



COMMUNITYLIVINGREPORT



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Message from the Chair

By Lois
Hollstedt

The community living movement is celebrating its 50th year as an organized force for change in our province. The leadership by families and self advocates towards full participation of people with developmental disabilities in our society has been profound. The creation of CLBC just over one hundred days ago is the most recent outcome of this work, and we must ensure that the community continues to be fully engaged.

One example of this is the work we're doing around strategic planning, that will result in a three year plan outlining our goals and priorities toward transforming the service delivery system. The process started with four different groups of people representing self advocates, families and service providers, as well as staff and our Board. Each group developed a separate list of goals that were integrated into one document. A group of twenty four people, again with representation from each group, reviewed the documents and created a draft

plan. The draft will now be taken to ten communities and representatives will review the plan and provide input. The plan will also be posted on our web site for feedback. The final draft will be debated by the Board before approval and will be used to allocate resources to transform the CLBC system.

In future years, community councils and the provincial advisory committee will help provide input into the plan as we review it each year.

On a policy level, the two Transformation Working Groups, one for Adults and the other for Children's issues, have been working with our staff to ensure similar involvement as we develop the policies to guide our ways of work.

A majority of our Board members are self advocates and family members. Their voices are ensuring that our work truly reflects the needs of individuals and families to deliver the kinds of service, communication, response time and accountability they deserve.

Change is often difficult. But with the involvement of as many people as time, resources and process will allow, we believe we will be successful in achieving our vision of a good life in welcoming communities for all people with developmental disabilities.

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INSIDE VOICE

Penny Soderena is a strong, life-long self advocate for people with developmental disabilities. She currently lives in Prince George.

Penny was recently in Vancouver to participate in the strategic planning session for CLBC, along with families, board members, staff and service providers. She reports, "this is very important work for CLBC and I am proud I was asked to be here." Penny's participation in this session is just the latest in her extensive involvement in advocacy for people with developmental disabilities.

Penny was born in Port Arthur, Ontario, where she lived with her parents and brother until 1972. The family then moved to BC and Penny went on to graduate from Grade 10, placing on the honour roll several times.

But even in school Penny felt discrimination. "Even other kids with disabilities could make you feel bad," she remembers. "I have the scars to show, both inside and out, that everybody has prejudice."

Those scars have made Penny more determined that people with developmental disabilities should be able to live and work with dignity and respect.

For many years, Penny earned money through a variety of means, such as babysitting, house sitting and fundraising. But it wasn't until she began working with AiMHi in 2001 that she felt she finally had a real job.

At AiMHi in Prince George, Penny is now the Self Advocate Peer Advisor and also helps run the Snack Shop. "I love helping other people with developmental disabilities find their way through difficult situations, and I learn things myself!"

Penny was also involved with the BCACL caucus and helped establish the Self Advocate's Philosophy, Objectives and Ethical Code of Conduct. She reminds everyone of the first four lines of the philosophy: "You have rights; You have feelings; You have things you need; You are just like anyone else."

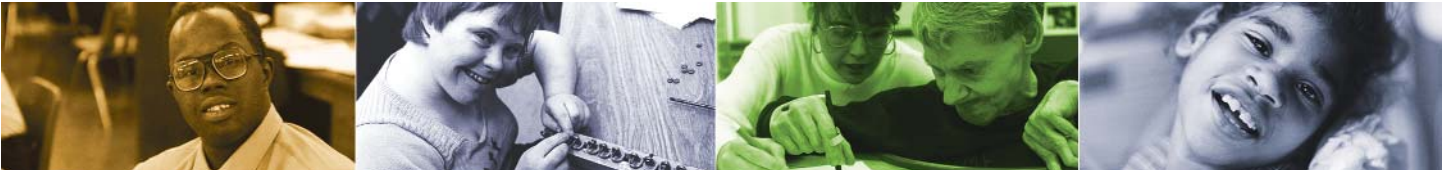
She is pleased to be working through AiMHi's Work Options program, which took the place of the agency's Sheltered Workshop service, and helps individuals find employment in such areas as gardening and landscaping, flyer delivery and document shredding. "It's great that people with developmental disabilities have real jobs where they can feel good about what they do," she says.

Penny has also been on the board of AiMHi, the BC Association for Community Living and the Canadian Association for Community Living, where she was Chair of the Self Advocate Advisory Committee to the board. While working on various boards, she has travelled extensively, including to Ottawa and twice to South America.

Penny is an active member of her church and choir, and her love of singing is well known to everyone who has met her. Penny wants to remind everyone through the lyrics to her favourite song (The Rose) that:

*Some say love it is a hunger
an endless aching need
I say love it is a flower
and you its only seed.*

*It's the heart afraid of breaking
that never learns to dance
It's the dream afraid of waking
that never takes the chance
It's the one who won't be taken
who cannot seem to give
And the soul afraid of dying that never
learns to live.*



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EVENT REFLECTION

A Celebration of Community Living Month at Science World in Vancouver

On Friday, October 21st, the Vancouver CLBC office hosted a wonderful event for all community living children, adults and their families at Science World, Telus World of Science in downtown Vancouver.

Five community agencies - Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living, Spectrum Society for Community Living, the Developmental Disabilities



Halloween face painting at Science World



Association, Vancouver Resource Society and Family Services of Greater Vancouver - also helped out by providing their time and energy for this activity.

About one hundred individuals took advantage of the free admission, graciously donated by Science World, and also enjoyed refreshments, face painting and arts and crafts.

The local staff in conjunction with local agencies worked extremely hard to put this wonderful event together and enjoyed themselves thoroughly in the process!

Community Living Month wrap-up

Many successful events have taken place during October, proclaimed as Community Living Month, including a Community Living Celebration hosted by the Richmond Society of Community Living and CLBC staff on October 16th. This event featured games, balloons and face painting throughout the day with speeches from the mayor and a cake at noon.

On October 6th and 7th, the Burnaby Mainstream

Association for Proactive Community Living hosted an impressive art show and auction featuring the work of over one hundred artists with developmental disabilities from across British Columbia. During the auction several larger mosaics were sold to the public.

And it was a Night of Stars on September 30th as the Imposter's Revue took centre stage with a half hour show for over three hundred people. In colorful costumes, singers and dancers with developmental disabilities impersonated rock stars and musicians, providing lively entertainment for all. 3



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Community Living Month wrap-up

continued

Get out there and enjoy the final events of Community Living Month!

Castelgar: Oct.29.

Halloween Party at 2224 - 6th Avenue. 12pm to 5pm

Maple Ridge: Oct.30.

Halloween Howl golf tournament, dinner and dance.

1pm tee off time, dinner at 8:30. At Maple Ridge Golf Course. Cost is \$30.

Nanaimo: Art Show - public gallery, Fitzwilliam street.

Prince George: Oct.29 - Office Halloween Open House.

Oct. 30 - Prince George Caucus Halloween Dance.

Vancouver/North Shore: Oct.26 to Nov.22.

This is what Community Means to Me storytelling project. Contact the North Shore Association for the Mentally Handicapped (604) 984-9321.

A challenge to reach the top

BC group climbs Mt. Kilimanjaro



On February 7, 2006, twenty people with developmental disabilities and their support climbers will leave our grey Vancouver winter behind, heading for Tanzania, Africa on a journey to change lives, raise dollars and increase public awareness of the challenges facing people with developmental disabilities and their families.

They are self advocates, support workers, program coordinators, administrators and care givers, and over nine days the group will experience rain forest, heath and moor land, a highland desert and finally the glacier that caps the mountain. Guided by Berg Adventures and local guides, the climbers will tackle steep and rocky terrain, exhaustion, unpredictable weather and only half as much oxygen as their bodies are used to.

Tanja Sullivan will be making the climb with her support worker, Susan Janetti. Tanja says, "I have a lot of training and it's been hard work but I have never climbed a mountain before. I am learning to focus so I can make it." She wants to make new friends on this journey, improve her public speaking skills and build self-confidence.

Each climber has a fundraising goal of \$1 per foot – \$19,341 per climber – with a group total of \$500,000. Provincially, funds raised will support advocacy for children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their families to ensure justice, rights and new opportunities. Locally, the funds will ensure the continuation of programs and support services available.

Susan Janetti grew up in Africa and loves the continent. "The best part of it all is the opportunity to see the positive changes in Tanja's life, to watch her personal growth, to witness her self-confidence blossom and to hear people at work and her family marvel at her progress."

Laney Bryenton, Executive Director of the BC Association for Community Living, will join the climb. She says, "I hope I will be able to face this challenge with the same grace and courage that I see demonstrated daily by the people we serve and support."

For more information, or to donate, please call the BCACL at 604-875-1119 or visit www.bcACL.org.



Making CLBC community councils work

Community Councils will be an important way for individuals, families, service providers and the community to have a strong voice in guiding CLBC's priorities and directions. So far, people have been quite clear on the general direction they want the Councils to take. The next step is to gather input on how to implement the Councils.

To move things forward we've drafted a position paper that explains the process so far, and how we plan to move ahead in creating and supporting CLBC Community Councils. The paper also asks questions about specific aspects of implementation.

We want to hear what you think about how the Councils should work, and get your ideas about how best to access the strengths of

your community. Once we've reviewed all the feedback, recommendations will be made to the CLBC Board. We plan to do an initial evaluation of the Councils after a year, so adjustments can be made as we go along.

The consultation paper will be released to the public in early November 2005 and will be open for your feedback during November and early December 2005. You can read the paper on our web site at:

www.communitylivingbc.ca or you can call us at 604-660-2522 or toll free 1-877-660-2522 and we will send you a copy by mail or fax. We will also ensure that all CLBC offices throughout the province have copies of the paper to be picked up in person. The paper copies will be available after November 14, 2005 in our local offices.

Please take the time to read this important paper and provide us with your thoughts.

Health and safety policies posted

In the coming weeks and months, we will be posting CLBC policies on our website, to ensure that the community has access to these important pieces of work.

The first will be policy around the Health and Safety Standards Reviews, which will assist in ensuring that the safety, security and well-being of individuals supported by CLBC continues to be the primary focus during this period of transition and transformation.

CLBC is committed to establishing a complete

safeguards framework that incorporates informal and formal methods to support individuals and their families. The framework will be further developed with the input and advice of individuals, families and community partners as we move towards a new approach to the delivery of supports and services. The introduction of the Health and Safety Standards policy and procedures is one element of this larger process and is intended to provide continuity and consistency in addressing the immediate health and safety requirements of individuals.

You can view this policy at www.communitylivingbc.ca.



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The CLBC call centre: up and running

Our call centre has been fully staffed and operational since July 1st. The calls have ranged from 'who is my worker?' to 'what services does CLBC provide?' and have given us a good picture of what is on people's minds. We will continue to review the calls we're receiving with a view to improving service quality. Queries about service delivery or eligibility should continue to be directed to your local office.

You can reach our call centre between 10am and 6pm, Monday through Friday.

I live in Enderby - where is the closest CLBC office?

How do I apply for services for my son?

My neighbor has a developmental disability, but she has no family or friends. Who can I call for information on services for her?

**CLBC Call Centre: 604-660-CLBC
or toll free: 1-877-660-2522**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We want to hear what you think about current issues or upcoming events in your community!

If you would like to share information with others around the province, send us your comments in 250 words or less. Please include a valid email address and phone number with your comments. We may edit letters for reasons of space or clarity.

The newsletter reserves the right to publish your letter, unless it is labelled 'not for publication.'

Please email your letter to:

info@communitylivingbc.ca

Or mail it to:

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c/o the Editorial Board
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CONTACT US

We are updating our website regularly. You can find all the latest information about Community Living British Columbia at:

www.communitylivingbc.ca

Receive Our Newsletter: To be included in an email distribution list to receive our newsletter, or if you have feedback on our current newsletter, please email us at: newsletter@communitylivingbc.ca

If you or someone you know would prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, contact our call centre at 604-660-CLBC (toll free: 1-877-660-2522), or write to us at the address below.

Please send feedback and story suggestions to:

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