

Cairnsmore Community Newsletter

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The Cairnsmore Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to contribute an article about the Cairnsmore Community please contact Veronica Scott at 733-2441 Email: verscott@telus.net

COWICHAN VALLEY OPEN LEARNING CENTRE (CVOLC) STUDENTS FIGHT RACISM

Students in CVOLC's Leadership group are meeting on Thursdays with **Dr. Linda Hill**, Youth Projects Coordinator at the Cowichan Intercultural Society. The focus of the group is on preventing racism and discrimination in our schools. Ten students use cooperative games to empower youth in the community, a way to brake down barriers and stereotyping. With Linda's guidance, students are now taking the message out to several Cowichan Valley schools. Dr. Hill has worked with students to produce a video about racism and discrimination.

CHRISTMAS IN STYLE AT THE GALA VISTA

Everyone got into the spirit of Christmas at the **Gala Vista** apartments. On November 19th children and parents gathered to make Christmas tree ornaments. About 30 people squeezed together to cut, paste and glue colourful decorations. Then, on December 10th, a balcony decorating contest took place at the apartments. **Duncan Mayor Phil Kent** and **Save-on-Foods Manager Chris Gale** were the official judges. Although the weather was cold about 60 people gathered to enjoy the festivities. Both events were hosted by **Geraldine Poirier** (manager of the Gala Vista apartments) and the staff of **Safer Futures**. Santa arrived courtesy of Save-on-Foods. Delicious treats and extra decorations were also provided courtesy of Save-on-Foods.



A good time was had by all... and it was caught on film!

Above left: Santa tells Gala Vista manager Geraldine Poirier that she has been very good.

Above right: Official judges Mayor Phil Kent and Save-on-Foods manager Chris Gale review the scores, as Geraldine Poirier and Terri Ferris of Safer Futures look on.

Middle and bottom right: Mayor Kent announces the winners.



SPECIAL CHRISTMAS SHOP HUGE SUCCESS

For the second year in a row, students from Cowichan Valley Open Learning Centre (CVOLC) plus staff and board members of Growing Together Child and Parent Society have organized a Christmas Shopping "store" stocked with donated gifts supplied by community residents, volunteers, service agencies and the society's board members. Growing Together's Mary Dolan explained that the gifts, which are top notch quality, allow family members of all ages to shop with respect and dignity. The shop's customers can make donations if they like with proceeds going to the Housing Resource Centre (homeless shelter). "The generosity of people has been incredible," said Mary.

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Safer Futures: www.saferfutures.org
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The Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy is a partner in this initiative.



COMMUNITY GARDENS AND FOOD SECURITY

The Cowichan Green Community (CGC) has received funding to hire another staff person (through Service Canada's Job Creation Project) for seven months. The new person's role will be to focus entirely on food security including public education. Amy of CGC says an information booth, newspaper 'advertorials' and planning for a Grow-A-Row program to encourage people to grow extra food from their gardens for local service programs are all part of the educational plan.

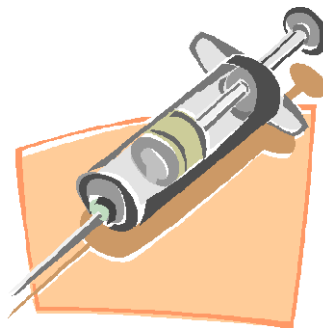
Amy is proud to announce that the Kinsmen Garden won an Honorary Mention Award through the North Cowichan Design Awards. The award was given for CGC's imaginative use of public space to improve food security and community development.

And speaking of gardens...

Jan McIntyre of the Cairnsmore Neighbourhood Working Group recently received a \$16,610 grant from New Horizons to develop community gardens at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Cairnsmore. The raised vegetable gardens will be for seniors. "We obviously feel that community gardens are a great thing and want to congratulate Jan and Kerry McIntyre on their growing garden," Amy said.

SAFE NEEDLE DISPOSAL TOOL KIT IN THE WORKS

Safer Futures is working with the Community Safety Advisory Committee to put together a community 'tool kit' for the safe disposal of needles left in public places. The tool kit will provide a step-by-step guide for getting rid of the problem as safely as possible. The committee includes members of School District 79, local government, Vancouver Island Health Authority, Canadian Mental Health and other service organizations. It is chaired by Mayor Phil Kent. For more information, please call 748-7000.



WHAT IS SAFER FUTURES?

Safer Futures is a program of Cowichan Women Against Violence Society (a non-profit organization) that works with people in the Cowichan Valley to create neighbourhoods that are safe, healthy, and offer equal opportunities for a good life. A safe and healthy community is one that works to provide all citizens with equitable opportunities for a good quality of life, to narrow the gaps between advantage and disadvantage, and to ensure healthier children, and stronger and more cohesive families.

NEWS FROM SERENITY HOUSE

Serenity Child and Parent Society has submitted an application to the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD) for a \$750,000 grant (\$500,000 for new child spaces and \$250,000 for a community 'hub' for family strengthening programs). The hub will be part of the Society's family care home for young parents and their children; priority will be given to young parents with children in the care of the Ministry. They will be able to live in the home for up to one year.

The Serenity Child and Parent Society has partnerships with Growing Together and Lalum'utul' Smun'eem Child and Family Services. Eight letters of support have been received from Cowichan service providers for the development of supportive family services in the hub. The Society will hear about the success of its funding application in February. Growing Together donated \$3,000 toward Serenity House.

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR DUNCAN ELEMENTARY STUDENT

As we are about to go to press, a family benefit concert for Duncan Elementary School student Lourdess Sumners was planned for Saturday, January 26 at 7 p.m. at New Life Baptist Church, 1839 Tzouhalem Road, Duncan. Lourdess, a remarkable nine year-old, is in Vancouver Children's Hospital receiving treatment for a rare form of leukemia and urgently needs a bone marrow transplant. A suitable match is proving difficult and a world-wide donor search is underway. The concert, featuring Stephanie Lang, is to raise money for the family's expenses. For more information check www.lourdesssumner.com

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