



Volunteer Newsletter of the
Community Justice Centre

“Justice is our middle name”

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United Nations UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

CJC taking on Art(icles) for MusicFest panels

December 10, 2008 is the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. So Music Fest is developing a community outreach project around this anniversary to include the whole community. The CJC has been asked to join twenty-nine other individuals and organizations in taking on the design and painting of one panel. Each panel will focus on one of the 30 articles contained in the Universal Declaration, and each group has been asked to think of further rights they would like to see considered as a hypothetical “Article 31” – incorporating human rights that ought to be protected. The completed panels will be displayed at Music Fest this summer, and then they will either go on permanent display somewhere in the Valley or be auctioned off to private collectors.

Members of the CJC who choose to work on our panel will be eligible for a valuable prize pack, including tickets to this summer's Music Fest, running from July 11 – 13th – it doesn't get any better than that!

We are currently looking to make arrangements with one or two artists to design the panels, then we'll get together for a painting party to finish them up and get them to MusicFest for display. So, if you can manage to “paint-by-numbers”, plan to kick off the summer on the afternoon of Sunday, June 22nd from 1 PM by painting our two panels and enjoying a free BBQ at Bruce Curtis's house in Comox. Come along for a couple of hours, or the whole afternoon!

The two panels we will be doing relate to our work at the Centre. Article 1 reads: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.* Our second panel incorporates the listing of the grounds on which all human beings ought to be free from discrimination: *race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*

So we know how many paint brushes to have on hand, and, of course, to ensure we have enough food and drink for the BBQ, please let us know if you plan to attend. Leave a message at the justice Centre, 334-8101 saying how many you will be bringing with you. Feel free to bring the whole family.

New President Elected by CJC Board

Following the resignation of Dr. Lori Carpenter as President of the CJC due to work pressures, there has been a realignment of the table officer positions at the CJC Board of Directors and a new member.

Aniel Dato has been elected President, with Rick Clough taking on the role of Vice-President and Russ Arnott assuming the role of Board Secretary. Aniel is a young lawyer with Swift Dato and is serving his second year. Rick Clough is a retired educator, in his third year. Russ Arnott is with the Coast Guard base at Cape Lazo.

Joining the Board is Frank Assu, a Kwakwaka'wakw cultural leader and educational assistant in the Comox Valley Schools. He is pursuing his teaching degree.

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Anti-racism project trains first STD Facilitators

CJC's involvement in the Critical Incident Response Steering Committee's anti-racism project has resulted in a new resource for the Centre: a fully trained panel of Short-term Transformative Dialogue Facilitators.

Nine people applied to participate in the training, held for two days in April, and will now serve on a roster for the next two years. In principle, the roster will receive referrals of cases involving cases alleging racism, homophobia and hate crimes, if the case is not being prosecuted through legal channels.

STD facilitation is a restorative justice related approach to our existing work with resolution conferences and the peacemaking circles practices of our colleagues in the Denman Hornby Peacemakers group, which is affiliated with the Centre. The main difference with STD facilitation is that the objective is not to reach a consensus agreement on remedy and restitution, but

rather to fundamentally transform the understanding of victim and offender about the nature of the incident and the underlying stereotypes and perceptions rooted in the participants' discriminatory attitudes.

Those being certified following the training were: Andy Stringfellow (past president of CJC and current Chair of the Critical Incident Response Steering Committee); Aniel Dattoo (current CJC President); Adrian Symonds, Laurel Watson and Wendy Pope (CJC Resolution Conference facilitators); Monika Grunberg (private practice counsellor); Serena Patterson (NIC psychology/womens' studies instructor); Denis Evan (criminal lawyer); and Bruce Curtis (CJC Administrator).

The training was delivered by CentrePoint's Maureen Fitzgerald, adapted from her model of an expedited peacemaking circle which she has previously applied in the corporate sector for work-place conflict resolution.

CJC welcomes the Island RJ Group for June Meeting

We have invited The Vancouver Island RJ Group, composed of volunteers from each of the RJ agencies on the Island, to hold their next meeting here on Monday, June 23rd. (Exact starting time will be announced).

Because our particular RJ model differs in many ways from most of the others, they have expressed interest in seeing our facilities; hearing how we operate; and – in particular – how we're funded. Should you be interested in attending to learn about the many and various restorative justice initiatives that are taking place on our island, please contact Lou at the office (334-8101 or by e-mail to cjc@shawbiz.ca). We will be meeting in the BCGEU Education Centre (across the lane from our office), and seating will be limited.

We often gather for lunch following to carry on informal discussions and gain new and useful insights into the work with which we are all engaged.

By the Numbers...

Statistics tell us part of the story of our success, stories tell the rest. Here are the statistics for the last two months. It's been a slow period, but the results have been positive!

Well done! and thanks to all the office assistants, case coordinators, panel members and facilitators who did this work!

March & April Statistics

New cases received	10
Resolution Conferences	4
Cases closed successfully	6
Cases closed unsuccessfully	4
Cases not accepted	0

Something "fishy" coming to CJC

Along with our regular business at the Centre, the increased prominence of our work in the local press has resulted in requests from new agencies to make referrals for conflict resolution. We have recently agreed to accept referrals from ICBC of cases involving insurance fraud, and the first two have not only been conference, but have now been closed successfully. The Regional District will begin to refer some cases involving by-law disputes sometime this month. And finally, we have received a request from the federal department of Oceans and Fisheries to refer cases involving conflicts arising under fisheries legislation.

Restorative Justice is increasingly seen as a more appropriate approach to solving a wider array of issues. And as the approach becomes more well understood, there is much greater interest in seeing how the CJC can assist in meeting our vision of promoting peace and harmony in the Comox Valley.

CJC Assists Cumberland Jr. with RJ Role Play

By Lou Cassivi, CJC Office Administrator

On Wednesday, 23 Apr, Sally Turner, Shona Fallon, Larry Winter, and I participated in an extraordinary experience at Cumberland Junior School: a Restorative Action Role Play Workshop with students and drama teacher, written and organized by Mark Hellman of Victoria.

Nationally-recognized theatre artist Mark Hellman, with over 25 years of experience in professional theatre, education, and community development, just last year joined RJ City of Victoria as a volunteer. With his expertise and initiative, he submitted to the Ministry of Public Safety/Solicitor General (CAP) for funds for a theatre project, the aim being to:

- 1) initiate interest in RJ in some schools;
- 2) help renew interest in other schools where interest may be flagging; and
- 3) provide an occasion for dialogue towards a Whole School Approach applying RJ.

Farewell to Wendy Vogels

Last week we bid farewell and thanks to six-year veteran panel member, Wendy Vogels. Wendy is off to greener pastures (well, perhaps not that much greener): Clearwater, BC, where she will be closer to family and friends.

With her passion for learning, Wendy decided that she wanted a degree, and followed through. In 2001, as a single mom, she completed her BA. Because of her passion for volunteerism, and apart from her dedication as one of our panel members, she has worked with the Adult Learning Centre as a tutor; and with the Crossroads Crisis Centre providing both telephone and face to face support to people in crisis. For the last six years she has also been with the Wachiya Friendship Centre.

Wendy joined us in 2002, and as well as being an active panel member, she became our first office cleaner in our present location, and only relinquished the position in January of this year. Our warmest and sincerest appreciation and best wishes, Wendy. Our loss is indeed Clearwater's gain. Should you wish to communicate with Wendy, her email is: wendy_vogels27@hotmail.com

A new feature commencing with this newsletter is a column dedicated to introducing new volunteers; saying thanks and farewell to retirees; and/ or highlighting one or two of our senior volunteers. Please help by composing a short bio of yourself to include those things you'd like (or wouldn't mind) others to read. -Lou

Meanwhile, the Vancouver Island RJ Group – composed of volunteers from most, if not all, RJ agencies on the Island – was in the process of selecting RJ/ RA in schools as its cause. The converging of the two could not possibly have occurred more serendipitously. The planets were obviously aligned. Early in 2008, The Greater Victoria RJ Resource Group received a \$10,000 grant.

With Bruce Curtis' help, Mark and Cumberland Jr's Mike Copes met and organized the first role play workshop.

To summarize the scenario: two male (junior school) students had broken into a female student's locker, took clothes, makeup and books; spread them around the floor and in the toilets; some of her clothes were found wet in the shower. Lipstick was used to write offensive remarks about her on a mirror.

The three youths and one respondent's parent were played by drama students; drama teacher, Karen Lihou, played the principal; Sally, the facilitator; Larry, (fittingly) played the police officer; Shona, the young lady complainant's mother, and I, one of the respondent's father. We were observed by about 10 students.

The students were marvellous. They read over their individual scenarios, put them down, and totally immersed themselves in the role play; they fed off one another's remarks; made up credible family relationships; and the young lady complainant actually ended up in tears. (An obvious tribute to their drama teacher).

Adding to the workshop's success was the fact that as part of Cumberland Jr's Student Personal Development Day, the students had just come from a mock court-room drama. They immediately experienced the difference and the advantage of the restorative action over the retributive. Discussions between the student actors and the audience were astute and positive.

To add icing to the cake (so to speak), the Home Ec. Dept. furnished a wonderful lunch for the day's participants. Kudos to every participant! A special thanks to the drama students and their teacher, Karen Lihou. This was indeed an auspicious launch of Mark Hellman's project and the Island RJ Group's cause to see restorative action in our schools.

If other members of the CJC are interested in an involvement with the schools, let Bruce know as we are sometimes invited to make presentations to classes and other groups.

RCMP briefs CJC on child exploitation in the computer age

Lou Cassivi, CJC Office Administrator

The issue of online sexual exploitation of children is one that has gained a greater profile over the past several years. The Internet has changed the way child sexual exploitation offences are committed, investigated and prosecuted. It has also destabilized the ability of Canada's criminal justice system to respond effectively to this type of criminal activity.

On 25 Feb 08, RCMP Superintendent Carla-Kim McColl, the Officer in Charge of the National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre in Ottawa, was the keynote speaker at the University College of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford. The topic: "Sexual Exploitation of Children: Global Phenomenon, Local Implications." In attendance was Cst Gerald Sherk from our CV detachment.

On Thursday, 17 Apr, Cst. Sherk met with interested CJC volunteers to relay what he had gained from the UCFV seminar, and to discuss his involvement in fighting child exploitation in the computer age.

He prefaced his presentation with a history of the internet: how it got started in 1969; how it grew from there; and where we are now. The statistics are staggering:

- English is the number one language on the internet, with 327 million (approx) users (as of Dec 07);
- In Mar 06, worldwide usage passed the one billion user mark, with the two billion user mark expected to be broken in 2011. (English, although no. 1 at present, is by no means the only language being used, and will soon be surpassed by Chinese);
- The estimated size of the Web ranges from 1 trillion pages to 20 trillion pages; and
- Two percent of those trillions of pages is porn.

Cst. Sherk then proceeded to describe how children – the majority of whom own or have access to computers – easily and unwittingly fall prey to sexual exploiters. Unmonitored children post an unending cache of personal information and pictures through chat rooms, social networking sites, (Facebook, Blogspot, etc). The rise in Web cam popularity contributes immensely to inappropriate use, and the speed in which predators ensnare children.

Predators use the internet to comb through chat rooms, and pose as friends on social networking sites. Within a few lines, they've discussed having sex and the possibility of meeting. If they feel it's not worth proceeding, they immediately move on to the next prospective victim.

Cst. Sherk described offenders as usually average and unassuming, and not greasy, dirty and unkempt as often portrayed. They are often family relatives or friends, about whom families may be unaware.

To the offender, using the internet to talk to children or to access child pornography is merely a step in the progress. Quoting Superintendent McColl, he added: "people don't collect hockey cards if they're not interested in hockey." His feeling, too, is that the term "child pornography" downplays the seriousness of the crime, and that it should be termed "child rape."

Cst. Sherk hopes eventually to be moved to the Integrated Child Exploitation unit in Surrey, with the ultimate goal of working with the National Child Exploitation Centre (NCEC) in Ottawa.

Our sincerest thanks to Cst Sherk for his time, effort, and informative presentation, and to his boss, Insp. Tom Gray for the suggestion.

For your Calendar

Sunday, June 22nd from 1:00 PM
BBQ and Paint-by-Numbers Party for CJC's MusicFest entries
1768 Noel Avenue, Comox, BC
Let us know at the office 334-8101