

Association for Community Education



JANUARY 2012

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FRENCH CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL TURNS 100 IN 2012

French Creek Community School is in Coombs at 2350 Alberni Highway, on Vancouver Island, BC. It is just across the bridge from the Coombs' Goats-on-the-Roof Market. Under the umbrella of ACES (Arrowsmith Community Enhancement Society) volunteers led by Sharon Cox-Gustavson have created and opened the Coombs Museum which is housed in the building adjacent to the Coombs General Store and Post Office. The museum is providing a social awareness of the community's history in preparation

for the Community's Centennial Celebrations taking place on the May, 2012 long weekend. The museum operates solely by volunteers, is free of charge and open every day from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (summer hours) The museum is now into winter hours which are 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends only (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Since the opening, August 2011, close to 1000 visitors: locals and many from around the world have visited the museum and been entered into the guest book. The museum offers group visits to schools, preschools, seniors and any other groups or organizations that are interested. Please contact Sharon Cox-Gustavson for more information at

sharoncg@shaw.ca

Museum French Creek
School model.





**Some close ups from the Lochdale Community
Quilt Project**



Let's Get Cooking!

In November 2010 the Bamfield Community School Association (BCSA) held a potluck at the Community School and asked individuals to bring a favourite recipe to contribute to a community cookbook. Exactly one year later "The Bamfield Cookbook" is finished and available in time for Christmas.

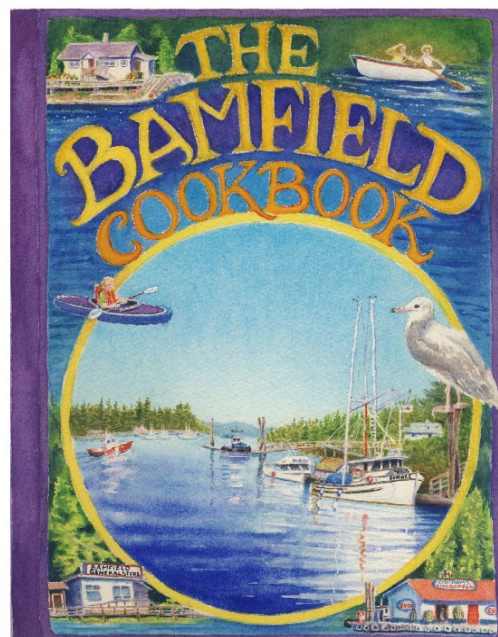
The first edition of the Bamfield Community Cookbook was compiled and printed in 1975 at the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre and then put together by hand. Years later a local volunteer gathered a new set of recipes and in her spare time she diligently typed them on her type writer with no spell check or backspace. The 3rd edition was compiled and edited in 1993, printed in a small, local office and sold 500 copies with all the proceeds going towards Bamfield community projects.

This cookbook was a fantastic amount of work and a real community effort. The book features: a beautiful cover painted by a local artist, art work done by various individuals in town and historic photos courtesy of the Bamfield Historical Society. This is the 4th cookbook that has been compiled in Bamfield and it contains 274 pages of recipes from the previous cookbooks and many recipes new to this edition. Communities, like a recipe, are dynamic and constantly evolving, however like a good recipe they are also dependable and full of flavour. This cookbook shares a special history of Bamfield; one of potlucks, parties and sharing; freshly caught seafood, delicious dips and the largest dessert section I have ever seen! Food is a big component of life, community and living. Enjoying food with others gives us an opportunity to talk and slow down, it is an act of giving and receiving, which has connected people and cultures for generations. Indeed, many great conundrums have been solved and ideas hatched over conversations and coffee with friends.

As the days get darker the Bamfield Community School Association is also gearing up for the 2nd annual Oysters, Authors & Ale. Last year the Writers Festival was a huge literacy success with readings from local and visiting authors, musical interludes by local talent, a silent auction and amazing food. The night brought in over \$3800 for future literacy initiatives in our community. Not bad for a town of little more than 100. This year the event will take place on April 7th and we will expand on the theme by hosting a writer's workshop leading up to the event and an anonymous art sale during the event. Our hope is that the all-ages workshop will encourage new individuals to enter their stories in a Short Story & Poetry Competition, giving them the chance to read their work in front of an audience. The art sale is supported by the Bamfield Arts Council who has purchased 18 canvases for interested individuals to paint and donate to the cause.

The BCSA continues to work with the Huu-ay-aht First Nation and hopes to offer literacy tutors, as well as cooking and computer classes in the New Year.

Catherine Thompson



Clearbrook Community Connections at Clearbrook Elementary has a **great partner** to prepare students for the many challenges of the future!



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Community School Society



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Clearbrook Community Connections program is for referred children (Grades K - 5) at Clearbrook Elementary. Clearbrook is one of eight schools that fall under West Abbotsford Community School Society (WACSS). Many of these families are struggling and are working odd jobs and shifts and are challenged socio economically. This in turn makes it difficult to take care of the children after school hours. Therefore we continue to host a program at Clearbrook that houses the children and gives them positive and enriching sports, homework, and recreation programs after school M - F from 2:45pm to 4:45pm. In turn this program provides many positive role models through volunteers and staff and the children are involved in homework time, leadership, mentoring, nutrition, culture, computer and activity based program experiences and opportunities.

We assist these children and families to succeed. Busy children in positive pursuits equals less life problems and the children inevitably become contributing members of society because they will be engaged and busy pursuing positive pursuits and leadership training. The school is the most under-utilized facility after school hours and we are using the space to its maximum for the children five days a week. Secondly we can capture the children at their home school location - Clearbrook. The program is accessible to all the children in regards to accessibility, cost, supplies and equipment because these things are offered to them for free.

Our young children need to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow through "special" community programs of need like this!

As a school district (SD No 34 - Abbotsford) community school society (WACSS) and a school (Clearbrook), we all partner to support this "special program". We have families and children that greatly benefit from these services.

This can be accomplished most effectively when the community, parents and staff share the responsibility for the growth and development of our children. Clearbrook's vision statement: "Ecole Clearbrook Elementary will provide a safe and caring environment where all students are encouraged to develop the knowledge, skills and virtues to become a productive member of society", speaks of our desire to prepare students for the many challenges of the future.



Contact List—Members at the Sooke Retreat

“What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.”

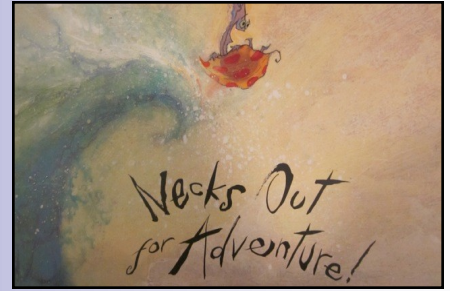
Kurt Vonnegut



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President's Message

The theme of the ACEbc board this fall has been "**Necks Out for Adventure.**" I'll highlight a few of our adventures this fall.

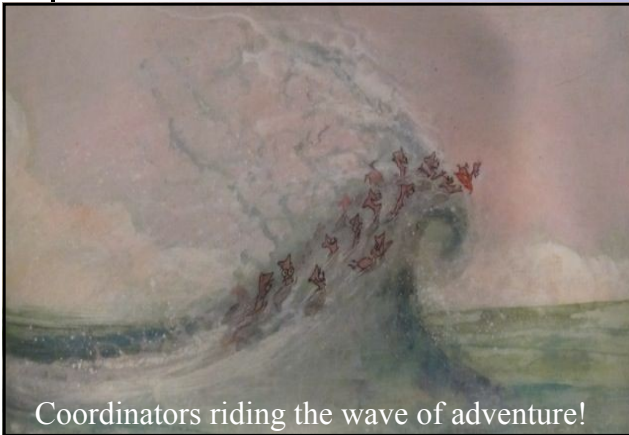


Heather Walsh, a second year coordinator at Edward Milne Community School in Sooke hosted a fabulous retreat for coordinators in October called "Employing a Leadership Lens." Forty-seven coordinators from around the province attended. The conversations, the setting and the recreational opportunities made it a retreat that had impacted on coordinators and will not be forgotten. With cameras in hand and the stunning sites of Sooke, coordinators captured their possibilities, learning outcomes to create and the gifts they'd received. It was all presented in a moving slide show to conclude the retreat. Thanks Heather for being bold in the creation of this event. *(See pictures of the retreat on page 13-14)*

Comments from participants:

"It was great to make those personal connections with coordinators from around the province", "I was able to see something bigger, envision greater possibilities", "It was a great venue, created a chemistry to all be under the same roof", "The community garden tour and drinking lemon ginger tea heated over the fire was a highlight. I want to grow up to be like Phoebe Dunbar"

The one disappointment was that coordinators from more remote areas were not in attendance. To try to bridge that gap, I set up a conference call opportunity to reach out and connect coordinators from further afield. Although the participation in the first call was small, Laurie Watson from Robson Community School and Joanne Ellis from WE Graham Community Service Society, both from the Kootenays, participated. We had a rousing conversation about their successes and concerns; everyone contributed, everyone learned. I'd love to hear from you if you'd like more dates to do free conference calling courtesy of ACEbc to help stay in touch.



Coordinators riding the wave of adventure!

Grant Sheppard, coordinator of CommunityLINKS for the Ministry of Education. was a key presenter at the Sooke Retreat. His presentation resonated and informed coordinators and we wanted to provide that same opportunity to those who were not in attendance. At ACEbc's request Grant hosted a second conference call and thirteen coordinators from around the province called in. I believe that when coordinators share a deeper understanding of the purpose and the process of data collection for CommunityLINKS, that the reports will continue to improve and the data collected can be more streamlined and useful to district and the Ministry. The process has had mutual benefit and clarity and understanding has increased for Grant, coordinators and district contacts.

On December 9th the province released long awaited good news regarding more equitable funding for vulnerable students in the province. The backgrounder states funding formula changes in the following areas: (Please see next page)

- “Provides additional funding for vulnerable students to districts based on an updated CommunityLINK funding formula.
- Recognizes districts that have experienced growth in the number of vulnerable students.
- Protects CommunityLINK funding in all districts.
- \$5 million additional allocation in 2012-13, increasing to \$11 million in 2013-14.
- Recognizes special transportation needs and the location of students in relation to their schools.
- Enhanced to provide more funding - an estimated \$1.5 million - to districts to help cover the costs of operating small, rural and remote elementary schools.
- Enhanced to provide more funding - an estimated \$3.7 million - for the smallest districts in the province.
- Sustainable and predictable funding protection policy.
- Districts protected to at least 98.5 per cent of previous autumn's funding, despite any decline in student enrolment”



Good news for children, families and communities:



Cheers

East Sooke Park

Save the date **Friday, March 30, 2012** for the **ACEbc AGM**. It will be held in Burnaby, location and time to be sent out in the New Year.

At this time I am aware that two positions for the board are open, **Communications/ Newsletter** and **Treasurer** and it is always healthy to have any of the positions contested. Consider becoming part of the board as an elected member or district representative.

New Sooke Retreat resources now online <http://www.acebc.org/>

Janey

janeytalbot@gmail.com

Janey Talbot, retired Coordinator of Community Education Services Burnaby(L) and Fran Bourassa Norgate Community school N Van (R) about to stick their necks out on the new adventure of paddle boarding.



The Junior Apprentices of the Little Town That Does

They don't have towering golden skyscrapers – they've got a new(ish) one level school. They don't have shiny limousines –they have an eleven year old, only slightly dented, not always dusty minivan. They don't have a board room with fancy chairs, but they found a comfortable couch outside marked “free”. There isn't one awkward hairdo between them – they've all got great hair! They are the **JUNIOR APPRENTICES**, and they want to hear you say “*You're hired!*”

A brand new program in the Cowichan Valley this past summer had team members Sarah Burgess, Avi Ursolom, Jordie Peterson, Ann Marie Louie and Allan Gibson following a variety of tasks laid out by PM –that's project manager – Annamieke Blitterswyk (formerly of kidZsummerCamps) in hopes of earning funds for charity as well as a reward for their team. Oh, and there were a few business skills to be mastered along the way. This team, the Junior Apprentices, were challenged to look for work experiences, learn about jobs, and put that learning into actions that earned the team big bucks.

This team started off with several things in common. They all had attended Chemainus Elementary at one time. They were all grade 8 and 9 students. They had all attended kidZsummer Camps, but were growing past that. All five were a little too young for full time summer jobs, and lacked experience for that. Most importantly, this group shared a great attitude. They were willing, eager to learn, enthusiastic, cooperative and real team players.

With only five weeks and only 3 days a week; and only getting a 10:00 am start, a lot had to be accomplished quickly. The “To Do” list became a “Can Do” in many important areas such as financial life skills, fundraising, interviewing successful business and career members of the community, and writing resumes. Add these to the team challenges, a photo shoot and a final trip with dollars raised themselves and these apprentices can be very proud of what they accomplished.



As with many business ventures, the team started off with a trip to the bank to open their own account, and get their own debit card. From then on, it was watching the balance rise and fall as they pumped gas, did a bottle drive; pumped gas and bought baking ingredients; sold hot dogs; pumped gas and purchased advertising materials for their market stand; did a garbage pickup; and pumped gas.

It wasn't all about the bank balance, however. These young people interviewed and learned from many of our local workers that weave the fabric of a community. Time given from staff in the fire department, RCMP, military, banking, tourism, SPCA, teaching, jewellery design and store owner opened the eyes of the apprentices to what is really involved in a variety of professions. Then they wrote up their own resumes! The apprentices and PM are grateful to all those who let themselves be interviewed.

Part of the whole experience was the citizenship piece, and giving to the community. The JA Team was made aware of this as well. They eagerly embraced the idea of raising funds to send a child to kidZsummer Camps; and raised enough to sponsor one place in muZic Camp! They got down on their hands and knees and weeded some murals – look out flowers! They earned money for garbage pickup; and they did it *without* complaining!

The Junior Apprentice program was about learning through fun and challenges. These future leaders rose to all the challenges. They designed a first class visual advertising display for hot dog sales. They planned and taught two hours of kids' activities for Hollywood North summer camp. They created their own image, name, signs, product and marketing plan for the Wednesday Chemainus Market. They weren't above a little acting and dressing up in costume to be the bad guys (dementors) for Harry Potter camp. The grand finale was earning enough money for an overnight trip to Horne Lake Caves, where they camped in tepees, went caving, canoeing and rock rappelling. The learning didn't stop; the apprentices had to decide whether to focus their limited budget on better food or more activities, (a concept many adults haven't mastered), and participated in team building exercises.

Despite what they have in common, these young people are each very different too. They did not start this program as best friends, but as individuals from diverse backgrounds and situations. The Junior Apprentices was a learning experience for the youth, but it is also a teaching lesson for others. The group, and their leader Annamieke Blitterswyk, are to be applauded for the microcosm of community they have created. The students treated each other with respect, with acceptance, and with trust. They each had high expectations of themselves. They blended, and they bonded! Well, done Junior Apprentices!



Burnaby is Piloting its First Community Secondary School Model

Byrne Creek Secondary Community School is a diverse, interesting, fast paced, high school built along the Burnaby Corridor in Burnaby, BC.

Over the past seven years, Byrne Creek's student population has increased to a maximum capacity of 1300. Byrne has vibrant arts programs, varied and competitive athletic programs and interactive, engaged leadership programming available. Byrne also provides a variety of services (from Youth Care Workers to Settlement Workers) for Byrne Creek students and families.

Byrne Creek is culturally diverse with over 70 languages spoken within the building. South East Burnaby has a very large refugee and new immigrant population and Byrne Creek reflects this fact with over 15 % of the current student population holding either refugee claimant or refugee status. Students from all over the world attend Byrne Creek, including the Sudan, Afghanistan, the Congo, Bangladesh, the Czech Republic, and Mexico. Byrne Creek also has a large International Student Program with up to 100 students studying here this year. Diversity is the norm and one of Byrne Creek's many gifts.

John MacKie, from The Vancouver Sun recently wrote an article about Byrne Creek called *The United Nations of Burnaby*, December 17, 2011. This was part of the ongoing Vancouver Children's Fund campaign to raise money and provide opportunities for schools within BC that have a high proportion of students that live in poverty. This article will give you a little more information about our school and our community's overall demographics. You will find the article at: <http://www.vancouversun.com/news/canada-in-afghanistan/United+Nations+Burnaby/5876810/story.html>.

Byrne Creek's mandate for this year is to help connect and coordinate services to best support our students and families. We have begun the work of constructing a Community School Model that works for our community and within our district. This is Byrne Creek's pilot year. To give you an idea of our path, these are our four overarching goals for this (2011-2012) year:

1. Assess the school facilities and create a booking process for community groups to use the school after school and on weekends.
 2. To create a welcoming Community Room where students and families come to visit, ask questions, and connect with needed services and support.
 3. To create after school and summer programs.
- To facilitate the integration of school services with agencies and organizations outside of the school.

Personally, the highlight of our start-up thus far at Byrne Creek is the success that we have had creating a welcoming, vibrant, functional community room. The community room acts as a hub for the students, parents, teachers and community volunteers to come, visit and ask questions. It has allowed me to learn and connect community members with appropriate community supports. Examples of questions we might be asked are: Can we get free eye glasses for a student that can't afford them; How can we apply for Canadian Citizenship for a minor; How can I find warm jackets for my family this winter; Or I'd like to start an art project in your school, can you help me get that started? A bit of a surprise to us all was how successful and large our clothing exchange within the community room has become. Students feel comfortable coming to look for, or ask for clothes that they need. I have a list of how many would really like basketball shoes, or who would like a pretty dress for a job interview.

Piloting a food program that includes breakfast, lunch and after school snacks is another huge success. It has been a team effort with support from Summit Logistics, The Canadian Breakfast Club Program, Byrne Creek's Parents, our student leadership class and many fantastic Byrne Creek staff.

So much is going on at Byrne Creek already, you might be wondering why we need to become a Community School? The fact is that although much has been done to support students and families since the school opened seven years ago there has been limited ability to assess needs and to coordinate and develop new partnerships and services. For example, there is a lack of after school programming. Byrne Creek's students like to stay at the school. On any average afternoon from 3-9 PM, 40-60 students not engaged in the any pre-established school courses or programming just stay in the school, in the atrium to visit and "hang out". We want to create opportunities for these kids. Designing after school programming will be our next big task to look forward to in the New Year.

If you are interested in learning more about our student population and community I would suggest a few things to you:

Reading a book called *From Bombs to Books*, written by David Starr, principal of Edmonds Community School in Burnaby (one of Byrne Creek Secondary School's feeder Elementary Schools). It is a very powerful book that tells the stories of many of our families' journey and struggles as refugees to Canada. This is a book about courage, survival and belonging.

I also invite you to visit our Community Room blog at: <http://byrnecreek.sd41.bc.ca/>. (Just push the Community Room tab). Your ideas and involvement are valued and welcome!

Happy New Year to all! And I look forward to sharing our journey with you and learning from you along the way!

Iha Farquhar
Community School Coordinator
Byrne Creek Secondary School



Photos from the Sooke Retreat

Dale Owen said it best when she stated, "I want to grow up to be like Phoebe."



Mike Evans, Britannia Community Services Centre Vancouver



Phoebe Dunbar retired community school coordinator Edward Milne Community School Sooke



Catherine Thompson, Bamfield Community School

Learning to Paddleboard—one of the options at the retreat.



Sue Lamb from Halfmoon Bay Community School Sunshine Coast

I am the possibility of...



Burnaby coordinators all in the hotel shower, should we ask why?



I received...

- Time/conversations/that enabled me to tie things together
- Strength
- The feeling of being connected
- The knowledge that being flexible is key



Necks out for Adventure

For as long as anyone could remember, the wiggleskins have lived by a simple rule: Necks out to eat, and necks in to hide. But then comes the dreadful day when all the wiggleskins are ripped from their holes and taken away — all but a brave little wiggleskin named Edwin. To save his mom and the rest of the clan, Edwin must shuck his shell and adopt a new rule: Necks out for adventure! Timothy Basil Ering's boisterous and warmhearted adventure will have you cheering for Edwin — and for plucky souls everywhere who dare stick their necks out.

Parents' Night Out

2011-2012

Parents' Night Out are **free** parent info sessions that focus on current and emerging topics. The five evenings are from **7pm to 9pm** and open to all parents/caregivers in New Westminster. Light refreshments and child minding will be provided. We look forward to seeing you.

Helping kids Navigate Anxiety

course code #115897

Hosted by École Glenbrook Middle - January 19th

Is your child struggling to cope with the demands of home, school or friends? Statistics are showing that anxiety is on the rise. Why is this happening? How can we help our kids? Understanding that it's a complex issue, this session will touch on certain aspects of anxiety with some tips for parents.

Internet & Social Media Awareness

course code #115895

Hosted by Queensborough Middle, Multipurpose room - February 15th

Are your kids on-line? How about on Facebook? Do they text? If yes, targeting, bullying, and predators are real life risks you need to be aware of. Listen to guest speakers as they discuss the concerns of social media and how it's affecting our kids, as well as some strategies to monitor and keep them safe.

Building Positive Relationships with Your Child *based on Attachment Theory

course code #115899

Hosted by NWSS, library - March 14th

Ever find yourself completely confused by your child's behaviours? How do we know what our kids need from us as they grow? As parents, we are always looking for new ways to connect with our children. Come hear from experts who will discuss building healthy relationships with our kids and family.

Trends in Teen Alcohol and Drug use

course code #115894

Hosted by Lord Tweedsmuir, Gym - April 11th

This workshop will help bring focus to alcohol and drug use amongst teens. It will also help parents dialogue about the stresses surrounding these issues.

To register — call: 604-515-3775 — online: www.newwestpcr.ca or **show up!**

For info call Dan Kalivoda District Community School Coordinator: 604-517-5995

Thank you for joining us.



Community Schools



Dr. Brandy Weibe, Saleema Noon Sexual Health Educators

By Ashley Currie, District Community School Coordinator

Parents came out in full force on November 1st to learn about every parent's somewhat challenging topic—Talking to Kids about Sexual Health. Dr. Brandy Weibe, from Saleema Noon Sexual Health Educators, engaged parents with her humorous, light-hearted, and straight-forward talk about “body science” and what your kids should be learning at each age and stage of development.

Many parents took advantage of Dr. Weibe's session to ask those difficult questions that many parents struggle with around the topic. Dr. Weibe encouraged parents to

“remember that you can't tell a child too much... they can only absorb what they need to know at the time.”

Dr. Weibe was brought into the district for this free event because of parent requests based on last year's *Parents' Night Out* Series. The series has been expanded this year, due to positive parent and community feedback, to include five separate free workshops for parents and care-givers.

At the first session held at John Robson Community School, Dr. Weibe encouraged parents to “take advantage of the great opportunity” to attend the *Parents' Night Out* sessions.