



**Dawson Creek Society
for Community Living**

With Open Arms
We Welcome
2023 And A New
Chapter

NEWSLETTER

Issue 7

NOVEMBER / 2022

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Many of 2022's Best Memories Were Made in Flip Flops!

Nearly three years ago, the first whisperings were heard, of an unknown virus striking people around the world at an alarming pace. At the time, the global community had no way of knowing how drastically life as we knew it, was about to change...

It has been a long haul, but as we leave summer 2022 behind, we do so with gratitude. While not back to the 'normal' we were once so accustomed to, we did have more freedom to reconnect with family and friends, take the holidays we'd been postponing, and get back to living much fuller lives.



Photo of
Camp Cameron Trip, August 2022

For many of the people we support, this meant lots of day trips to take-in events in neighboring communities, picnicking at every chance possible, going on fishing trips, and of course, resuming our annual camping trip!

Our greatly expanded Opportunity Centre, is better-than-ever and we were happy to host our Annual General Meeting there in September. The AGM saw the continuation of all Board Members terms. As always, the slideshow, Performance Improvement Report, and dinner were a hit. We were even treated to desserts from around the world, made by each program, in celebration of the diverse culture we live and work in.

SELF HELP SKILLS

"It's so nice to always see you guys out in the community supporting local business!"

~ Local Business Owner

We've had a very busy six months in our Self Help Skills and Home Support programs. Several changes in staffing and schedules did not stop the individuals and staff from making the absolute most out of the beautiful, and much freer, summer. Particularly exciting, was that three individuals accomplished their long-standing travel goals; their determination and dedication to stick to their respective budgets, payed off.

It was the dream of one woman, to see a Broadway Production. With staff support, she was able to see that goal through this summer. They took a roadtrip to Edmonton and went to see the Canadian Broadway Production, Hamilton. To say she was thrilled would be a huge understatement! To round out the trip, she and staff also took in the famous West Edmonton Mall.

Another individual with a passion for gold panning has always wanted to go to Barkerville, the largest living-history museum in western North America. He dreamed of having a real, hands on experience, panning for gold where the famous 'Billy Barker' uncovered a staggering channel of gold that spear-headed a twenty-year, multi-billion dollar industrial revolution that literally helped build the province of BC. Needless to say, he's already planning his next trip!

The third individual that realized their dream this summer, had to post-poned it for two years due to the pandemic. His determination to go saw to it that he didn't give up however, and he and staff finally found themselves on a plane to California, on their way to Power Morphicon! Held primarily and exclusively in California, this membership-based convention was originally created for Power Rangers but has expanded to include guests from other franchises as well. Near and dear to his heart however, is the Power Rangers, so he went as the Red Ranger.

We were also incredibly happy to support an individual to go see her mom after years of being kept apart by the pandemic. I'm unsure who was happier, them or all of us when we saw them together again!



Shopping, volunteering and cooking, just a few of the many skills SHS and Home Support staff support individuals with.

& HOME SUPPORT



in addition to these individuals that were able to achieve very large goals, we also supported many others to reach goals that, while not as grand, were equally as important to them. We are very excited that individuals are demonstrating they understand the importance of choosing goals that are meaningful to them and are independently advocating to make additions or changes to them, as they see fit. Given the increased cost of living, many have chosen to focus on budgeting so they can still have healthier foods while being able to afford to do the things they enjoy. Home maintenance and independently administering medications are also popular goal choices individuals are striving to achieve with staff support.

Some of the most popular activities for the folks in SHS/HS are Freezer Meals and cultural diversity activities. A little slow to initially take off, cultural celebrations are now being embraced by everyone, with each program having their own globe to spin, point and explore. Meals, crafts and activities are regularly based on a variety of cultures from around the world. Having such a diverse worksite gives us the opportunity to learn from people with first-hand experiences.

As we continue to see more people with unique challenges being referred, staff training has evolved to better meet individuals increasingly complex needs. We were fortunate enough to have several staff participate in Starr Commonwealth's Trauma Informed Care training in June, which provided indispensable information. In addition, staff are continuously learning about and applying positive behaviour interventions, and as the age of people supported continues to rise, dementia training has also become pertinent.

Individuals and staff alike, participated in and had great times celebrating the AGM, Thanksgiving, and Halloween; up next, the Christmas Gala, Christmas and New Year's celebrations - excitement is palpable, to say the least!





OPPORTUNITY CENTRE

Since the completion of the Centre's renovations, we have seen the number of participants continually grow. Referrals are coming in fast and furious as news of our increased space and larger variety of activities gets around. To ensure that every individual has an opportunity to voice their thoughts about what activities should be held, a monthly Peer Committee meeting has been established. While still in its infancy, with a small number of repeat members, we have already received and put into action, many of the suggestions that have been brought forth. Some of these have included indoor sports, such as soccer and badminton, plenty of dances, Potlucks, and High Tea. There has also been a significant uptake in individuals hosting their own activities. From Bingo with Bernie, Gold Panning with Terrence, Meditation with Katherine, Yoga with Angie and many more, the Activity Workers provide just as much support as is needed. Welcoming back several activity hosts that had been unavailable throughout the pandemic, rounds off the diverse selection of activities currently being offered.

If you haven't done so yet, be sure to take in a Peer Committee meeting. Held monthly, these meetings provide you the chance to discuss with your peers, what is working well for you, what you'd like to see done differently, what activities you would like to see added, what events are coming up that may be cost prohibitive for some and how to fundraise so everyone that wants to participate can do so. It's a great opportunity to have your say - be sure to pop in!!

(Dates can be found in The Scoop)

Prior to the recent Dawson Creek Municipal election, we held information sessions so interested individuals could learn about the various candidates. We supported several individuals to the advanced polls, while many others made their way to vote independently during regular voting. We are so proud of everyone that took the time to learn about and vote for the candidates of their choice!

If you haven't yet noticed, we have a new staff member of the four-legged variety, frequenting the Centre! Chenyl's new guide dog, Derrick, is a wonderful addition and we are all enjoying learning how best to support he and Chenyl through the transition as they learn to work together; needless to say, everyone misses Nyla, and is happy to see her when she comes for visits.

Now that we have the space to accommodate a variety of different activities, we are encouraging community members that are affiliated with us, to contact us about utilizing our space for their planned events. In September, we were excited to welcome the Friendship Group; they will be using our space on a monthly basis.

In the next few weeks, we will be undergoing our CARF survey by virtual means, so you will likely see us going around with an iPad talking to people and showing the surveyors around while they are on camera. It might look a little different, but be sure to wave or say hi if you see us, just like you would if they were with us in-person.

Over the coming months, be sure to watch for dates and times for Peer Meetings, Christmas plans, the holiday schedule, and the many new activities the new year is sure to be full of. Hope to see more of you!

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM



S & SUPPORTED LIVING



115TH AND CANALTA RESIDENCES

Summer was busy for these two residences and the individuals residing in them. Canalta was pleased to finally see the completion of the renovations and landscaping. The newly renovated area, as well as the outdoor space, is working well for the individuals. 115th is eagerly awaiting the installation of their new counter tops and windows. Individuals in both homes grew wonderful flower and vegetable gardens, spent lots of time outdoors, had picnics, participated in several cultural activities, and took many day and overnight trips to partake in events in neighboring communities, or to visit with family. Dawson Creek's Annual Fall Fair and Rodeo saw participation by all individuals, as did our first annual camping trip in three years, to Camp Cameron - swimming, fires and games were enjoyed by all during day camp.

As a result of staffing struggles, men began working in programs they hadn't worked in before or not in a long-while. It has turned out to be a wonderful change to the programs, with the individuals expressing enjoyment over the different perspectives and energy brought by the male staff.

1416 RESIDENCE

"The staff at 1416 are exceptional. I could not ask for anything more." ~ Family Member

We have undergone many changes in this program over the past few months. We were very sad to say goodbye to one of our residents and longest service recipients of the Society. She is and will always be missed by her friends and staff alike. As heartbreaking as saying goodbye to her was, the individuals were soon blessed with a new roommate, another long-term service recipient of the Society; she brings with her familiarity, laughter and a big heart.

With the warm weather came a plethora of activities for the individuals to partake in; from trips, picnics, camping,

the Circus, Fall Fair, Mile Zero Car show, music events, to in-person get-togethers as often as possible, the residents made the most out of summer. As the weather cools, staff will continue to go the extra mile to keep everyone busy. One of the ways they plan to do this is by continuing to make cultural celebrations better and better, complete with cultural attire, dancing, music and food. The individuals are sure to have a great winter.

1408, 1328 AND CENTENNIAL CLUSTERS

"I appreciate the staff so much, because of them I have been able to build a relationship with my sister."

~ Family Member

The past few months have been full of growth and challenges. With one residents needs surpassing the supports available in a Cluster setting, we supported the individual to move to another program within the Society that better met their increased needs. We are expecting to have a new person move into the Centennial Cluster in the near future and are excited for what they will bring to the dynamics of the group.

The residents in both the 1408 and 1328 Cluster's, have been very busy since the spring. Partaking in many of the same activities within the community and surrounding areas as the other residential programs, each lady in the 1408 Cluster also enjoyed a night away to a destination of their choice, complete with a fine dining experience and one-on-one time. The men in the 1328 Cluster have seen some significant changes in staffing, having lost a couple of long-term staff. Thankfully the remaining staff filled the void by keeping the men busy participating in lots of Opportunity Centre activities, volunteering, working, visiting with family, and celebrating all of their birthdays, including one fella turning the big 60!

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

"You are doing an amazing service for the public"

~ Community Member

It's been another busy season for Supported Work and Confidential Shredding. With several new referrals to the program, the Job Coaches have been kept running. To ensure that each individual receives employment training pertinent to them that meets them where they are at, there are now three different workshops being offered, each on a quarterly basis. Job Readiness Skills, is meant for unemployed individuals who may have never been employed before or still have skills they need to improve upon. Job Keeping Skills, has the highest attendance rate and is for those that are already employed and want to maintain their employment long-term. Job Advancement Skills, supports individuals with effective communication, resume enhancement, and other skills to help them showcase their abilities and readiness to advance to a new, desired position.

Over the past several months, Supported Work has received an influx of business. Our eager Janitorial team has done such a great job fulfilling their contractual duties to businesses within the community that they felt confident in their ability to provide DCSCL's Janitor, holiday coverage at several locations. No surprise, they surpassed all expectations and we look forward to using their services again!





In addition to Janitorial services, Supported Work provides many other services, some of which include, meal deliveries to seniors in the community twice weekly, the delivery of Good Food Boxes every other week, and lawn maintenance to 12 different locations throughout the City. The Job Coaches also provide various levels of support to 14 individuals that are employed throughout Dawson Creek, in addition to the many others that are employed organizationally. With 46 people in the program, nearly all of them active, this is one busy program!



Confidential Shredding is also very busy. Typically a time of year that we experience a slow down in Shredding pickups, this fall has seen a steady supply of paper coming in which means the two industrial shredders run all day, Monday through Friday, and shifts have been added rather than reduced! In addition to maintaining schedules for our regular staff, we've also been able to use this as a training opportunity for individuals that are interested in employment but have little to no experience. In the last six months, Confidential Shredding has picked up and shredded over 65,000 pounds of paper!



With Christmas fast approaching, we are planning a Christmas Luncheon for the Shredding staff. Please also note that the Shop will be closed for a week over Christmas.

ASSISTED LIVING &

Northview Assisted Living residents and staff are busy preparing for the winter months ahead. With Christmas fast approaching, staff are planning decorations, a variety of activities, and a traditional Christmas Turkey dinner. Unfortunately, Covid-19 restrictions persist and once again, we will be unable to resume our Family Christmas dinner and celebration. Vaccinated family members are however, welcome to visit loved ones, but please note that common areas continue to be closed for family gatherings.

Since last spring, Northview has had four new residents move into the building. We had a very busy summer with many residents going on holidays to visit family. The garden was also a hit and kept many folks busy. Although the tomatoes suffered from blight which resulted in a smaller yield, the potatoes did better than ever, ensuring the kitchen had plenty to use for meal preparation. What's better than fresh potatoes??

In September, we did experience a small uptick of individuals testing positive for Covid-19, but given the many safety protocols we have in place, it was identified quickly which prevented it from spreading further. Some additional measures were put into place to ensure the health of the residents and staff, including the temporary closure of the dining room and limiting activity participants to one-on-one or very small groups. The measures were effective and we did not see any further spread of the virus.

Halloween was celebrated with a party on October 30th, complete with a Costume Contest - 1st prize was a \$40 Coop gift card, 2nd place a \$30 Coop gift card, and 3rd took home a \$20 Coop gift card. A great time was had by all. October 31st saw Trick or Treater's coming to the building where volunteers handed out candy. The residents enjoyed seeing the many different costumes.

Seniors Services experienced another successful season. Our Meal Call program wrapped up the summer with a big BBQ, complete with grilled

burgers and homemade potatoe salad; the food was a hit. We continue to provide hearty, healthy soups with a bun or a sandwich, and a take-home supper for seniors residing within our housing units, as well as for others in the community. We are currently providing 60 to 80 meals per week,

For Thanksgiving, we provided a traditional feast complete with turkey and fresh from the garden, potatoes, carrots and turnips. Thank you Audrey, for growing such a great garden and generously donating some to us!

Up 30 percent since first being offered in the spring of 2020, our grocery shopping service continues to fill a gap. Initially meant to help alleviate the fear felt by many seniors over having to leave their homes during the pandemic, it has grown into a way for seniors struggling with the limited availability of affordable transportation, to get the groceries they need. Grocery orders are taken by phone and shopping occurs twice weekly. Seniors are able to pay for their groceries using debit or credit upon drop-off. A small user fee of \$5 has been implemented to help with the continuation of the service.

We are happy to announce that our Senior's Aging in Place program is no longer a trial and rural seniors residing in PRRD Area D and parts of Area E, will continue to be eligible to receive services aimed at keeping them in their homes longer. This program offers three services, meal provision, housekeeping and/or snow removal. Seniors can choose to utilize one service or all three, depending on their circumstances. We are currently providing services to over 90 rural seniors.

This fall we attended the Senior's Expo at the Oviniv Events Centre, as well as partook in six information sessions in various rural halls throughout the area. It is our desire to get information on these services, out to those who need them. If you or someone you know would benefit from any of our services, please call Anne, at (250) 782-2611 ext. 227 for more information.

SENIORS SERVICES





HOME SHARE

"... gets to help on projects we have, such as working on the shacks, at the shop and around the house. He loves being involved!"

~ Home Share Contractor

Home Share continues to be a busy program, fraught with many challenges. As the overall population ages, no one is immune. Home Share contractors and individuals receiving supports, are both experiencing the effects of aging, including more frequent and increasingly complex health needs, crisis' and sadly, losses. For a few lucky homeshare contractors, retirement is on the horizon which is fantastic for them, but compounds the challenges being realized by the program. Recruitment for suitable and compatible families is ongoing, however the individuals waiting for the service continue to outnumber the available families. Changes, coming into effect in the foreseeable future, will see service providers take on the responsibility of finding ways to meet the contractors needs for respite services.

Once such arrangements are in place, Home Share contractors be able to access service and get the breaks they are in dire need of, which will help to maintain happy and healthy familial relationships.

For some Home Share providers, lack of respite was not their most significant concern this summer. During this years out-of-control fire season there were a few families displaced due to evacuation. Thankfully, they were all able to return home within a relatively short period of time.

On a much brighter note, thanks to a group of determined people advocating on his behalf, an individual was successful in having his Representation Agreement recognized, allowing him to access his bank account and the funds within. Way to go!

Many people had some really great adventures this past summer. From camping and RVing, boating, fishing, quadding, hiking, travelling, and going to an array of festivals and concerts, there was no shortage of great memories made by all involved.

Everyone is looking forward to a less restrictive Christmas, gathering with family and friends, and a brighter new year!





ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GALA

At long last, we can gather with friends and family and we're pulling out all the stops!

This year's Gala, will be held at the Senior's Hall to ensure we can accommodate all the individuals and their loved ones that would like to attend. Invites will be sent out soon so if your loved one is supported by DCSC and has not received theirs by November 14th, please let us know at the Administration Office.

This year's affair will be formal for all attendees, to give everyone the opportunity to dig out and dust off their best outfits. We will be hosting a hair and spa day prior to the Gala for those that would like to be pampered, as well as fun activities for those that would just like to hangout pre-party. There will be a photo booth available to capture great moments with

friends, family and staff, as well as a band, so be sure to wear dancing shoes and bring your best moves.

As in past years, there will be an RSVP included with the invitation and we are asking once again that each person write down their top three gift ideas for \$25, include any food allergies or intolerances, tell us how many people they are hoping to have accompany them, and return them to the Administration office or if unable to drop it off, call in and notify us. The hall is large but we want to ensure we have ample space for everyone, as well as plenty of food.

We will be collecting non-perishable food items for the local foodbank again as well, and would greatly appreciate it if each attendee bring a donation - together we can help those in our community that are struggling.

We look forward to seeing everyone!



STAFF APPRECIATION PARTY

*Watch for your Save the Date Card -
You don't want to miss the first Staff
Appreciation Party since 2020!*

It has been far too long, but we want all of our staff to know how much we appreciate you and thank you for sticking with us through the plethora of challenges we have faced over the past few years. We don't want to tempt fate (or the pandemic!) by putting too many plans into place quite yet, but suffice it to say, there will be a great time had by all when we finally get to gather together and celebrate being a part of such a great team.

With three years of successes under our belts there will be plenty of stories to tell, laughs to share, and reasons to cheer. We can't wait!
More details to come....



SUMMER



R 2022





CARF



CARF (The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities) accreditation is an independent, nonprofit organization that surveys and accredits health and human services providers worldwide. A service or program that is CARF accredited has passed an in-depth on-site review and has demonstrated substantial conformance to internationally recognized standards for quality.

Dawson Creek Society for Community Living has been accredited by CARF since 2004 and is currently accredited in the following:

- Community Housing
- Community Integration
- Supported Living
- Community Employment Services: Job Development
- Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
- Organizational Employment Services
- Host Family/Shared Living Services

Our accreditation is a public commitment that we strive to:

- Involve persons served and their families in their service planning.
- Respect individual cultural preferences.
- Be accountable to our funding sources, referral agencies, and the community at large.
- Address health and safety concerns, such as building safety and emergency preparedness.
- Maintain management practices that are efficient, cost-effective, and based on outcomes and consumer satisfaction.

For more information about CARF International, the standards, or the survey process, visit www.carf.org.



GAIL FERGUSON 1960 - 2022



Sadly, we said good-bye to Gail, on September 12th. Having come into Dawson Creek Society for Community Living's services at a very young age, she was one of the recipients for whom what is now known as, our Opportunity Centre, was first created. Always full of smiles, giggles and silly faces, Gail could brighten your day with a wink. She will be greatly missed by her many friends, none more than her best friend Carole; and all the staff that were blessed to have known her during her 62 years.

**"Goodbyes are not forever, are not the end;
it simply means 'I'll miss you,' until we meet
again." ~ Unknown**

RESOURCES

Family Support Institute of BC...

Is a provincial not-for-profit society committed to supporting families who have a loved one with a disability. FSI is unique to Canada and the only grassroots, family-to-family organization with a broad volunteer base. Supports and services are free to any family.

UPCOMING WEBINARS AND SUPPORTS

MY BOOKLET BC

Join Rachel Skidmore to learn about MyBooklet BC. MyBooklet BC is a FREE online tool that individuals and families can use to create a beautiful and personalized information booklet (all about me booklet) to store and

share their strengths, gifts, goals and more!

November 9

TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

Moving to adulthood can be a challenge. If you're the parent, guardian, or caregiver of a young person with a developmental disability, helping them move towards adulthood can be challenging. That's why FSI has created the Transitioning to Adulthood Series Zoom meetings where, together with our special guests, we'll be discussing different scenarios, tools and services that can help you and your family with this transition and make it less complex.

November 9, 23

WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW WHEN HIRING RESPIRE WORKERS

Hiring a respite provider is not always as straightforward as it seems. In this session, we will explore the different ways of correctly hiring respite providers under the guidelines set out by Canada Revenue Agency and Employment Standards. We will focus on when respite providers are classified as employees and when they are classified as contractors. We will also cover the obligations of the families and staff under each type of relationship.

November 7

JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF

Parents, grandparents, and caregivers of a child or family member with a disability who journey through aspects of grief, are invited to come together in a safe space for connection, understanding, inspiration, capacity building, and non-judgmental support. Whether your experience is a new diagnosis, life stage, or loss, we welcome you to join the conversation circle. And we just want to say that you're not alone, and we're here to help!

November 28

ALSO AVAILABLE....

FAMILY HANGOUTS - November 8, 15, 22, 29

FASD - November 10, 17, 24, December 1

HOUSING OPTIONS - November , 17

TANSITIONING TO CLBC - November 21

JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF - November 28

And more....



Family Support Institute of BC Continued...

PODCAST FOR PARENTS OF PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX DISABILITIES

The Skies We're Under is a podcast by and for parents of people with complex disabilities. During each episode, you'll hear the talk about how the weather is not always what we predicted or wanted. Author of The Skies I'm Under and nurse, Rachel Wright, has authentic, funny and sometimes swearsy conversations with fellow parents about a different kind of parenthood. Her life went off script 16 years ago when her eldest son was born with complex brain damage and severe disabilities.

The podcast is for anyone trying to get from one end of the week to the other while bridging the gap between the expected life and the one we are living.

Mental Health Support

WELLNESS TOGETHER CANADA

Free and confidential mental health and substance use support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from Wellness Together Canada.

To speak to a professional, call 1-866-585-0445 OR TEXT:

- 686868 for youth
- 741741 for adults

CRISIS SERVICES CANADA

Available 24/7 this service is for anyone in Canada that is thinking about, or has been affected by, suicide.

Call 1-833-456-4566

Text 45645

Inclusion BC

We are a federation working with partners to build community and to enhance the lives of children, youth, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families by building awareness, inspiring action and advancing rights, responsibilities and social justice. We provide education and advocacy where and when it's needed. We advocate at a systems level for policy change and promote inclusion through public awareness initiatives and campaigns.

Find us at www.inclusionbc.org

Homelessness Intervention & Prevention

SOUTH PEACE COMMUNITY RESOURCE SOCIETY

- For people leaving corrections or hospital systems
- Women who have experienced violence or are at risk of violence
- Youth, including those leaving the care system
- People of indigenous ancestry

Call (250) 782-9174 EXT. 230 for more information.

Obair Economic Society

Formed by a group of citizens concerned about unemployed workers in our community that wished to provide services to assist the unemployed to become employed, especially those who were having the most problems getting a job. They had noticed that often, the ones who needed the most help, were the ones least likely to receive it. Since then, the Society has been able to provide a variety of programs and services related to employment. Funding is provided by a variety of ministries of both the Federal and Provincial governments. As governments change their policies, the programs, and services we are funded to provide change as well.

Many people wonder where our name came from and what it means. "Obair" is a Gaelic word that means "work", and the name was chosen to represent the work that we do. Over the years we have adapted to changing workforce markets and increased the area we offer programs and services too. One thing has remained the same...a journey starts here and we celebrate all of our client successes!

Career Coaching that fits your schedule; we offer virtual classes so you can succeed right from home.

We currently run 5 programs and we know one will fit your journey. Our Coaches will work with you to find the right fit and then support you through the process.

Base Locations: Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Chetwynd, and Fort Nelson, in North East BC.

Call (250) 782-2628 or see us at www.obair.ca



WWW.DCSCL.ORG

(250) 782-2611