

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2017



Thank you for another successful Gala, thank you to everyone who supported us!



Celebrating 60 wonderful years!

LETTER FROM THE ED



To all Friends, participants, families, Staff and Members of Clay Tree Society.

How wonderful that we are starting to get some warmer weather at long last, yesterday was three years since I started to work at Clay Tree and over the last few months was the first time I had seen snow on the drive to work, however it then snowed so much that it certainly made up for the previous two years and I am now really ready for the summer months and all that sunshine.

The last few months have been really busy at Clay Tree, as you all know we have changed some of the way we work here and we hosted two information sessions in March to explain those changes to caregivers and families. I am thrilled to say that this has been a huge success with the participants and also with the staff, the days are just flying past and are filled many exciting and educational life skills that are being embraced with a new enthusiasm that is wonderful to be around. An exhibition of these groups and the new listings will be available to see at the AGM.

The 3rd Annual formal Gala was held on March 4th and was a complete sell out raising a much needed \$15,400 towards our Connections program which runs from 3.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. during the week. We are contemplating opening Connections at weekends and will be having a trial in July, so watch out for further details.



The AGM is our 60th and as such we are inviting all participants to have a buffet and dance after the meeting, the long service rewards will take place and we have some staff and participants letting you know the latest in their groups.

Clay Tree is on the March (so to speak), we are undertaking to get up to 100 people overnight in Vancouver for the Disability Pride March on June 15th, this will be a fabulous event and we are so happy to be a part of it, banners are being made, hotels and transportation being booked and Susan will be streaming live on facebook so even if you are not attending you can still feel a part of it.

Please keep watching our facebook page and looking out for notices that keep you up to date with all events, we have so many coming up in the future. Milk Carton Boat Race, Disability Pride March, Kayak Day, Art From the Heart and many more, you are very welcome to attend all of these great events and show your support for the work that we are doing here at Clay Tree Society.

Thank you to all the volunteers that help in so many different ways that is the icing on the cake that makes all the difference to us and we are so very grateful.

Enjoy the summer,



Often when family members and caregivers have dialogue, it can be amazing to hear about a service that is available for individuals with disabilities and yet they were not aware of this.

Are you aware of the benefits of a LEAP Card through the City of Nanaimo? The LEAP program offers access to recreational facilities for families in financial need that are living in the Nanaimo, Lantzville and surrounding areas. Participants will be issued a swim/skate/gym pass for 50 free admissions throughout the year.

Access the website:
www.nanaimo.ca LEAP applications can be accessed here.

Are you aware there is a special transportation subsidy provided by the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and Assistance to Persons with Disabilities? This is available to individuals who are unable to use available subsidized public transportation services due to their disabilities.

Further information can be obtained by accessing the website:
www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/.../special-transportation-subsidy-policy-and-procedures

Are you aware that you may receive either free admission or a significant discount for your support person at member movie theatres and attractions across Canada? The Access 2 program is administered by Easter Seals. Present the Access 2 card when purchasing tickets with your support person at participating movie theatres and attractions. The individual with the disability pays regular admission and the support person receives his or her admission free or at a significant discount.

For further information go to: www.access2card.ca



Clay Tree Society Retreat

Glenys extended an invitation to all staff to attend a voluntary weekend retreat, away from Clay Tree, whereby everyone would be given the opportunity to provide input into the future of programming and developing goals for persons served.

For those staff who were unable to attend, they were encouraged to put their ideas in writing enabling them to also be represented.

On Friday, January 13, six members of staff rendezvoused at the retreat destination.

The official presentation was facilitated by Glenys with the distribution of materials, sharing CARF recommendations and reviewing the 8 domains for the quality of life that is the framework used by CLBC.

Over the course of the retreat, staff would meet in smaller groups and then share their brainstorming ideas together. The focus was to concentrate on outcomes, timelines and goals along with establishing effectiveness and efficiency measures.

The weekend was intense and has been described by some of the attending staff as a great experience enabling them to express and share ideas in a quiet and calm environment.

On February 10, a training session was held for all staff to share the material that was discussed at the retreat.

At the beginning of March, new programming ideas were implemented allowing participants to make choices in their programming with interest groups that would also contribute and support their personal goal development.

The following pages features interest groups which participants were a part of over the last two months.

INTEREST GROUP FEATURE



Hiking:

The weather seems to cooperate for us on Mondays! Our group has been really enjoying our hikes. We've explored Colliery Dam Park, walked the Seawall, hiked at Westwood Lake and found some new trails at Bowen Park. The water falls are amazing at the moment and there are hundreds of ducks at the pond. Everyone in the group is really keen on finding new places and being out in nature.

We are looking forward to some sunshine though!



Spanish:

We have a group of 16 very enthusiastic people learning Spanish this session. We adopted the motto "Keep it simple and fun!" and it really has been! The energy in the group is quite incredible with everyone eager to learn more words. We have been focusing on some basic words and useful phrases for every day conversation. Curiosity peaks each week though with people wanting to know the Spanish word for all sorts of things. We did take a break and watch a wonderful DVD on Barcelona and the arts, culture and foods there.

Yoga:

Our yoga sessions have been very well received thanks to the skills of Michael who has been leading the sessions. He blends a good variety of gentle yoga poses and stretches while incorporating meditation and relaxing music. Everyone in the class seems to really enjoy the experience.





Environmental:

Environmental group runs every Monday afternoon and we have learned about composting and recycling. We had a guest speaker come in from the Nanaimo Recycling exchange to do a talk about composting and about recycling. We will be setting up a composting program here at Clay Tree to help reduce some of the waste, and also to help with the gardening group with their garden beds. We will also be setting up a better recycling program as well. In May we will be having our guest speaker in again to talk about climate change and hopefully we can have the stream keepers group join us as well.



Scrapbooking:



The scrapbooking group has learned about different equipment and supplies that we can use to make cards, scrapbook pages and display boards. Everyone is enjoying the creativity and being able to show their talents. We will be doing up a nice bulletin board display that will change every couple of months as the seasons/special occasions happen.

Jewellery Making:

The jewellery making group has been learning different ways to string beads and using different tools, beads, fasteners and patterns. We will be welcoming a special guest to show us how to work with wire and wrap special stones/beads, as well as remake/refurbish broken jewellery. Everyone is enjoying the creative side as well as the hands on activities we do.





Sewing:

Everyone is excited to learn a new skill and Tuesday's are a favorite for those learning to sew. The course started the beginning of March and already we can sew on a button, hand stitch a hem and use our new sewing machines. Yes, we received a generous gift from longtime Clay Tree participant, Dan Bateman and his sister Jacquie of 2 new sewing machines and we are very grateful. This month we have chosen our fabric and made patterns to create a beautiful pillow. At the end of the three month cycle we will join up with the "Dress for Success" and "Groom and Polish" programs to highlight our achievements at an afternoon fashion show.



Dress for Success:

Dress for success has been an exciting journey for both participants and supporting staff. We have enjoyed learning about different types of clothing and what roles they play in day to day living successfully. We have explored protective clothing attire and it's importance, experimented with accessories, job interview and job ready attire, personal favorite clothing, clean and tidy clothing, clothing critiqued peer to peer, proud posture for confident self presentation, clothing styles from India with our guest presenter, Meena. Members of this interest group, both participants and staff, empower each other to be the best we can be with confidence and style.





Life Skills:

We are now into our third year of Life skills Training and the personal growth of everyone is very noticeable. Our present 12 week session includes topics such as basic food preparation, understanding quality foods, reading store flyers, money management, household maintenance, laundry, table setting and manners. The class is excited to showcase their achievements and have received many compliments from families and caregivers.



Vision Board:

This interest group focuses on the importance of having a positive attitude (Positive thoughts create positive experiences) law of attraction and achieving personal goals. In the next following weeks we will be creating our personal vision boards. This is an all round feel good group

Polish and Groom:

In Polish and Groom we learn all about good hygiene and taking care of yourself and your appearance. We discuss proper hygiene routines and grooming techniques. This interest group focuses on lots of group participation and we have fun!



INTEREST GROUP FEATURE



Visual Arts:

On Monday mornings our group has been busy making Cubist inspired "Picasso People". We are using wire, wood and other found objects to create modern art! We started out learning about the life and art of the famous Spanish artist Pablo Picasso, and then drawing Cubist style sketches of faces and bodies. Everyone is using their imaginations to create the human figure in a whole new way!



Performing Arts:

We facilitate two groups Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. We have been exploring improvisation, costume dress up, role play and we have now started play writing. A special guest Hailey has visited the group to talk about and play the ukulele. It has fun opportunity to see peoples talent flourish!

Transit:

In the course of the last few weeks, the transit program has been learning the basics of utilizing public transportation. These endeavours include how to read the bus schedule, how to recognize a bus stop and proper bus etiquette. Today we took a bus to the north end of town and with skill and good planning, made our way safely back to Clay Tree.





Photography:

Group discussion with the participants who wanted to take pictures of certain areas in Nanaimo, full discussion of which areas they would like to explore that would be suitable. Researching different types of cameras, air brushing, settings on cameras.

Reclaimed wood products section: research different project on pinterest, picking up wood while out exploring, example drift wood or any distressed wood we may find on our adventures that we can bring back to life through art.

Walking:

Group meeting to find out peoples mobility issues or physical strength to decide whether we can go on long walks, hills, close to Clay Tree neighborhood walks or nature walks.



Gardening:

Group discussion on what everyone knows about gardening and what are things we can grow in our climate. What are things we would like to grow how often we water? After we grow it what can we do with it?

Our vision for the gardening group:

Pick a spot at Clay Tree where we can make our garden. Get supplies to build garden beds. Make garden beds and also make it wheelchair accessible by building some that are high and by having a wide path.

Science Experiments:

Mad scientist Heather has brought many lively experiments to two groups on Wednesdays. We have various types of trash buried in a garden to see 'How Long Your Garbage Lasts'. The groups were impressed with our home made lava lamps and were grossed out by the growths on potatoes (especially the pieces rubbed on hands, the telephone and the bathroom floor!). We are learning about sturgeons and their spawning differences to other species and will be heading up to VIU in May to visit their aquaponics and Sturgeon Programs.



Volunteer:

A willing group has taken on delivering books to the neighbourhood loaning cupboards, has done recycling towards Clay Tree's dishwasher and recently baked and delivered cookies to the RCMP and the SPCA. A treat to show our appreciation of all that they do for us and the animals respectively. We have lots more ideas so stay tuned!



Water Gardens:

We have been looking at designs of ponds, to help us in our planning.

We had outings to VIU koi pond. We're are just now figuring out our building supplies.

The participants seem to be enjoying their time while we learn about different structures and designs. We have decided on a patio pond design like the one on the left.



Well done to all Clay Tree Society interest groups featured and not featured for having done amazing work over the last two months!



Staying Connected with Connections

On April 20th, the after-hours Connections program celebrated its 2 year anniversary. Light refreshments and a slices of pizza were offered followed with social time and a dance in the common room. Tim, Valerie and Thomas continue to provide a wide array of activities to capture the interests of all those attending. Some afternoons we have as many as 25 individuals.

Activities throughout the month can be seasonal such as decorating Easter Eggs to planting seeds and tracking the growth of the plants. There are discussion groups, crafts, invited guest speakers and hands-on opportunities. The Sticks n' Stones 4x4 group were happy to bring their off road trucks and all terrain vehicles to Clay Tree. Participants were able to ask questions and sit in the vehicles.

This program runs from 3:00 p.m to 6:00 p.m throughout the week with HandyDART service available at the end of the day. If you are interested in attending, please call Darryl to make an appointment.





Employment Update

The latest from Clay Tree Employment Services is **GREAT NEWS**, during April we secured two more fully paid jobs for our participants, we now have many of our clients either doing work experience, volunteering in the community or getting paid. As supporters of a client that you spend time with going through life skills for many months with pre-employment training, which can consist of learning how to use the transit system, mock interviews, dress for success etc, etc and see that client grow in confidence, then to go through an interview and be successful and finally to getting that first pay check is the most wonderful feeling. We are hoping to eventually get funding for this very important program and be able to help many more clients over the coming years.



Second Annual Training Course Clay Tree Society 2017

Last year Clay Tree Society implemented a specialized 4 - week training program for all new trainees. With last years training being such a success we will continue to run this program annually. This year we looked closer at the new format to see how we could improve our specialized training program. We are proud to say we have created an ever-evolving quiz. Keeping the quiz flexible, it can be transformed to meet any of our fluctuating needs. The first quiz was validation that the material taught was being absorbed by all of the trainees.

I would like to take this time to introduce our successful candidates for 2017 that qualified for the training and were later offered casual employment: George Horvath, Kayla Barnaby, Meena Nagi and Brittany Lundquist. We would also like to congratulate Tim Beer, Mandy Raimondo and Carly Harris they have successfully obtained their class 4 unrestricted licence and are now part of Clay Tree's centre of excellence.

IMPORTANT DATES



Closures:

Monday May 22, 2017 Victoria Day - STAT
Monday July 3 2017 Canada Day - STAT
Monday August 7th, 2017 BC Day STAT
August 8 – August 11th, 2017 – SUMMER CLOSURE
Monday September 4, 2017 Labour Day - STAT
Monday October 10, 2017 Thanksgiving - STAT
Monday November 13, 2017 Remembrance Day – STAT
December 22, 2017 – January 1, 2018 - Christmas Closure

Dates to Remember:

June 14th & 15th 2017 - Disability Pride March Vancouver
June 6th 2017 - Milk Carton Boat Race
July 14th 2017 - Kayak Day
September 8th 2017 - Kickball Tournament
October 2017 - Art from the Heart (Date to be Announced)

CHRISTMAS CLOSURE - LAST DAY FOR PARTICIPANTS Thursday December 21, 2017
Clay Tree to re-open January 2, 2018

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and we make certain you get a
copy of the latest Newsletter!
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<http://www.claytree.org/media>

