



Message from the Board Chair, Chris Ingles

On September 22nd Nelson CARES Society held its 37th Annual General Meeting. As in previous years, this is an opportunity for people to gather in strength to reinforce our vision and our values by both listening and talking about our successes and indeed our challenges. Our vision speaks to a healthy and inclusive community where complete respect for all individuals is an ordinary, everyday occurrence. Never losing sight of our vision means we must adhere to our values - Equality, Respect, Collaboration, Diversity, Transparency, Accountability, Integrity without compromise. While these values carry an equal amount of importance, it seems that in these particularly challenging times inequality is very much on people's minds.

Through the direction of the Executive Director and the program managers, the work carried-out by Nelson CARES Society staff is helping to close the inequality gap and build a more inclusive community by removing barriers to entry. As a result of the programs and services we offer and the way they are delivered, we are building a high level of trust and which is both evident to direct users and others living in our community. We become advocates for change.....it's already in us because of our common humanity. Our challenge is to quietly and systematically reach out to "community minded individuals" and convey that the work carried-out through Nelson CARES Society makes us all better for it. Creating this awareness enables potential donors to be more informed about the work we do. Slowly but surely we see the inequality gap narrowing through the generous support of others and enabling us to build on the essential programs and services we provide. Sound fiscal management is evident within the operations of the society. However, building on our reserves will continue to be an ongoing part of the society's culture. We must hold on to the belief that once we all benefit as a community it signifies that we are embracing those who "need a helping hand".

On a personal level, my involvement in the community started when I first arrived in Nelson just over three years ago. After a long career in the financial services sector it seemed rather natural that I would confine my interests to those involving "dollars and cents" and perhaps compiling stats. This worked for a while until I volunteered at a Community Connect Day event and this shift in direction changed my life forever. My direct involvement with Nelson CARES Society commenced in March 2011 and it has become an important and integral part of my life. The work carried-out by all those involved with Nelson CARES Society is making a tremendous difference in the community. It may seem in these challenging times that the "finish line is never in sight" when it comes to building a socially just society, however, in our own individual way we are making a huge difference. Let's never lose sight of that.

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A Happy New Year to all Staff, Board and Society Members of Nelson CARES Society and your families.

Please note: *In an effort to minimize our impact on the environment, we would be pleased to send you future quarterly newsletters via email. Please email info@nelsoncares.ca to let us know.*

Message from Nelson CARES Executive Director....

As some of you will remember I held the position of Executive Director of Nelson CARES Society from 2006 - 2008. During that period we went through many changes. The organization was shifting to an integrated administrative model and we were facing the CARF accreditation process. It was a transformative time for Nelson CARES and as a team we began to build the foundation of a strong and vibrant organization.

Almost four years later I am witnessing, first-hand, the positive results of our common commitment to client focused value based quality service. It is a genuine pleasure to be back in Nelson working with all of you again. It is a rare experience in life to have a *real* second chance!

I am looking forward to many years of success ahead and working in partnership with all the staff, Board and volunteers of Nelson CARES Society as we continue to deliver exceptional service to the residence of Nelson.

To guide our ongoing work the Board of Directors will conduct an annual Strategic Plan Review and Update session in February 2012. We will hold an all staff meeting sometime in late spring to share these results with everyone.

In closing, I would like to share an experience I had the second day back on the job which coincided with the memorial service held for Margaret Sander at West Houston. It was a moving day that touched all in attendance- Margaret's family, her friends and the staff team that cared for her. It was a genuine honour to be there for the celebration of Margaret's life. What struck me deeply was the high quality of service our staff provided to Margaret throughout her time with Nelson CARES and in particular the dedication of our staff through the end of her life. Thank you to all of you for your continued commitment.

Jenny Robinson, Executive Director

Staff Comings and Goings...

We are pleased to welcome the following people to the Nelson CARES Society Staff:

Jenny Robinson, Executive Director
Minna Pietarinen, SCL
Julie Dembowski, SCL
Rachel Stace-Smith, SCL
Anisa Farhangi, SCL
Amanda Farquharson, SCL
Ana Like, SCL
Martine Oosting, SCL
Valerie Lidford, SCL

Farewell and good luck to:

Rona Park, Executive Director
Summer Caskey, SCL
Meghan Stewart, SCL
Allison Brown, SCL
Heather Feenstra, ECO Centre
Natalie Reid, Earth Matters



Nelson CARES Society 2012 Membership

At the November 16th, 2011 Nelson CARES Society Board meeting, the Board of Directors approved an additional Society membership fee. The fees are either \$2 or \$10, your decision on how much you the member can afford.

2012 Membership fees are due, please see our website for 2012 Membership Form, or visit our office at 521 Vernon Street to see Leisa for information, or call 250-352-6011 ext. 10.

*Please note that you must be a member in good standing at least 2 weeks prior to our AGM in order to have voting privileges at the AGM.

Services for Community Living News...

Happy New Year everyone. On December 7, 2011 Services for Community Living had our annual Christmas Luncheon and first every live music dance. Frank Brooke and a couple of his band members really had the place hopping. Around 85 people attended the event. As usual the food was delicious thanks to the Best Western Hotel. Break dancing exhibition was provided by Rhys. The rest we show in pictures.



Part of the West Houston gang enjoying the wonderful buffet



Rhys busting a move



Rosalyn and Alison enjoying a dance



Everyone enjoyed Frank's talent





Earth Matters Gardens

Cottonwood Herbal Demonstration Garden and Hendryx Street Forest Garden are always growing and changing. We were very lucky to have a nice group of volunteers help us, and Hendryx Street Forest Garden has a neighbourhood of volunteers that come together to work in the garden. This season, we did not receive funding for supplies or summer projects. Our summer student organized a silent auction to raise awareness and money for our gardens, particularly to help us purchase needed supplies and tools.

Thank you to our local businesses that donated items for us to auction at MarketFest: Oso Negro, Eddy's Music, Vadim Kristopher Salon, Nelson Community Acupuncture, Shanti Yoga and the Royal on Baker! Thank you to our community who bid on the items, and helped us raise over \$200 for the garden!



ECO Centre and the Compost Education Project

This summer, Earth Matters ECO Centre was out in the community offering educational information about household composting. Our education program is continuing in the schools with our worm bin library program. Classrooms can borrow a worm bin and learn about worm composting from our local, composting expert, Heather Feenstra. If you know a classroom that would like a bin, please contact Alison at 250-352-6011, ext 15, or via email at alison@nelsoncares.ca. We have a couple bins ready to get out to local schools right now! Currently, the Earth Matters ECO Centre is closed. Products are for sale by appointment only. Please call Alison at 250-352-6011, ext 15, to arrange a time to meet.

Earth Matters placed second in Touchstones Ideas for Change Contest. Our exhibit raised \$48.55 for Earth Matters Projects, all in quarters! Also, we were presented with a gift basket from Fortis BC filled with many energy saving goodies. Rod Taylor presented Earth Matters with the gift basket.



The ECO Centre has two unique options for household cleaning: our all-purpose cleaner, in concentrate or ready-to-use spray bottles, and our highly concentrated laundry soap. Save money and save the earth! Our laundry soap is \$12.95 for 100 loads. That is only \$.13/load! It's an amazing deal!

News from our Supported Employment Program.....

Supported Employment partners with the Pennywise and Creative Culture!

The Supported Employment Program is very excited to have the Pennywise and the Creative Culture Magazine partner with our Kootenay Direct Paper Services. Newspaper carriers from the Supported Employment Program deliver the Pennywise weekly and Creative Culture monthly to the downtown businesses. As of July 2011, Creative Culture closed down production, but we are very thankful for the support of our program and our carriers.

Our carriers are very proud of their work and enjoy being out in the community. Be sure to say hello when you see our carriers out on Baker Street and area!



Marlene Motz and Nick Toner deliver the Pennywise every Tuesday!



Above: Alison Roy and Zhenia Tarasoff present Patty Axenroth, owner of the Pennywise, with a recognition certificate and gift basket for her support of community inclusion.



Nelson CARES Society and CLBC recognize local businesses for their support of community inclusion!

Throughout the year, local businesses have been recognized for supporting community inclusion. In March, we have recognized the Nelson STAR and in April, we recognized Kootenay Christian Fellowship and Our Daily Bread for their support of inclusion. As a part of their recognition package, the businesses received a basket of items from the Earth Matters ECO Centre, such as environmentally friendly cleaner, a locally made candle and much more!



Above: Supported Employment recognizes Kootenay Christian Fellowship and Our Daily Bread for their support of community inclusion. Bev Johnson, Steve Perello and Jean McAvin are three of the volunteers at Our Daily Bread each week.



Above: Supported Employment recognizes the Nelson STAR for their support of community inclusion. Publisher Chuck Bennet, Distribution Administrator Selina Birk, and Office Administrator Amber Lowdermilk receive a gift basket and certificate. The Nelson Star currently hires 11 carriers from the Supported Employment Program.



Supported Employment recognizes the City of Nelson for their support of community inclusion. Gary Allin worked at the Nelson Cemetery during the summer and fall months.

News from The Advocacy Centre

The Advocacy Centre continues to be a busy place. This fall, we have been working with an average 160 clients/month. Our poverty law advocates dealt with issues ranging from welfare and disability benefits to tenancy, debt and family law. Our Specialized Victim Service Worker assisted victims of relationship violence, sexual assault and abuse, criminal harassment, child abuse and historical child sexual assault to navigate the justice system and access resources.

There have been a few new developments at the Centre. We continue to get a large number of requests for help with Persons with Disabilities (PWD) applications. To meet the high demand, we are now holding PWD group information sessions every three weeks. These two hour sessions cover some of the ins and outs of completing the application and give folks an opportunity to ask questions.

Late last summer, we received funding from Legal Services Society to act as a Community Partner. Advocacy Centre staff are available to provide information to individuals or groups about what resources LSS offers and how people can access them.

Sarah Bolton is working with Nelson Community Services Society on the Side by Side project. The project provides opportunities for youth, parents and the community to learn about violence prevention. As part of the project, Jackson Katz will be coming to Nelson. He will hold a talk for the general public on May 8th focussing on gender violence and community attitudes that contribute to it. On May 9th, he will hold an all day workshop open to service providers.

Finally, we are very pleased to welcome Roxanne Heiden as our Selkirk College Social Service Worker practicum student. As one of the founders of the WINS Thrift Store, Roxanne brings with her a wealth of experience in the community. Welcome Roxanne!

CLBC Month – October 2011

Every year we celebrate Community Living Month in October. This year, we hosted Harvest Fest, a fun event at the Cottonwood Falls Market. We gave out cloth market bags and played games. Local vendors were featured in our prizes and give-a-ways. We met with over 150 people and talked about Community Living BC and community inclusion.



L to R: Heather Feenstra, Rosalyn Bancroft, Lindsey Watson and Andreas Tarasoff at the games table.



Above: Chris Fraser and Jason Rempel showing off our market bags.

The Weekly Express – Goodbye and Good luck!

Goodbye to the Express Newspaper! In February, our newspaper carriers said farewell and good luck to Nelson Becker and the Express Newspaper. Carriers from Nelson CARES Society had delivered the paper for just over 10 years!



Stepping Stones and Ward Street Place - Successes and Accomplishments



Ward Street Place has seen a year of growth and strengthening of the community. Several years ago the seeds of community were planted and each year has seen the seeds grow and prosper. This growth has stabilized the building, which in turn has allowed the partnership with Mental Health, the Supported Housing Independence Program (SHIP) and the Transitional Accommodation Program to (TAP) to offer housing and support to some of the most marginalized people in our community. These programs offer housing to people who were unable to find or maintain housing in the community due to extremely poor tenancy records, mental health or substance use issues, and or behaviour issues. WSP provides a place which people can call home, a place where you can see and hear people who truly care and look out for each other, regardless of what challenges they may be facing. The caring community within the walls of WSP, with the unconditional acceptance, is an example all of us could learn from.

In the summer, WSP saw a key person in their community move onwards. The tenant who came into WSP, off the street six years ago with no source of income, serious physical issues and who was exhausted, moved into their own self contained bachelor suite, with a good paying fulltime job and all physical health issues stabilized. They have been clear that WSP saved their life. At Thanksgiving the former tenant, with the people in the building, created a wonderful meal, one which people talked about for weeks afterwards.

Stepping Stones, this past year has seen another flood and relocation to the Salvation Army for 7 weeks. However this time it was an organized and orderly event as there was a number of weeks of notice. Once finished the staff and clients were happy to be back into a clean, freshly painted environment. It was like a home coming. Many thanks to the Salvation Army for being our plan "B"! We have seen a number of staff move on to further education, and have seen a number of new staff come aboard, who have come with energy, ideas and dedication. The WEB started in late November, thanks to an extremely fast application turnaround time by BC Housing. The community of Nelson is lucky to have the support of such a wonderful organization. And to close off a great year at Stepping Stones, we celebrated our 7th birthday of opening on Dec 10 2011. Having been with SS from the very beginning, one can see the huge amount of growth and development the place has experienced in that time. The success of Stepping Stones is due to the wonderful group of staff who work there, the ones who offer people a place to eat and sleep, a place to rejuvenate and become more grounded, and then the tools needed to move forward. Thank you very much Stepping Stones.



Stepping Stones – Blanket Drive

Now that the winter months are here, those who do not have a roof over their heads will be turning to Stepping Stones for temporary shelter. However, with only 17 beds, there are a lot of times when the shelter is forced to turn people away and for many, sleeping on the street is their only option. With your help, we can do our best to keep them warm by giving out blankets and sleeping bags.

If you have a new or slightly used sleeping bag, blanket, knapsack or tent you would like to donate, please drop it off at 567 Ward Street, #7 buzzer. All donations will be greatly appreciated. Please do not bring coats, sweaters or other clothing as we have enough of these for the time being.

For more information contact Stepping Stones for Success by phoning 250-352-9876 or by e-mailing steppingstones@nelsoncares.ca.