

# kardel connector

SPRING 2013

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Curt Tyrrell and Steven White

Photo by Kris Gower

## Celebrate Spring!

### New Logo

With Strategic Planning accomplished, it was time for a new look for Kardel's logo! And here it is!

Each of the coloured spokes represents one of Kardel's programs: Group Homes, Day Programs, ISN, Home Share, Administration, and Community Response Team.

## Sean Bartram, Kardel Reporter, Interviews ISN



Sean

**Sean:** What does ISN stand for?

**ISN (Mark):** ISN stands for Individual Support Network.

**Sean:** What does ISN mean to you?

**ISN (Kerry-Ann):** Lots of people that will take time out of their day to come be with you during both good and bad times.

**Sean:** What does your average day look like?

**ISN (Sean L.):** I go to Beacon Hill Park to feed the ducks, play cricket, go to music at Namaste, go out for coffee, take the city bus, and go exercising.

**Sean:** What are some things that the others on your team do?

**ISN (everyone):** To name a few things: we volunteer at various places, have day jobs, go swimming, cook, do paper routes, and make crafts.



Photo by Kris Gower

Here are some of the ISN Crew!

# Tom Dash August 20, 1941—April 12, 2013

## I AM THOMAS DASH



Sunshine, trees, water – these are the things that make me happy. I like to go for long walks, or a picnic in the park. I like to soak up the sun and to study light effects in my mirror. I like the play of light through the leaves on trees and the glistening reflections of rays of sun off water in the ocean or in lakes, in the pool or off the ice at the ice-rink. I like things that shine. I like light contrasts in a dark room and I like the feel of the sun on my skin. I like the sun.

For most of my life I was able to walk and explore these things for myself. Now I am more dependent on you to help me get around. And although I'm a man of few words, I'm very good at communicating my wishes. I'm also open to suggestions – going out for coffee or maybe a meal is guaranteed to be a great experience for both of us. You may have gathered that I'm not too crazy about the cold—so somewhere warm and dry is always good. There are some great coffee shops and restaurants within easy walking distance of my house.

Throughout my life, living in places like Glendale and later sharing Prairie House with my roommates before coming to live at Maryland, I have been known for my skills as a musician. I can become completely wrapped up in my compositions and love my keyboard. Lately, I have been exploring the drums and joined others on the piano. Who knows how far my interests and talent will take me?

I like my roommates and have forged strong bonds with all of them. I sometimes share a joke with my staff or kick some balls around for fun. Hey I like fun.

### A Collaborative Affair by Bev Preuss

I have been supporting Jaime Sarvi for six months now, and not only is she a beautiful person, but also an extremely creative artist. When the Art Show was first mentioned, she jumped at the chance to have an entry. And so it began.

Colours, materials, textures and an art room with a plethora of stuff to dig through. Everyone was involved; my kids, grandkids, husband, myself ... and the coordinator, Jaime. All the colours were picked and the painting was done by Jaime. I was the glue gun girl. Just when I thought we were done, Jaime said "No, we need whales", hence the search on the Internet for the right ones ensued. At last it's done. Please enjoy!

Jaime's art will be on display at the Pandora Art Collective Art Show, 1923 Fernwood, beginning May 24th.



Jaime has loaned this beautiful artwork to the Kardel office for 3 months – please come and see how it looks with the lights off and the black light on!

## Celebrating Our Own!

### Barb Fisher

I started working in this field in 1967. In August after I finished high school I approached the Sooke School Board asking for a job working with kids. I bugged them every other day until they relented and offered me a two-week position helping the new kindergarten kids at Savory School make the transition from home to school less traumatic, making me the first TA in Sooke School district. This became a two day per week position and they also offered me a three day per week job at Dogwood School in Langford. That was at a time when students with disabilities still had their own special schools and the wages were \$1.10 per hour. The next three years I worked five days a week at Dogwood where I ran the senior class. I sometimes see my former students in the community or hear that they're living in some of the group homes in our area.

One of the highlights for me during this time was attending the first-ever Special Olympics held June 9, 1969 in Toronto. Each province sponsored students and staff from the various schools to attend and they flew everyone to Toronto and put them up at the York Hotel. The principal of Dogwood and I each took one student and came home with a Silver medal in swimming. What an amazing opportunity that was.

In 1996, when my own kids were well on their way, I went back to school to become a certified TA. I did my practicum in a small private school and then spent the next three years working in their high school. During my last year there I got a part-time job working in a group home. I was hooked! I found my passion! That June I resigned my job at the school and worked full-time at the group home. My work life was now almost perfect.

When Kardel took over the home I worked in I was so lucky to be hired by a most amazing agency. I immediately felt at home with their values. All was right with my work life now!

After about 1 ½ years of working for Kardel, my family and I decided to also become Homeshare providers. We got to know Kevin when I first started working in group homes. Soon I was introduced to his Mom while I was supporting him with home visits. We all became very fond of each other and realized we worked well as a team in helping Kevin lead a good life. We trust each other and have a positive relationship. When it came time to have someone move in with us there was no doubt as to who that special person should be. We are all so lucky.

### Patrick Callow

Patrick Callow receives his Bachelor of Education this Spring from the University of Victoria.

Patrick started with Kardel in 2006 as a CSW, quickly becoming a valued team member. He juggled work and school schedules to accomplish his goal of becoming a teacher and hopes to work with elementary school children.



Congratulations, Patrick, and good luck in your new career from all of us at Kardel – you've made us proud!



Barb Fisher

# Karaoke Night

We had a great turnout for the first Kardel Karaoke Night on March 13<sup>th</sup> at Sopranos. Great singing, great food and service were enjoyed by all. Food is available until 9 pm, and Karaoke begins at 9 pm.

More Karaoke to come TBA!

Peter Bourne would like to invite everyone to his 66th birthday party at Sopranos on October 9<sup>th</sup>!



Left: Patsy Wood singing "I Feel Like a Woman" by Shania Twain, with Curt Tyrrell and Jennifer Andreen as backup singers!



Right: Renn Butler, Jackie Gandy and Curt Tyrrell enjoy the singing.



Congratulations to Futures Club team member Jose Ramirez and his wife Catherine Moreno on their beautiful baby boy ,Thomas, born December 31st, 2012!  
  
What a wonderful way to welcome the New Year

**SIGNED ENGLISH CLASSES for 2013 and 2014**

**Provided by Dorothy Tait**

**Classes are held Mondays from 4:45pm to 6:30pm**

**Place: Room 205, 2951 Tillicum Road Victoria BC V9A 2A6. (KARDEL Board Room)**

**Cost: \$65.00 per Level**

**Signed English Level 1**

**Dates: September 9, 2013 – November 4, 2013 (except October 7, 2013)**

**Signed English Level 2**

**Dates: January 6, 2014 – March 3 (except February 10, 2014),**

**REGISTER EARLY AS CLASSES FILL UP QUICKLY**

**To register please call Dorothy Tait at 250-642-4102. If you leave a message, please leave your name, number and a time you can be reached, or email [dorothy.cst@shaw.ca](mailto:dorothy.cst@shaw.ca). Payment should be made at least one week ahead of the first class. Cheques are made out to Dorothy Tait and mailed to 2104 Otter Ridge Drive, Sooke, BC.V9Z 1E5**



Three members of our fabulous Management Team  
Left to Right: Helen Thorne, Shelly Norbury and Janice Bradley



Left to Right: Barb Delbrouck and Lindsey Stoddart

## Training—Gentle Teaching

The Gentle Teaching workshop was offered in Victoria on March 26th, and again on March 27th by SIEC (the South Island Education Committee). The two presenters, Cam Dore and Dave Lappin, (Co-Executive Directors of the H.O.M.E. Society in Abbotsford) each have many years of community living experience and mentoring Gentle Teaching. Dave Lappin has also trained with Gentle Teaching Founder, Dr. John McGee, and in 2002 became a certified Gentle Teaching Mentor. Gentle Teaching leads us to question who we are, why we do what we do, and how we deepen and spread a spirit of gentleness in ourselves and others.



Left to Right: Marcella Cadwell, Pat Gray, and Lucille Porlares



Left to Right: Barb Delbrouck, Tracy Bruno and Jen Neely

## Workshops

November 2012—"Goals , Goals"— 12 staff and Managers learned about sharpening their skills to ensure accurate assessments and planning processes, to maximize opportunities for individuals' success.

March 26/27 "Gentle Teaching" - 10 staff and Managers attended

Mandt and First Aid courses continue to be offered to staff every few months. (A big Thank You to Ken Passmore and Warren Delaney for their years of commitment to outstanding staff training!)

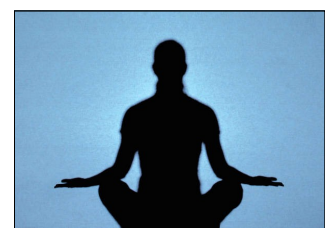
Leadership meetings for our Management team have been facilitated by Cathy Elford since last fall. They have been an inspiring addition for all participants!

## Wellness

Free Yoga is offered Tuesdays at 4:30pm in the Kardel Board Room, led by Carla Hunt, yoga instructor. RSVP the day before to [jandreen@kardel87.com](mailto:jandreen@kardel87.com) or leave a message o at 250-382-5959 ext. 221, to ensure you have a spot.

## Team Connections

The new "Team Connections" group facilitated by Kimberley Albrighton has been meeting regularly and is working toward creating an even better workplace for all! A big thank you to Kimberley, Jenn Noullette, Andrina Forslund, Olga Andino, Mark Bamford, Carla Hunt, Bev Preuss, and Maelene Krausnick for your hard work!



# Futures Club Taco Salad

Serves 12 – 15



Taco Salad! - yum!

## Taco Beef

3 pounds extra-lean beef	4 tsp. minced garlic
2 cups chopped red onions	6 tbsp. taco seasoning (below)
2 cups chopped green pepper	2/3 cup ketchup
1 1/3 cup reduced sodium beef broth	

## Chunky Avocado Salsa

2 cups quartered tomatoes	4 tbsp. freshly squeezed lime juice
4 lge. avocados, peeled, pitted & diced	2 tsp. sugar
1 1/3 cup minced red onions	1/2 tsp each salt & freshly ground black pepper

## Spiced Sour Cream

2 cups light (5%) sour cream	1 tsp taco seasoning (recipe below)
2 tsp. freshly squeezed lime juice	1/4 tsp. grated lime zest

## Salad

24 cups chopped romaine or mixed lettuce	2 cups canned black beans, drained & rinsed
2 cups canned corn, drained	2 cups packed shredded light sharp/old cheddar cheese

## Taco Seasoning

8 tsp, chili powder	1 tsp. salt
3 tsp. ground cumin	1 tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. garlic powder	2 tsp. paprika
1 tsp. ground coriander	2 tsp. sugar
1/2 tsp. onion powder	

**Taco beef:** Cook beef, onions, green pepper and garlic in a large (12-inch) non-stick skillet over medium-high heat until beef is no longer pink and vegetables are tender, about 8 minutes. Stir often and break up large pieces of meat as it cooks. Do not drain. Sprinkle taco seasoning over beef, add broth and ketchup. Mix well. Reduce heat to medium and cook mixture, uncovered, for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and keep warm.

**Chunky Avocado Salsa:** Gently toss together all ingredients in a medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use. Note: This salsa tastes best if made just before serving.

**Spiced Sour Cream:** Mix together all ingredients in a small bowl. Refrigerate until ready to use.

**Salad:** To assemble salad (individual servings or on a large platter), layer ingredients in the following order: lettuce, taco beef, corn, black beans, cheese, sour cream, avocado salsa, cheese, sour cream.

**Taco Seasoning:** Makes enough for this recipe. You may wish to double the amount and store the rest in an airtight container for future use.



Cissy and Sean serve lunch!



## Jay McNeil interviews Iggy Pelkey about Futures Club

**Jay:** So when did you start attending Futures Club and what was it like starting out there?

**Iggy:** In 2010 I graduated from Stelly's Secondary school and started going to Futures Club right away. I was very shy and nervous at first but soon saw how hard the staff and participants were trying to make me feel welcome. I quickly started to view Futures Club as a second family and my shyness went away.

**Jay:** It sounds like you really enjoy the people here. What about them do you like so much?

**Iggy:** Yes I do. I like that they are straightforward with me and support me when I am having a rough day. They are all very trustworthy and always do their best to make me feel welcome.



Iggy

**Jay:** Cool. What kind of stuff do you do during an average week at Futures?

**Iggy:** During the week I do things like volunteer at James Bay Community Center, go on the computer, listen to music, learn photography, help with the Kardel Connector, do numerous paper routes, act in our theatre group and help with meal preparations for the weekly hot lunch we have.

**Jay:** And what other things do people get to participate in there?

**Iggy:** Lots. People go swimming, to the gym for Hockey and Aerobics, for walks, to dances, to other life skills groups such as "sign language" and "stranger danger", and sometimes take trips to places like the museum, Imax, and Vancouver Aquarium.

**Jay:** Awesome! What are the top 3 things you have done within the last year?

**Iggy:** I really enjoyed going to the Vancouver Aquarium, participating in theatre group, and learning about my camera in our photography club.

**Jay:** What are you looking forward to right now?

**Iggy:** I'm looking forward to displaying/selling the photographs I have been taking in Photography club.

**Jay:** Cool! Where will you sell them?

**Iggy:** We are going to make cards out of them and sell them at the Kardel Office (and maybe another place).

**Jay:** Sweet. Do you mind putting into words what Futures Club means to you?

**Iggy:** To me, Futures club means support, friendship and Self Improvement.

**Jay:** Why would you recommend Futures club to someone who might be looking for a day Program?

**Iggy:** Because it is a fun-loving place where they can make great friends and learn valuable life skills.

**JULY 31<sup>ST</sup> - KARDEL BARBECUE — Save the Date**

Join us for lunch or dinner, or both! There will be great food, games, and lots of fun! Bring your family and friends!  
Site to be announced later.

## Photos by Sean Bartram



Photography teacher Kris Gower says Sean was eager to join when he heard a photography club was starting up.

Sean enjoys photographing nature and animals best .

He is incredibly interested in learning the technical side of taking photos –his favourite days are when Kris teaches theory, explaining the internal workings of the camera and how to get the most out of them.



Kris says “Sean is always full of tons of questions, always making sure he fully understands the answer before moving on to the next.”

Sean is “a very creative person, “ says Kris, “specifically when it comes to writing. He spends a lot of his spare time writing stories and sharing them amongst various online communities which he belongs to - his favourite genre of writing is called "Fan Fiction".

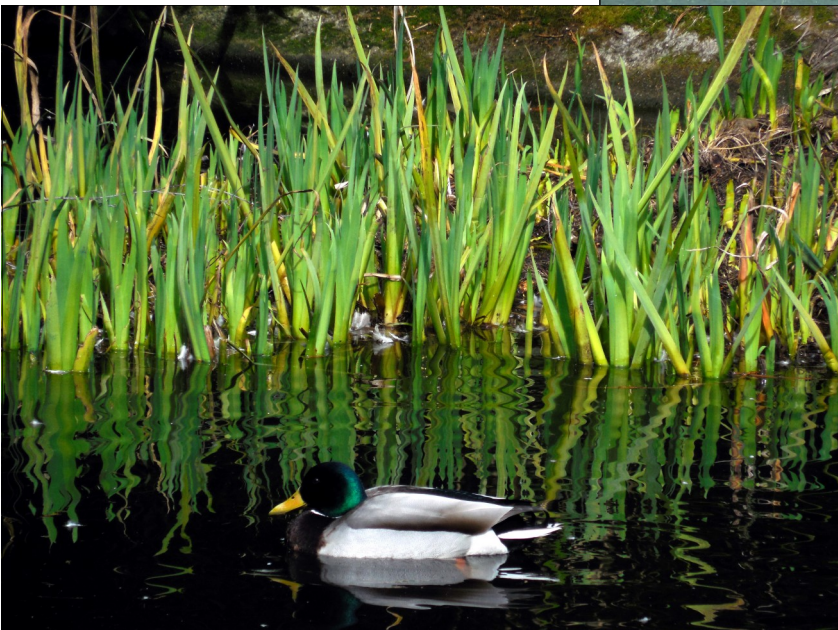
# Photos by Iggy Pelkey



At Iggy's annual PCP (Person-Centred Planning) meeting, he mentioned he was interested in saving to purchase a camera (he saved and bought a Nikon)- and participating in a weekly photo club.

Kris Gower says "Creating an interesting image came very naturally to Iggy. His favourite thing to photograph is people - and we are working on the best ways to approach subjects in the street and ask if they would mind him photographing them.

Iggy's favorite image is the one of "Boss" the guitarist."



Kris Gower reports that "Iggy is very artistic by nature and enjoys many forms of art, such as music with a lot of "feeling" and poetry. He is incredibly creative with words."

*Iggy's and Sean's goal right now is to create a gallery of photos that they can print and make into greeting cards, which will hopefully be on sale at the Kardel office, as well as maybe a few markets and events.*

## Dustin Time

by Ken Passmore

- Don Kimura got his game on. He cheered the Victoria Cougars to a successful playoff run and has the team hat and hoodie to prove it.
- Julie – continues to go out with her Mom most weekends and has enjoyed several sleepovers at her family home.
- Wayne Ballantyne, International Man of Leisure, was a Tourist in his own Town, staying at a local hotel for a couple of nights.
- Caitlin enjoyed getting away to a downtown hotel. She loves the good life and this overnight stay was a chance to live it up.
- Kara goes on regular outings with her family – brunch with grandparents, trips to the mall and family dinners at Dad's house. She is already planning her summer birthday party.



Don's definitely a ten-pin bowler!



Wayne checks out the Maritime Museum.



Caitlin's huge chocolate and berry filled crepe.

## Changes to Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has made changes to the rules governing withdrawals from the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). As a result, RDSP holders have more choices about what they can use withdrawals from their Plan for without impacting their eligibility for provincial disability benefits (PWD or PPMB). According to the new policy, RDSP holders can use withdrawals in various ways without jeopardizing their benefits.

For more information, go to [http://www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online\\_resource/verification\\_and\\_eligibility/assets/policy.html](http://www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource/verification_and_eligibility/assets/policy.html) or phone toll free 1-800-663-1278

## ONE DAY— September 7th, 2013, 11:00am to 3:00pm at Topaz Park

Becon Support Services, Community Living Victoria, Community Living BC, Integra Support Services, Kardel and Recreation Integration Victoria are teaming up again to kick off Community Living Month in Victoria! Community Living Month is a time when communities across Canada host events to celebrate the abilities and achievements of people living with disabilities.

This FIFTH annual ONE DAY is a celebration of our diversity, community, humanity. A day to play together, dance together, and eat together. There will be a ball tournament that EVERYONE can play, Children's Fun Zone, prizes, refreshments BBQ lunch, live music and dancing, performances, local celebrities, your friends, my friends, our friends. ONE DAY. We are ONE.

If you're interested in reserving table space at One Day 2013's "Marketplace," where people who make art can display and sell their creations, contact Jason at [jfalk@beconsupport.ca](mailto:jfalk@beconsupport.ca).

For more information about the event, please visit [www.onedaytogether.com](http://www.onedaytogether.com) or email



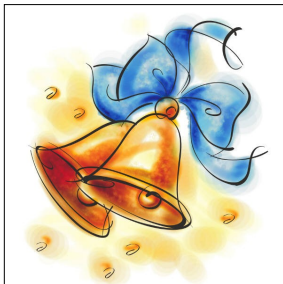
### Disneyland, Here We Come! by Jennifer Johnson

Jennifer Johnson and Melanie Hall travelled to Disneyland in December 2012. Our friend Gayle joined us on the trip as well.

Mel's first trip to Disneyland was a huge success! She went on all the rides and loved it! Her favourite ride was It's a Small World and her favourite character was Minnie.

Our next vacation is a cruise to Alaska in May 2013.

Left to Right: Gayle, Eeyore, Jennifer and Melanie.



Congratulations to Vicki Thibault on her marriage on February 23rd, 2013, to Leon van Eeghem.

Congratulations to Vicki Cordick on her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday on-May 1<sup>st</sup>!

A lunch was held at Red Robin to celebrate this milestone birthday. In this photo, Vicki's checking out a gift!



## A Poem from Patterson House

by Bruce Clark and Jace Ford

Fifteen changes of shirts and pants then Ken is doing the fashion dance.  
 It's off to program for Kenny Wong where he drinks coffee all day long.  
 We're going to the favorite spot Doug and Shirley like to walk.  
 Doug is yelling airplane while Shirley plugs her ears again.  
 Doug and Shirley love the drive it makes them both feel alive.  
 Heading home it's just a hunch think Doug and Shirley want their lunch.  
 Shift change time: Here we go door opens up we hear Hellooooooo.  
 Dinner all made the salads tossed Shelly calculates the cost. LOL  
 Thanks for reading Thanks for sharing  
 To one and all thanks for CARING

## The Mandt Minute

by Ken Passmore

Bullying is a topic that we are bombarded with in our daily lives. There is rarely a day where we do not discuss, become aware of or experience bullying ourselves. The reason Bullying is so pervasive in our society is because we have allowed it, accepted it and in many cases used it ourselves. Most people want to be respected, popular and get attention. People who bully use fear, anger, intimidation, shame, belittlement and condescension to feel superior, get attention and feel popular.

By treating people with dignity and respect we can help to build people up. Treating people with dignity and respect over time tends to develop healthy relationships. In healthy relationships we experience positive attention, enlarge our social circles and begin to learn about and like ourselves. Creating and cultivating healthy relationships is a tool that we can use to combat bullying. In healthy relationships people thrive, learn and expand their horizons – a bully stays away from people in healthy relationships.

Bullying should not be considered a normal part of life.



## SABF Conference—June 18th and 19th, 2013

SABF (Self Advocates for a Brighter Future), is proud to announce our second conference, “My Community Too”, by Self Advocates for Self Advocates, in Victoria. The conference will be held in Emmanuel Baptist Church on Cedar Hill Cross Road.

Like our last conference, this one promises to be lots of fun and have some excellent speakers. We're finalizing details and will send out complete information on how to attend shortly.

You can check out the SABF website as well at [www.sabf.ca](http://www.sabf.ca).



# Lakes Volunteer - Owen Lucina

by Colleen Dally

Owen Lucina began volunteering at Lakes on November 28th, 2012. Five months later, he became our employee!

Owen was born in the Philippines and has two sisters. He has a caregiving certificate and was studying nursing in an OT program. Owen came to Canada to better his future in September 2006. His friends in the Philippines were surprised when he moved here. He currently works at Tim Horton's, Walmart, Lakes, and helps with a house-cleaning business.

Owen is a gentle, peaceful person who loves to help. He quickly became involved with everyone at Lakes and he loves going to Monday Music, therapeutic riding and for community walks.

Here is the remarkable thing... Owen likes cleaning windows! Our cat Angel repeatedly jumps up against the patio windows to tell us she wants in. Her paw marks range from 3-4 feet off the ground. Most staff are content to leave these marks to see if Angel can beat her previous record. Owen cleans them!

Owen loves to sing and garden. He is an animal lover and his favourite food is Filipino food. His dream is to have permanent full-time employment and become a Canadian citizen.

We are delighted to have Owen join our team!



Top Right: Owen cleans Angel's paw prints!  
Bottom Right: Owen and Jason



Left: Jason Smith, 6-year Volunteer at Lakes, enjoying ice cream—a definite sign of Summer!

**April was National Volunteer Recognition Month.**  
**Kardel's thanks to ALL our wonderful Volunteers, who make life better for the people supported by Kardel, their staff and their families!**

## Welcome Kim!

We would like to introduce Kim Lichtensteiger to the Kardel team

Kim started with Kardel in November 2012, in the Accounts Payable Department. She is now transitioning to a Home Share Coordinator role.

Kim has years of experience supporting individuals with developmental disabilities, both at Glendale and in group homes.

She comes to us with a Professional Business Management Diploma and a background in retail management supporting a staff team.

Welcome Kim! We are very lucky to have you!



## Volunteer Harold with Patsy at Silver Threads

by Laurie Bradford



Harold Peffers worked with Patsy at Henry House for many years, and accompanied her to the Silver Threads dinners twice a month.

When he left Henry House, Harold continued to meet Patsy at Silver Threads.

Harold still meets Patsy once a month at Silver Threads, where they enjoy their friendship, good food, and a social evening on the town!

Thanks, Harold!



## Karl Egner, CEO

Dear Reader

It's been a while since I've occupied a space in our newsletter. There are a few updates that are noteworthy and that I would like to share. As many of you may know, in recent months Kardel has been working on its strategic plan for 2012 – 2015. The development of the plan began with survey information, stakeholder focus groups, the creation of a Strategic Plan Steering Committee, and a one-day planning session in November of last year, attended by families, direct care and management staff, CLBC representatives, Home Share Providers and people supported. A special acknowledgement goes to Stuart Munger (Director, Quality Assurance) and Stacy Barter (Consultant) for their planning and execution.



Five strategic objectives were identified through this process.

- Enhance team building, leadership development, and engagement
- Develop staff recruitment, retention, and succession strategies
- Create strategies to better support an aging and changing population
- Develop greater resource innovation and efficiency
- Expand and innovate existing activities and services

One of the outcomes of this process is the development of a new internal decision and action structure, one which includes a broader representation of staff and will facilitate our achievement of the Strategic Plan objectives.

- Labour/Management Group
- Team Connections Group
- Joint Occupational Health & Safety Group
- Manager's Group
- Strategic Action Group

The terms of reference for these groups have been developed and it is through their work that Kardel will deliver the desired Strategic Plan outcomes and, of course, continue the tradition supporting people with disabilities as we have done for 25 years. I think that people are bringing a great energy to this work and I'm very much looking forward to our collaboration.

The next update is from the Labour Relations front. Bargaining proceeded under the terms of Government's Cooperative Gains mandate, in which compensation increases needed to be offset by cost-savings within each bargaining sector. Fortunately for all concerned, job action was minimal in this round. This presumably reflected a recognition that there were few, if any, sectoral savings that could be generated and that individual employers themselves have no latitude within the funding structure. We've already endured years of cost reduction and constraint.

The bargaining teams have reached a tentative settlement for our sector, which is expected to be ratified. The new agreement calls for a modest wage increase for bargaining unit employees of 1.5% effective April 1, 2013 and a second 1.5% increase on January 1, 2014. An additional 1% (\$0.155) increment will apply to Step 1 (the lowest step - \$15.54) of the wage grid. While the agreement itself seems reasonable, I and other agency EDs and CEOs have expressed our anxiety about funding commitments from government in support of the new agreement.

This agreement will end March 31, 2014. Round and round we go.

## Karl Egner, CEO

The next thing on the horizon is, of course, the Provincial election. As most of you will be aware, CLBC has endured considerable criticism over the past year or so and has sought to make changes based on an internal review by government. While there may be some inconsistencies in how decisions have been made at CLBC, and the Acting CEO acknowledged they had “lost their way”, it seems to me that what’s at the heart of the matter is a government funding mechanism that hasn’t recognized the annual growth in the population to be served by CLBC, compounded by a cycle of fiscal restraint, and perhaps an idealistic or unrealistic perception on the part of Government regarding the real cost of services.

In February Minister Stilwell said the government is 1 year into a 12 point, 18 month plan to “fix Community Living BC” (plan is available on the CLBC website), but perhaps more telling are comments from the Minister about more belt tightening. The Ministry of Social Development plans to drastically reduce the average amount of money it spends per person on adults with disabilities over the next three years, but at the same time they’re going to “be as innovative and client-centred as [they] can be”(Feb 20, 2013). It doesn’t sound all that promising. There are no doubt interesting times ahead, but sooner or later all this talk of “innovation”, “creativity”, and “client-centredness” will have to give way to predictable commitments of hard dollars. I say “predictable” because it seems like it’s been forever that the transition to adult services has been a struggle for children and their families. Both CLBC and service providers have been working to develop rational costing/funding models and practices. Surely a system that offers predictability and continuity is neither unreasonable nor unattainable.

Stepping down from the provincial to the regional level, I feel a strong sense of commitment and leadership in the work of the regional CLBC staff. Clearly the perspectives of service providers, families, and CLBC are not always perfectly aligned. Challenging and sometimes divisive issues can arise. From my perspective however, there is an underlying integrity and dedication to collectively doing the best we can, both through mutual support and some “give and take”. I think the same can be said of the service provider community in this region. Despite challenging times for service agencies, it remains, by and large, a collaborative and collegial network that serves our region well and we should try to protect and strengthen our regional cohesion.

Moving now to another matter that sometimes receives public attention, I will add a brief comment. This matter has to do with the Health Benefits Trust and the role of the Provincial Government in its operations. There have been a series of articles, one as recent as April 7, in which I, and Kardel, have been specifically mentioned. I find that the articles have been informative and well written, considering that the matter is not particularly straightforward. The Health Benefits Trust is the organization that provides employee benefits to agencies in our sector and it is the Long Term Disability benefit that has been particularly problematic. Kardel and dozens of other agencies around the province have been trying for years to deal with the issue of a liability (shortfall in the pool that makes benefit payments on behalf of employees) created jointly by HBT and the Provincial government. Our efforts to come to an acceptable resolution with HBT and the Province have failed. HBT has already filed suits against some agencies, in an effort to download onto agencies the shortfall within the pool of funds that pays out the employee benefits (the alleged “debt”). As a result, agencies have themselves now taken the fairly dramatic step of filing a lawsuit against HBT and the Province.

I’ve offered this very brief summary only as assurance to anyone who might be concerned that services provided by Kardel or any other involved agency may be in jeopardy in some way. This has nothing to do with service delivery; it’s fundamentally about trying to get a fully insured Long Term Disability in which the full cost of claims is covered by the insurer, and **the employer’s liability in the matter ends with the payment of the monthly premiums**, as opposed to paying the premiums and being stuck with the ongoing cost of claims for which the “insurer” has not properly accounted.

## Karl Egner, CEO

I'd like to close with a few words on a more individual note, a note having nothing to do with strategic plans, elections, government policy and funding, labour relations, or Employer's battles over Long Term Disability deficits, but one that resonates in the heart of community living. As I was preparing this newsletter contribution on Friday afternoon, my phone rang and I heard a voice that I immediately recognized, but it seemed a little weaker and more strained. It was the Manager of one of the group homes calling me from the hospital with a "heads up".

A person we have supported for a very long time had slipped within a matter of a little more than a week, from subtle changes in demeanor, to medical assessment, hospitalization, a diagnosis of liver cancer, and to palliative care with an expectation that he would not make it through the weekend. In his disoriented state and unfamiliar surroundings the dying man was afraid and resistive to the ministrations of unfamiliar people. Her compassion for this man, the strength of her commitment to keep him safe and at peace, at the expense of her own personal circumstances – these things are characteristic – not just to ease the passing of a dying man but they envelope the daily lives of all of those who come into her care in this home.

It was the emotion and the fatigue in the voice that struck me as she kept her "Manager hat" on to give me a "heads up" that the staffing schedules and costs would look unusual because they were trying desperately to keep someone familiar in the hospital room during the final days, while at the same time juggling the staffing in the home. Night shift cancellations are particularly challenging. I well know from past experience her competence as a nurse, Manager, and advocate, but also know that overtime and "overwork" were no stranger to her.

To cut to the end of this account, I abandoned my newsletter submission (no doubt the reader will recognize the tremendous sacrifice in this), and headed for the hospital. I found the room and noticed that group home staff had applied some decorative touches you probably wouldn't ordinarily see on a palliative care ward. Most notably was a string of lights draped around the room and over the bed. These were brought from the man's bedroom along with pictures, his favorite fleece jacket by his head, his "flasher" (a hand mirror) and a recording of "Blue Danube" in the portable player at his bedside. His bed was oriented diagonally in the room to afford him a view of the trees in his beloved outdoors. The Manager was standing at his bedside. To borrow from the song by Julie Andrews (surely you all remember) "these are a few of his favorite things". Who knows why these things hold value, even fascination – the fact is, for him they do. So, you try to use the few things that you have some control over and hope that they can render a peaceful passing.

Now, I've had a lot to say about this particular group home Manager and it would be a gross injustice if I ended here, without reference to the other dedicated and compassionate people, who over many years have brought comfort, pleasure and love into the lives of those in the home. And at the end, they freely and often stood by the Manager and stood by the bedside, when only by their mere presence might they still hope to find some avenue of connection and comfort.

So that's the note. A sad note, but a powerful, very personal kind of note. I'm not saying that what I've described here is necessarily extraordinary. It's the way we want it to be and the way we believe it is for the most part; that people have good lives and that they have an opportunity to form secure, lasting relationships and that the "giving and getting" from a relationship flows equally in both directions.

I just wanted to take a moment to recognize it, to celebrate the people and the relationships. Governments and their derivative authorities don't create this by their planning, public policy, and funding allocations. Individuals do this on their own. We just don't want governments to get in the way.



**RIP Thomas Dash**

**August 20, 1941 – April 12, 2013**



#### Vision

Kardel's vision is a community where all members live a full life, feel included and are given equal opportunity to make empowered choices in their lives.

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Our Contributors to the May 2013 issue of the Kardel Connector are legion! Thank you All! What a team!

Special thanks to Sean Bartram and Iggy Pelkey, part of the Futures Club, who contributed their excellent photographic talents and their interview skills to the newsletter. Also thanks to their Mentor, Kris Gower (*kris@kristopherjamesphotography.com*), who teaches photography as part of his work at Futures and has also contributed HIS amazing photos to the Kardel Connector.

Thanks to Jennifer Andreen, for taking over the Editor's role from Jen Neely, and finding so many good stories for this issue. Tracy Bruno provided support, and we thank all the Kardel contributors, who sent in their wonderful photographs and stories.

We are offering a special incentive for our Fall issue, We're looking for innovative stories for the newsletter, so please send us your ideas. The winner will receive a \$40 gift card to Thrifty Foods. Please send your ideas to Jennifer Andreen at [jan-dreen@kardel87.com](mailto:jan-dreen@kardel87.com) or co-editor Sharon Sinclair at [ssinclair2@shaw.ca](mailto:ssinclair2@shaw.ca). Deadline is September 1st, 2013.

We all wish you a wonderful sun-filled Summer!