

The Citizen

Connecting people with their community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA



The Power of Knowing Each Other

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Cathy Anthony and her son Josh are among the families featured in a new resource on informal safeguards created by CLBC and Family Support Institute (FSI).

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Rick Mowles, CEO

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THIS MONTH, THE CITIZEN FOCUSES ON THE WAYS SELF-ADVOCATES, families and CLBC are reaching out, informing, innovating, and creating relationships in ways that bring us closer to realizing the vision of “good lives in welcoming communities”. Included in this edition are stories on CLBC’s upcoming new safe social media website, the recently released book of family stories, “The Power of Knowing Each Other”, videos of the meetings between families and the CLBC Board, and this year’s WOW!clbc Award winners.

Social media is a great way to connect and build awareness of inclusion. CLBC wants to make sure that self-advocates and families have the skills, knowledge and understanding to stay safe online. On June 30, CLBC will be launching icanbesafeonline.com, the only website of its kind in Canada. This website will be dedicated to educating and informing adults with developmental disabilities on how to be safe while having fun online. It’s an exciting initiative and I am proud that CLBC is providing leadership in this area.

In May 2010, the Family Support Institute and CLBC began collaborating on “The Power of Knowing Each Other: Stories about Informal Safeguards told by BC Families”, a book of stories about family members with developmental disabilities and the informal safeguards and relationships that makes their lives richer and safer. The stories gathered share families’ joy, inspiration, innovation and creativity in helping to build informal safeguards in community for their family members. This book can be viewed on the CLBC website under Individuals and Families > Safeguards.

CLBC’s Board has spent time over the last few months talking to self-advocates and families to learn about their lives and the issues that are important to them. In March, the CLBC Board Chair and members of the CLBC Board met with family members to hear their stories and learn about their challenges and successes. You can view video clips from these meetings on CLBC’s Youtube page at: www.youtube.com/user/communitylivingbc.

We’re also celebrating this year’s winners of the 2011 WOW!clbc Awards, which recognize the hard work and dedication of self-advocates, service providers, families and community members to building more inclusive communities. This year’s ten Award winners were chosen from among 39 nominations received from all across BC. Read more about the winners’ stories in this edition, or visit www.wowclbc.ca to watch their videos.

I hope you enjoy reading this month’s stories. ■

Pride in helping others

By Sherry Shortman

Hi, my name is Sherry Shortman.

I live in Kamloops. I have lived here all my adult life and have owned my own home for the last four years.

I was born on the Sunshine Coast but moved to Kamloops when I was a baby. I was sick at the time and my Grandma helped my Mom out by taking me home with her. I went back and forth a bit, but really I settled here in Kamloops and I call it home.

A word to describe me is busy. I work and sit on a lot of boards and committees. I see my friends and then there is always my cat.

I work for the Kamloops Society for Community Living as a Peer Advisor. I help people to understand their rights and find different resources in the community. I also help with advocacy, when people need help filling out forms, understanding systems like Persons With Disabilities (PWD) and so on. I find the advocacy very satisfying. It is great to support people to get what they need.

I guess my roots for advocating with others go all the way back to when I was in high school. I went to Overlander Senior Secondary here in Kamloops. My best friend went to the same school and she was being bullied by a group of girls. I was mad. I went and confronted the girls and asked them why they were teasing her. Their answer was that it was fun to tease her and make her cry. I was fuming mad and just then the principal appeared and I told him what was going on. The girls got detention, the bullying stopped and that was the beginning of my advocacy career.

Over the years, I have served on many committees and boards. I was on the Board of Directors for the Kamloops Society for

Community Living for sixteen years. That was a great board. We did fundraising, helped out at bingo, and worked on Community Living Day.

I have also been involved with the BC Self Advocacy Caucus, BC People First and the BC Self Advocacy Foundation Board of Directors. In 1993, I started the Kamloops Self Advocate Group and last year I started the Greystone People First Group here in Kamloops

The BC Self Advocacy Foundation has a big campaign they are starting. The campaign is called "No More Barriers" and has been a lot of work. We have a new logo for the Foundation and we also developed a short video that tells the story of the community living movement.

The campaign is about exploring ways to raise awareness about our human rights and start a conversation about making them real for everyone. It is about learning about our past to prevent history from repeating itself. The campaign will be launched in the early summer and I am pretty excited about that!

For fun I crochet blankets and dishcloths. Lots of people like my dishcloths and I give them to all my friends. The thing I love most is watching my cat climb on things and bounce off the walls. She is very entertaining.

To learn more about the Self Advocacy Foundation's "No More Barriers" campaign, please read the story on page 15. ■

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



Sherry Shortman takes pride in her work advocating for others.

Highlighting community contributors

FOR THE THIRD YEAR, CLBC PRESENTED THE WOW!clbc Awards to recipients from across BC.

WOW stands for “Widening Our World”. The Awards were launched in April 2009 to help recognize the exceptional contributions people across the province have made towards building community inclusion and full citizenship for the adults CLBC supports. Every year, awards are presented to individuals and groups in four categories: Self-Advocate, Family Member, Service Provider and Community Partner to recognize their creativity, compassion and commitment to fostering “good lives in welcoming communities”.

This year, nominations for the WOW!clbc Awards were accepted from February 1 to April 10. A volunteer panel of six 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 with Awards at regional events in Prince George, Parksville, Kamloops and Surrey in May and June. 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.

VANCOUVER ISLAND

InclusionWorks! – Community Members

InclusionWorks!, is a small group of committed, like-minded families, all with 19-year-old sons and daughters who joined together to be more self-sufficient and promote effective community inclusion through a family governance model. The group works together to pool their human and financial resources and foster natural partnerships with the educational, business, non-profit and government sectors.

Musical Band “Inclusion” – Self Advocates

The band “Inclusion” is from Campbell River and they have been playing together for six years. What makes this group unique is that three of its musicians are people with developmental disabilities. The band members met through their affiliation with the Campbell River and District Association for Community Living. They are now a familiar voice in the Campbell River music scene, and donate much of their time and music to events, fundraisers and supporting others in community.

VANCOUVER COASTAL

Mara St. Onge – Community Member

Mara St. Onge has been a member of the Vancouver Community Council for four years. She is a home sharing provider, and helps people who live with her have full and inclusive live in community. Last year, Mara also held a successful workshop for self-advocates called “Making Friends, Keeping Friends”, which helped participants to make and maintain new friendships. Currently, Mara is running a series of workshops at the YMCA called “Friends, Fitness and Fun” that include a variety of health, fitness and friendship development activities.

Paul Gauthier – Self Advocate

Paul’s life story is a testament that individuals can overcome challenges through determination and perseverance. When he was young, Paul was told he would have to live his life in a palliative care facility for seniors. He chose to define his own reality and became a Paralympic silver medalist, foster parent, father and husband, and Coordinator of the BC Personal Supports Network (BCPSN). Paul is inspirational, and knows how to get people thinking about possibilities and how to move from a focus on disabilities to abilities.



Marilyn McLean has dedicated her career to helping people with developmental disabilities.

NORTH

Denny Delaney – Service Provider

Denny and his staff pride themselves on learning about individuals holistically and how their particular challenges affect them, then ensuring staff have training so they can best support an individual. Their philosophy is based upon respect for the individual, quality of life and adjusting their approach to support individual strengths and needs. They embrace diversity and differing points of view to improve services, will involve a person's whole support network in planning, and see accountability to the people they support and their families as a key priority.

Safeway Terrace – Community Member

Safeway Terrace has shown they are an exemplary employer for adults with developmental disabilities. They have worked closely with the local service agency to customize jobs for the three employees they currently have on staff, and to recognize and encourage each person's skills. For example, one employee, after being employed for four months, was made senior shift person because of his positive attitude and work ethic. He now helps supervise the other service clerks during his shift and Safeway is supporting him to gain new skills.

FRASER

Brenda Gillette – Service Provider

Brenda is the Executive Director for the Chilliwack Society for Community Living (CSCL). Brenda's extensive experience, long history and incredible energy allows her to be a mentor, a valued member of the local Community Council, a member of the CSEA Board, a member of the Steering Committee for Social Services at the University of the Fraser Valley, an active and thoughtful member of the Upper Fraser Ethics Committee, and involved with the Employment Training Network, helping to create more employment opportunities for adults with development disabilities. She gives freely of her time and expertise in community to help build more inclusive communities.

Surrey Association for Community Living (SACL) – Service Provider

SACL successfully engaged a range of community partners, including the School District, Chamber of Commerce, City of Surrey and corporate partners, to launch a two-year



"Inclusion", a band from Campbell River, donate their time and music to events and fundraisers in their community.

Literacy Project for Adults with Developmental Disabilities. The project used a specifically designed curriculum and innovative teaching methods for adults with developmental disabilities to help increase their literacy skills and confidence. It is the first program of its kind in Canada.

INTERIOR

Margaret Milsom – Service Provider

Margaret is the president and founding member of The Central Okanagan Professional Caregiver Society (COPCS). Margaret gives hundreds of hours of her own time to the COPCS by her creating a quarterly newsletter, recruiting new members, speaking at events, training other home sharing providers, organizing workshops, creating events like summer picnics, and being available to home sharing providers to answer questions and provide support. She is also a home sharing provider, and constantly creates positive experiences for the people who live with her.

Marilyn McLean – Service Provider

Marilyn dedicated her career for over 30 years to serving students with special needs. She has volunteered tirelessly and passionately since 1978 with Special Olympics as a trainer, coach, Chairperson and Director. Her hard work, dedication and involvement have made a huge difference in many lives. Self-advocate and Community Council member, Tony Cuglietta, says, "Marilyn's fantastic and she's the best. She helps us a lot." ■

New Resource: The Power of Knowing Each Other

COMMUNITY LIVING BC AND FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE (FSI) HAVE WORKED

together to create a new safeguards resource, “The Power of Knowing Each Other: Stories about Informal Safeguards told by BC Families”.

This book contains 12 stories plus a forward and concluding story about the creative and unique connections families have built and nurtured with their family members who have a developmental disability. These relationships offer many things, all of which contribute to people living good and safe lives in welcoming communities.

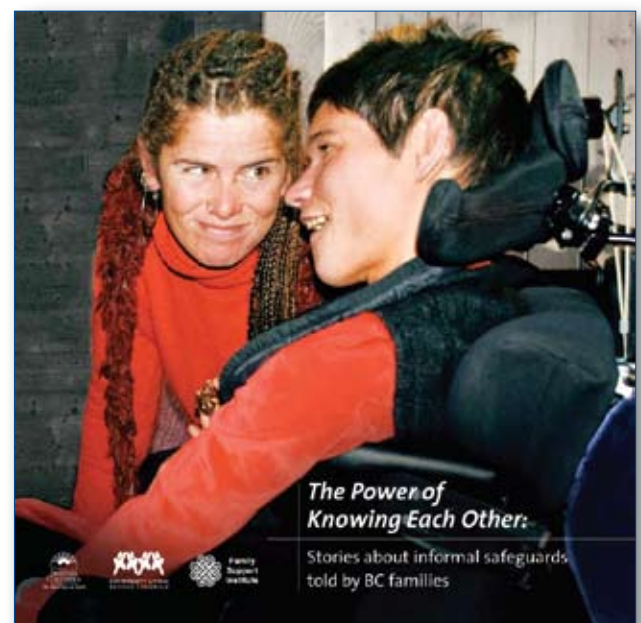
CLBC believes that the best way to keep safe is to have family, friends and people in our lives who know and care about us. Having a personal support network made up of many different people is one of the best safeguards. Support networks are an important informal safeguard. As a book of stories told by families, “The Power of Knowing Each Other” serves as a powerful vehicle for sharing this message about informal safeguards.

Family Support Institute’s connection with families, and their dedication to making sure that families’ voices are heard, has ensured that the book contains authentic, powerful and real stories.

This resource is meant to inspire and stimulate people’s thinking on informal safeguards. The stories bring to the reader wonderful ideas and ways to build supportive networks. These personal stories demonstrate the incredible strength and love family members have for each other and how families have built informal safeguards in community, with their loved ones. Stories from the book will be featured in future issues of The Citizen.

“The Power of Knowing Each Other: Stories about Informal Safeguards told by BC Families” can be viewed and downloaded on the CLBC website under Individuals and Families > Safeguards. If you are interested in requesting a copy of the book, please e-mail info@communitylivingbc.ca. ■

“The Power of Knowing Each Other” is meant to inspire and stimulate people’s thinking about informal safeguards.



Celebrating accomplishment

JEFFREY LAFORTUNE JOINED FELLOW

Selkirk College grad students this past April to celebrate his accomplishments. Jeff was awarded an Honorary Diploma in Human Services, an honour bestowed on someone who has made significant contributions in their field. Jane Green, Instructor for the Classroom and Community Support Worker program at Selkirk College, and her colleagues wrote a letter to Board of Governors at the college nominating Jeff for this award.

“Jeff has been making a contribution to the program for the last eighteen years as a co-instructor, simply through his presence,” says Jane. “I am really moved that the Board of Governors of Selkirk College has honoured Jeff in this way, it makes me feel proud to be part of an institution that values and honours inclusion.”

This is the first time that Selkirk College has had an accessible stage at Grad. Cathy Lafortune, Jeff’s mom and support worker, says she was impressed with the staff at Selkirk College. “Jeff’s contributions have had ripple effects that have gone through the entire college,” says Cathy. “Angus Graeme, President of Selkirk College, called me at home to tell me that Jeff was going to receive the diploma in recognition of his significant contributions to students’ learning. And the staff at the college built an accessible stage and ensured Jeff’s needs were taken into consideration at the banquet.”

This may be one of the only programs in the province to welcome the involvement of a co-instructor who has complex and diverse needs. “Jeff just being there and inviting people into the discomfort that they sometimes feel when they meet people with complex needs is significant learning for students,” says Jane. “Jeff welcomes whatever comes his direction. He doesn’t discriminate.

He includes people and invites them to get in touch with the judgement and fear inside of themselves.”

His mother, Cathy, has served as his support worker, which has helped the students learn about the support worker role and the role of the family. Cathy learned that part of her job is to let people help them and open doors.

“When people stop to open a door for us, they are opening more than just a door, they are making a connection and going away with a good feeling and we are too. This really sums up Jeff’s job as an ambassador and educator,” says Cathy.

Both Jane and Cathy feel that the students have learned much from Jeff. Most importantly, they have learned that people can outlive their labels, that a person who doesn’t use words can still communicate articulately, that you call a person by their first name, not by their label, that Jeff’s noises do not mean he is dying, and that they can ask the questions that they never had permission to ask.

“Jeff has been a calm port in the storm of student life, because he grounds them and provides real life learning,” says Jane.

Cathy believes a lot of injustice results because people have not been exposed to people with disabilities. “This program is also a safeguard for Jeff. It is a wonderful social opportunity for him. He is very well positioned to make his contribution and meet new friends,” says Cathy.

Teri Todd, Jeff’s sister, said that he was very deserving of this award and she was thankful for a situation where her brother was not just tolerated, but celebrated. ■



Jeffrey Lafortune, with his mother Cathy, receives an Honorary Diploma in Human Services.



Selkirk College students celebrate their graduation.

Where environment and enterprise meet

COMMUNITY LIVING BC FACILITATOR DAVID PASKO'S

voice fills with enthusiasm when he talks about the Maples Discovery Garden Co-operative project. "This project meets the needs of people on so many levels," he explains.

"Not only are our CLBC participants exploring their own interests and learning horticultural skills, they are also producing organic food in a way that is healthy for the environment, making new community connections and starting to meet local market demands for their organic herbs and vegetables. All at the same time. The gardening skills these individuals are learning are already in demand by local community employers. It is a win-win situation."

Located on a quiet acreage not far from the Township of Langley, The Maples Discovery Gardens Co-Op is a non-profit cooperative whose purpose "is to encourage community groups and the community at large to participate in programs in order to advance and sustain health improvement, disease prevention and environmentally friendly activities while striving to create a healthy community by nature."

Working with The Maples Discovery Gardens Co-Op, CLBC has launched a unique project: a one-time funding initiative to build a communally supported fully equipped greenhouse. Accompanied by some paid supports and many community-based volunteers, 15 individuals supported by

CLBC, ranging in age and experience, take a hands-on role in learning how to cultivate a productive garden. Participants currently need to have the desire to take regular part in greenhouse activities, for a minimum of one to two times each week. The Maples greenhouse project creates opportunities for participants to acquire skills related to future employment, self-employment and micro-enterprise in the field of horticulture. In David Pasko's words, "Really, the possibilities are endless."

How does The Maples project work? To begin with, adults with developmental disabilities who are eligible for CLBC supports and services are given a healthy space and environment to explore their interest in gardening and horticulture. Through the use of the greenhouse space (which is equipped with electricity, water, heat, hoses and other equipment required in the growing of plants as well as specially designed wheel-chair accessible planter boxes) and mentored by community-based volunteers and a part-time on-site gardener, individuals learn about growing, cultivating and marketing organic plants, produce, herbs and flowers. They also receive ongoing training from Discovery Co-op volunteers, and support and education from different community partners. For an annual \$10 membership fee, each individual also becomes a Maples Discovery Gardens co-op member. That person receives co-op privileges, including use of co-op facilities, access to communal space, visitation for friends and families, a seat at the Co-Op meetings and a voice in the Co-op's decision-making.

A primary goal of The Maples project is to assist individuals with skill advancement and employment development. In particular, the Maples greenhouse environment is ideal for people who may want to explore self-employment or micro-enterprise opportunities. Even David Pasko, a self-professed "entrepreneur at heart," has been surprised by the range and types of business and employment opportunities already presenting themselves to the project. From invitations to be involved in local farmer's markets and local produce chains, to standing orders at larger local grocery stores for organic herbs and produce and interest from local restaurants.



Aqua bowls are among the many items created by participants in the Maples project.



Participants in the Maples greenhouse project explore their interests in gardening and horticulture.

David admits that “we have more business lined up than we can currently produce.” An on-site retail space at the Maples greenhouse facility is in the works for the future, and a Tender Loving Care (TLC) plant program is currently underway and already raising funds. The TLC program involves local nurseries and growers donating stressed or un-bought seasonal plants to The Maples. With some care and nurturing by program participants, these plants can often be rehabilitated, resold, or used for propagating new plants and product. Funds raised are put towards making the Maples greenhouse project a self-reliant and self-sustaining year round venture.

In terms of regular employment opportunities, David has already been contacted by local nurseries and landscape companies interested in hiring individuals with greenhouse training and horticulture experience. So far the community response to the project has been very positive.

The Maples greenhouse construction and set-up is now complete and running year-round, with new organic products and crops growing now. Despite the more rural setting, individual attendance and participation rates have been very good and transportation via Handi-Dart, car-pooling and paid supports has been working well. After the set-up and winter work everyone is enjoying the spring, with regular crops and frequent sales.

Free plant donations to the Maples’ TLC program, including some rare Australian trees and day lilies on a recent pickup, continue regularly. Word of mouth about the program has spread quickly and David reports that community response as a whole has been supportive.

Currently, the program supports CLBC-funded participants to take part for a period of 6 to 12 months, before a new rotation of participants is introduced. In this first phase, The Maple project is trying to provide stepping stones to valuable skills for its participants, and a healthy environment to build employment, self-employment or micro-enterprise opportunities related to horticulture. For project coordinator and CLBC facilitator David Pasko, the longer term goal is to “see the bar raised and have participants excited about employment or self employment.” He hopes that people “can be excited about employment, to be finding new skills and just to see their own potential and what they are capable of doing, and to give them the opportunities to do just that.” ■



Participants have access to a fully equipped greenhouse space.

Working hard to achieve goals

By Karen Adkin, Program Manager, SMART Options

AFTER COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL, RYAN ROSHARD OF KAMLOOPS CHOSE TO FOCUS ON HIS ABILITIES, RATHER than his hearing impairment and developmental disability, by setting three goals for himself: 1. To eventually secure full time employment; 2. To make enough money to get off of government disability assistance; 3. To obtain his drivers license, purchase a truck and pay it off.

With assistance from SMART Options, Supported Employment Services, Ryan was able to transition from school to the world of work.

Ryan's first couple of jobs were seasonal; one working in an outdoor nursery and the next painting over graffiti in partnership with the City of Kamloops. With his goals in mind he wanted more permanent employment and we worked together to apply at Costco as a lot attendant. He worked part time for a couple of years in this position. Not working as many hours as he would like, he pursued Costco management and asked to be moved into a more permanent position inside Costco.

He secured a front end assistant job. This entailed packing groceries, price checking, collecting and exchanging items for customers and general clean up of the front end area of the store. By working full time at Costco, Ryan has been able to achieve his first two goals.

Ryan says that all the staff are friendly and fun to work with. What he likes most about his job is the work hours. He works mainly from 11:00 am to 7:30 pm, five days a week. "Of course the money isn't too bad either," he adds.

Ryan's coworkers say he is hardworking, cooperative and reliable. They can ask him to do anything and the job gets done quickly and efficiently.

Ryan studied the driver's manual and obtained his driver's license a number of years ago. He paid off his first older truck, sold it, and then purchased a new 2010 GMC Canyon while also contributing annually to the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). He checked off his third goal by paying off his old truck and is now on track to achieve his new goal of paying off his new truck.

When not at work, Ryan's main hobby is working on his huge model train set. He has pretty much taken over the basement of his mother's Kamloops home creating an entire city surrounded by railways. On his days off in the summer he likes to go to Shuswap Lake to fish, swim and relax.

Through focus and hard work, Ryan has reached his goals. ■

Ryan Roshard (left) works full time at Costco as a front end assistant.



Sharing knowledge on employment

ON MAY 26, ABOUT 100 SERVICE PROVIDERS, AGENCY staff and CLBC staff gathered at the Capilano University Sportsplex for a day-long forum to share, learn and talk about inclusive employment, and new approaches to employment supports. Mary McLaughlin, a self-advocate who works with the North Vancouver CLBC office, was MC for the day. CLBC, Capilano University, self-advocates, family members, community partners and service providers made presentations about their employment initiatives. The event was organized in partnership by the CLBC North Vancouver Community Planning and Development office and Capilano University.

"I enjoyed working with CLBC to put this event together," said Kathy Moscrip, Career Access Coordinator for Capilano University. "I will support anytime we can get people together to learn from one another, particularly when it is a subject as important as inclusive employment."

There were a total of seven sessions throughout the day, ranging from CLBC's report on the progress of the Customized Employment program to resources available for activities that can help prepare a person for employment. Some of the highlights included:

Kathy Moscrip presented on the Capilano Access Work Experience programs that teach life, literacy and employment skills to adults with developmental disabilities. The programs provide a combination of in-class instruction and practical work experience. Admission requirements for the program include a motivation to work, self-management skills, and the ability to attend and participate in work experience placements independently and with little supervision from program faculty.

Barb Penner, CLBC's Employment Initiative Coordinator, shared with participants the progress CLBC has made to date on Customized Employment. Customized Employment has been testing a new approach to connecting potential employees with employers; the project was developed with feedback from families, adults, service providers and employers in 2007. Staff from the agencies involved in the project discover what an adult's interests, skills and abilities are, and then work with employers to create a job that fits the person. Training courses on Customized Employment are now available for service provider staff across the province.



Goli Khalafi, CLBC Facilitator from the North Vancouver office, took part in the forum on employment.

Gladys Duran and Barb Goode from the Empowering Self Advocates to Take Action Committee (ESATTA), a cooperative of self-advocates who develop and teach workshops on goal setting and empowerment, talked about their organization. Members of ESATTA are self-employed by making presentations of the workshop "People Planning Together" which gives self-advocates a stronger voice in community and their lives. The group has presented throughout Canada, and in the United States. "Only by working together can we get things done," said Gladys during her presentation.

WOW!clbc 2011 Award winner and BC Personal Support Network (BCPSN) staff member Paul Gauthier shared his life story with the people attending the forum. As a young man, Paul was told he would not be able to live independently. Today, he is a Paralympian, a foster parent, advocate for disabilities and a father to a growing toddler. "It's so important that we don't judge people's goals but support them," said Paul. "People's goals often change over time, but the most important thing is for people to participate and be out in community."

To find out more about CLBC's approach to Employment, please visit the CLBC website under Individuals and Families > Employment Initiative. You can also visit www.BCEmployNet.org to view a comprehensive list of service provider resources for Customized Employment. ■

Green thumbs encouraged

SERVICE PROVIDERS IN THE VICTORIA AREA WERE invited to share their environmental practices for a chance to receive \$100 to help their organization “grow greener”. The funding was passed on to service providers by the South Island Quality Service Office after being acknowledged for the training its staff took. Several submissions were received.

On March 31, Integra Support Services received the \$100 in recognition of the numerous activities they are involved in to help the environment. These steps include: recycling of materials and clothing, reducing water use, using green cleaning supplies, composting at all their facilities, using public transportation as often as possible, and installing a new server so staff can access documents remotely, which eliminates their need to drive to the office.

“This is an issue that our agency feels very passionate about,” said Al Coccola, Chief Financial Officer for Integra. “We do all the basic ‘green things’. This green spirit flows through our company and even includes our home sharing providers.”

Recently, Integra started a gardening project as part of their Good Neighbours community inclusion program. Good Neighbours helps connect adults with a range of abilities with opportunities in community. The gardening project was started to give some of the people who had fewer opportunities to connect an option to share their gifts. The funds were given to the gardening project to help get it underway.

“We’ve bought fruits and vegetables to help get the garden started, and so that people can see progress quickly,” said Joanna May, Manager of Community Inclusion for Integra. “Our plan is to use what we grow in the garden to teach people about harvesting, washing and preparing fresh produce that they’ve grown.”

There are four adults who regularly attend the gardening project for an hour a week. The garden was started a month ago at a support home that is new to Integra. The home’s garden was quite large and overgrown, and provided the perfect place to show people how to create a garden from the ground up. On the day CLBC visited, support workers and adults were working side by side under blue skies to clear weeds and plant seedlings.

“It’s been exciting to see the adults involved get into the project. The first week we had people who didn’t want to get dirt on their hands, and now they are digging out weeds,” said Joanna.

Integra’s goal for the first year of the project is to get the remainder of the grounds prepped and weeded. All the refuse from the garden is being composted, and will be used to fertilize the new beds, helping make the project environmentally friendly and cost effective. Joanna hopes to grow more food and their own seedlings next year.

To find out more about ways that CLBC is going green, please visit the CLBC website under About > Go Green. ■



(left to right) Kyle Green, Shawna DeCosta, Randy Stancin, Kaily Robinson, Ian Metheral, Chris Anderson, BJ Ward and Ausi Elliot-Morris take part in a gardening project as part of Integra’s Good Neighbours program.

A legend in the community

“I am not doing this work alone. There are many self-advocates working to change the public’s opinion of people with developmental disabilities.”

- Barb Goode

BARB GOODE HAS BEEN A SELF-ADVOCATE SINCE THE 1970S. SHE WAS ONE OF the earliest innovators and change agents in “community organizing” among people with disabilities. Her work has made significant impacts in the lives of people with developmental disabilities living in Canada. In 1986, Barb served as the chair person of a committee in the landmark *E. (Mrs.) v Eve* Case, which helped Eve and other people with developmental disabilities win the right to make their own medical decisions. In 1992, she became the first Canadian with a disability to speak at the UN General Assembly.

“There have been roadblocks along the way, but it is the people that I work alongside that make self-advocacy work rewarding,” says Barb. “I am not doing this work alone. There are many self-advocates working to change the public’s opinion of people with developmental disabilities.”

Barb has been invited to several local, provincial, national and international conferences to participate or speak about her own life experiences. She currently shares her expertise with Community Living BC by supporting other self-advocates, facilitating workshops, advising on language in booklets, sitting on the Simon Fraser Community Council, and representing the Start with Hi initiative (www.startwithhi.ca) promoting safe, inclusive communities.

“I just don’t want kids or parents to forget the history of people with developmental disabilities,” says Barb. “I feel that people need to tell their stories and have a voice.”

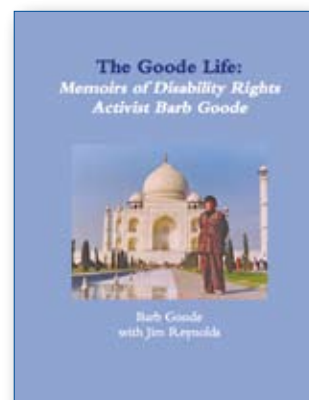
Now Barb can add author to her list of achievements, she recently published her biography, “The Goode Life: Memoirs of Disability Rights Activist Barb Goode”. She says the book has something for everybody - inspiring stories about her life, quotes, photos and even recipes.

On May 9, members of the community dropped in to the Heritage Hall in Vancouver to join Barb for the official launch of her book at a special reception hosted by Spectrum Press, the book’s publisher. Barb shared smiles and stories with the many attendees, and signed several copies of her book. She also treated those gathered to a short reading from the book.

For more information about Barb’s book, including information on how to order a copy, please call Judy at Spectrum Press at 604-323-1433. ■



Barb Goode reads a passage from her book, “The Goode Life: Memoirs of Disability Rights Activist Barb Goode” (pictured below).



You asked us: Staying safe online

CLBC's "You Asked Us" COLUMN

features CLBC staff answering your questions about CLBC supports, services and initiatives. This month, Lisa Porcellato, Social Media Advisor for CLBC, who is working with Policy and Program Development's Safeguards Initiative, answers your questions about staying safe online.

Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter provide a welcome opportunity for people to make friends, meet people with similar interests and engage in community activities regardless of geographic location. CLBC is committed to providing the skills, knowledge and understanding to help the individuals we support and their family members stay safe online.

1. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT NOT TO SHARE YOUR PASSWORD WITH PEOPLE?

Your password is the door to your private life. Sharing your password is like giving away the keys to your house. Keeping your password private means that you are in control of what you share on sites. If people have your password they can go onto your Facebook page and post things that are not said by you but they can also have access to other online places that could put you in harm's way.

2. WHAT IS A "CHECKER FRIEND" AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

A checker friend is someone you trust who will make sure you are safe online. They should be your friend on Facebook or follow you on Twitter so they can make sure that you are not sharing information with someone who may cause you harm or who makes your checker friend feel uncomfortable. It's all about being safe!

Sometimes we need someone else to keep an eye on things to make sure we are being safe online.

3. SHOULD YOU SAY 'YES' TO EVERY FRIEND REQUEST YOU GET?

We all know it's hard to say 'no' to someone's face. I think we bring that fear into our online lives. Un-following someone or not accepting a friend request doesn't automatically mean, "I don't like you," it simply means that you are in control of your online life. If you don't know someone who sends you a friend request, then they are not a friend.

4. WHAT THINGS ARE TOO PRIVATE TO POST ONLINE?

Don't share your home or work address, your phone numbers and your credit card numbers. Discuss with others what you want to keep private - even a trusted friend may accidentally share your information. Important medical information and your physical health are private - this is not a good thing to share with others.

5. WHAT DO YOU DO TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T LET BEING ON THE COMPUTER TAKE OVER YOUR LIFE?

I love being on the Internet but I also love to hang out with my friends and family.

I make sure that I don't get caught up with being online by staying focused on what I am supposed to be doing on the computer.

When I am done, I turn the computer off. There is nothing like being with friends and family sharing good food and laughing together. You sure can't do that on the computer!



CLBC will launch icanbesafeonline.com on June 30, 2011.

6. HOW IS CLBC HELPING PEOPLE TO BE SAFE ONLINE?

On June 30, 2011, CLBC will be launching icanbesafeonline.com, a fun and easy-to-use website that educates adults with developmental disabilities and their families, about how to stay safe when using the Internet. This is the only site of its kind in Canada and I am really excited about it!

CLBC recognizes adults with developmental disabilities and their families want to enjoy the Internet and take full advantage of what it has to offer. We have created icanbesafeonline.com to encourage people to stay in control and to understand what to do if they feel at risk. The website will feature online safety tips, videos, quizzes and a blog. There will also be a section specifically for families and service providers so they can learn the information they need to know to help people with developmental disabilities be as safe as they can be when they are online. ■

Leading the conversation

THE BC SELF ADVOCACY FOUNDATION (BCSAF) IS PROUD TO LAUNCH THE

“No More Barriers” blog. The blog is a way to share stories online and get feedback from readers.

On March 11, 2010 the Canadian government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Since that time, BCSAF has been exploring ways to raise awareness about our human rights and start a conversation about making them real for everyone. The No More Barriers blog is a way of getting this started.

It is very important that people with developmental disabilities are leading the conversation as the experts in their own lives. So over the next year you will get to know three amazing self-advocate leaders. Each will be sharing their life lessons and challenging you to look at the world a little bit differently. BCSAF will also be featuring a guest blog writer once a month. If you are interested in being a guest writer, you can contact the BCSAF at 604-777-9100.

Here is a sneak peak into the world of the three writers:

David Johnston lives in Dawson Creek and is passionate about the rights of people with disabilities. David is also a talented chef that enjoys preparing dishes from around the world.

Sheenagh Morrison is from Victoria and enjoys traveling. Sheenagh loves her job at Beacon Hill Children's Farm delivering baby goats. She is much respected for all her work in the community.

Lyle Lexier lives in Vancouver and is interested in foreign languages, music and dinosaurs. He speaks Hebrew, French, Spanish and German. Lyle loves classical music and opera and is a huge fan of the Vancouver Canucks.

We believe we all hold a piece of our story and have a responsibility to write the next chapter together. Thank you for joining the conversation.

To learn more about the BC Self Advocacy Foundation and read the No More Barrier blog, please visit www.bcsaf.org or join them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bcsselfadvocacy. ■



Lyle Lexier, Sheenagh Morrison and David Johnston will be sharing their stories on the No More Barriers blog.

Sharing stories online



CLBC Board Chair Denise Turner listens as Vidyut Aklujkar shares her experiences of raising her daughter Rasika.

SIX PARENTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL disabilities gathered in Vancouver to share their individual stories of lived experience with CLBC Board Chair Denise Turner and CLBC Board Members Mark Duncan, Don Rowlatt and Arn Van Iersel.

Parents Vidyut Aklujkar, Carol Antoine, Maria Glaze, Russ Keil, Annette Pope, and Arlene Zuckernick from Victoria shared accounts of their family experiences.

This meeting provided an opportunity for members of the CLBC Board to hear about these family members' different and ongoing life journeys with their adult sons and daughters with developmental disabilities.

Video clips from this meeting can now be viewed on CLBC's Youtube page by visiting www.youtube.com/user/communitylivingbc.

Links to each of the video clips are also available on the CLBC website under What's New > Media Room. ■

CONTACT US

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Send story submissions and feedback to:
editor@communitylivingbc.ca.

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To receive the electronic or paper version of *The Citizen*, please visit www.communitylivingbc.ca and go to What's New > Newsletter > Subscribe.

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Please 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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