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New Location, New Name, New Opportunities

A new location, a new name, and many new opportunities – this was the kind of year one of our community inclusion programs had in 2015. Selkirk Centre was once located in an industrial complex in Maple Ridge – surrounded by industrial buildings, far removed from the community. This past year, they underwent a major change and have since relocated to a much more central location on Selkirk Avenue in the heart of downtown Maple Ridge. It was hopeful that this new, accessible location would provide our persons served with more opportunities to be more engaged, while also providing a great way for the community to connect and discover their gifts and contributions.

Shortly after, the program decided a change of name was in order. You may be more familiar with their original name, New Transitions, but the team felt it didn't speak to what the program was truly about. They wanted a name that reflected their new location and identity and collaboratively, the program decided on – **Selkirk Centre
for Community
Engagement!**

With a brand new location and name, Selkirk embarked on an ambitious plan and organized a community event this past summer. They hosted a "getting to know the neighbours" celebration that focused on the theme of community development and contribution. You can check out Spotlight Jake's video covering the event here: <http://bit.ly/1i92Sbf>

Most recently, Selkirk took part in and won the "Scarecrows-a-Plenty" decorating contest put on by the Downtown Maple Ridge Business Improvement Association. Local businesses decorated scarecrows and had community members bring in a donation for the Friends in Need Foodbank to vote on their favourite!

They're already gearing up for the holiday season and getting into the spirit by participating in the Christmas Window Decorating contest! If you're in the Maple Ridge area throughout December, be sure to pop by and check out their decorated window (22334 Selkirk Avenue). They're also going to be volunteering at the Santa Claus Parade at Memorial Peace Park in Maple Ridge on December 5th at 6pm so stop by if you can!

With such a busy year, it's exciting to see what 2016 will bring! Selkirk is always looking to discover new opportunities for community involvement and engage in meaningful activities. Their persons served thrive on being active members in their community, and one fellow in particular, Brian, shares his love of working with people and giving back.

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Do you have a story for our quarterly newsletter or website?

Staff writer/editor: Justine Chubb

Email: communications@posAbilities.ca or call (604) 299-4001 ext. 235.



New Location, New Name, New Opportunities

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Brian Brown attends Selkirk Centre and spends much of his time out in the community. On Mondays, he delivers meals on wheels and plays the organ for a few seniors at one of the buildings he delivers to. On Tuesdays, he volunteers at Bibles for Mission where he organizes hangers and folds clothes. He loves golfing and tries to go out every Wednesday when the weather is warm. Every Thursday, he learns German on the computer and on

Fridays he volunteers at Petland. He gets to wear a long white doctor's coat with his name on it. On top of all of that, he never forgets to go to McDonald's every day for his coffee! Brian shares with us: *"I volunteer because I believe that I need to give back to the community and I really like people. I love playing the keyboard at the program and am practicing Christmas carols right now. I find it enjoyable and relaxing."*

– Brian Brown

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Largest Art Show & Sale to Date!

Contributed by Stefanie Costales, Special Projects Worker



posAbilities hosted its 11th annual INCLUSION Art Show and Sale on October 28th and 29th this year at Heritage Hall. The two day event featured original and creative work from artists of diverse abilities from seven studios across the Lower Mainland and invited the community to come together to celebrate how beautifully disability can be transcended through various media. This year, both Wednesday and Thursday highlighted our traditional Celebration of Art, featuring over 700 pieces of work created by nearly 200 artists.



The doors of Heritage Hall opened on Wednesday at 5pm to the public, and in no time the room was buzzing – live music was playing and art was selling! Many artists were present to mingle with over 350 attendees as they displayed their work. But it was not just art that kept the crowd lively; delicious appetizers, raffle prizes and silent auction baskets kept everyone's energies high! In addition, Monique Nelson – Director of Community Engagement and Master of Ceremonies for the event was joined by artists, team members and guests to keep the crowd entertained!



Thursday was an all-day affair, with doors open from 11am-8pm. The long day flew by as there was always new, friendly faces to greet and mingle with. The fun continued with raffle prizes drawn on the hour, two more silent auctions and yummy treats for all our guests, of course! INCLUSION was a major success - with the largest number of art and silent auction baskets sold and a record breaking attendance this year with over 900 guests!

There are countless people who make this amazing event happen every year. A special thanks to our fellow associations and independent artists for participating and showcasing their work, posAbilities team members for supporting persons served in creating artwork and attending our event, our Art Show committee for their dedication and hard work and of course our fantastic volunteers for their time and energy!



Holiday Card Contest Winner

A main highlight from the night was our Holiday Card Winner, **Alexander Magnussen** of Semiahmoo House Society in Surrey. His creative design came to fruition after putting in 140 hours over three months to create this fantastic art piece called "Mountains". His design was purchased by posAbilities and will be used in our electronic greeting cards, Imagine newsletter and online. Alexander came onto the stage when his name was announced and addressed the crowd in American Sign Language with the help of our Douglas College ASL translator volunteers. His speech was touching and extremely inspiring! Congratulations Alexander!

**posAbilities would like
to thank the INCLUSION
Art Show & Sale 2015 sponsors:**



COLOUR TIME



We also appreciate the following businesses and private donors for their contributions:

Boston Pizza • Cactus Club Cafe • Cineplex
 • Delany's Coffee House • EA Sports
 • Everything Wine • Pacific Breeze Winery
 • Pink Candles • posAbilities Team Members
 • PotteryWorks Studio • Queen's Park Dental
 • Science World British Columbia
 • Shopper's Drug Mart • Starbucks
 • The Body Shop • Vancouver Whitecaps Football Club • T3 Athletics

The generosity of the community is greatly appreciated and pivotal for the success of our event!

YOUR 2015 ART SHOW COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS.



SHARING OUR STORIES



All Misfit Toys Welcome Here!

Alternative Creations Studio recently had the pleasure of preparing a four-panel Christmas-themed mural for the Bright Nights Christmas Train in Stanley Park! Along with a group of secondary students from New Westminster, Alternatives' artists spent the last few months working away like elves to complete the mural which features characters from the holiday classic, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.

During the holiday season, the Bright Nights Christmas Train and Stanley Park Train Plaza sparkle with three million twinkling lights. Your donations and a portion of ticket sales go to the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund. \$1.4 million has been raised to help burn survivors and their families since 1998. Bright Nights is open from November 26, 2015 - January 2, 2016.

Alternatives had a blast dropping off the mural and even had a chance to visit with some of the amazing firefighters on site. They are very proud to contribute to the Fire Fighters' Burn Fund and can't wait to participate next year. So be sure to head on over to Stanley Park this holiday season and keep your eyes peeled for their mural in the main walkway!



KUDOZ FIFTH SPACE

9 Months, 2 Prototypes, 4 Organizations, 1 Partnership

One of our key directives of the current strategic plan (2015-2018) is to strengthen and develop our services. This key directive is vital to the success of our vision and mission. In the spring of 2014, posAbilities, in partnership with Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, Simon Fraser Society and InWithForward, embarked on an innovative service development project to assist all partner organizations to strengthen and develop services. Many of you are familiar with the development of **Kudoz** and **Fifth Space** and we welcome you to visit: <http://bit.ly/1QEAln2> for an update on both projects!

Marty Wong had a blast this summer living it up at a Vancouver Canadians baseball game at Nat Bailey Stadium and dancing up a storm at the Latin Festival at Trout Lake Park!





My Dream Vacation

By Fay Sherlock, Supported Living Network

I went to Disneyland in October with my SLN worker Jadwiga. I have wanted to go to Disneyland for many years. I dreamed of seeing Minnie and Mickey and all the other characters.

While I was there, I got all of their autographs including Chip, Dale, Goofy, and Woody. I went to three parades, went on some rides and one of my favourite things was the World of Colour show which was spectacular! It told the story of how Disney and Mickey started. It started in 1955, when I was only four years old!

We went for breakfast with Minnie at her house, dinner with Goofy and also had a great dinner out at the Rainforest Café where we sat right next to a noisy gorilla. Jadwiga bought an elephant shirt there and I bought some Disney clothes, ears that lit up and a new keychain.

I was so excited while I was there and was sad to come home because I was having so much fun. I want to go again next year and so I will start saving my money now!

Cheering on the Giants!

Thanks to a generous donation from Colour Time, some of our folks had the chance to watch a recent Vancouver Giants game in a private Executive Suite at the Pacific Coliseum!

Thanks Colour Time for this great opportunity!



Urban Garden Tour, and Discovering the Japanese Art of "Morimono"

Contributed by Sarah Yada Seto, on behalf of the Bosa Properties Foundation



With the Autumn season fully upon us, we wanted to share how our community garden at Bosa False Creek has sparked so many wonderful spinoff effects in the False Creek community. This past Spring and Summer, gardeners and new gardeners alike came together to tend to their rooftop garden and reaped the benefits of eating sustainable, healthy produce throughout the harvest season.

Beyond their own garden, the residents recently were invited to attend an urban garden tour of several community gardens in False Creek, including the Creekside Community Centre garden, the James and Meccanica community gardens, as well as Bosa False Creek's own rooftop garden. What a great way to swap ideas and meet your neighbours! The tour culminated with a 'Morimono' demonstration – the modern Japanese art of arranging flowers with fruits and vegetables to symbolize abundance and prosperity during the autumn harvest season.

Judie Glick, President of the Vancouver Ikebana Association, notes that Ikebana is a Japanese art that differs from western flower arranging by incorporating a more meditational approach. "Ikebana allows you to be in touch with nature," Judie shares. "Autumn is like Spring – Fall's flowers are the leaves – by connecting with these elements of nature, it opens your eyes more and makes you more aware of what is around you."

We look forward to our residents being able to participate in many more of these amazing community building events. For more information on Ikebana, visit www.vancouver-ikebana.ca. For more information on community gardens, visit www.cydi.ca.



FAMILIES MATTER



The Training Room – It's Your Money

Contributed by Monique Nelson

As the holiday season is upon us, it's a great time to remind families and friends that anyone that anyone can make a contribution to a loved one's Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). Learn about this and more, in one of the 2016 workshops introducing the [Equal Futures RDSP Program](#). Equal Futures assists eligible individuals to learn about, qualify and apply for an RDSP - easily, efficiently and for free. This program is provided by [Ability Tax and Trust Advisors](#) and supported by [Vancity](#). Everyone is welcome! Please contact the respective host organization for more information or to RSVP:

BURNABY

– Hosted by the [Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion](#)

- **Saturday, January 9, 2016** from 6:30-8:30pm
Chinese Parents Support Group - translation provided:
Cantonese, Mandarin.
Info or RSVP to John Tsang, john.tsang@gobaci.com
or call 604.299.7851.
- **Monday, March 7, 2016**, from 7:00-9:00pm, english presentation.
Carol Stinson, cstinson@telus.net or call 604.299.7851.

PORT COQUITLAM

– Hosted by the [Simon Fraser Society for Community Living](#)

- **Tuesday, February 2, 2016**, 6:30-8:30pm
RSVP to Kathy Trotter, ktrotter@sfsc.org.

MAPLE RIDGE & RICHMOND

– Hosted by [posAbilities](#)

- **Maple Ridge - Wednesday, April 6, 2016**, from 6:30-8:30pm
- **Richmond - Wednesday, May 4, 2016**, from 6:30-8:30pm
RSVP to Monique Nelson, mnelson@posAbilities.ca,
or call (604) 299-4001 ext. 270.

Navigating Life's Transitions

I recently had the opportunity to pop into a meeting of the **Square Peg Society**, a support group for parents of young people transitioning to adulthood who are seeking to enable youth to become independent, contributing adults. Since our last update, the Society's discussions have been on the topics of belonging, housing and family governance collectives and their new website has been launched www.squarepegssociety.ca. Meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month at Vancity, South Burnaby Branch, 5064 Kingsway from 7-9pm. Please introduce yourself to parent leaders: Louvain, louvain@heli-college.com or Joette, fredm@allstar-pacific.com to learn more! Other support groups that assist families with youth transition include the [Vancouver Parents Transition Group](#), [FamilyWORKs chapters](#), as well as the Family Support Workers associated with many organizations across BC. To learn more about the supporters and resources within your community or area of interest, visit www.findsupportbc.com.

Lastly, it was with pleasure that posAbilities' **Family Support Network** hosted the [Interim Advocate for Service Quality](#), Paula Grant at our gathering. We learned about her recent provincial consultation process to review the role that was initially established in 1992, when the last large institutions in BC were preparing to close and shift services into community. We talked about how an internal advocate within the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation can be effective in strengthening services and what changes are being proposed for the future. At our next meeting in January, we will review what we learned and have a discussion about service quality, advocacy and more! To join the group or for more information, please contact me at (604) 299-4001 local 270 or email mnelson@posAbilities.ca

Wishing you and yours a joyous holiday season!



 **UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

It's time to celebrate

– December 3, 2015 marks the International Day of Persons with

Disabilities! The day works to promote action to raise awareness about disability issues and draw attention to the benefits of an inclusive and accessible society for all. Join us in celebrating people of all abilities on December 3rd by heading to the Yaletown Roundhouse in Vancouver from 2-6pm. This free community celebration marks the final event from the Project EveryBODY campaign and features live performances, inspirational talks, distinguished guests, a storytelling workshop from InCommon.TV and much more! We hope you'll join us! For more information, please visit: www.projecteverybody.ca

REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS



Holiday Message 2015

It's hard to believe that the end of 2015 is just around the corner. Where did the year go? Well that would take more than a few paragraphs to flesh out but suffice it to say, it has been a busy year.

At posAbilities, 2015 has been peppered with many milestones. It's the year we achieved our best accreditation survey results since we were first accredited in 2002 (with only one recommendation). We completed work on the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan (delivering on 85% of our goals) as well as crafted a new Strategic Plan (2015-2018) to guide us through our next three years. We also expanded our adult behaviour support services into the South Okanagan region and together with our community partners (BACI, Simon Fraser Society and InWithForward), further committed ourselves to the development of innovative service options to help us better deliver on the vision and mission of our respective organizations. These are but a sampling of the great work we all made possible in 2015 and will continue to build upon throughout 2016. None of these successes would have been possible without the contributions of each posAbilities team member.

Thank you for your commitment to the people we support and may the upcoming holiday season and 2016 bring you and your loved ones health, happiness and prosperity.

Happy Holidays to all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Fernando Coelho.

Fernando Coelho,
Chief Executive Officer

posAbilities' Employee Christmas Party!

When: Friday, December 18, 2015

Where: Executive Plaza Hotel – 405 North Road, Coquitlam

Time: Doors open at 6:30pm, dinner at 7pm, dancing until 11pm

Cost: \$10 per person – cash only (only 150 tickets will be sold). Tickets on sale now through Monday, December 14, 2015. Available at Head Office or through your Team Leader.

Please don't drink and drive. The location is accessible by transit, you can share a cab or have a designated driver. Let's celebrate safely.

Meet the Board of Directors for posAbilities, 2015-2016

The Board of Directors develops policy and the long term vision for this organization. We are pleased to introduce you to our valued volunteers. **Celso A. A. Boscariol**, President,

Dr. Linda Eaves, 1st Vice President, **Paul Girardi**, 2nd Vice President, **Paul van Koll**, Treasurer, **Chris Doerksen**, Secretary, **Stuart Charmichael**, **Anita Lee**, **Helen Premia** and **Lorie Sherritt**.

We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to **Dr. Sidney Mindess**. He was a long-time board director of posAbilities Association of BC and was the inaugural president of Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living. We wish you the very best in retirement and are grateful for your leadership and service over a period of more than 30 years.



Dr. Sidney Mindess

CONGRATULATIONS

On behalf of our organization, I would like to recognize and thank the following employees for their years of service to posAbilities.

Your dedication to persons served, your peers and our stakeholders is much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Fernando Coelho, CEO

5 Years

Chris Bridges

10 Years

Joanne Beattie
Diobert Belimac
Jasvir Burchha
Euan Clemens
Anette Holkamp
Gillian McTavish
William Zhang

15 Years

Kelly Berge
Priscilla Casama
Judith Murphy
Elizabeth St. Rose



Kelly Berge



Judith Murphy



Elizabeth St. Rose



Transformation Challenge Winner

**Contributed by
Melanie Cortner, Wellness Committee**

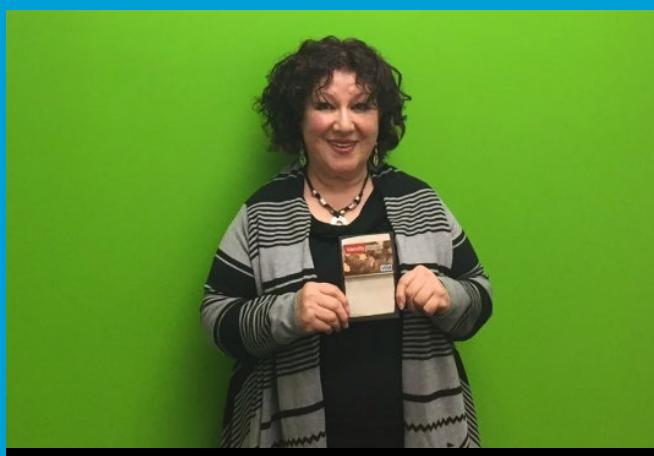
They say it takes 21 days to form a habit and the six week Body Transformation Challenge at the Burnaby Infighting Training Centre with Tom Taylor was the perfect opportunity to help get me into the routine of regularly working out. I signed up with the goal of losing weight and improving my overall fitness level. The workouts were a lot of fun and I have seen an improvement in my energy level, running ability and even my sleep. I also received assistance from nutritionist, Kastro Vafa, who provided feedback on my food journals.

At the end of the challenge I had lost a total of 16 lbs and four inches and have been able to continue on with my workouts where today I have lost a total of 21 lbs. If the opportunity comes around to participate again I would highly recommend this to everyone no matter your fitness level or goals! Thank you to both posAbilities and Tom at Infighting for this opportunity!

Complete the uSPEQ Employee Climate Survey

**Open now until December 15, 2015.
Let us know what really matters to you at work.**

Check your inbox for your personal link to participate in the annual uSPEQ survey! The survey provides each employee with the opportunity to confidentially contribute their views on what is working well and what can be improved in their workplace. To encourage participation, we are offering some fabulous prizes, including the grand prize of a 16G iPad Mini! The earlier you enter the draw, the more changes you have to win.



Week 1 – Rouhangiz Farhoudi