

KELOWNA AND DISTRICT SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

1953 - 2010

June 10, 1953: A group of parents, teachers, doctors and concerned citizens met because children with mental handicaps were not being educated in their community. On June 18, 1953 the founding members named the organization the Kelowna and District Society for the Mentally Handicapped. The "centre" opened December 7, 1953.

1954: The society name changed to the Kelowna and District Society for Mentally Retarded Children and the centre was officially called Sunnyvale.

1958: The Sunnyvale Centre had an enrollment of thirteen students and a staff of two teachers. They taught classes of seven to thirteen year olds and fifteen to thirty year olds.

1968: The Sunnyvale Workshop was developed and served 27 adults supported by 6 staff. The school enrollment was 18 students supported by 3 teachers.

1970: The name changed to the Kelowna and District Society for the Mentally Retarded. There were four main departments operating: Commercial, Special services (Wedding car decorations and crafts), Woodworking and Ceramics. Recreational activities such as bowling, skating, parent sponsored picnics and field trips were offered. Towards the end of the year, the pre-school program started and soon moved to the Baptist Church on Bernard Avenue.

1971: September, an extension was built onto Sunnyvale, which added two more classrooms.

1973: The Bertram Street Residence opened with 12 residents living there. The children's education programs were given to School District #23.

1975: July, the expansion of Sunnyvale Workshop was completed and those on a waiting list finally received services.

1976: The Infant Development Program started.

1977: A Recreation and Field Counselor was hired to expand activities within the community.

1981: The society changed names back to the Kelowna and District Society for the Mentally Handicapped and the Sunnyvale Workshop became Kelowna Diversified Industries (KDI) Wood Shop.

1983: The society transferred the Infant Development program to the Child Development Centre. Bertram Street Residence closed with some residents moving home and others went into the Independent Apartment Living Program.

1984: Early in the year, the Bach Road group home opened and 4 people moved in. The Bertram Street Residence opened as a pre-vocational activity centre. Discussion groups, personal grooming, work preparation, arts and crafts and access to community-based programs were offered.

1985: Two homes were purchased, Solly Court and Lakeland and former residents of institutions in BC moved into the community-based homes. Bertram Street expanded its' services to provide day programming for these individuals. The society assisted in setting up the Special Olympics program in Kelowna.

1986: The Bach Road residents moved to a newly purchased home on Richter Street, which is still owned and operated by the society.

1988: The 35th anniversary of the society was held. The society was now running four levels of programming ranging from personal skills to vocational training. The day

program served 68 people supported by 16 staff. The residential program served 24 individuals supported by 19 staff.

1989: Lakeland residence was sold and a duplex on Elm Street purchased. Wedding Belles and Baskets moved to a storefront operation on Sutherland Avenue with 11 individuals and two staff. The society's offices moved out of the McWilliams Centre and into Bertram Street Vocational Centre (KDI).

1990: The society name changed again to the Kelowna and District Society for Community Living. Integrated Career Opportunities (ICO), a supported employment service was formed. The society started an integrated daycare.

1991: Solly Court was sold and the contracts transferred to the new owner.

1992: The Self-Advocacy group started to grow and expand. The arts program would be converted to a production contract. The newly formed Travel Club made its' second trip, a cruise down the Mexican coast.

1993: Elm Street was in the process of closing which left the society with one group home, Richter Street. ICO opened a second office in Winfield.

1994: The society purchased a new recycling truck for ICO to assist the recycling program to expand. They secured a contract with the Kelowna General Hospital. Plans for a bicycle shop were initiated and involved handling the city's lost and stolen bikes.

1995: The society established another 'storefront' operation when contract services moved to Bay Avenue and became First Choice. 12-18 individuals worked there with two staff. Contracts included packaging and labeling for Sun-Rype and Calona Wines as well as bulk mail-outs, newsletters and collating projects for their regular customers. The Bike Shop opened at KDI and a showroom for sales and repairs started. The Bike Shop was named Larry's in memory of a former service recipient. The Daycare was closed due to the decline in children enrolled. The Bertram Street building was purchased by the society from the city so that it could be sold. The Winfield office closed due to the decline in participation.

1998: The Bike Shop signed a contract with Zellers to assemble their new bikes and was working on signing deals with Wal-Mart and Canadian Tire.

1999: The administration offices moved to KDI and the Bike Shop was in the process of opening a store on Doyle Avenue. October was designated Community Living Month. At the end of the year, the Legion purchased the Bertram Street building.

2000: A shredding machine was purchased and the search for more work started. The Wedding Shop moved to Spall Road and ICO moved to Kent Road. In the fall, a new 14-foot cube van was purchased for Econoshred.

2001: The Wood Shop received a forklift, which helped a great deal with their lift lots of wood. First Choice gave up the storefront on Bay Avenue and moved back to KDI in December.

2002: The Wood Shop started making cedar sheds. March 1, the Bike Shop moved to a new location on Lawrence Avenue. The Bike Shop name was changed to Larry's Cycle and Sports. The Minister for Children and Family Development appointed a provincial Transition Steering Committee to make recommendations on transferring community living services from government to a new community based governance authority.

2003: KDSCL celebrated 50 years of community service. Celebrations occurred throughout the year beginning in April. The society donated a tree, which was planted in City Park to thank the community for their support and KDSCL hosted a Chamber of Commerce new member's breakfast. In June, a "50th Anniversary Party in the Park" occurred at Mission Creek Park. The entire community was invited to come and participate in the celebration. In October, in recognition of community living month, a

reunion dance was held at the Performance Centre on Ellis Street. ICO's offices relocated to KDI. Individualized funding became an option for individuals and families. Government was moving away from traditional global funded contracts. Wedding Belles and Baskets moved to a new location on Lawrence Avenue, next to Larry's Cycle and Sports. The society underwent a major service review. The three supervisor positions were consolidated into 2. Action plans were established to clearly define the service areas and establish clear goals for each service. The society offered 4 types of services; business services, day service, residential and ICO. Ricky Barton a service recipient, passed away.

2004: KDSCL began preparing for accreditation. ICO focused solely on employment and the Day Service assumed responsibility for assisting individuals with life skills. Community Placement Developer positions were established to create more opportunities for community participation in employment and volunteer work. An agency shuffle occurred and staff were reassigned to their preferred areas of work. Incentive pay was clarified and a new system implemented. Another truck was purchased. The society secured an individualized funding contract and assisted a family to support their two adult children in their home. The Interim Authority for Community Living BC was established to assume provincial responsibility for services to people with disabilities from the Ministry for Children and Family Development. The building continued to be utilized by outside not-for-profit groups including Parent-to-Parent, the Cool Arts Group, the Okanagan Deaf Association and self Advocate Caucus. The Board of Directors and executive director continued to work on replacing the building located at 555 Fuller Avenue.

2005: KDSCL had their first Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation site survey November 2 to 4, 2005. Three surveyors came from the United States and evaluated KDSCL's services against industry standards. On December 15, 2005 we received notification that we had been assigned a three-year designation. Community Living BC took over the provincial responsibility for services to people with disabilities from the Ministry for Children and Family Development July 1. Community participation at various recreation and leisure activities and events increased in all areas. Service recipients planted and harvested a community garden plot, hiked trails, participated in signing classes, went tubing, attended hockey games, etc. Community volunteerism increase and service recipients volunteered over 2900 hours at Pine Acres Rest Home on the West Side, Windsor Manor in Rutland, Ki-low-na Friendship Center downtown and Compassion Canada. KDSCL assisted with Kelowna Centennial celebrations and Regatta. After 14 years of association with the Kelowna General Hospital and Cottonwoods, 5 individuals from ICO were laid off. Many employees at the hospital were upset and tried to have the individuals reinstated, unfortunately to no avail. Richard Bernard and Patrick Smart passed away.

2006: Service contracts with CLBC were renewed for an additional year and a half. CLBC hired a provincial self advocate advisor worked at establishing better communications with people with disabilities. A new provincially bargained 4-year collective agreement was ratified, to create labour stability. Due to a decline in sales and the lack of activity for the attendees, Wedding Belles and Baskets officially closed the doors July 14, 2006. KDSCL purchased a house at 925 Sutherland Avenue which became an extension of the KDSCL day service. The women from the Wedding store moved to this location. At the same time Larry's Cycle and Sports moved to a new location at 123-1511 Sutherland Avenue. Larry's expanded their retail operations and began selling Waldies shoes, Life is Good and Horsefeathers clothing lines. The residents at Richter Street celebrated 20 years together. They also vacationed in

Mexico while the interior of the house was being painted. The KDI Wood Shop was extremely busy with stakes sales increasing due to increased construction in Kelowna. The day service expanded and the services offered were based on individual's needs and pre-scheduling activities. Community volunteerism continued to increase. ICO expanded their contracts and had record sales. A 30 year lease on the 555 Fuller Avenue property was finally reached with the City of Kelowna and the society continued to pursue replacing the building. The unofficial KDSCL travel club spent a week at the West Edmonton Mall. A group of KDSCL service recipients went camping the 2nd weekend in September to Camp Owaissi across the lake. KDSCL purchased the ShareVision program designed to eliminate paper work through the use of online websites and make the services more effective and efficient. KDSCL held very successful community living month events including BBQs each Friday in October. Many of our community partners, including the mayor, came to KDSCL for a free lunch and received bouquets of flowers. KDSCL was also showcased on CHBC by Mike Roberts. Joan MacGregor, who was the KDSCL executive director from 1989 to 1999 and Anne-Louise Woite, a long term wedding store participant, passed away.

2007: KDSCL continued to pursue replacing the building at 555 Fuller Avenue. The City of Kelowna requirements were actively being addressed with 2 outstanding items at year end. KDSCL secured four new individualized contracts with staff specifically working under the direction of the individual and/or their family. Recruiting and maintaining qualified staff was a huge issue due to the labour market in the Okanagan. Much time was spent trying to hire and orientate new staff. The Day Service continued to expand with increases in referrals. The activity schedule that was established in the prior year was operating in full mode with a variety of recreation and leisure opportunities being offered. Individuals continued to volunteer with other community non-profits and attended several appreciation events through out the year. The evening/weekend social and recreation group participated in many community events including attending hockey, baseball and football games, playing billiards, Parks Alive activities, dinner and a movie, arts classes, etc. The Richter residents went on an Alaskan cruise which they thoroughly enjoyed. ICO continued to provide employment services. Group contract work declined with more emphasis on independent employment. ICO hosted a very successful employer's breakfast in September with many community partners attending. Larry's Cycle and Sports sales increased at the new location. They expanded their clothing line. The KDI Wood Shop had record sales, with individuals continuing to participate in community activities. The officially resurrected Travel Club went to Disneyland, Niagara Falls and hosted a September one week camp at Camp Owaissi. Community Living month celebrations occurred in October with a free BBQ lunch and an evening open house. Sadly, this was also the year that Desmond Hill, Maria Sulzer and Janet Asselstine, long term KDSCL participants, passed away. Chris Jiyobu and Stewart Ritchie both retired. The Kelowna Self advocates attended the BCACL conference in June in Prince George. They produced a video and presented it at a workshop on Rights and Responsibilities. The group continued to meet monthly and worked on issues at both a community and provincial level.

2008: KDSCL celebrated 55 years of service to the community. Unfortunately this proved to be a difficult year with the unexpected death of Leigh Edwards, a 25 year employee, on April 18. He made many contributions to the society including coordinating KDSCL's first successful 3 year accreditation designation. He was a very kind man and his death affected many.

The ICO bottle sorting group moved from sorting bottles at KDSCL locations to Columbia Bottle. The contract expanded to include KDSCL collecting donated recyclables at the locations with the proceeds going directly to the society. ICO continued to develop the discovery process focusing on individual specific employment. The Activity Service continued to expand. Individuals participated in various activities including scrap booking, bird watching, CURVES and volunteerism. Some activities that were held at 555 Fuller Avenue began relocating to community venues. Many additional opportunities were offered through the evening and weekend service. The travel club went to Tofino, Disney World and on a Caribbean cruise. KDSCL also coordinated another fun filled week at Camp Owaiss where a 55th celebratory barbeque was held. KDSCL set up their first successful home share living arrangement for one individual. Larry's Cycle and Sport sales were similar to previous years while the wood shop's decreased slightly due to the decline in building. KDSCL staff hosted a second very successful Craft and Bake Sale fundraiser. The building project remained live and active. All city requirements were satisfied and the board and executive director worked actively to find a fund raising chair. Eight self advocates attended the BCACL AGM and Conference in Surrey. In November KDSCL had their second accreditation survey and in January of 2009 we received confirmation that we again received a three year designation.

2009: Staffing which had been a significant issue for the last few years stabilized. We were very fortunate to suspend casual hiring and were able to accommodate staffing replacement needs as required. Many staff had the opportunity to attend various conferences and training throughout the year. In June three staff and two people KDSCL supported attended the BCACL Conference in Vancouver. In March, the union allowed the executive director to participate on a travel club trip to Mexico. The travel club also went to Tofino and Ucluelet, Big White, Disneyland, Vancouver twice, once sightseeing the other for a hockey game, Southbeach Washington for the Christmas light-up, Camp Owaiss and Las Vegas. In addition the Richter residents holidayed for a week at Jewel Lake. A board strategic plan was completed in April (follow-up to the one completed in November the previous year) that was comprehensive and focused on the organization as whole. The activity service took over publishing the KDSCL Newsletter. The revamped format and enhanced content received much praise. Sadly, this year long term employee Mike Johnson passed away and individuals Chris Jiyobu, Laurie Yuros, Madeline Church and Verona Harding who all received service from KDSCL. The activity service continued to assist individuals to participate in community recreation and leisure activities and volunteerism. Many activities from the previous year continued and a selection of new ones offered. ICO continued to support individuals to work and was actively implementing the Discovery process. Due to economic slump, sales were down at both Larry's Cycle and Sports and the KDI Wood Shop. Individuals at both locations continued with activities in house and in community. KDSCL staff and Larry's Cycle and Sports (had a booth set up) participated in the City of Kelowna's Bike to Work Week. KDSCL staff hosted a third very successful Craft and Bake Sale fundraiser. The Community Living Awareness Committee was very active in the community and KDSCL participated in Canada Day celebrations via Apple Bin Painting and setting up a booth that distributed balloons and paper glider airplanes, Parks Alive, Safeway Arts and Music Festival, distributed posters for Viva Musica and decorated and put a Scarecrow in the Uptown Rutland Scarecrow Convention. Likely the most exciting accomplishment of the year was winning the Juicy Give. Fifty-three not-for-profit organizations participated in a contest sponsored by our local radio station, the Juice. Organizations submitted projects that needed funding and the community voted via the internet for the project they felt

was most in need. The organization that won, the Juice committed to raising a minimum of \$100,000 for and provide \$50,000 worth of free advertising. Everyone worked so hard campaigning and we had so much support both internally and from the community at large.

2010: The Community Living Awareness Committee (CLAC) was very active and participated in and/or supported participation in a community living month barbeque, Seedy Saturday at Okanagan College, a Staff Craft and Bake Sale and a 57th anniversary tea at KDSCL. All the events were successful and served as opportunities to showcase our society and promote welcoming communities. Collectively we worked on addressing the organization's strategic plan goals including replacing our building at 555 Fuller Avenue. Our only barrier continued to be securing the dollars to build. We developed various funding strategies including contracting with a fundraiser, recruiting additional committee members and developing and hosting our own events. The new committee worked very hard with limited resources to host or participate in a dunk tank through the Boyd Autobody Show and Shine, a Kayaking Race, a Lawn Bowling tournament, the Skookum Barn Dance and sold Christmas swags. In addition Jazel Homes held another very successful fundraiser with KDSCL the recipient of the proceeds. In anticipation of rebuilding, KDSCL administration and ICO relocated to 925 Sutherland Avenue and the individuals attending the activity service relocated to Fuller Avenue. Staffing continued to be relatively stable though we did hire a few casual employees mid-year. Our provincially bargained collective agreement expired March 31, 2010. Bargaining commenced however by year end no agreement had been reached. KDSCL secured funds to complete a feasibility study for Larry's Cycle and Sport and the City of Kelowna Lost and Stolen Bike program. A contract to manage the lost and stolen bikes for the city of Kelowna was signed and the wood shop continued to support this service. KDSCL supported 7 individualized funding contracts at the beginning of the year; one family opted to take over managing the services on their own in the fall. KDSCL participated in the CLBC initiative "Start with Hi" by distributing newspapers and bracelets hoping to educate the community on inclusive practices. The activity service continued to rotate their schedule as the season changed to offer a variety of different activities while continuing to volunteer in the community. Included was Geo-cashing which not only enabled staff and individuals to explore community but brought people to us. Sadly, this year Karen Pringle passed away. ICO secured additional funding through CLBC for an employment first initiative. This initiative had us develop an employment first approach to individuals wanting to become involved in services at KDSCL. The grant enabled KDSCL to employ two individuals for a 7 week period to develop the Discovery process and complete Discoveries with 18 people. KDSCL continued to provide and offer numerous professional development opportunities. Staff attended employment specialist courses, Mandt training, assertiveness training, conflict resolution training, computer classes, customized employment training, epilepsy and dementia seminars just to name a few. A speaker bureau was developed which included helping people with disabilities to hone their public speaking skills. KDSCL also jumped on the technology train and created a Facebook page.

Travel Club and Travel Trips

1991: The newly formed Travel Club made its first trip to Hawaii!

1992: Cruise down the Mexican Coast.

1993: Mexico.

1994: Disneyland.

1995: Mexico and Mara Lake Camping.

1996: Alaskan Cruise and Mara Lake Camping.

1997: Mexico, Hawaii and Osoyoos Camping.

1998: Mexico, Disneyland and Osoyoos Camping.

1999: Mexico and Camp Owaissi.

2000: Mexico and Camp Owaissi.

2001: Disneyland and a Cruise back to Vancouver and Camp Owaissi.

***2002:** Mexico and Camp Owaissi.

***2003:** Mexico, Disneyland, and Camp Owaissi.

***2004:** Mexico and Camp Owaissi.

***2005:** Disneyland, Victoria, Camp Owaissi and the Kootney's.

***2006:** Mexico, West Edmonton Mall and Camp Owaissi.

2007: Disneyland, Niagara Falls and Camp Owaissi.

2008: Tofino, Disney World, Caribbean Cruise, Camp Owaissi and Leavenworth.

2009: Jewel Lake, Ferndale-Washington, Mexico, Las Vegas, Tofino, Vancouver-Whistler and Vancouver a second time for a hockey game.

2010: Barkerville, Camp Owaissi, Ferndale and Christina Lake.

*Trips were not coordinated by KDSCL.

President	Year
Mrs. H. B. Simpson	1953
Mr. R. C. Gore	1953 - 1955
C. J. Knowles	1955
Ivor Jackson	1956 -1957
Freeda Woodhouse	1957 - 1958
Mrs. H. Burbank	1958 - 1959
Mr. R. C. Gore	1960 - 1961
Mrs.T.C. Williams	1961 - 1962
Ivor Jackson	1963
Mr. R. P. McLennan	1964
Mr. E. H. Cotton	1965 - 1968
Audrey Perley	1968 - 1970
Mrs.G. Ritchie	1970
W. S. Leggat	1970 - 1974
Elise Clark	1974 -1977
Jim Grindley	1977 - 1980
Walter Brown	1981 - 1982
Gerry Bleiler	1982 - 1983
Frances Nutz	1983 - 1986
Elise Clark	1986 - 1988
Dan Porayko	1988 - 1989
Joanne English/ Calkins	1989 -1991
Jim Greenlay	1991 - 1993
Nick Pizio	1993 - 1997
David Paynter	1997 - 1999
Dennis Gates	1999 - 2004
Gail Meier	2004 - Present