

Victoria Brain Injury Society



The Reminder

EST. 1983

VBIS STAFF

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Volunteer Profile	2
Important Dates to Note	3
VBIS Annual Picnic	4
Gorge Canada Day Parade	4
Thrifty Foods Smile Card	5
CAP Program	5
Programs (People with ABI)	6
Programs (Families)	7
Did You Know...?	8
Peer Support Program	8
Introducing....	9
Carole James' Visit	10
Grants & Funds Received	11
How You Can Help	12

ANNOUNCING TWO MAJOR PROJECTS AT VBIS THIS AUTUMN

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

How are we doing? What is working well for you at VBIS? What needs would you like to see served at VBIS? How are we perceived in the community?

We are thrilled that we have been successful in obtaining funding to have an outside organization conduct a survey with you—all our clients, our Board of Directors, our donors and our other community partners—to help us find out the answers to these important questions.

During September, you may receive a phone call to arrange a face-to-face or phone interview from one of our team of specially trained volunteers; alternatively you may receive an electronic survey request via your email. This project will help us review and tailor the services we deliver to clients, and learn how we present ourselves in the community. We welcome your input and comments to assist us in doing this.

A special thank you to the United Way and the Vandekerkhove Family Foundation for their generous support in funding this important project. Thank you also to the Community Social Planning Council for conducting this survey for VBIS.

4th ANNUAL GALA—**"An Evening of Black & White...Because Grey Matters!"**

Being held on Saturday, November 19, 6:30pm to 10:00pm, the Gala will feature an intimate concert by renowned Canadian tenor, Ken Lavigne, and a silent auction. This will be a fun night, so be sure to get your tickets from VBIS. Call, or drop by, and talk to Anna.

If you are interested in helping out with the event, please let Anna know.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE IN OCTOBER!!

Victoria Brain Injury Society — Units D & E, 830 Pembroke Street, Victoria, BC, V8T 1H9
Office Hours: Monday to Thursday—10:00am to 3:00pm



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

If there ever was an organization that relies so heavily on their volunteers to carry out the variety of services and support to the people served, it is VBIS. Our large and dedicated volunteer team consists of a wide variety of people from all walks of life, all of whom give so much of themselves. This month, we want to shine the spotlight on one of our amazing volunteers:

Brenda Clayton!

Brenda has a passion for reaching out to people of all ages in so many capacities. For thirteen years, she has been a hugely valued member of the Peer Support team at VBIS in our drop-in clinics, talking with people young and old, as they deal with the dramatic effects their brain injury has had on their lives.

Brenda also has a special gift: she knows how to reach kids and teens! How many adults can claim that! She started a **program called "H.I.P. Kids"** (Head Injury Protected) and goes into schools to deliver an interactive presentation. Utilizing her infectious enthusiasm and joie de vivre, **together with a mind that can think 'outside the box'** she has developed unique ways of effectively educating young kids using a variety of props—**such as Elmo the Muppet!** **"Think of the brain as a battery—with the flick of Elmo's switch, his movements become completely disjointed,"** Brenda explains to listeners. It is quite the demonstration to behold!

Not content to sit on her laurels, Brenda took up the challenge of being a presenter with the P.A.R.T.Y. Program (Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth) six years ago, talking to grade 10 teens about the cause of her brain injury, and the devastating repercussions brain injury has had on her and other brain-injured people's lives.

More recently, Brenda has become a member of the Awareness & Education Committee at VBIS.

Brenda is such a valued volunteer at VBIS for all of these and other ad hoc events she joins in with. So we want to pay kudos to Brenda and say:

"A huge THANK YOU, BRENDA for ALL that you do for us, and for all the lives you have – and will continue to – touch with your passion."



SOME IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE:



September—Needs Assessment Survey

October—Launch of new VBIS website

August 3 to October 5—Running Clinic (see below)

October 10—Thanksgiving Day (closed)

October 31—Halloween (it could get scary round VBIS!!)

November 11—Remembrance Day (closed)

November 19—Gala Night (main VBIS fundraiser)



Do you Enjoy Running?

Would you like to learn more about running and work towards a goal?

VBIS is hosting a FREE running clinic:

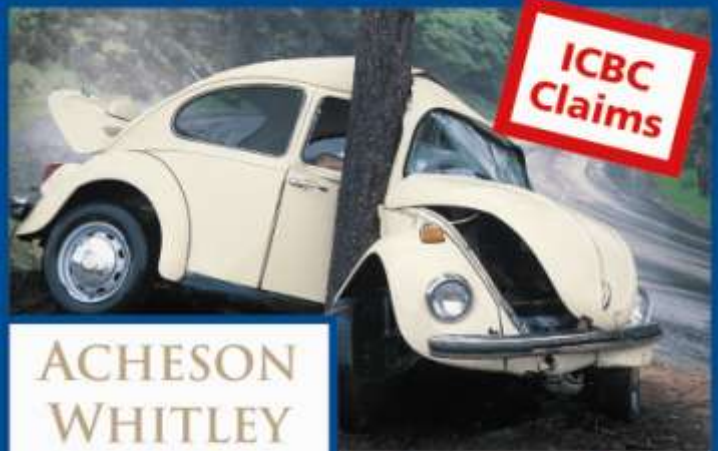
Wednesdays, 1:00pm to 2:00pm
Dates: August 3 to October 5

Not a runner (or don't think you are)? Walking is your 'thing'? You are welcome too!!

If you would like to join in and are physically able to participate, you are invited to contact our Manager of Administration, Anna, at the number or email at the bottom of the page, or just drop by her office.

Running/walking can: improve health, improve coordination, improve brain function following a brain injury, build your confidence and self-esteem, relieve stress and tension, improve attitude, help create a general sense of happiness, strengthen your mind and give you focus and determination in **other areas of your life.....** amongst other things!

**Injured?
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We had our Annual Picnic on Tuesday, August 16!!

If you were there, you'll know it was a gorgeous day... but did you know that we have never had so many folks come to our Annual Picnics before—literally!! Nearly 100 of you were there. We had tons of food and camaraderie ... Marty the Marmot came and joined us! We had a chance to say a fond adieu to Lindsay Beal, who is leaving us after 13 years. A beautiful card handcrafted by Andy and Mary, and signed by SO many people, was given to her...we had Richard sing a couple of songs...



NONE of it would have been possible without the energy of a small army of volunteers, or if you hadn't come out with the full intention of having a darn good time!! Without taking anything away from all the hard work put in by so many great people, special kudos have to go to volunteers-extraordinaire: Ruth, Michelle and Brenda H. Thank you, ladies, from all of us!

And there would not have been any food if it hadn't been for the tremendous support of our community partners: **Art's Bakery, B&C Food Distributors, Country Grocer, Red Barn, Safeway Tillicum, Walmart Langford and Wildfire Bakery.** So, if you can, please make a point of being a patron of any of these wonderful businesses-with-hearts, as your way of saying a personal 'thank you' to them.

Do you have any suggestions for next year's picnic? If you do, come along to Anna's office to tell her about it!



VBIS took part in the **Gorge Canada Day Parade** this year. There were fun learning activities, compliments of Brenda (see page 2) — think "dancing Elmo" and eggs — which kids and adults alike loved!! There was a helmet draw—won by Sarah Stubblefield!



And who could resist the pleading eyes of our newest, and it has to be said very successful, fundraising volunteer, **Sequoia, a.k.a "The Chunk"** (right).



Do you have your **Thrifty Foods Smile Card** supporting the Victoria Brain Injury Society? Did you know that, with your VBIS Smile Card, 5% of your total purchase is donated to VBIS?

And what do we do with those funds? They help us raise awareness about brain injury and VBIS, by funding the printed materials we produce.

How easy is it to put money on your card? As easy as going to the Customer Service Desk, or just asking the cashier to load your card BEFORE your purchases are rung through the till!



Now I hear you asking yourself, "So how can I get my handy-dandy Thrifty Foods Smile Card for VBIS?!" Simple answer there too: just give Anna a call or drop by her office!

Now, don't you just wish everything in life was THAT easy!! Come on down and see Anna, or give her a call sometime!

CREATIVE ARTS PROJECT (CAP) for PEOPLE WITH ABI and THEIR FAMILIES

This project focuses on art as a therapy and rotates through three courses: "Visual Arts," "Drawing & Writing" and "Movement & Dance." These are open to people with acquired brain injury, while the "Movement & Dance" course is extended to family and caregivers as well. No experience in any of the arts is necessary.

To participate, you must register in advance by calling the VBIS office.

Facilitator: Katusha Dmitrieva

VISUAL ARTS

With an open studio structure, you will work at your own pace. Bring a sketch book and some images you find pleasing. Exercises will be offered for those interested, and supplies are provided.

Upcoming Sessions: Mondays, 12:30pm to 2:30pm

Dates: Sept 12 to Dec 19

Location: To be advised upon registration in advance

GROUPS & PROGRAMS for PEOPLE WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

Please contact the office at 250.598.9339 if you are interested in signing up for any of these programs

ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY (ABI) 101

An informative introduction to brain anatomy and brain injury. In this 4 week, knowledge-building course we will discuss brain function and brain injury with focus on causes, effects, recovery and more. This is a prerequisite to the **“Coping Strategies”** program.

Facilitator: Leidi Fortner

Upcoming Sessions: Wednesdays, 10:00am to 12:00pm

Dates: Sept 7, 14, 21 & 28 — Oct 5, 12, 19, 26
Nov 2, 9, 16 & 23 — Dec 7, 14, 21, & 28

COPING STRATEGIES

This 20 week program is informative and in-depth. We look at strategies of daily living and dealing with the effects of brain injury.

Facilitator: Leidi Fortner

Upcoming Sessions: Fridays, 10:00am to 12:00pm

Dates: Ongoing. Next dates to be advised, to start Dec

CASE MANAGEMENT

One-on-one support for people with acquired brain injury. Contact the office for an appointment. No referral is necessary.



AWARENESS ~ CHOICES ~ EDUCATION (ACE)

This program is an educational support group for people who also experiencing difficulties related to substance abuse. The sessions aim to motivate, support, increase self-awareness, examine issues & strategies and to increase social stabilization and social interactions with others.

Facilitator: Leidi Fortner

Upcoming Sessions: Tuesdays, 11:00am to 1:00pm

Dates: Ongoing. Next dates to be advised, to start Nov or Dec

PEER SUPPORT

“Walk-In” Support Groups

An opportunity for people with acquired brain injury to connect with trained Peer Supporters, who have experienced brain injury themselves. They have participated in our Peer Support training program, and carry out their work under the supervision of our Case Manager, Alex Gilchrist.

No appointment necessary.

Location: VBIS

Sessions:

Mondays, 10:00am to 12:00pm—Women Only
Mondays, 1:00 to 3:00pm—General & Music Groups

Tuesdays to Thursdays, 10:00am to 12:00pm—All Welcome

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Victoria Brain Injury Society — Units D & E, 830 Pembroke Street, Victoria, BC, V8T 1H9
Office Hours: Monday to Thursday—10:00am to 3:00pm

GROUPS & PROGRAMS for FAMILIES/SUPPORTERS OF PEOPLE WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

Please contact the office at 250.598.9339 if you are interested in signing up for any of these programs

"I learned from going to the family support groups that so many other families were going through the same ordeal and I was not alone. It was wonderful, the feeling that you were not alone." ~ Ruth

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

A group for the family, partners and friends of people with an acquired brain injury. This is an opportunity to get together to support each other, share information and discover **common experiences ... and to know they are not alone.**

Facilitator: Barbara Erickson

Upcoming Sessions: Second Monday of the month (exception: Oct), 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Sept 12—Speaker: John Minkley
Topic: Preparing for the Unexpected (Wills, Trusts, etc)

Oct 17— Speaker: Dr Deb Allison
Topic: Understanding Fatigue in acquired brain injury

Nov 14—Speaker: Esme Rothschile, O.T.
Topic: Memory Loss

Dec 12— Speaker: To be confirmed
Topic: To be confirmed

COPING SKILLS FOR FAMILIES

This is a 20 week program for family members of those who have sustained acquired brain injury (ABI). Participants worked with each other and the facilitator to increase their knowledge of ABI, how it impacts the individual and the family, and to explore strategies that might be helpful when interacting with those who have an ABI.

Facilitator: Leidi Fortner

Upcoming Sessions: Wednesdays, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Dates: Ongoing. Next dates to be advised, to start Dec

CASE MANAGEMENT

One-on-one support for family, spouses/partners and caregivers of someone with an acquired brain injury. Contact the office for an appointment. No referral is necessary.

VBIS GROUP at VICTORIA GENERAL HOSPITAL Information/Education/Support Group

A group to help family and friends of someone with an acquired brain injury who is currently a patient in the ICU or the Neuro Unit learn more about brain injury. It is an opportunity to support each other, share information, and know that you are not alone.

Please check in with the Unit Social Worker.

Location: VGH Family ICU/Acute Neuro Unit, 6th floor

When: Thursdays, 2:00pm to 3:00pm

PEER SUPPORT DROP IN

Brain injury is an invisible epidemic. Thousands of people are living with brain injury in BC; many of them have not been properly diagnosed and many of them have had no follow up care. Often, employers, family and friends are as confused about the effect of the brain injury as the survivor is.

The Peer Support Program at VBIS offers the support of people who know acquired brain injury (ABI) from the inside out. They get it: they have also struggled with the impact of ABI on their lives, families and careers. In this process, they have learned some valuable lessons about how to live with brain injury and they are here every day, from Monday to Thursday, to help.



Neurological recovery from brain injury is very slow; in the meantime coping strategies can hugely improve the quality of the **survivor's life and therefore** everyone round them.

In the Peer Support program, strategies, ideas, points of view, jokes and respectful support are all offered every day. There are card games, crib matches, crosswords, movies and presentations from community partner agencies.

The Thursday group has traditionally been a project- or games-orientated session; what do YOU want to see happening on Thursday afternoons? Call Alex or just drop by!

Come and listen, share and participate. Peer Support happens Mondays to Thursdays, 10:00am to 3:00pm.

DID YOU KNOW....

...there are as many as 38 new brain injuries a day in BC

...that VBIS has walk-in peer support groups Monday through to Thursday, mornings and **afternoons? You don't even need an appointment—you can just drop in.**

... that all the peer supporters have undergone careful training and operate under the guidance of Alex

"People who attend

compare their experiences, share solutions to their challenges and enjoy an atmosphere in which others "get it."

Peer Supporters pride themselves on the safety they create, and they **often hear that 'people out there don't always understand... people at the Society do.'** "

~ Mary, Peer Supporter



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INTRODUCING... Anna McLauchlan

If you have phoned the office and heard a rather strange accent on the other end, or if you have been in to see us at VBIS, you may have seen a new face of someone trying very hard to fill rather large shoes left by Vicki Boles... That would be Anna, our new Manager of Administration!



Anna comes to us with an extensive and varied background in secretarial, **financial and administrative support**. She told us that she “chose many years ago to work in the non-profit and social services sectors, where helping people comes first.”

Anna is a bit of a music-hound, as will be witnessed by the iPod dock sitting on her desk in her office! Outside of work, she can often be found at some arts or music venue/festival, when she is not at home tending to the needs of her other boss: Hobbs—the cat! In her spare time, you’ll find her ‘playing’ in her garden, or working on the admin support for the local sailing school she and her husband, Jim, operate, or even riding a couple of times a week on a friend’s horse. Anna’s passions also include a travel bug that loudly beckons her, and photography—she has dreams of being a much better photographer ... eventually!

Kirsten Madsen *Steve Heringa* *Brad Garside*

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CAROLE JAMES' VISIT & PROCLAMATION

June was Brain Injury Awareness Month and on June 2nd, Carole James, MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill, made a statement in the Legislature addressing brain injury awareness and the work of the Victoria Brain Injury Society itself .

On June 6, 2011, staff and members were delighted to host Carole, when she visited VBIS to learn more about what we do. As she sat and talked to our Peer Supporters, it was clear she really grasped and understood the challenges people with ABI face every day.

She also understood the concrete importance

of the work we are all focused on carrying out every day: **"(The Society's) goal is to help citizens living with brain injury become self reliant, confident and productive and overcome the risks of homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction and crime..." she says.**

"By using the experience of volunteers who have experienced ABI themselves, the Peer Support Program has proven to be a successful way to help survivors deal with the devastating repercussions of ABI."

- Carole James, MLA

Before leaving, Carole presented us with a Letter of Support.

For more information about Carole's visit to VBIS, the Letter of Support and to view the You Tube video of her address to the Legislature, please go to the Blog on our new website!

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS.

If you've been injured and need someone to look out for your interests – we can help! Our unique team approach allows us to access the very best resources for you.

We pride ourselves on our long history of supporting clients through some of their darkest hours while actively campaigning for their benefit. We are here to work with you if you are struggling to meet your monthly commitments with our Advance Program. Most importantly, we get paid – when you get paid.



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GRANTS & FUNDS RECEIVED



We would like to thank The Hamber Foundation for their generous support of our Peer Support Training Program. You can read more about our Peer Support Program on page 8. The grant we received from The Hamber Foundation will allow us to continue offering ongoing training and support to maximize our Peer Supporters' effectiveness and the value they receive from their mentorship role.



We also owe a debt of gratitude to the City of Victoria for their contribution of \$5070 towards our *Interactive Community Project*. The purpose of this project is to raise the community's awareness of acquired brain injury, its causes and consequences and methods of prevention, through a dynamic and innovative public engagement strategy.



Vandekerkhove Family Foundation



We rely on the generous support of community friends and supporters through these grants, and with memberships and individual donations. Please consider donating, or obtaining a membership to VBIS, with benefits including:

- * Receiving the quarterly *Reminder* newsletter
- * A personal invite and vote at our Annual General Meeting
- * Invitations to our special events

The production of the VBIS Newsletter would not be possible without the generous support of Deborah Acheson & Acheson Whitley Sweeney Foley Law Firm

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Victoria Brain Injury Society (VBIS) quarterly newsletter is distributed to approximately 800 families and community professionals. VBIS is committed to producing a quality bulletin which expresses **the opinions, concerns, and ideas of its' members**. VBIS welcomes submissions that are informative, positive and are a clear reflection of its readership. Submissions should be written in an easy-to-read and understand format. Content should be void of labels, disparaging language, a "cure", "reversal", or "healing" of brain injury, and highly technical, medical or legal terms. VBIS reserves the right to edit and/or refuse publication of all submissions.

DEADLINES & DISTRIBUTION DATES

February 1.....Spring 2012 (March)
May 1..... Summer 2012 (June)

ADVERTISING

VBIS requires advertising submissions to clearly state the credentials of the individual/group providing the product or service, and any benefits and/or risks thereof. Advertisers who are VBIS supporters may not imply or indicate to the general public their support or membership or declaration thereof is an **endorsement by VBIS for an advertiser's products or services**. Please include payment with digital ad copy and graphics.

AD RATES & SIZES PER ISSUE

Standard Business Card	\$50.00
Quarter Page	\$100.00
Half Page	\$200.00
Full Page	\$400.00

DISCLAIMER

The products or services advertised and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily supported or endorsed by VBIS or its directors, staff, or membership. VBIS assumes no liability for medical treatment, legal advice, or other activity undertaken by newsletter readers. Individuals and families are encouraged to consult their personal healthcare provider/legal counsel for medical/legal advice.

PRIVACY POLICY

VBIS maintains a mailing list to inform members of upcoming events and for newsletter distribution. The mailing list contains your name, address, telephone number, and email address. VBIS does not share, sell, or otherwise disclose your information to any third party. In compliance with **British Columbia's Personal Information Protection Act**, contact us if you no longer wish to be on the mailing list.

YES! I would like to help!

Mission: to provide education, support and advocacy to people with acquired brain injury, their family and friends, to enable them to move toward emotional, economic and social self-reliance



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Email _____ I do NOT have email

Telephone (home) _____ (Cell) _____

I would like to receive newsletters/updates via email I would like to receive newsletter/updates via postal mail

Other information you would like us to note _____

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Donations can also be made online via
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at any time

- I would like to become a **Monthly Donor** with the Victoria Brain Injury Society.
- I understand that I can change the details of this monthly gift at any time by calling 250.598.9339. I can also cancel my gifts at any time. I understand that I will receive an annual tax receipt for the total amount of my gifts each year.

\$10/month \$25/month \$50/month Other \$ _____ /month

Please deduct my gift on the 1st or 15th of the month, starting the month of _____ 20 _____

I prefer to contribute through Visa MasterCard Card # _____ Expiry _____

Chequing Account (please attach void cheque) Signature _____ Date _____

This donation is made on behalf of: an individual a business

I may revoke my authorization at any time, subject to providing notice of 30 days. To obtain a sample cancellation form, or for more information on my right to cancel a Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) Agreement, I may contact my financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca.

I have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, I have the right to receive reimbursement for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this PAD Agreement. To obtain more information on my recourse rights, I may contact my financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca

- I would like to **renew my annual membership** I would like to **become a member**
(Please see page 11 and VBIS website for benefits of membership)

Membership Contributions:

\$10—Individual \$25—Family \$100—Professional \$400—Corporate

I'm enclosing my **one-off donation** payable to Victoria Brain Injury Society

\$40 \$75 \$100 \$150 \$250 Other \$ _____

I prefer to contribute through Visa MasterCard Card # _____ Expiry _____

Signature _____ Date _____

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