

# Cairnsmore Community Newsletter

October/November 2007

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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

## ST. ANDREWS CHURCH HOSTS FALL COMMUNITY BBQ

A sudden downpour wasn't enough to dampen the spirits of 70 Cairnsmore residents who turned out for a community 'meet your neighbour' BBQ (pictures to the right). Church volunteers rallied together setting up chairs and serving tables in the church basement. The atmosphere was welcoming and lively as folks mingled and munched on hot dogs, hamburgers and an assortment of salads. **Kerry McIntyre**, church minister has been an active member of the Safer Futures neighbourhood working group for the past two years. Thanks for a terrific afternoon to St. Andrews Church!

## FULL HOUSE AT THE GALA VISTA APARTMENTS

All of the units at the Gala Vista Apartments are full and fifty-three have been completely renovated, says apartment manager Geraldine Poirier. The apartments are located behind the 7-Eleven Store on Cairnsmore Street. Until a few months ago they were called the Luxor Apartments, which had a long-standing reputation for high turnover and drug and alcohol problems. Under new management, the Gala Vista has undergone extensive renovations, along with an all out effort to make life better for the tenants, many of whom are single parents.

"The tenants have taken back their building. I want to say thank you to all of them because they are fantastic," said Geraldine. Her improvement plans include regular tenant get-togethers and family social events. "We are going to have a big splash at Christmas time," she said, referring to plans for a balcony decorating contest. Geraldine has purchased artificial trees which tenants will decorate with popcorn strings. By keeping actively involved in their apartment buildings they will enjoy life much more, she notes.

Last summer Safer Futures hosted a parking lot BBQ for Gala Vista tenants. Approximately 60 people attended many of whom offered suggestions for services. Some of these included day care and after school services, a playground, an on-site good bank, sports clubs, graffiti wall for young people and an Elders Club. "People were thrilled to be asked for their opinion and suggestions. It was a remarkable and worthwhile afternoon. We may not be able to accomplish everything all at once, but we've got a good place to start" said **Suzanne Gray**, Cairnsmore Community Coordinator.

## PICTURES FROM COMMUNITY BBQ AT ST. ANDREWS CHURCH



## SAFER FUTURES NEWS

As you may know, Terri Dame left her position as Program Supervisor of Safer Futures on October 16th to accept a position with the Provincial Government in Victoria, where she now lives. Terri had been with Safer Futures for many years. She was one of the founding participants and played a significant role in the organization's success. We wish Terri all the very, very best in her new life.

While the search for a new Program Supervisor is underway, Theresa Gerritsen, Executive Director of Cowichan Women Against Violence, will oversee the program. Theresa can be reached at 748-7000, ext. 228.

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Municipality of North Cowichan: [www.northcowichan.bc.ca](http://www.northcowichan.bc.ca)

Safer Futures: [www.saferfutures.org](http://www.saferfutures.org)

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The Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy is a partner in this initiative.



## SERENITY HOUSE ORGANIZERS LOOKING FOR HOUSE TO RENT

When Serenity House is up and running it will provide a temporary home in Duncan for young parents needing support to raise their newborns. Mother and daughter duo **Lorna and Jessica Mcpherson** are organizing the initiative in partnership with a very comprehensive board of directors. They have also formed partnerships with Growing Together Child and Parent Society and Lalum'utul'Smun'eem Child and Family Services.

"We are working with our partners to find a five to six bedroom house to rent or lease in the Cairnsmore area to start Serenity House. Once we've received funding we'll eventually be able to purchase. We'd like to find something by January 2008 for a year," said Jessica.

The Serenity Child and Parent Society has made it to the second round of the Success by Six funding application. This gives them an opportunity to be eligible for a portion of \$93,000.

"We're also looking for some extra support to get funding "it's hard work and very time consuming for us both," she said. "If anyone in the Cairnsmore area has expertise in fundraising, architectural design, leasing and building information, we'd love to hear from you. We can provide a tax receipt for donated service," she noted.

The Serenity Child and Parent Society recently raised \$6700 from a silent auction and dance, and MLA **Doug Routley** recently presented them with a cash donation of \$1,000.

## HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN SALE YIELDS BIG TREAT FOR DUNCAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Students and teachers at Duncan Elementary returned from summer holidays to find 27 of the school's windows smashed and the playground vandalized. Disappointed but determined, the Parents Advisory Committee (PAC) has launched a \$35,000 fund raising campaign for a new playground structure for both students and the local Cairnsmore Community. The pumpkin sale raised \$1500. "We did amazingly well," said Susan Porter of PAC. She especially thanked Cairnsmore residents for their generous donations. If you would like to help out, please contact Susan Proter at 416-0245 or Cheryl Martin at 748-2246, evenings.

## SAFE NEEDLE DISPOSAL IS A TEAM EFFORT

Last spring, Safer Futures held a community workshop to deal with the issue of needles left in public places. Several agencies and concerned citizens learned about the seriousness of the problem and safe ways to get rid of the needles.

The group put forward its recommendations to the Community Safety Advisory Committee and a working group has been formed to look at a plan.

If you would like to know more, please contact **Safer Futures** at **748-7000**.

## NEWS FROM THE COWICHAN VALLEY OPEN LEARNING CENTRE (CVOLC)

Good things are coming out of the kitchen at CVOLC these days. **Vice Principal Joseph Boudreau** and several of the school's students are planning, shopping, cooking and selling delicious nutritional lunches. For only a dollar, students can munch on wholesome entrees including chicken curry and chow mien. The group also cooks breakfast every morning with treats like french toast and burritos.

## WHAT IS SAFER FUTURES?

**Safer Futures** is 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.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT FROM COWICHAN GREEN COMMUNITY

With funding from the Vancouver Island Health Authority, the Cowichan Green Community is working toward a Community Food Action Plan. The goal is to help local communities to develop a health food system – Food Security - for the Valley. Key organizations include the Food Bank, Our Eco Village, Community Kitchens and the Clements Society. Focus groups involving local producers, purchasers and consumers, local government and economic development groups are in the works.

The Green Community is also winding up this year's FruitSave. Volunteers have been harvesting back yard fruit to take to the Food Bank, House of Friendship and the Community Options Society. If you have fruit to spare from your trees please call **Amy Rienzo** at **748-8506**.

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