

Applying the Circle of Courage

Signe Finnbogason, Burnaby

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It's September, and we're facing a new crop of angry kids, depressed kids, and quirky kids, none of whom are dying to hear our fantastic algebra, grammar or history lesson. Where to begin? How do we hook them into caring at least as much as we do about their success?

I've been one of the two teachers running the A.B.L.E. (Grade 9-10) and P.M. (grade 11-12) District Alternate Behaviour programs for at-risk youth in Burnaby for the last three years, and I want to take this chance to share with you some of what we've been doing with our students.

Having recently undergone some training in the "Reclaiming Youth" seminars developed by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg¹, and Steve Van Bockern, I'm going to focus my discussion around the Circle of Courage philosophy,

which illustrates how self-worth and growth comes from feeling successful in four key areas: Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity.

Belonging: We Hear You

In the Circle of Courage, Belonging is positioned in the east, where the sun rises; the place of beginnings. And nothing else can happen in a classroom until the roots of belonging are starting to grow. I think ...continued on page 10



From the Editor's Desk:

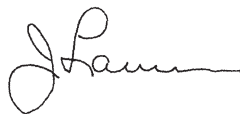
Please allow me to be, probably, the last one, to welcome you back to another school year. I am always surprised by the number of non-teaching friends I have who remind me that I have to return to work after the summer break like its so great a hardship it should have me in tears. Don't get me wrong; I love my summer break, but I also always look forward to the new school year. How many other jobs afford you the opportunity to take on a fresh start every ten months after an often relaxing and rejuvenating break?

The 2007 Challenge and Change Conference, our 20th, will again be held at the Sheraton Wall Center in Vancouver on January 25th and 26th. Register online at www.bctf.ca/bcaea.

This year's conference coincides with Tourism Vancouver's fifth annual "Dine Out Vancouver" culinary promotion, designed to showcase Vancouver's renowned food and wine scene. Be sure and check out the article elsewhere in this issue for full details.

Included in this issue are articles highlighting successful school-based and community-based programs, a restorative justice article by our own Constable Shelley, teasers from Dr. Gary Phillips, and Dr. Gordon Neufeld, and a taste of things to come in January with the Schmooze menu from the amazing Joyce May. As always, I invite you to send me your comments, suggestions, or articles for a future issue.

See you in January.



President's Message

Mike Shaw



You are quite likely wondering what has happened to Rick Fitch's name and photo that usually appears in this space. No, there hasn't been a palace coup! Rick accepted a position in Mission over the summer as an administrator, so now he can only have associate BCTF membership. BCTF article 33.16 (d) (i) precludes all but active members from holding the office of PSA president or vice-president. As a result, I was appointed Acting President for the remainder of Rick's term and Joyce May was appointed Acting Vice-President. Rick hasn't gone entirely to the "dark side" though. His commitment to the BCAEA remains steadfast, and I am happy to report he has accepted an appointment as Secretary-Treasurer to fill the position vacated by Joyce.

Like our Newsletter Editor, Jim Lawson, my pre-teaching background is in construction. I apprenticed as a carpenter while fresh out of high school, and like Jim, attended UBC's Industrial Education Teacher program years later to become a shop teacher. I never actually did teach shop, except as a TOC. During my first full-time teaching assignment as a Math and Computer Science teacher, my principal, Bob Lindsay, enticed me to be the founding teacher in an alternate program he was starting in Kelowna. I've never looked back, and can honestly say that I have enjoyed every minute in Alternate Education.

Just like you do I'm sure, I find working with at-risk youth immensely rewarding. There is something addictive about knowing you are making a difference in the life of a troubled student.

My involvement with the executive of the BCAEA began in 2002. I thought it was time to give back to an organization that had given me so much personally and professionally over the years. Little did I know that my volunteering would be an even more rewarding experience. If you are thinking about getting involved with the BCAEA, I encourage you to do so. We are always looking for new faces. You won't regret it, and you, the association, and the membership at large will benefit immensely.

Coming up in January is the twentieth annual Challenge & Change Conference. I went to my first in 1991 (and every one since), and still remember how excited and simultaneously scared I was to find out more about what I had volunteered to teach. The sessions at my first conference, as now, were informative, interesting, and covered a wide variety of topics. I am sure you will get as much out of the 2007 conference as I did way back then. I look forward to seeing you there. I'll be the big tall guy in the red vest and matching red moustache manning the Help Desk or welcoming people into the Schmooze. ♦

The Real Business of Education

Dr. Gary Phillips, National School Improvement Project

As First Nations cultures have always recognized, each person is born with their own *special song*. Our role as teachers and parents is to look for the gifts in children, not the deficiencies. To encourage improvement, not perfection. It is imperative that we see the quality that makes a student different as a trait, which is necessary for his or her life path. We have the opportunity to help students develop this quality in a positive way. In fact, it is our responsibility, since any difference left unattended becomes a disability!

Why are we disciplining kids? Are we enforcing the same consequence for everyone in order to get even for violating policies? Or are we trying to extinguish certain behaviors and help students improve? If the latter is true, then we must recognize that rewards and punishments do not work with kids from sensate cultures. Other forms of consequences, such as restitution and choices, can effectively change behaviors by addressing emotional needs in an empowering way.

Incidents and events are one of the determinants of creating lifelong legacies for learners. Experiences leave a greater impact on students' lives than information alone. Who we are makes a far deeper impression on others than anything we say or do. Strong emotions (whether positive or negative) are things that most of us remember for a long time. Coming in contact with a great teacher is like being branded - the mark never wears off, so we must make sure it's not a scar.

Teachers and students can create meaningful habits in the classroom that extend into lifelong rituals. For example, the ritual of a 'belly laugh a day in class' creates a culture where people want to be, and ensures a focus on positive emotions. Students say, "I may not remember what you said, but I'll never forget how you made me feel."

There is a transformation happening in schools across North America today. Many new classroom options and expanding programs have flourished in schools where a culture of trust and a shared vision of hope have become priorities. Teachers are becoming more willing to create innovative new ideas in the classroom to include students who have been at-risk in the old system. "Action research" by these courageous leaders has set a wave of improvement in motion across the continent. This is the real business of education - sharing and learning together.

Trusting relationships help people through vulnerable times of change and risk-taking, and contribute to people's identity and motives for action. Many of today's children are starved for intimate access to adults, rich life experiences, and belief in themselves. Often, their unpredictable home environment has not included a trusting relationship with another person. An important function of educators today is to provide intimacy for kids by acting as models of healthy relationships, and offering personal support so students can find meaning from their new learning and become effective members of the community.

As educators, we need to support each other in order to thrive. We can begin by giving ourselves spiritual nurturing through journaling our successes and reflections for a few minutes each day. As we do, we will come to recognize the gifts and contributions of others in our lives. A ritual of appreciation built into staff meetings, such as the exercise described in "Views from the Field" below, can foster collegiality and trust among colleagues. We are grateful for all the dedicated teachers who take the time to offer support and encouragement to each other in this very important and life-changing work.

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Boys & Girls Club: Adventure-Based Learning

Lindsay Cornell, Geoff Mill, and Jason Cole, Victoria Boys & Girls Club

Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria has been creating powerful, positive experiences for children and youth for over 45 years. We recognize the importance of alternative education techniques and the many ways in which people learn and retain knowledge. Adventure based learning and experiential education principles are cornerstones of both our Coastline Challenges and Adventure Based Learning programs.

Today's youth face a wide range of challenges and decisions that can make the turbulent waters of adolescence difficult to navigate. Support, understanding, and guidance for young people are critical. Our programs are designed to provide a protected harbour where participants can dock and step outside day-to-day complexities and reflect, rebuild, and make plans before setting sail again. By providing challenging, solution-focused experiences young people are able to develop their confidence and potential, laying the foundation for making future decisions and meeting new challenges. Through debriefing and reflection, instructors can provide perspective, facilitating the participant's connections to their everyday life and helping to supply strategies for a young person to continue to create constructive solutions to challenges they face.

Adventure Based Learning (ABL) and Coastline Challenges (CC) are two programs designed to meet a broad spectrum of individual and group based development needs. Being based out of the Metchosin Wilderness Camp -- 98 acres of forest, trails, ponds, farmland and ecological space -- provides a diverse setting for programming. CC and ABL engage participants in a wide range of activities, including canoeing, swimming, climbing (on

our new 42 foot climbing tower), challenge course activities, wilderness skill development, orienteering, natural and cultural history appreciation and service learning projects. This broad spectrum of activities enables our staff teams to custom design a curriculum to meet the specific needs of the client.

Overview: Coastline Challenges Program

The Coastline Challenges program is run year-round for youth at risk who are currently involved in the justice system. All participants are referred to the program by their probation officers or a judge. For many participants this program is an alternative to spending time in custody.

Expeditions (extended out-trips) take place in different geographical areas on Vancouver Island. During a program, the youth participate in a variety of activities depending on weather, location, group dynamics and abilities. Programs may consist of ocean and lake canoe trips, backpacking, light mountaineering, rock climbing, snowshoeing, running, swimming, and challenge course activities.

An integral part of the Coastline program is the 48 hour "solo". During this time, participants spend time alone in a self-made campsite and have minimal interaction with instructors only and none with the other youth. This experience encourages participants to think about the decisions they have made, the company they keep, and the path they are on.

The program curriculum encourages youth to stretch their perceived limitations and discover their own personal strengths and resources. A strong sense of self-awareness is necessary for solving problems and participating fully in their families and communities when they leave the program.

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Coastline Philosophy

CC instructors work within a philosophical framework that includes Developmental Asset Building, Experiential Education, Adventure Therapy, Creation of Pro-Social Environments and the use of Rehabilitative Correctional Practices. Curriculum consists of a series of challenges and teachings that increase in difficulty as the group and program progress. The challenges aimed at both the individual and the group build individual esteem and competency while developing and strengthening a sense of community. Building wilderness skills such as paddling a canoe, basic navigation and preparing a meal over an open fire helps to develop a sense of efficacy, enhance character and develop independence.

These unfamiliar experiences are opportunities to learn and practice skills in areas such as cooperation, communication, anger management and self-determination. Skills such as these have real life applications and are easily transferable into the youth's daily life. This process is supported by group discussions with instructor assessments and evaluations throughout the program.

Coastline instructors focus on building strong professional relationships with youth. This focus allows participants to build relationships at their own comfort level with staff based on mentorship vs. hierarchy. A healthy use of stress (eustress) through environment, activity and routine is essential in creating opportunities for youth to grow and learn during the program. The practice of reducing real or objective hazards while increasing perceived risk for youth is im-



portant to increase their learning opportunities in a safe manner. The Instructors have unique role modeling opportunities and increased potential for effective interventions with youth because of their relationship. Through environment, activity and instructor/youth relationships youth are engaged, creating opportunities to explore new perspectives, personal values, accountability, and emotional management and expression.

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Adventure-Based Learning

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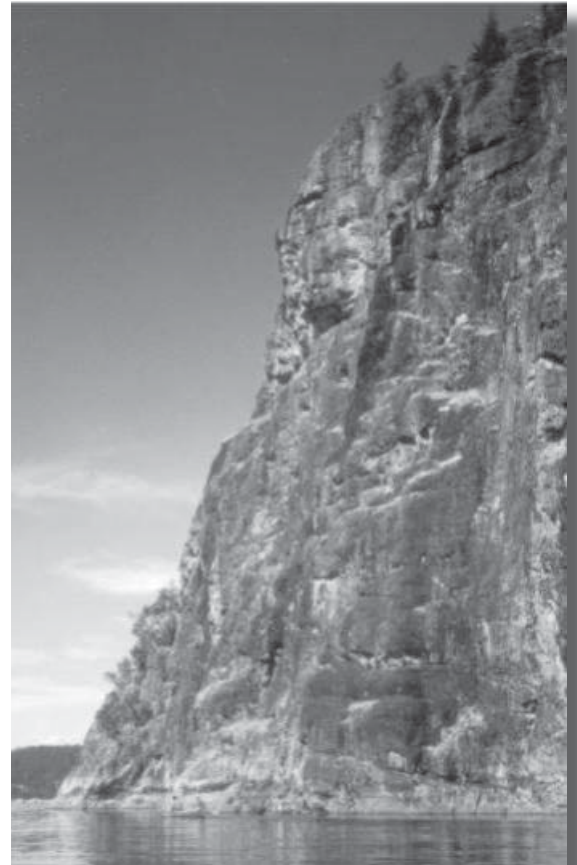
Coastline Challenges Program Outcomes

The CC program has profound short-term and long-term impacts on youth. Natural consequences and teachable moments play an important role in the delivery of effective wilderness programming. Youth quickly realize that a poorly made tarp shelter equals a wet miserable night; not consulting a map may result in having to retrace steps. These incidents allow for tangible experiences that can solidify the retention of a lesson – cause and effect relationships are immediately apparent. The natural environment also provides a plethora of self-guided learning opportunities via investigation and curiosity. Youth become engaged in the natural world through creativity and imagination and, in turn, gain knowledge about themselves and the world around them. Individual responsibility and ownership of behaviour are easily addressed and worked on in the natural environment.

The program has different outcomes for different youth depending on their personal motivation and a verity of other intrinsic and extrinsic factors. An increase in self-confidence, independence, personal and community awareness, responsibility and accountability are all areas in which youth experiences growth. A greater understanding and appreciation of values like honesty, law, respect, leadership, stewardship, compassion, diversity and integrity are commonly experiences in our programs which challenge youth in a self-evaluation and reflective process. Our programs believe that personal growth and change are by choice, therefore youth are exposed to these and other pro-social values in a safe and respectful environment and they can adopt what works for them into their lifestyle.

Overview: Adventure Based Learning

Adventure Based Learning (ABL) utilizes exper-



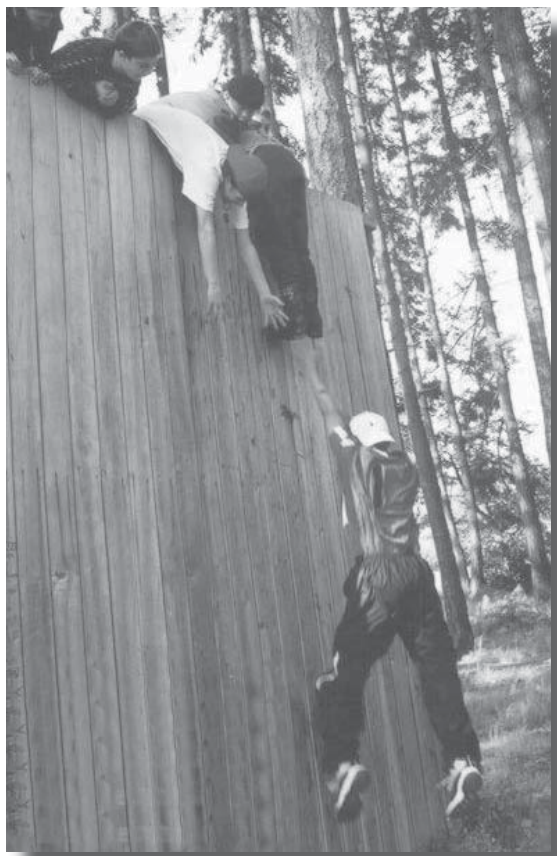
iential learning in the natural environment to facilitate personal and group development. Activities range from supporting group members as they allow themselves to fall backwards, to build up group trust, to working together to climb a 10-foot wall. Programming is developed according to the needs of the client group. Half day to multi-day courses can incorporate challenging activities at the Wilderness Camp (climbing tower, canoeing, challenge course, etc) or can take advantage of the wilderness areas around Vancouver Island – from canoeing in Pacific Rim National Park area to rock climbing and hiking on world class trails. Clients have included school groups, non-profit organizations, community groups and corporate groups seeking to improve communication or develop leadership skills.

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The flexibility of ABL programming enables staff to design courses that reflect the level of skill and abilities of a group and ensure that the desired objectives and outcomes can be achieved. The ABL Program has experiences developing and facilitating programs for a wide range of groups spanning from deaf-blind children groups to varsity-level sport teams. Each group, regardless of differences and ability levels, can be challenged by our programs and as a result experiences personal growth.

ABL Philosophy

Programming is designed to create challenges that are specific to the needs of the group. ABL operates using an approach known as “Challenge By Choice” allowing participants to work towards success – as defined by their own needs



and abilities and according to their own personal comfort level. Each participant is actively engaged in the learning process. By creating programs specific to the needs of each group staff ensure that clients achieve success – while encountering challenges that encourage them to step past their known comfort level. By introducing unfamiliar situations and challenges participants are encouraged to develop healthy approaches to handle stress and change. Throughout the course staff facilitate reflective processing of the activities and work with participants to identify ways that outcomes can be implemented in their daily lives.

ABL Program Outcomes

While programs may be designed to meet specific objectives such as improving morale or developing leadership skills, experiential learning also enhances personal understanding and highlights the importance of group work. Participants become aware of personal strengths – how they address problems, their ability to communicate their ideas, and how to work together to meet challenges. Through this process participants can observe group members and may be exposed to alternate ways of addressing conflict, perceiving challenges, and drawing on group resources. Individuals gain confidence to address new situations and learn how to incorporate creativity into problem solving strategies. Appropriate risk taking challenges individuals to find new ways of perceiving situations and provides opportunities for individuals to explore approaches that lead towards personal growth.

Staff

Staff for both CC and ABL bring skill sets that include outdoor-skill certification, crisis intervention, counselling skills, curriculum development and delivery, *...continued on page 14*

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CopTalk: Restorative Justice

Cst. Shelley Arnfield, RCMP School Resource Officer, Port Alberni



We all have different ways of looking at crime. Many factors influence our view of the event or incident. Are we the victim? Related to the victim? Did it happen in our neighbourhood? Is this an ongoing problem? Is it a serious offence? And try to define serious. If you're the owner of the home with the rock through your window, it's serious. Now you have to clean up the mess and have the window repaired. You're out of pocket for the repair cost because it's not worth putting it through on your insurance. If you're the police officer responding to the call, it may be one single incident of vandalism or mischief or yet another in a long string of such complaints. No witnesses, no suspects, CH. (That's police shorthand for Concluded Here.)

But let's just suppose, by some stroke of luck (and luck has lots to do with police work) that we catch the bad guy. What are we going to do with him? If you, the homeowner, had your way, you'd likely want to lock him up and throw away the key. Natural first reaction. But let's be realistic. Our young vandal goes to court, pleads guilty and is sentenced to...what? Probation? A curfew? Maybe some community service hours? You, the victim, did not have to appear in court and no one ever calls to tell you the end result of the file. Case closed.

Maybe our offender pleads not guilty and you do have to appear in court. Your notification tells you to be there at 9:00 a.m. So you take a day off work and spend most of it sitting in the hallway in the courthouse waiting for your case to be called. When you finally get into court, all you get to say is that your window was broken with a rock. The police officer gets to say that he caught the offender in the act. The offender can choose to get up and give his story or not. He's found guilty and sentenced to...what? Probation?

Curfew? Maybe some community service hours?

Did you get compensated for the damage? Maybe, maybe not. Courts do not have to order restitution, although they sometimes do. Did you get to tell anyone that this was more than just a broken window? That it happened at a time in your life when you were dealing with the emotional stressors of another family problem and this incident just about put you over the edge? Did you get to hear that our young offender had just experienced another fight with his alcoholic father prior to his impulsively picking up a rock and launching it at your window?

Sure, I'm over simplifying. But let's explore another option. It's called Restorative Justice.

Despite its emergence recently as an alternative to court, Restorative Justice is an old idea with a new name. There is evidence of restorative practices world wide since the years B.C. Following the Norman invasion of Britain, restorative practices were replaced by retributive justice. By the end of the 11th Century crimes were considered to be against the state, not individual persons. But by the 20th Century the pendulum was swinging again and the popularity of Restorative Justice was on the increase in Canada, the US, Britain, and Australia. In North America, the roots of Restorative Justice are found in Aboriginal healing traditions.

Fast forward to 2003. On April 1st the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) replaced the Young Offenders Act (YOA). Significant problems in the youth justice system included the over-use of court for minor offences and the insufficient

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recognition of victim concerns and interests. The YCJA stipulates that police are required to consider extra-judicial measures (EJM) before making a decision to charge.

These EJM can include no further action, a warning, a police caution, a crown caution, an extra-judicial sanction, or a referral, which is where Restorative Justice comes in. It can and should be considered for less serious offences, when the process would be adequate to hold the offender accountable, and is primarily used for first-time, non-violent offenders. This does not preclude its use for offenders who have previously been dealt with by EJM or who have been found guilty in court of an offence. And while it is an option for anyone, the majority of cases referred to Restorative Justice are young persons.

The guiding objectives for EJM are: an effective, timely response to offending behaviour; acknowledge and repair the harm caused to the victim or community; provide an opportunity for the victim to participate in decisions and to receive reparation; to ensure the measures used are proportionate to the seriousness of the offence; and to encourage the involvement of families, victims and other community members. A better description of Restorative Justice could not have been written.

In a perfect system the goals of the justice system would include: zero recidivism; absolute deterrence; healing and satisfaction for all; reintegration of the offender; confidence in the system; a sense of closure; appropriate punishment; and forgiveness.

How does Restorative Justice fit this picture? First off, the crime is seen to have been a violation of a person by another person, not simply the breaking of a law. Compared to our traditional

system which is offender focused, the cornerstone of Restorative Justice is community healing. The offender is held accountable for his or her actions and everyone, including the victim, community and offender, are involved in the process of "making things right". As a result, punishment is not the key, assuming responsibility is. The offender has the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community and the victim is not alienated which leads to healing for everyone involved.

Restorative Justice can take many forms from victim-offender mediation to sentencing circles to family conferencing. The RCMP utilize Community Justice Forums which brings the victim, offender, and their supporters together in a safe, controlled setting. Trained facilitators working from a script address the offence and its effects on everyone in the circle. In order to be eligible to participate in a forum, offenders must acknowledge the offence and be willing to accept responsibility for their actions, be remorseful for what has happened, be willing to participate in the forum, and be willing to comply with the forum agreement. Victims must also agree to the process. The RCMP may make the recommendation for anyone who could be charged with a minor offence under the Criminal Code.

The benefits? In the sales pitch you'll hear that it's a cost effective process handled in a timely fashion where everyone has a chance to be heard and contribute to the outcome. It's a learning experience for everyone that restores and creates bonds between the participants and provides closure and healing. From my perspective? I am a police liaison on my local Restorative Justice Board of Directors and, as a police officer, I've participated in many Community Justice Forums. I always come away from a forum awed by the ability of people to for- *...continued on page 12*

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Circle of Courage

(continued from page 1)

there are two ways we primarily go about creating a sense of belonging in our classroom. The first is by always greeting each student individually as they come in the room- always positively, even if they're an hour late. This often means that no one is getting much work done in the first ten minutes of class, but it's vital for us to know what's going on in their lives, what kind of mood they're in, and it also gives them a chance to know us a little too. These are easily the most important moments of the day in terms of creating a sense of belonging.

The selection of curricular materials can also go a long way in helping students feel like they belong. Having materials that reflect the student's culture, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, etc., will help them to connect with school in a way they often don't in the mainstream. With small class sizes, we can often tailor the material to the student's specific interests. In science courses, if I have a student who is into computer games, I find computer games that tie in with course content and give marks for scores in the game; once this actually motivated a student to get through three whole chapters of Physics in order to get to play the computer game at the end! I've found a chapter in Biology on drugs and alcohol can be an enticing way to learn about the body's systems as well as being a relevant and educational unit for many of my students.

In English, we have a selection of novels the students can choose from, which reflect a wide range of reading abilities and interests. Books in the Orca Soundings series have been a hit with struggling readers, while *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson has 'spoken' (groan) to some of our students with troubled pasts. We have books

that reflect queer content (*Alt Ed* by Catherine Atkins), have Aboriginal characters (*Crossing the Panther's Path* by Elizabeth Alder), portray kids dealing with difficult issues (*Whirligig* by Paul Fleischman), among others. Our short story units reflect similar diversity, and we've worked hard to find poetry that is relevant to at-risk teens. The idea with the materials we select is to give the students the sense that we understand to whatever extent possible where they're coming from as well as what ability level they're bringing to the table. A sense of belonging will not flourish if the curriculum alienates the student.

Mastery: Building Self-Esteem

Most of our students have been out of school (or class, anyway) for a year or more. Often, the last time our grade nines passed a course was grade seven, so as a result, their abilities and learning gaps can be all over the map. For students who are coming from a position of school failure, mastery becomes crucially linked with motivation; why would a student want to try if all she's known is failure?

With this in mind, we've designed all of our courses to start with easy material and build up, especially Math and English. For example, in Math 9, the students start with multiplication, moving towards order of operations and negative numbers, and slowly build to full grade nine curriculum from there. The vast majority of our students believe they 'can't do' math. When they ace the first test, they start believing they really can do this, and this self-confidence boost has always been enough to see them through the harder booklets that come later; once they believe they can be successful at math, they actually become successful at math- it's incredible to watch.

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We've found that another part of mastery is sharing the students' success with the parents and guardians, who for various issues and reasons, have often given up on the student's academic capabilities as well. We send detailed progress reports home every two weeks which outline behaviour, attendance, and work completed in each subject. Since most kids have fantastic starts given renewed motivation and dedication, the first progress report is always a positive one. We continue to emphasize the positive in all reports that follow, despite any stumbling blocks that might arise. This helps the student's support network to realize that success is possible after all, and this renewed support tends to give the student an additional boost of motivation. Our incredible turn out rate of parents, guardians, social workers, brothers, sisters, grandmas, etc., to our year end closing ceremony illustrates the power behind having the student's extended support circle become a part of school success.

Independence: Give Lots of Choice

Our students don't choose to be placed in our program, so from day one we work to put other kinds of choices in their hands. Our students are much more likely to take responsibility for choices they make than for ones made on their behalf. Their first choice, presented during the intake meeting, is what two courses they want to take first; with school lasting only two and a half hours per day for our kids, they're encouraged to complete their four academic courses, but only two at a time (so that if things fall apart, they're more likely to leave with some credits rather than none). Some students choose their two best subjects, some their two worst, most choose one of each, but the point is that even with this first choice, they're starting to exercise some independence and assert their individuality.

During each class, they also have choice over which of the two courses they want to work on and for how long. Bored of Math? Switch to Socials for half an hour. Within courses, there is also choice. For example, in Science 9 and 10, they pick which unit they want to start with (e.g./ Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Earth Science), and in English, if they feel stuck on poetry, they can switch to short stories. We believe empowering our students with choices wherever possible in their own education is a key that helps to make them more successful in their school experience. All our courses are entirely laid out in detailed tracking sheets, leaving them free to pick and choose the order, always knowing exactly what's done and what's left.

Finally, we stress the philosophy that behaviour is also a choice. We have a strict five minute break policy, and if a student is late returning from break twice in a one month period, they lose their break for a month and must be escorted by a staff member if they need to leave the room. The students accept this rule primarily because we stress to them that they are responsible for making the choice between returning from break on time, or giving up their break privilege; after this philosophy starts sinking in, we have very few issues because the students feel the independence within such a philosophy; rather than feeling helplessly controlled by rules imposed by adults, they feel in control of their behaviour and resulting privileges or consequences.

Generosity: A Spirit of Service

This is the final section in the Circle of Courage, and it is here where I think we currently fall short in our programs. We work on generosity in small, unstructured ...continued on page 16

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Closeup: Dr. Gordon Neufeld

Jim Lawson, Newsletter Editor

It is most fitting, given his long history with our annual convention, that Dr. Gordon Neufeld will back with us for our special 20th anniversary conference in January. He will be giving two presentations: a half day seminar on resistance and oppositionality called Making Sense of Counterwill, and a full day seminar on bullying called Bullies: Their making and un-making. The bullying seminar is the offspring of an inspiring keynote presentation given at Canada's first national conference on bullying in Ottawa.

As many of you know, Dr. Neufeld is a leading interpreter of the developmental approach and now an international speaker. His popularity has grown during his history with us, to where he is now an award-winning and best-selling author,

published in five languages.

Dr. Neufeld has also developed two video-courses: an 8-session course for parents called the Power to Parent and a 5-hour course on Making Sense of Adolescence. These DVD sets are available for purchase through his web site, www.GordonNeufeld.com and will also be available at our conference in January. ♦



Dr. Gordon Neufeld is a perennial favourite at our conference. Check out his website, www.gordonneufeld.com for more information.

CopTalk: Restorative Justice

(continued from page 9)

give. People who entered the forum madder than hell, looking for their pound of flesh. I've seen them accept apologies genuinely given, shake hands with the offender and wish them well. I've seen offenders who entered the forum looking sullen and angry, sit up in their chairs and look people in the face. Their body language tells me they get it, they actually, and maybe finally, understand the impact of their actions. People leave smiling. People leave talking to each other. Ever see that happen in court?

But what about recidivism? People believe that this is the yardstick by which to measure success. No long term formal studies have been published, but in 2001, Department of Justice Canada reported, "Restorative Justice programs, on average, yielded reductions in recidivism compared to non-restorative approaches to

criminal behaviour." Perhaps, instead of focusing on recidivism, the measurement should be on the satisfaction levels of the participants. Because, hey, no one on probation ever committed another offence, did they?

Sometimes I think my workmates feel I've gone soft working in the schools. Maybe I have in some respects. I prefer to think that I've opened my eyes, seen that sometimes the old way of doing things doesn't necessarily always achieve the end result that you want. Is Restorative Justice the answer to everything? Absolutely not. But it is another valuable tool that can and should be used to help bring people back to community, not push them further away. ♦

Cst. Shelley Arnfield is a school resource officer with the RCMP Port Alberni Detachment. Watch for her column each issue.

2007 Challenge & Change Conference

Mike Shaw, President

The 2007 Conference is our twentieth! And we are proud of that milestone. For twenty years, DJ Pauls our conference co-ordinator has organized one of the premier teacher conferences in B.C., and this year is no exception. She is responsible for the myriad behind the scenes details that have to be perfect for things to run smoothly. Dave Lafontaine, our speaker co-ordinator has brought together a tremendous mix of old and new presenters, highlighted by our 2007 Keynote Speaker, Dr. Gary Phillips., who will also present three workshops during the conference.

It will be held January 25 & 26, 2007 in Vancouver at the wonderful Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre. If you haven't received a registration package in the mail, you can download a pdf version from our web site, www.bctf.ca/bcaea. And just like last year, we have gone to an entirely electronic registration process thanks to the hard work of JD Duncan.

For the gastronomically inclined amongst us, the highlight has to be the ever popular Schmooze. Each year, Joyce May and her gang outdoes themselves yet again with the quantity and quality of appies available. You really don't want to miss it! For a teaser about what is to come, check out the Schmooze menu on the next page.

As always, the Conference is also the time we hold our Annual General Meeting. Once again, a light lunch will be offered to those who attend. Unfortunately, last year, not a single member other than the executive showed up! Thanks for your trust in us, but it would be nice to see some other faces at the meeting for a change! This year, we have the positions of President and Vice President up for election. We are always interested in welcoming new people, so if you feel like you'd like to volunteer for something, talk to one of us at the conference. We're easy to spot in our red vests! ♦

Dine Out Vancouver 2007

Joyce May, Vice President and Resident Foodie

Local and out-of-town food enthusiasts alike can look forward to Dine Out Vancouver 2007, an annual event which showcases some of Vancouver's top restaurants at incredible prices. From January 19th to February 1st, each participating restaurant will feature a special three-course menu at a fixed price of \$15, \$25, or \$35.

This is a perfect opportunity to enjoy fantastic food from some of Vancouver's finest chefs,

while going easy on the pocket book. Restaurants will be posting menus for the event on the Tourism Vancouver web site (www.tourismvancouver.com/visitors/dining/dine_out_vancouver) starting on January 2nd 2007, and reservations will be accepted beginning on that date. Be sure to reserve early because you don't want to miss this delicious attraction, but remember that Thursday, January 25th is the legendary, never-to-be-missed, BCAEA Schmooze! Mark your calendars now. ♦

THE *Schmooze* MENU

Hot

Bratwurst Meatballs with BBQ Sauce
Chicken Wings
Quesadillas

Seafood

Spooned Scallops with Blueberry Chutney
or Black Bean Sauce
Kiwi Mussels on the Half Shell
Poached Prawns with Lemon
Shrimp and Watermelon
Smoked Salmon
Crab Mousse

Indian

Samosas with Chutney
Tandoori Chicken Kebabs

Schmoozers

Baked Brie
Assorted Sushi
Gazpacho Shooters
Greek Antipasto Platter
Water Chestnuts Wrapped in Bacon
Dried Apricots with Goat Cheese and Walnuts
Spring Rolls with Orange and Red Pepper Salsa

Dessert

Chocolate Fountain Fondue
Fruit

Adventure-Based Learning

(continued from page 7)

knowledge and awareness of issues and behaviours of youth, risk management, and substantial experience in leading wilderness expeditions. Safety is ensured through solid decision making skills and sound judgment. Staff are matched to programs based on their individual strengths and their ability to enhance the experience for client groups.

Boys and Girls Club programs strive to provide youth with a safe environment to be in and op-

portunities to explore and enact personal change into their life. For more information about Boys & Girls Club Services and our programs please visit our web page, <http://www.bgcvic.org> or contact our head office: 250-384-9133 ♦

Lindsay Cornell, Geoff Mill and Jason Cole work for the Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria.+

Bursaries, Awards, and Grants

Rick Fitch, Secretary-Treasurer

In year's past, we often had award money left unclaimed at the end of the year because we didn't have enough applications in the various categories of awards we offer. For the last couple of years, the word seems finally to be getting out, and we have seen applications from some terrific students. We would like to see this trend continue!

As you probably know by now, each year, the BCAEA has more than \$6,500 in total available to students in the form of bursaries and awards, and to teachers in the form of grants.

Students may apply for one of four \$500 Student Bursaries, awarded to deserving students attending post-secondary education. In addition, there are four \$250 Student Achievement Awards, intended for students who have been at least eight months in an alternate program, have met their goals and who are moving on to another program or back to the regular school. And finally, there are ten \$100 Student Develop-

ment Awards, given to students who have been in an alternate program for at least six months and who have met their goals.

We like to brag about the success of your students, and one way is to publish their photo and a brief write-up in the spring edition of the newsletter. Award winners will be asked for a JPEG file of a high-quality digital photograph so we may publish their picture in a future edition of our newsletter.

Teachers can apply for one of four up to \$500 Student Activity Grants to help fund an activity of benefit to their students, or a single \$500 Regional Conference Grant, available to help offset the cost of a second conference that helps promote membership in the BCAEA. Teachers are reminded that an article highlighting the activity is required for publication in the newsletter.

Application forms for are available on our web site: www.bctf.ca/bcaea then follow the links. ♦

The Real Business of Education

(continued from page 3)

Educators are faced with enormous challenges in teaching today's children and creating schools where both staff and students enjoy an exciting and fulfilling learning experience. Transformation, not information, is what students need most. They are looking for models of healthy relationships and personal support to help them find meaning from their new learning. Educators must make an emotional connection before they can make any cognitive impact.

For kids at risk, feelings are the main form of communication. When an adult communicates

acceptance and affection, the child opens up to learning new things. As students experience more and more interdependence and success, they begin to trust themselves and become more self-directed. Teaching becomes less time-consuming and more rewarding when both students and teacher work together to create a meaningful curriculum. ♦

Dr. Gary Phillips is the keynote speaker at our 2007 conference. He is also the president of the U.S.-based National School Improvement Project. Visit www.garyphillips.com for more information.

Circle of Courage

(continued from page 11)

ways, but we have yet to implement any kind of structured, larger scale giving opportunities. We've talked about having a day each month where we as a class do something to help the community, but we haven't yet developed this idea. So... write in and share your thoughts! How have you incorporated generosity in your programs? What's worked well?

When you teach the kids we all do, the kids who have mostly failed out of mainstream education, then the need to adapt curriculum seems obvious; not necessarily in the sense of adapting to make it easier- few of our students need that. What they need are adaptations to build back up non-existent academic confidence, to empower them by putting limited choice, control and responsibility back into their hands, and to make school and the learning environment relevant to them and their lives. With these adaptations in place,

they're set to grow, be self-reliant, and achieve greater success than they thought possible. This past year we had seventeen students pass fifty-three courses, and most exciting of all, both of our grade twelve students graduated. Adapting alternate programs to instill in students a sense of belonging, independence, mastery and generosity creates a holistic framework where the whole self is nurtured and success starts to become inevitable. ♦

Endnotes

¹ For more on Dr. Brokenleg's philosophies and research, visit www.reclaiming.com

² For more on Choice Theory, as developed by William Glasser, visit www.wglasser.com

Signe Finnbogason teaches in the P.M. and A.B.L.E. programs in Burnaby.

PROActive Curriculum

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Visit www.proactivecurriculum.com for samples, textbook titles and costs, publishers contact information, and more.

Financial Statement

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for the Year Ended June 30, 2006 (Note 1)

Balance, July 1, 2005 \$106,285.47

Receipts

BCTF grant	5,143.00	
Membership/subscription fees	22,924.00	
Sale of back issues	0.00	
Other	60.00	
Interest	3,631.75	
Conference fees	84,858.21	
Conference exhibits/sponsorships	1,350.00	
		117,966.96

Disbursements

Executive meetings	8,071.13	
Meeting-annual general meeting	1,817.22	
Meeting-council	15.84	
Meeting-subcommittee	1,944.11	
TOC costs	1,903.00	
Publications-newsletter	7,832.34	
Publications-other	31.02	
Operating expenses	305.56	
Scholarships	8,325.22	
Miscellaneous	103.14	
Conference-operating	5,969.81	
Conference-facilities	1,996.00	
Conference-catering	11,528.57	
Conference-printing	3,239.40	
Conference-promotions	1,549.82	
Conference-committee costs	2,491.83	
Conference-entertainment	10,900.67	
Conference-equipment rental	4,098.22	
Conference-speakers	21,293.12	
Conference-miscellaneous	65.09	
		(93,481.11)

Balance, June 30, 2006 \$130,771.32

Note: 1. This statement reflects only funds held by the BC Teachers' Federation on behalf of the BC Teachers of Alternate Education.

2006-2007 Association Goals

- *To advocate appropriate programming and services for alternative education students.*
- *To promote alternative education programming and services provincially.*
- *To support and promote professional growth and networking for alternative education teachers.*

Objective 1: To advocate for alternative education students.

Activities

- 1.1 Provide Student Awards.
- 1.2 Respond to Ministry of Education and BCTF requests for policy and program direction.
- 1.3 Encourage alternative education students to provide artwork and articles for the newsletter.
- 1.4 Publish newsletters.
- 1.5 Provide Student Activity Awards.
- 1.6 Liaise with Ministry for Children and Family Development.

Objective 2: To enhance programming and services for alternative students.

Activities

- 2.1 Provide Innovative Programming Award.
- 2.2 Hold Annual Conference.
- 2.3 Publish Newsletter.
- 2.4 Network with members via membership list-serv
- 2.5 Liaise with Ministry for Children and Family Development.

Objective 3: To network with other PSA's and other programs that support the association's goals.

Activities

- 3.1 Provide complimentary conference registration for PSA presidents.
- 3.2 Send the newsletter to interested groups.
- 3.3 Support BCAEA representative to attend other conferences.
- 3.4 Maintain a website homepage on the BCTF file server.
- 3.5 Develop and maintain a provincial directory of programs for at risk students.

Objective 4: To support regional development.

Activities

- 4.1 Provide expertise and financial support for regional conferences and activities.
- 4.2 Provide start-up grants for the establishment of local chapters.
- 4.3 Provide a maintenance grant for local chapters based on number of PSA members.
- 4.4 Provide Innovative Programming Award.
- 4.5 Maintain a directory of programs for at risk students.

Objective 5: To promote membership.

Activities

- 5.1 Include membership fee in conference registration.
- 5.2 Provide information regarding exemplary programming and services at conference.

Evaluative Criteria

1. Membership maintained.
2. Conferences held.
3. Representatives at regional conferences and other conferences.
4. Newsletters published.
5. Regional bursaries awarded.
6. Innovative Programming Award given and synopsis published in Newsletter.
7. BCAEA Homepage maintained on the BCTF Web-server.
8. Network with Ministry for Children and Family Development maintained.
9. Maintenance and refinement of Program Directory.

2006-2007 Budget

Income Accounts

99921	Income surplus (deficit), June 30, 2005	130 771.32
99930	Membership fees, 300 @ \$30.00	9 000.00
99931	BCTF grant, 300 @ \$18.50 (\$3,000 minimum)	5 550.00
99933	Sale of back issues	300.00
99934	Interest	2 500.00
99939	Other (Guest tickets/reception)	300.00
99940	Conference fees	80 000.00
99943	Conference exhibits/sponsorships	1 500.00
Total Income		\$229 921.32

Expense Accounts

99950	Meeting-executive	15 000.00
99951	Meeting-table officers	1 000.00
99952	Meeting-council	1000.00
99953	Meeting-subcommittee	2 500.00
99954	Meeting-annual general meeting	2 500.00
99958	TOC costs	3 000.00
99961	Publication-newsletter	8 000.00
99962	Publication-other	1 000.00
99970	Operating	0.00
99972	Chapter support	2 000.00
99973	Affiliation fees and meetings	1 500.00
99978	Scholarship	7 000.00
99979	Miscellaneous	1 000.00
99980	Conference-operating	5 000.00
99981	Conference-facilities	5 000.00
99982	Conference-catering	13 000.00
99983	Conference-printing	4 000.00
99984	Conference-promotions	4 000.00
99985	Conference-committee costs	3 000.00
99986	Conference-entertainment	12 000.00
99987	Conference-equipment rental	5 000.00
99988	Conference-speakers	20 000.00
99989	Conference-start up costs (registration)	3 000.00
99998	Conference-hold, future conf. expenses	108 421.32
99999	Conference-miscellaneous**	1 000.00
Total Expenditures		\$229 921.32

The Association presents its 2005-6 financial statement and 2006-07 budget to members at the AGM held on January 26, 2007 in Vancouver, and publishes them in this edition of the Newsletter.

Association Executive Contact Information

The following dedicated individuals volunteer their time to ensure the smooth running of your association. Information on the roles and responsibilities of each position may be found on our website: www.bctf.ca/bcaea/executive.html



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