



June 2014

COLUMBIAN CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT

Columbian Centre Board of Directors

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Past and Future by Barnabas Walther, Executive Director

The past year has been eventful. Tom Grauman retired and I assumed the responsibilities of Executive Director in March of this year. Tom has been with the Columbian Centre for ten years and has accomplished much in that time for which we are all grateful.

This past year saw the consolidation of the Boundary Project, a collaboration with BC Housing, Nanaimo Affordable Housing, the Haven Society and the Columbian Centre Society for the construction of 41 apartment units for low income people who have mental health issues. Thirteen of the units will be for the exclusive use of single women fleeing domestic violence and that floor will only be able to be accessed by those residents. There were several local community meetings to address neighbourhood concerns, where architects and project partner representatives presented information and interacted with interested neighbours. Many positive news stories followed these information sessions and at present we enjoy the support of the local community council and are looking forward to the beginning of construction this summer.

This past year there were six presentations of the workshop *Hearing Voices That Are Distressing*. In each community we partnered with a local non-profit, and publicly screened our documentary *On the Road to Find Out*, followed by a discussion. Attendance was robust and enthusiastic and we have been invited to do more workshops this coming year. Public education concerning mental illness and addiction continues to be an important part of our mandate.

On the horizon for this year we are engaging in the development of a community of practice for motivational interviewing. Motivational Interviewing is an evidence based approach to counselling. Columbian Centre has been selected as the host organization to develop and maintain the high standard of practice of motivational interviewing for all of Vancouver Island. The purpose is to develop a knowledge building community of practice. Many of the organizations involved do not have the infrastructure to provide ongoing supervision for clinicians using motivational Interviewing. One of the functions of developed communities of practice is the provision of peer supervision and support. In future this model could be adapted for a number of different areas of evidence based practice that can be honed for delivery of services for those with a mental illness and addictions.

We have also secured a contract for the coming year to provide "Ready to Rent" training for individuals who have difficulty finding and maintaining accommodations. For this endeavor we will be partnering with the John Howard Society. Taryn O'Flanagan, the executive director for the John Howard Society and I will provide a series of workshops in Nanaimo. *(continued on page 2)*

Past and Future *(continued from page 1)*

The workshops will cover residential tenancy law, rental applications, fire safety, pests, banking, credit and debt, communication, human rights, shopping for a rental unit, preparing a budget, and overview of community resources. There is strong evidence those individuals who have a mental illness and other social problems are much more able to secure and keep a home if they are better educated in these areas thus preventing homelessness.

On August 9th Neighbours Being Neighbours Community Gathering will be held. Also on the horizon for this year is our annual fundraising golf tournament to be held at Fairwinds Golf Club Friday August 15th; we are partnering again with Colliers International and for the first time with the Nanaimo Clippers. The golfers will include Kelly Hrudey, past goal tender and currently a commentator on Hockey Night in Canada and other NHL celebrities.

4th Annual Mental Wellth Gala May 9, 2014

The 4th Annual Mental Wellth Gala was held at the Grand Hotel on May 9. The night included a three-course buffet dinner, live music and a silent auction. Guests were treated to the music of Phil Dwyer, Louise Rose and Joan Wallace and The Martys.

Phil Dwyer, one of the most recorded musicians in Canada, became a member of the Order of Canada in 2013. He has been featured on nine recordings which have received a Juno Award, and has been a part of another 15 that received nominations. Dwyer was an international saxophone prodigy in his teens, and has played with some of the true jazz legends

Musical from a very early age, Louise Rose, from Norristown Pennsylvania, fell in love with Victoria in the 1970's. She conducts the 200 voices of the Victoria Good News Choir and coaches the award-winning vocal jazz ensemble 'Genesis' (from Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon), the Victoria High School Rhythm and Blues Band, and students in the Applied Music Programme at Esquimalt Community School.

Nanaimo-based Joan Wallace started her career as a folk singer in Winnipeg, and later sang blues & jazz professionally. She has produced two CDs as part of the Nanaimo acapella trio Mama's Kitchen, and wrote and performed Deep River: A Blues Journey, a history of the Blues, and The Harlem Renaissance, the golden period of early jazz in 1920's Harlem.

The Martys are a three piece jazz/blues hybrid trio: Marty Steele on keys, Marty Howe on flute and jazz chromatic harmonica, and James (Smarty) McRae on drums.

We want to thank all of our sponsors for supporting this year's Gala, please see page four for their names.



Louise Rose on piano with Phil Dwyer on saxophone.



The Grand Hotel Ballroom was beautifully decorated.

Reflections by Bill MacGougan, CCS Outgoing Chair

Bill MacGougan will be leaving the board of Columbian Centre Society at this year's AGM. Here are some of his reflections on the work of the Society during his time as chair.

The first thing I think of in terms of importance from the last six years has been our ability to keep the organization focused on the mission set by those that came before us. Our residents continue to thrive in a caring and constructive environment with improved opportunities for recovery and full integration in our community. Maintaining that core focus, while actively pursuing new service development is an ongoing challenge that has required continuous innovation and flexibility as the environment around us continues to change.

Having a succession and continuity plan in place for the Executive Director and carrying it out effectively was an important success. This year we saw the departure of Tom Grauman and the hiring of our new Executive Director, Barnabas Walther. We were appropriately prepared. Tom Grauman is one of a kind and did amazing things for Columbian Centre; its people and our community. He could not be replaced. However, in Barnabas we have a new hand on the tiller with the commitment and the ability to keep CCS on its critical path and at the same time apply his own brand of leadership to take this organization forward. Columbian Centre is in very good hands. That was an achievement.

The biggest challenge for CCS in the future remains unchanged. We need to anticipate and respond to our changing environment for the purpose of preserving our core mission and at the same time capitalizing on new opportunities. Our community needs more of what CCS delivers.

The opening of the new low barrier housing on Boundary Crescent will be a shift in operational focus for this organization. Our strategic partnerships with Nanaimo Affordable Housing and Haven Societies and the integration of services will be a real benefit for Nanaimo and hopefully usher in new opportunities. At the same time there is risk, and working closely and effectively with our partners and other stakeholders will be critical.

I have observed the amazing skill and dedication of Columbian Centre staff and how that is so consistently blended with warmth and caring to create the safe and nurturing environment that residents and their families value so much. I couldn't imagine a better mix and it is inspiring to see the effect that this has for the residents.

As for the Board members that I have had the honour to work with over the last six years – they have varied widely in terms of their background and how they addressed the challenge of being on the Board. The one thing they all

had in common was a strong sense of responsibility. Elbows were up when CCS and what it values were seen to be at risk, they maintained a strong focus on the financial security and obligations of the Society, and they were always enthusiastic and creative in designing a future for the organization and our community.

I have been deeply affected by my involvement in Columbian Centre. First, I have a much greater understanding and empathy for people in our

community affected by mental illness and drug addiction. This experience has created one more voice strongly in support of recovery, social inclusion, safe housing, and public education.

It's also been an education for me in community building, non-profit operations and governance. When I think about the impact of the Board's decisions I know that the time I spent on the Board was worthwhile. And when I reflect on the enduring mission and vision of the organization, and see the many committed supporters making it happen I am more optimistic than ever that people in our community can work together to do whatever needs to be done, that they will never give up and CCS will continue to provide the leadership required.

Lastly, I've made many new good friends and feel much more connected to my community. I'm sad to be leaving but I know that CCS is in very good hands with the talented and dedicated Board, management and staff and the many supporters in the community.





Columbian Centre Society

www.columbiancentre.org

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4th Annual Mental Wellth Gala Sponsors

- Chemainus Theatre Festival
- Quality Inn Victoria
- COCOCO Chocolaterie Bernard Callebaut (Country Club)
- Vancouver Island Symphony
- Inn on Long Lake
- Pacific Opera Victoria
- Old Spaghetti Factory
- The Royal BC Museum
- Nanaimo Museum
- Victoria Butterfly Garden
- Nanaimo Clippers
- Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
- Cactus Club Café
- Nanaimo Theatre Group
- BC Forest Discovery Centre
- Flying Fish
- Milner Gardens (VIU)
- Dairy Queen
- Flight Centre
- Chico's Chicken
- The Butchart Gardens
- Nanaimo Art Gallery
- Country Club Centre
- Krog & Company
- Speedy Automotive
- The Crow & Gate Pub
- Costco
- PI Granite
- Friends of CCS

Neighbours Being Neighbours Gathering

The sixth annual Neighbours Being Neighbours Community Gathering will be on Saturday, August 9, 2014 from 10 – 4 at the Bailey Studio on Rosstown Road. Trinitude will be performing again this year, and there will be lots of fun activities. Please mark your calendar, and don't miss it!

The Annual Colliers International & Nanaimo Clippers Mid-Island Charity Golf Tournament

August 15, 2014
Fairwinds Golf Club
Texas Scramble 1 pm

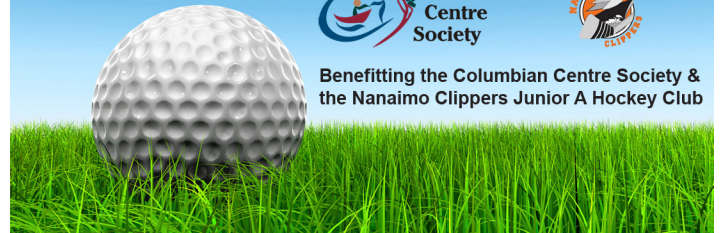


Special Guests:

Kelly Hruddy, CBC Hockey Analyst & former NHL goaltender
Dave LeNeveu, New York Rangers goaltender



Benefitting the Columbian Centre Society & the Nanaimo Clippers Junior A Hockey Club



Columbian Centre Society is generously supported by



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