



The Kamloops Self-Advocate:

A Newsletter for People with Diverse Abilities

December

Issue #4

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Looking back at 2013...

It has been a great 4 months since the newsletter was started. Time goes so fast. Your support has been much appreciated.

Christmas can be a time of much stress for many, but can also be very rewarding. Play it safe. Don't drink and drive and have a wonderful time with family and friends.

Any inspiring stories that anyone has over the

holiday season would be a joy, if you could share them with us. We may pick a few stories for January's issue.

From all of us to all of our readers, have a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year.

~ Krystian

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Meet One of Santa's Helpers, Bill

Meet Bill Cook, one of Santa's helpers here in Kamloops. Bill met with Krystian to share a little bit about what he does as Santa's helper, but also what he does with a men's group at Vista, where he volunteers each week.

When did you get your first Santa's helper job?

About 15 years ago. It was at the Thompson Park Mall, which is now the Landsdowne Mall.

Are you in the Christmas Parade?

Yes, I will be in the parade on the 30th of November.

What do you want children to know about Christmas?

I want them to know that they've got to have a good time, enjoy it, and don't ask for too much for Christmas.

Do you like egg nog?

It's not bad, but I'd rather have a hot chocolate.

What is your favourite Christmas song?

White Christmas.... "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas, with every Christmas card write."

Do you like working with people who have diverse abilities?

Yes, I do. I work with a number of groups of people and we have a good time [...like going to "The Zoo"]. We have a wonderful time. They are all my friends now.

Saying Farewell to a Long-time Advocate

Very soon, Cathy Chisholm will be retiring from her position at Community Living BC. Krystian had an opportunity to sit down with Cathy for an interview, learning about her work experiences and the many changes she has seen for people with diverse abilities in Kamloops. When Cathy first arrived in Kamloops, she worked at Tranquille School, but since then, she has been a big part of the community living movement.

What did you do at Tranquille?

I was a psychiatric nurse there. That is where my training is, in psychiatric nursing. So I worked at Woodlands [a big institution in the Lower Mainland] from 1973-79 and then I moved up to Kamloops and I started working at Tranquille School.

There were nurses and aids. So, the nurses provided people with medication and we looked after

people's health. We also worked directly with people, doing programs and making sure that people were well looked after.

We did a lot of trips with people. We'd get folks and go down to the coast, or we'd go up to the lakes or go camping and that kind of thing. There always had to be a nurse because people had health issues and they needed a nurse to make sure their health was okay.

Can you tell us a bit about Tranquille farm when you were there?

When I was there, there weren't really any animals and it wasn't a farm anymore.

It started out as a sanatorium. When it was first built, it was for people who had tuberculosis. People did really well with the dry climate, so people from all over the province would go there. It was like a convalescent home.

Once that stopped, it became Tranquille School, which is what it was called when I was there. They had kids that lived at Tranquille School. They had teachers and people went to school. There was a lot of training and teaching that was done there.

Were you one of the staff that lived on-site?

No, I wasn't.

What do you do at CLBC in Kamloops?

I am called a quality service analyst. CLBC provides or delivers services to adults with developmental disabilities and to their families. I am on the quality service side, so I am involved in doing the resource development, the contracting and the monitoring. I work with the service providers and make sure the people are getting the supports and services that we're paying for. And, making sure they are the services that people want.

What is your favourite memory of Tranquille?

One thing that struck me when I first started working at Tranquille, it was much smaller [than Woodlands] and people knew each other. The staff knew each other really well and knew the people living there well. It was a very close knit group.

When the institution was first closing, there was a lot of controversy. There were people that didn't agree with it and didn't think that it should close. I was part of the team developing the new resources, moving people out. That is my favourite memory, being part of moving people out of the institution into community.

What changes have you seen and are you most proud of?

The changes I have seen are huge, because I worked in the institution, where there were 30-40 people on a ward. When they

decided to close Tranquille, people were moved into 4-bed group homes, where staff would come in. At that time, back in the '80s, it was the model of the day.

People are now moving out and living on their own. They are living with friends. Group homes are no longer being developed.

Services are more individualized so rather than having to conform to a group, their supports are individualized to their needs and wishes, so things that they would like to do.

I've seen lots of changes to employment. There are more people with disabilities working and getting paid for the work that they do.

What is the best way to reduce stigma and segregation for people with developmental disabilities, even mental health?

I think a good way to reduce stigma and segregation is for people to be part of the community, to access the community and not be put away or hidden away in institutions or facilities. People with developmental disabilities have a lot to offer the community and the best way to do that is to have people out and about, just like the rest of the population. That is going to help, when people understand and see people with developmental disabilities, they are going to realize that they are just like everyone else.

What about mental health?

I think it is the same....being part of the community.

As the formal interview ended and the conversation continued, Krystian brought up his concerns about limits in services for adults with diverse abilities. Some service providers may try to promote integration, which he agrees is beneficial; however, when the focus of integration prevents the client from being able to have support to participate in activities that might be viewed as segregation, he doesn't agree.

There are certainly different philosophies and viewpoints out there. Different societies have their viewpoints; CLBC has its viewpoint.

You guys are all combined because you contract them. They are kind of like your employees.

That's not totally accurate. We contract with a variety of different agencies and they all have different ways of doing things. They are not employees. It is a contractual relationship. In our contracts, we purchase somebody to provide a program or community support or a home share, but we don't tell them how to do it. We have standards that they have to live up to as part of the contract. We don't tell them how to do the job. We provide them with the money to be able to do the job.

We like the agencies to involve the individuals and the families and any support people. Each agency has their own point of view, so they might operate a little differently, but CLBC's role is to make sure that the services they are providing are good, quality services. Not everybody is the same, so none of the agencies are the same.

Did you know...

If you aren't satisfied with the support that you are getting, you can request something different. So, if there was a reason that you weren't satisfied, you could connect with your facilitator to let her/him know. If anyone isn't happy with the service they are getting, that is where CLBC comes in to work with you and your team to figure out what would work best for you.

Things can change. You can go to CLBC and let them know if you are unhappy with something. You can also let them know if you are happy, too!



Cathy Chisholm & Louise Bick

Kamloops Y Peace Medal Winner, Louise Bick, Approaches Work with a Pure Heart

According to the YMCA web-page, "the Y peace medal recognizes local people and organizations that work quietly, but tirelessly, to make our community, and the world, a fairer, more just and more peaceful place." As participants at the 2013 presentation ceremony heard, this definitely describes this year's recipient, Louise Bick. After the ceremony, Louise sat down with Krystian for an interview.

Why were you chosen to receive this award?

I think it was largely because I teach a course for caregivers in non-violent crisis intervention and I've been doing that for 20 years. I have taught many, many caregivers this course. It teaches

how to resolve situations peacefully.

Can you tell us a little bit about that work you do around crisis intervention training?

For 20 years now, New Horizons, who I work with, has offered this course to all people who support someone who has a disability. It helps the caregivers to help people who are going through hard times and to find peaceful resolutions and keep everybody safe. That's what it is really about.

What does this award mean to you?

It is a great honour to receive this award. Yes, it is a tremendous honour to be selected....it has made me realize that even small people can make a difference in the world. You don't have to be a celebrity or making huge changes, people can make a difference in their own communities just by doing their work every day. And, people can

be recognized for doing good work.

Who should take crisis training intervention, for example teachers, principals, or any others?

Yes, it is a recommended course for teachers, principals, people in hospitals, or in any kind of human service setting that helps people. It is recommended for everyone, really.

What is the best way for the public to reduce stigma around disabilities, even mental health?

I think that what is happening right now, with a lot of emphasis for people who have a disability to be living in the community, working at different jobs in the community, and just being present in the community. I think that is the best way to help remove the stigma, because people see beyond the disability and they see that the person has something to contribute.



Jenna's Blazers Report

Well, it's been a busy month for the Blazers. Craig Bonner has been trading a way good players, trying to get better ones as his job is on the line because we keep losing.

Recently, the Blazers played against the Special Olympics floor

Hockey Contest

Calling all Blazers Fans

Would you like a chance to watch a Blazers' home game from a box suite in ISC?

Gradar Holdings Ltd. has generously donated **tickets for one person and a guest**. How do you win? Send us a note telling us why you would like to be in the suite to watch a game. Gradar Holdings will read all of the entries and select a winner. You can mail it or send it by e-mail. It is just that easy!

Deadline for entries:

January 10, 2014

hockey team and they won by one point.

December 2nd was the Booster Club's Christmas dinner and the Blazers will be joining us. Friday, December 6th was food bank night where you bring a canned food for the food bank. December 7th was the annual Teddy Bear toss night - it is a fun night! Everybody brings a brand new bear or stuffed toy, and bags of hats, mitts, and scarves to throw on the ice. These will be donated to local children.

Well that's all for this issue!

Merry Christmas everyone!



CLBC COMMUNITY ACTION EMPLOYMENT PLAN UPDATE

In the communities of Williams Lake 100 Mile House, Kamloops, and Merritt, there are partnerships being formed including the schools, employment specialists, service providers, MCFD and self-advocates. These groups are talking about how to use the services better so that more people get support so that they can work.

Service providers in the whole region have met and we are planning a training event for service providers to learn how to support people to get and keep a job.

Self-advocates are planning to speak to employers and they want to change community attitudes. They are looking forward to setting up presentations.

Employment specialists in Kamloops are working together to connect with employers.

There is an online course at Douglas College called "Employments Supports

Specialty". CLBC will cover part of the cost of someone's tuition in our region.



Caledonia's Corner

Are you ready for some festive groans and laughs? Caledonia has been hard at work!

What do elves learn in school?
The Elf-abet!

What nationality is Santa Claus?
North Polish

What do you call a cat on the beach at Christmastime?
Sandy Claws

What kind of bird can write?
A PENguin

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
Snowflakes

What's the best thing to put into a Christmas cake?
Your teeth!

What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?
It's Christmas, Eve!

What did the ghosts sing to Santa Claus?
We'll have a Boo Christmas

without you.

If athletes get athletes foot,
what do astronauts get?
Missiletoe!

Why was Santa's little helper depressed?
Because he had low Elf esteem

How do cats greet each other at Christmas?
Have a furry merry Christmas and a Happy Mew Year.

How do sheep greet each other at Christmas?
A merry Christmas to Ewe.

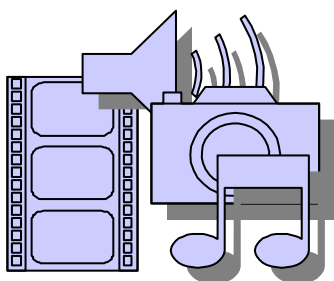
Patient: Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a Christmas bell.
Doctor: Take these pills and if they don't work, give me a ring.

Patient: Doctor, I'm scared of Father Christmas.
Doctor: You're suffering from Claus-trophobia.

A Christmas tribute to Women:

What if it had been three Wise Women instead of three Wise Men?

They would have asked directions,
arrived on time,
helped deliver the baby,
cleaned the stable, and
made a casserole.



Steven's Musical Moments

Happy Holidays!

Christmas music spans all genres and appeals to most. This music lifts our spirits at this time of year, plus reminds us nobody is alone and shouldn't be. It ranges from Christmas Convoy (Paul Brandt), Jingle Bell Rock (Ricky Van Shelton), Santa's on His Way (George Canyon), Merry Christmas from the Family (Montgomery Gentry), Santa Claus I Still Believe in You (Alabama), Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree (Anne Murray), Waiting for Christmas to Come (Johnny Reid) to Zion's Daughter (Boney M, a Christmas must).

These artists and others also do covers of the classics. So...be Walking in a Winter Wonderland, 'Joy to the World' because 'Mary's Boy Child' was born on Christmas day. Always remember to 'Oh Come All Ye Faithful' while you 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' on 'O Holy Night'.

Christmas movies, both the newer ones, such as

Scrooged ('Put a Little Love in Your Heart', also covered by Anne Murray, one of many Canadian artists contributing both original and classic covers to the further enjoyment of the season,) and especially the classics from *A Christmas Carol* to *Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer* with their unique music and covers of classics as they further add to the lifting of spirits, plus enjoyment of the season.



Amber's Recipe Book

Often Shepherd's Pie is made from ground beef. At Christmas, we can make a different version, using leftover turkey, gravy, vegetables and mashed potatoes.

Helpful Hints:

- 1 tbsp. = 3 tsp.
- 1/4 cup = 4 tablespoons
- 1/2 cup = 8 tablespoons
- 1 cup = 16 tablespoons
- 2 cups = 1 pint
- 4 cups = 1 quart

Christmas Shepherdess Pie

Method:
Pre-heat oven 325 degrees

Base:
In a large casserole dish, combine:
1 cup cooked turkey meat, chopped
1 cup leftover vegetables, such as peas or carrots
1 cup or can gravy
1/2 cup dressing to give taste
Season lightly with seasoned salt

Topping:
Mashed potatoes, adding enough milk so they are at whipped texture.

Add & mix in:
1/3 c. shredded medium cheese
1/4 c. parmesan
Spoon over base, then sprinkle with:
Finely chopped chives or green onion

Salt and pepper, lightly
Cover the entire pie. Bake for 30-40 minutes, until top is golden brown.

Beating the Holiday Blues

It is supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year, but the holidays can also be very stressful. If you find yourself struggling, know you aren't alone. There are some

The Zoo's Sweet Crepe Café *Sweet & Savory Crepes*

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Winter Special!**
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December, January, &
February**
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things you can do to ease the blues.

Look after yourself! Drink lots of water, try to avoid eating too much sugar, drinking too much alcohol, or just plain overeating.

*Get **exercise** every day, even if it is just a short walk.

*Try to get enough **sleep** – if you are staying up late for visits and parties, it can throw off your sleep patterns.

* If you are feeling depressed, make sure to **talk with someone**. (Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, may be a factor because of the lack of light during the winter months.)

* This can be a lonely time. Try to **stay connected** to friends and acquaintances. Maybe there is an

opportunity to do some volunteering.

* There can be added financial stress. Try not to give in to the pressure to spend – remember, it is not the gifts that matter. If the season doesn't have a clear meaning for you, maybe now is a good time to give it one. Know why you are celebrating the holidays. It will make it easier to avoid all of the commercialism and pressure that can come with the season. Maybe this is a great time to create some new holiday traditions.

Feeling Overwhelmed?

Your Local Crisis Line:

Call **310-6789** (do not add 604, 778 or 250 before the number) 24 hours a day to connect to a BC crisis line, without a wait or busy signal.

The crisis lines linked in through **310-6789** have received advanced training in mental health issues and services by members of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information.



Ability Online is an online community for kids, teens and young adults with all kinds of disabilities or chronic illnesses. We also have a separate section for parents and professionals. Membership is free and the online experience is safe, secure and monitored. There are over 5500 members currently registered with Ability Online. Programs include Bully Bouncers, Friendship Builder and Transition Plus. Ability Online helps a member build confidence and skills by connecting them to a supportive community of role models and mentors, linking them to great learning resources, and providing them with a safe and nurturing platform to receive assistance tailored to their specific learning needs. It allows any member (child, teen or parent) to connect with others for friendship, support and information in a secure, bully-free environment where the goal is to help our members accomplish great things! A new program Healthy Minds is just being developed with support of members of Ability Online and is designed to support young people with disabilities and mental health challenges. Visit www.abilityonline.org for more information and to register as a member. All our members are screened (that's what helps keep this a safe

place) so expect a call from Michelle McClure, the Executive Director. She can also answer any questions you might have.



Dr. Hollman is at it again! She has turned her office on Tranquille Rd. into a Christmas wonderland. Why not drop in and see the decorations.



Special thanks to our supporters:

- **Edge Publishing**
- **CLBC**
- **New Horizons**
- **Dr. M. Hollman**

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