses were placed on the mural and the result was a colourful representation of people’s hopes, dreams and plans for the future.

Barb, Shelley and Aaron were inspired by people’s honesty and their willingness to talk about their dreams. “What an amazing experience,” said Aaron.

All three hope to make this presentation to other groups around the province. If you’re interested in creating a workshop like this in your community, please contact Shelley at Shelley.Nessman@gov.bc.ca. ■

Powering potential

RYAN INKIN IS A MAN WITH VISION, PURPOSE AND a strong sense of community. He runs Inkin's E-Bikes independently from his home, helping people in and around Quesnel get connected with affordable, and environmentally friendly transportation. The "E" in E-bikes stands for electric. The bikes don't require a license, insurance or gas and can be driven by anyone over the age of 16.

Ryan clearly loves what he does and is enthusiastic when he talks about the bikes.

"The bikes save energy and are cheap to run. They can go up to 50 km/hour and have a security alarm so people can't steal them. You can plug them into any 110 volt outlet, so if you go on a trip you can plug them in anywhere. They are really great," says Ryan, who gets around town on his own E-bike.

Ken Anderson previously sold the bikes. When Ken retired, Ryan stepped in, feeling it was important for the local community to be able to purchase the affordable eco-friendly bikes. The bikes come to him on consignment basis from the distributor in Vernon. Once Ryan sells one, the distributor will send him another. Ryan also repairs the bikes when needed, a skill he learned from Ken. Ryan has help from his wife Charlotte who does the bookkeeping, and from Ken's daughter, Mary.

Quesnel is snowbound for the winter and spring, so Ryan is busiest in the summer months. This past summer he estimates 100 people in the local community bought one of the bikes. He lets people know about the bikes through word of mouth and by distributing business cards. Next year, he is thinking he may take ads out in the Quesnel Observer newspaper.

"Ryan is a wonderful man who is giving, supportive and patient, and shows others what is possible," says Daniella Hansen from Prima, a local service provider. "He is an active community member, and works hard at living independently."

Since 2002, Ryan has been connected with odd jobs, like lawn mowing and gardening, through Prima. His volunteering includes the Salvation Army soup kitchen, and security for the Quesnel Millionaires Junior hockey team. Ryan also delivers papers to make the extra money that helps support his self-sufficient life with Charlotte.

"The bike has helped Ryan be more independent. He uses it to get to and from work and Prima, and to any activities he wants to be involved in. It's really great to see him being successful," says Daniella. ■



Ryan Inkin uses his E-bike to get around his community.

New personal support networks resource

A NEW INFORMAL SAFEGUARDS

resource has been developed by CLBC on building personal support networks. The booklet, titled “Support Networks - A Guide for Self Advocates”, has been prepared in plain language for use by self-advocates and their support networks. The messages and ideas are written and displayed in a clear, concise manner.

We suggest that people who support an individual with a developmental disability take the time to walk through each page with the individual and explore what the messages mean to that person, personalizing the information in the booklet.

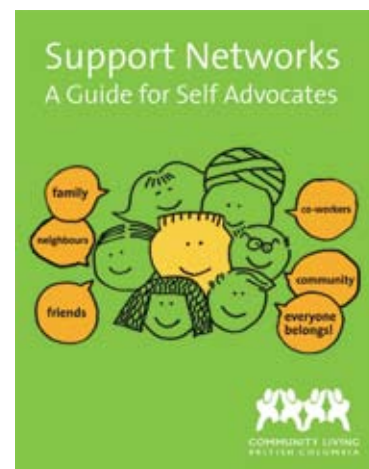
The development of the booklet was guided by self-advocates who identified the areas they felt were most important in the process of building their support networks. The booklet was created for CLBC by Susan

Stanfield and Aaron Johannes, Directors of Spectrum Society for Community Living, based on the CLBC Belonging to One Another booklet. Aaron also provided the illustration.

This resource is available by request through CLBC offices. To find your nearest CLBC local office, please visit the CLBC website under Your Community > Local CLBC Offices.

The publication can also be found in electronic format on the CLBC website under Policies & Publications > Publications > Safeguards Publications.

For any further information, please e-mail CLBC’s Manager of Service Accountability and Safeguards, Jule Hopkins, at Jule.D.Hopkins@gov.bc.ca. ■



Home Sharing providers connect

HOME SHARING PROVIDERS

gathered once again at the Quaaout Resort and Conference Centre near Chase for the region’s Second Annual Home Sharing Conference. The theme of this year’s conference was “Living in Community - Next Steps” and Mitch Loreth, who facilitated last year’s inaugural event, was invited back as facilitator and keynote speaker.

Drawing on 40 years experience, Mitch talked about safeguards. He drew comparisons to our own personal circles of friends, family, and people that give us valued social roles and challenged home sharing providers to realize the unique opportunity they have to be catalysts for inclusion.

Participants had rave reviews about Mitch and described him as “informative, “thought provoking”, and “inspirational”.

Workshops were held on a variety of subjects including Public Trustee and Guardianship, Persons with Disability Benefits, Health Services for Community Living, medication administration, CLBC’s website, and crisis management strategies. An informal planning session was held prior to the recognition dinner for home sharing providers.

Grant Huffman, Quality Service Manager performed a song he wrote highlighting the power of “ordinary

heroes”, an acknowledgement to the home sharing providers. Keith Bannah of Thompson Community Services in Kamloops presented a fantastic DVD he created with a compilation of pictures from the region.

A huge thanks to cultural coordinator Barbara Callihoe for her welcoming song and to Ernie Philips, a world renowned dancer, who surprised folks with an impromptu performance. There were also rave reviews about the best bannock in the region. Community Living BC and Caregiver Association of Salmon Arm were co-sponsors of this event. ■

Information for ageing parents



A NEW SAFEGUARDS RESOURCE, THE Ageing Parents/Caregivers Planning Pamphlet, is now available.

The pamphlet is an initiative of the Surrey-Delta Community Council and supported by the CLBC Provincial Advisory Committee. The intent of the pamphlet is to inform ageing family members, individuals with developmental disabilities who are ageing, service providers and CLBC staff of the importance of, and need to plan as caregivers and individuals age.

Over the next year, CLBC will be working with staff and Community Councils to hold community sessions, including meeting with Health Service Providers and Emergency Responders to encourage them to use and distribute

the pamphlet when they come in contact with ageing individuals and their family members.

The Ageing Parents/Caregivers Planning Pamphlet has been distributed to all CLBC offices around BC. To find your nearest office, please visit www.communitylivingbc.ca and go to Your Community > Local CLBC Offices. The pamphlet is also available on the CLBC website under Policies and Publications > Publications > Safeguards.

If you have any questions, or would like further information, please contact Jule Hopkins, CLBC Manager of Service Accountability and Safeguards, at Jule.D.Hopkins@gov.bc.ca. ■

CONTACT US

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If you have a story suggestion or feedback on the newsletter, E-mail editor@communitylivingbc.ca.

Questions

If you have a general question about CLBC, e-mail 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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