



# COMMUNITYLIVINGREPORT



COMMUNITY LIVING  
BRITISH COLUMBIA



## Message from the Chair

By Lois Hollstedt

On February 21, 2006, CLBC delivered its second three-year Service Plan for 2006/07 through 2008/09. The full plan is available on our website: [www.communitylivingbc.ca/transformation.htm](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/transformation.htm)

The plan is based on the budget provided by the provincial government and we now have an additional \$111 million over three years for adult services.

The basis for the plan is our new individual approach that we are implementing across BC. Person centred service planning, choice and innovation in the development of supports and services are key elements of future services. CLBC believes that increasing choices

beyond current supports and services is necessary for individuals and families to live full lives.

Service plans are based on the goals developed through our Strategic Plan and must fit within the resources available to us. The plan contains target numbers for new people receiving services in each of the next three years, as well as targets for measuring other goals, such as improved communication. The Board of CLBC, along with government and the public, will use these targets to measure our success.

Matching service delivery to the dollars available will continue to be a challenge. But as we develop indicators of what we can achieve with those dollars, we can track our success and explain our needs. And we will be able to tell our story - the story of individuals and families across BC.

Sincerely,

**Lois Hollstedt,**  
**Chair of Community Living BC**

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## Finding Meaningful Employment

By Penny Soderena

This is my story about employment. When I was young I had a

dream to run my own daycare in my home. The first thing was to do some baby sitting - this happened when I was a pre-teen. My phone rang and friends that I know who had kids called me up and asked 'what are you doing' *continued*

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Penny Soderena

## Meaningful Employment *continued*

tonight?' This was always on Saturday night. Some week days even if their mom and dad went for a weekend trip I sat for them, plus I was a den sitter and had many more little jobs like church

baby sitting, or meeting where kids came and I played with them. I was even called super sitter. I thought wow this is for me; I can do this. The next step was going to college.

When I went to sign up for my class there was a fee to pay so I went to my employment worker and said I want to attend this class and I needed money to go in this class. When I went to the ministry, the person I wanted to see was going on a trip, so I was told to come back later. I only had a few days to have this money in. Later I asked for more time to get the money. I met my minister's wife who works in the college and she asked me how I am. I said not too good. Why, she asked? Today is the day that I had to bring in the money for my daycare class and the person that was going to see me is still not back yet. To make a long story short she gave me the money. I paid it. This was \$100 for a down payment. I said I will pay you back, she said that's ok. At the same time a friend said to me that this class is not for me it is too hard and where will I get the money and this will give you stress.

I told him that we all get stress and money is hard to hold on to. The day I went to class the teacher asked a question. There were 20 ladies in the class and out of the 20 I spoke up and answered the question, the teacher said yes you are right. I thought wow who said I cannot do this? I thought where is that guy that said I could

not do this? He should be here today.

I did take first aid class and passed it, but no day care tryouts for me. I did not get to go on the practicum assignments - I asked and the teacher said I did not need to go. This did not make sense to me. There I was and all other 19 of them went out in daycare practicums. I stayed home for the two weeks and they went out. I was not very happy about this; I felt that I could not do anything about this. I did tell them that the ministry paid my class after all. This ended my day care dream...

I did do babysitting until I was 43, which I really enjoyed. They called me "Super Sitter." I still have the t-shirt from Disneyland that one young girl I babysat bought me with her allowance.

I am working now as a Self Advocate Peer Advisor for Prince George Association for Community Living (AiMHi). My job at AiMHi all started when they put out a notice about a job for a self advocate peer advisor. When the date came near myself and others went to see Bill and Melinda. We had to tell them what we thought a self advocate peer advisor does? This was for only 2 minutes, I gave them each a paper of what I was about to say.

I am pleased to say that on June 7, 2000 I was employed at AiMHi and this year it will be 5 years working for them. I really like what I do, I am happy that dreams can come true. (P.S. I am getting married in August, 2007!) We need to have open doors to employment so other self advocates can see their dream come true. Let's see more employment doors open and we can show you what all self advocates can do. Let us work with you!

By Penny Soderena  
Self Advocate Peer Advisor  
AiMHi, Prince George



# COMMUNITYLIVINGREPORT

The Newsletter for Community Living BC

## Imagine....

*A million years it seems  
Have gone by since we shared  
our dreams  
But I'll hold you again  
There'll be no blue memories then.*

Imagine meeting the person of your dreams - someone to share your hopes and your life. You begin the journey of getting to know one another, you become engaged and you start planning your future.

Now imagine that someone else in your life, say a doctor or a teacher, tells you that 'no, I'm sorry, but this future you are dreaming about cannot happen. You will have to go through your life without this partner.'

Just imagine....

Can't happen? Well, 35 years ago that is exactly what happened to Annie Clemson and Bob Geddes.

Annie and Bob met at Woodlands when both were in their teens. At one of the dances there, Bob first asked Annie if she'd like to dance and then quickly asked if she'd like a boyfriend! According to Bob, Annie readily agreed to take him up on that offer.

As often happens with teenagers, the young couple drifted apart, but met again in Abbotsford some years later when Bob was residing in a private residence and Annie was in a group home.

They quickly picked up where they'd left off - and then some! Before long, Bob had asked Annie to marry him and had bought her a beautiful engagement ring. They started planning their wedding and their life together.

About this time, a sad turn of events meant that



Bob and Annie were once again parted - this time for almost 30 years. Bob was sure they'd never see each other again.

Fast forward to 1999; Annie was living in Abbotsford. According to her friends there, she never stopped talking about a fiancé named Bob, and pretty soon her support worker thought they should follow up on these stories. Thanks to some intrepid detective work by this guardian angel, they were able to locate Bob who was living in White Rock.

It didn't take Bob long to make up for lost time. He took Annie out for dinner and asked her if she was still willing to take that big jump? Annie replied immediately and absolutely "yes." And that's when things moved into high gear.

On December 16, 2005, Annie and Bob finally said "I do" in a beautiful ceremony at the Evangelical Free Church in Abbotsford. About 150 people shared this happy event with them, officiated by Andy McPherson, with Annie attended by her four roommates from Evergreen.

For her vows, Annie sang "My Happiness" to Bob and brought many guests to tears. The lyrics are reflective of their love - never lost, but made more difficult by barriers encountered along the way.

*continued*

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## Imagine...

*continued*

Annie received a traditional wedding ring from Bob but, because he is unable to wear jewellery, Annie decided on a pocket watch that she had engraved "with love from Annie - December 16, 2005."

Annie unfortunately lost her dear sister, Betty, last summer, but Bob has promised Annie that she'll never be alone. Through the efforts of staff at Mennonite Central Committee Supportive Care Services Society, Bob has moved from the long-term care facility he was in, and the couple is now living together at the Evergreen facility in Abbotsford.

We all wish them many happy days together.

### **My Happiness**

*Evening shadows make me blue  
When each weary day is through  
How I long to be with you, my happiness  
  
Every day I reminisce  
Dreaming of your tender kiss  
Always thinking how I miss my happiness*



*A million years it seems  
Have gone by since we shared our dreams  
But I'll hold you again  
There'll be no blue memories then*

*Whether skies are gray or blue  
Any place on earth will do  
Just as long as I'm with you, my happiness*

*Whether skies are gray or blue  
Any place on earth will do  
Just as long as I'm with you, my happiness.*

Words by Betty Peterson and music by Borney Bergantine.

## **CONTEST: Name that Newsletter** *CLBC Needs You!*

Our newsletter is now into its second year and is ready for a new name. But we need your help and your ideas.

Your creative mind could help us find a new name, and the winning entry will be

rewarded with exciting prizes!

**Submit your suggestions by April 30th.**

**Phone: 604-660-5011**

**Email: [info@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:info@communitylivingbc.ca)**

**Fax: 604-660-5035**

Put your thinking caps on and stay tuned for more information on the great prizes you could win...



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## Climb for Community Living

*Mt. Kilimanjaro, February 2006*

While the rest of us were watching our Olympic athletes in Turin, the really big sporting news this winter took place on Mount Kilimanjaro on the east coast of Africa and involved members of the developmental disabilities community from our own back yard!

19 people with developmental disabilities and 24 support climbers from BC arrived in Tanzania on February 8, and began their remarkable journey to raise public awareness about the challenges facing people with developmental disabilities and their families, and to celebrate the accomplishments of many years of advocacy.

Kilimanjaro is an extinct volcano; one of the most massive in the world. It towers 19,341 feet above the plains. On February 16 and 17, forty three members of Team BCACL reached the peak.

Guided by Berg Adventures and local guides, the climbers tackled steep and rocky terrain, exhaustion, unpredictable weather and only half as much oxygen as their bodies are used to. And that only happened when they reached the mountain itself.

"We are very proud of every member of this expedition team for their individual successes," said John Kehler, President, BCACL Board of Directors. "This initiative presented many wonderful learning oppor-

tunities for our climbers that they took on with the same determination, commitment and purpose they use every day of their lives. We are forever grateful to the enormous outpouring of support we received from the community at large. This is what community living is all about - people working together, communities where everyone belongs and individuals achieving personal dreams."

The team had an extraordinary success rate. On February 17, after spending seven days of hiking through rainforest, moor land and high altitudes, 30 climbers reached the summit at 19,341 feet. Ten climbers reached Stella Point at 19,000 feet,



including Brock Metcalf and his team from the North Shore Disability Resource Centre, making Brock a world record holder as the first person to reach those heights in a Trailrider©.

To get there, each climber had a fundraising goal of \$1 per foot – \$19,341 per climber – with an ambitious group goal of \$500,000. By February, the combined total was an outstanding \$342,000! 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.

You can see more pictures and read and listen to their adventure at the BCACL web site at [www.bcacl.org/index.cfm?act=main&call=639769B9](http://www.bcacl.org/index.cfm?act=main&call=639769B9) Fundraising also continues on their site, or you can call 604-875-1119.

***Congratulations to everyone on the Kilimanjaro Climb Team from your friends at CLBC! Thanks for sharing a once-in-a-lifetime adventure with us.***



## Another Commitment to Community Input

The CLBC Board of Directors is very excited to announce that they recently approved the creation of a ten member Advisory Committee that will be made up of five self advocates and five family members. The Advisory Committee, which will be established by July 1, 2006, will provide the Board with a provincial point of view including:

- ◆ Gathering information and providing feedback on the level of satisfaction that individuals, families, service providers and communities have with CLBC's services.
- ◆ Assessing the effectiveness of CLBC's services, using CLBC's Three Year Service Plan and Three Year Strategic Plan as guides.
- ◆ Making recommendations that will enhance quality of life for those served by CLBC.
- ◆ Exploring long range issues that may impact on CLBC and recommending solutions.

Each of CLBC's nine Quality Service areas will be represented on the Committee, and there will be at least one Aboriginal member. Members will be selected based upon their knowledge and understanding of community living services, the local and provincial issues facing people with disabilities and their families, and a sound understanding of CLBC's vision and service delivery approach. The Board will make appointments that encourage language and cultural diversity. Members must be willing to serve a three year term.

The Committee will meet four times a year, with additional communications as needed. A Board

member, who serves as a liaison to the Board, and CLBC's Director of Strategic Planning, will attend the quarterly meetings as unofficial members. The Board liaison will be accessible to both co-chairs as needed; CLBC's Director of Strategic Planning will act as the Committee's link on policy and practice issues.

While the work of the Advisory Committee and the Community Councils will be linked, each will have a different focus. The Advisory Committee will look at issues from a provincial perspective, for example, how responding to the needs of individuals with challenging behaviors can be integrated effectively on a province wide basis. The 17 Community Councils, on the other hand, will provide feedback to CLBC management in the Community Living Centre areas on the operation and impact of local service delivery on individuals, families and providers.

The relationship between the Advisory Committee and Community Councils will be informal. Committee members will communicate with Community Councils in their Quality Service area on issues relevant to the Advisory Committee's work and share information as needed.

A one day conference will be hosted each year by CLBC to promote collaboration between the Advisory Committee and local Councils. This will enable members of both groups to discuss key issues with the CLBC Board of Directors.

Information will be posted to CLBC's website as implementation details are worked out during the coming months.

If you have questions about any of these details, please contact Brian Salisbury, CLBC's Director of Strategic Planning, by phone: 604-660-5021 or email: [Brian.Salisbury@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Brian.Salisbury@gov.bc.ca).





## CLBC's Transformation Update:

A new feature starting this month is what we're calling our 'Transformation Update.' We'd like to make this a monthly feature of the newsletter that will help keep you informed about the different initiatives happening in and around CLBC. Look back here every month for up-to-the-minute information.

### Community Councils:

Within the next two months we will be developing guidelines, terms of reference and implementation plans with measurable objectives. We will inform you of our progress through this newsletter and the CLBC website. In addition, we will be defining the nomination process for interested individuals and will ensure everyone is notified once the call for nominees is set to go out in your community. This will be supported by a communications strategy that will ensure broad promotion of our search to assist in the best Community Council memberships possible.

### Regional Progress:

CLBC will be moving their headquarters at the end of March. The new office will be located at:

7th Floor  
1200 West 73rd Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6P 6G5  
Main switchboard: (604) 664-0101  
Toll free number remains the same:  
1-877-660-2522.

**In January, the South Island CLBC offices began moving into their new roles.**

To provide community members with an opportunity to learn more about the new model of service, how services will be

provided in these communities, and the transfer of services to MCFD, public meetings have been scheduled in the coming weeks. There is limited seating so be sure to pre-register.

**Please call (250) 952-4203 after March 6th to register.**

#### March 14: Victoria

1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Craigflower Room, Esquimalt Parks  
527 Fraser Street

#### March 22: Victoria

from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
Craigflower Room, Esquimalt Parks  
527 Fraser Street

#### March 29: Victoria

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Juan De Fuca Recreation Centre  
1767 Island Highway

**And February has seen the North Region's offices embark on their transformation.**

### Children's Services:

Work is underway to begin the process of moving services for children with special needs back to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Check the CLBC website in the next few weeks for updates and information.



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## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS:

*We are looking for creative, energetic individuals to assist with our newsletter editorial board*

Calling all family members, self-advocates, and service providers for individuals with developmental disabilities...!

CLBC is looking for individuals from across BC to volunteer for our newsletter editorial board. **We need your help** to make sure our newsletter is current, interesting, cre-

ative, connected and responsive to issues in the community.

This time commitment will be minimal; once a month by phone, you will give us your opinion on various editorial issues related to the upcoming newsletter. We will also ask you to contribute your own articles from time to time.

No experience is necessary and no travel is required.

If you are interested, please contact Valerie Richmond, (604) 660-5011, or [valerie.richmond@gov.bc.ca](mailto:valerie.richmond@gov.bc.ca).

## 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](mailto:info@communitylivingbc.ca)

Or mail it to:  
Community Living British Columbia  
c/o the Editorial Board  
Suite 101, 3705 Willingdon Avenue  
Burnaby, BC. V5G 3H3

## CONTACT US

You can find all the latest information on our website: [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca)

**Receive Our Newsletter:** To be included in an email distribution list, or if you have feedback on our current newsletter, please email us at: [newsletter@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:newsletter@communitylivingbc.ca)

If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, contact our call centre or write to us.

### CLBC Call Centre

Hours: 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday.  
Ph: **604-660-CLBC** (toll free: **1-877-660-2522**)

**Please send feedback and story suggestions to:**

**Community Living British Columbia**  
Suite 101, 3705 Willingdon Avenue  
Burnaby, BC. V5G 3H3  
Email: [info@communitylivingbc.ca](mailto:info@communitylivingbc.ca)