

Burnside Gorge Community News

January 2021
www.burnsidegorge.ca

Giving Thanks over the Holidays

The holidays are always a busy time at BGCA and 2020 was no exception. It has been an extraordinary year, brimming with new challenges and opportunities, not least of which was figuring out how to continue offering our many seasonal events to celebrate the holiday season for youth, families & seniors in our community.

Christmas Dinner

Another year of community dinners wrapped up with our big Christmas Dinner on Dec. 3rd. The evening ran smoothly with more than 150 take-out Christmas meals given out. While we missed the hustle and bustle of an in-person dinner and our amazing team of volunteers this year we owe a huge thanks to everyone who helped to make this year's dinner a success. A special thank you goes out to this year's sponsor, the Ralmax Group.

Santa's Pancake Breakfast

We had to think outside the box to offer this event in 2020. We were able to serve 33 families with more than 60 children through a pick-up-only event on December 12th.

In addition to a delicious pancake breakfast to go, each child received a gift from Santa as well as a crafting activity kit with a guided online tutorial. A very special thanks goes out to the following supporters for their contributions towards a successful event at no cost to families:

- CFX Santa's Anonymous
- Red Barn Market
- Country Grocer Esquimalt

Christmas Hampers

Our Christmas Hamper program focuses primarily on families who may not be able to provide a special Christmas experience for their children without assistance. The families we support are currently involved with one of the many programs here at the BGCA. This year we were able to provide 108 hampers supporting 89 families with 142 children, 16 youth living independently, and three seniors. We would like to extend a huge thanks to all of the donors and sponsors who helped make the holidays brighter. We would also like to extend a special thanks to a number of organizations who supported food and toy drives to support hampers:

- Bank of Montreal
- Colquitz Middle School
- Saanich Police Department
- CFX Santa's Anonymous
- The Zone



Vancouver Island giving back to the local community with a Toy Drive ❤️



The BMO team dropping off 2020 Toy Drive donations!



Albany Street Communi-Tree

Submitted by Jenn McKillop

Albany Street is a lovely little street with kind and helpful neighbours. We have all experienced challenges this year with COVID and, as most of us would be home for Christmas this year, some of the neighbours decided that it would be nice to do something festive for our street.

We gathered our resources to put up a tree and create a blank ornament for each household. We asked the neighbours to decorate their ornament, if they wished, and hang it on the communal tree or communi-tree, as we decided to call it.

We were all amazed at the creativity and care that went into each piece and neighbours started making regular trips to the tree to see the new ornaments. The tree built community by bringing our neighbours together and it brought a lot of joy and fun into our lives during this very different holiday season. We can't wait to do it again next year!





Community News

January 2021

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The Burnside Gorge Community Association
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Website: www.burnsidegorge.ca

Note: Written contributions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the BGCA or its staff.

BGCA Board of Directors

Greg Arnold, Treasurer
Sara Maya Bhandar, Director
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To Advertise

Establish yourself as a community supporter with an ad in your community newsletter.

The deadline to purchase ad space is the 15th of each month prior to the month of publication. Please contact us for current rates.

Contributions

The BGCN welcomes submissions. Submissions are subject to editing as required for clarity and brevity. Please note that submission does not guarantee publication. Contact us for submission guidelines and deadlines.

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About us

Founded in 1991 in response to community need, the Burnside Gorge Community Association provides a continuum of programs and services that strengthen the lives of children, youth and families in Greater Victoria.

Programming includes: a range of childcare programs for ages 3.5 to 11; community and school based youth and family services; housing and asset development supports for youth and families; community recreation and special events for all ages; and a variety of community development initiatives.

As a non-profit organization, we rely on the support of individuals, businesses and partner organizations to continue providing a high level of service to our communities. If you're passionate about the work that we're doing there are a number of ways that you can get involved.

Join our team!

Want to join a fun and dynamic team? BGCA is a great place to work. To see current opportunities please see our website at:

<http://www.burnsidegorge.ca/opportunities/employment>

Volunteer!

Do you have some time to spare and a passion for community? We're always looking for volunteers to help out. Current opportunities are listed at:

<http://www.burnsidegorge.ca/opportunities/volunteer>

Become a member!

Are you interested in being a part of our mission? Become a member and take an active role in shaping our community. For more information contact the BGCA directly at:

info@burnsidegorge.ca

Childcare Registration for 2021/22 School Year!

We have made some changes to our registration process for licensed Before and After School Care for children attending Quadra and Tillicum Elementary Schools in 2021/22. This is **for new families only!** Families who are currently registered will be contacted directly by program staff.

- Quadra Elementary students: Registration opens Feb 1, 2021 at 11:00 am
- Tillicum Elementary students: Registration opens Mar 1, 2021 at 11:00 am

Once registration opens, please call our Front Desk team at 250-388-5251 with the following:

- Your name and contact information
- Your child(ren)'s name(s) and grade(s)
- What school your child(ren) go to
- What type of care you need (before and/or after school*)

You will then be connected with the appropriate childcare program manager to complete the registration package, pay registration fees, and apply for the Affordable Child Care Benefit if applicable. Childcare spots will be offered on a first come first serve basis. We look forward to meeting you and your family!

Starting a New Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program wants to help you establish a "New Normal" in your life. A new normal where you can create savings, lower your debt, increase your financial awareness, as well as working towards achieving long term financial goals. Through budgeting and goal setting with your family advisor you can create a positive plan for you and your children's futures.

The program provides one-on-one coaching support from a family advisor, financial education sessions, community connections, and an opportunity to build savings through our matched savings program. You will be able to step forward into the spring knowing you're headed in the right direction.

We are heading into a new year and a new program. Help us partner with you as you make the changes you want for the next phase of your life. If you are living with at least one dependent child and are living in subsidized housing or receiving a BC Housing rent subsidy (RAP)... this program may be for you!

The first step in the intake process is completing an application form which can be found on our website at <http://www.burnsidegorge.ca/family-self-sufficiency-program>. You can give the Family Self Sufficiency team a call to get more information or with help completing the application form. Just give us a call at the Burnside Gorge Community Centre, 250-388-5251.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) is currently accepting applications!

The FSS Program can support you to...

- Start saving with a matched savings program
- Gain more control of your money
- Face your financial fears and move forward
- Begin a debt reduction plan and reduce your debt
- Access supports that will assist you and your family as you move towards a brighter future

Are You:

- Receiving an eligible housing subsidy?
- Living with at least one dependent child?
- Surviving on a low income?
- Feeling overwhelmed about money?
- Struggling with debt?
- Worried about your finances?



We can help! Call the FSS program today at 250-388-5251
or visit www.burnsidegorge.ca to find out more.

CENTENNIAL UNITED CHURCH
621 David St.

Currently offering recorded services only
with Rev. Alanna Menu
www.cucvictoria.com

Please call 250-384-6424 for updates
as health orders change



 Burnside Gorge

FSS is generously funded by:



Bridging the Digital Divide—Community Technology Help Desk

To bring the concept of a virtual community help desk program to life, United Way of Greater Victoria partnered with The Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses Capital Region to help guide work to bridge the digital divide in the region and identify potential opportunities for coordination of resources and services.



Community Technology Help Desk

This community help desk program supports vulnerable individuals, families, seniors and non-profit service providers with computer and internet challenges.

The Community Technology Help Desk hours:

Monday to Friday

9am to 7pm

To access the Help Desk, or for more information about the program, please call:

236-638-2610 OR 250-217-4978

This pilot program, hosted by the Sooke Family Resource Society, has been made possible through the generous support of the Federal Government's Emergency Community Support Fund in which United Way of Greater Victoria plays a pivotal role in managing and distributing funds locally.

The Point Ellice Swimming Baths

By Tim Fitzthum (Volunteer, Point Ellice House Museum and Gardens)

By the late 19th century, the Rock Bay area had become a mixture of waterside factories, mills and shipyards, modest worker lodgings, and grand homes. Along the shores of Rock Bay and the Upper Harbour, one could find tanneries, sawmills, factories producing matches, canned fruit, watercraft, metalworks, and coal gas. Smokestacks, beehive burners, wood and coal yards, log rafting, and sealing ships were a common sight in the area.

Within this unlikely setting the Young Men's Christian Association of Victoria (YMCA) established a facility in 1893 for young people to apply the principles of swimming learned in the classroom. Known as the YMCA Floating Bath, the wooden structure was moored south of Work (Bay) St at Pleasant St next to Captain Grant's sealing wharf and the Spratt & Gray Machinery Depot. The bath was open six days a week from 6am to 9pm in the late spring and summer months and offered reserved hours of operation for women. Bathers were furnished with bathing suits and towels, all for the price of 15 cents. Swimming lessons were provided under the direction of Ian St. Clair, head of the YMCA's aquatic department.

Despite the apparent success of its first season, the bath did not operate again. In March 1894 part of the structure pulled loose of its mooring and floated southward to the Inner Harbour. The exact reason for the bath's closure is unknown but the location may have played a part in its demise. The site offered little protection from prevailing winds and adjacent industrial activity - the constant water traffic may have discouraged use and enjoyment of the bath.

Over the following years Ian St. Clair continued to promote swimming and to teach it in the classroom. He became head of the physical education departments of Corrig (Victoria) College, Boys' Central School, and finally the director of the entire Victoria public school system overseeing and teaching swimming, gymnastics, calisthenics, and drill exercises.

After the closure of the YMCA Floating Bath there was no place for swim instruction in the water. In 1895 Victoria school trustees contemplated a facility of their own that would be free for public school children. St. Clair was consulted and said that a suitable facility could be built for the modest sum of \$350. Money was authorized and plans were drawn up. This time, the location would be the north end of Pleasant Street next to James Leigh's sawmill. It provided another industrial setting but was more protected than the north shore of Upper Harbour. Progress was slow, legal challenges were overcome, and on July 14, 1900 the baths opened.

The Pleasant Street Swimming Baths consisted of a 120 ft by 50 ft wide floating structure with a sloping bottom, a 7 ft high fence, changing rooms, and a diving area. St. Clair gave swimming lessons four hours per day to boys and girls and taught canoeing and rowing. This opening was highly anticipated and the baths quickly became a popular place for recreation and competitions. Swimming galas, timed races divided by age or team, and water polo events attracted many spectators. Thanks to St. Clair's ongoing efforts of education and promotion combined with the public's approval of the baths, the facility became known as St. Clair's Swimming Baths.

In 1906 St. Clair moved his swimming school to warmer waters and better conditions farther up the Gorge Waterway. This move was timely as two lumber companies, Moore-Whittington and Cameron, soon built sawmills near the Pleasant St site and the waters there filled with log rafts.

St. Clair went on to be elected as the first president of the BC Amateur Swimming Association and in 1927 was chosen as Citizen of the Year, receiving an appreciation medal for his 33 years as the popular instructor of physical education in the public schools.



BURNSIDE GORGE
COMMUNITY CENTRE
RECREATION PROGRAMS

PROGRAM
REGISTRATION

We have an exciting line-up of programs for all ages, from toddlers to seniors. To register for a program call 250-388-5251 or drop by the Centre in person. Pre-registration is required for all programs. The Front Desk hours are 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday. We are closed on statutory holidays and weekends, unless noted otherwise.

Payment is required at the time of registration and can be made by cash, cheque, credit card (VISA & MC), Debit or City of Victoria LIFE credits.

REGISTER EARLY
TO AVOID
DISAPPOINTMENT!

Programs may be cancelled or postponed if there are not enough registered participants. Decisions to run or cancel a program are usually made two days prior to the first class.

REFUND POLICY:

- For a full refund, request for withdrawal must be received at least 1 day prior to the first class.
- A full refund will be issued if BGCA cancels a program.
- If a participant withdraws after the first class, they will be refunded the pro-rated cost of the program.
- Withdrawing after the second or third class, the participant will be refunded the pro-rated cost of the program minus a \$5 administrative fee.
- No refunds for withdrawals after the lesser of the 4th class or 50% of the course has been completed.

GET IN TOUCH

Do you have an IDEA for a program that you would like to see offered at Burnside Gorge Community Centre? Are you an instructor interested in running a program with us? Contact Travis Chater, Community Recreation Coordinator, at 250-388-5251 ext 225 or email travis@burnsidegorge.ca.

FACILITIES

The Burnside Gorge Community Centre is located just outside downtown Victoria at 471 Cecelia Road, between Burnside Road East and Gorge Road East. Outdoor public facilities include the Cecelia Ravine Park, Sport Court and Bike Skills Park, adjacent to the Centre.

The Community Centre is readily accessible by public transit: buses #8, 11, 21 and 22 routes on Gorge Rd East, Jutland Rd and Burnside Rd East, run parallel or border Cecelia Road. It is also easily accessible by the Galloping Goose Trail, which is adjacent to the Centre.



Burnside Gorge Activity Guide

JANUARY PROGRAMS

Schedule is subject to change without notice – please call 250-388-5251 for the most current info.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

All Family Centre programs have limited spaces available and pre-registration is required. To sign up please call 250-388-5251 or email theresa@burnsidegorge.ca.

LOVE 2 LEARN (AGES 0-5)

Centred on fun, engaging, play-based learning Love 2 Learn focuses on making early learning activities transferable to the home environment. Weekly sessions will involve a story and share time as well as an activity kit to make and take home. At the end of each session families will set a goal to achieve during the week and explore it during the following group. Sessions will be held in the Family centre.

Tuesdays January 12 - February 23 9:30-11:30am

HEALTHY TOGETHER

This innovative and unique family education program brings families together to learn to make healthy choices and build healthy relationships. The sessions will involve group discussions to share ideas around choices to support physical and emotional health as well as how to make an easy, healthy meal each week. Participants will receive educational materials as well as the food items needed to make the weekly meal together. Families will also practice setting achievable healthy goals each session to be shared and reflected on the following week.

Wednesdays January 13 - February 24 10-12:00pm

FAMILY DINNER

Families need to register for dinner by Tuesday at 4pm by calling the front desk at: 250-388-5251. Thursday between 5 and 5:45pm, pick up dinner to take away for an easy, nutritious weekday meal for your family. Maximum 25 families.

Thursdays 5-6pm

NOBODY'S PERFECT

Nobody's Perfect is a place where parents can:

- MEET with other parents of young children (ages 0-5)
- SHARE questions or concerns and ideas about being a parent
- LEARN about child development, safety, health and behaviour
- TALK about real-life parenting experiences
- WORK together with the support of a trained facilitator
- DISCOVER ways of positive parenting

Within a group setting, parents participate in facilitated sessions that will: promote positive parenting; increase parents' understanding of children's health, safety, and behaviour; help parents build on the skills they have and learn new ones; improve parents' self-esteem and coping skills; increase self-help and mutual support; bring them in contact with community services and resources; and help prevent family violence.

This is a registered program. Call today to book your spot, 250-388-5251. Subsidies may be available for childcare. Please enquire at registration.

Fridays Feb 5 – Mar 12 10 a.m.–12 p.m. 6/Free (registration required)

ADULT RECREATION

The following COVID-19 protocols are in place to keep everyone safe:

- no shared equipment (yoga mats & blocks, weights, bands, etc). Please contact Travis at 250-388-5251 for info if you do not have your own equipment.
- No drop in registration. Class size has been reduced to ensure safe distances
- Spaces are sanitized between each class.

XL YOGA

For those living in large bodies taught by a person living in a large body. The benefits of yoga – increased balance, flexibility, stamina, and relaxation – are wonderful for everybody. We'll make the poses work for everyone using modifications and props (bolsters, blankets, and straps). Our classes are fun and light-hearted. If you do not have your own equipment please email the instructor jillxlyoga@gmail.com and she can loan you what you need for the class series. *Instructor Jill Moran*

Th Jan 14 – Feb 18 7-8:00 pm 6/\$72

50+

STRENGTH, CONDITIONING & BALANCE FOR 60+

The first step is the most important! This well rounded program will focus on activities to improve strength, balance, mobility and cardiovascular fitness. A certified BCRPA instructor will use light weights, resistance bands, fitness props and a fun selection of agility games to improve overall fitness. Have fun, make new friends and feel good about yourself. All abilities welcome. *Instructor Janice Arnot*

Tu Jan 12 – Feb 16 9-10:00 am 6/\$48
10:30-11:30 am 6/\$48

Victoria's New Home and Hope

"Everything just kind of fell apart," Victoria says, remembering the moment of deepest pain in her life.

Victoria spent much of her childhood moving from place to place with her parents. Her younger days were unsettled, and not just because of the moves. Her parents often fought, and ultimately split up. When Victoria was 15, she made her way back to the city that's her namesake.

In spite of the turmoil of her younger years, Victoria managed to build a life for herself. She worked hard and focused on providing a good home for her own daughter.

Then, four years ago, the unthinkable happened. Her daughter tragically passed away at just 16 years of age.

"My whole world turned upside down," Victoria whispers, "I just couldn't do it anymore."

Victoria was blindsided by grief, falling into a debilitating depression. She eventually turned to substance use to numb the deep pain of her daughter's loss.

Within months, she'd lost her job, her home, and her family to the horror of addiction.

She found herself on the streets, struggling to get by. She had no idea where to turn for support. But Cool Aid found her.

First, she was provided with a tent and other life-saving supplies, to survive harsh days and nights on the street.

And then, the moment that marked a turning point in Victoria's life: she was offered a room at the new supportive housing project at the Comfort Inn across from Topaz Park.

"I couldn't believe it. I really didn't. It felt too good to be true."

Thanks to this partnership between Cool Aid, Our Place, BC Housing, and other local organizations, Victoria has a safe, warm home for the first time in years.

She and over 90 other vulnerable men and women now have the peace of mind and stability of a room of their own, as well as hot meals, medical services, and addiction counselling.



"Family couldn't help me. I couldn't help myself. But Cool Aid is helping me," Victoria smiles.

Thanks to our caring community, Victoria's life has gone from despair to hope.

"It can feel like there's no way out," she says, "and then, someone comes along and gives you this and loves you. And I have people to reach out to, and everyone looks out for each other. It's incredible."



[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) VicCoolAid [LinkedIn](#) Victoria Cool Aid Society

Thank you for everything you do to help neighbours like Victoria find home and hope again.