



*"Keep your heart with all diligence  
for out of it spring the issues of life"*

*Proverbs 4:23*



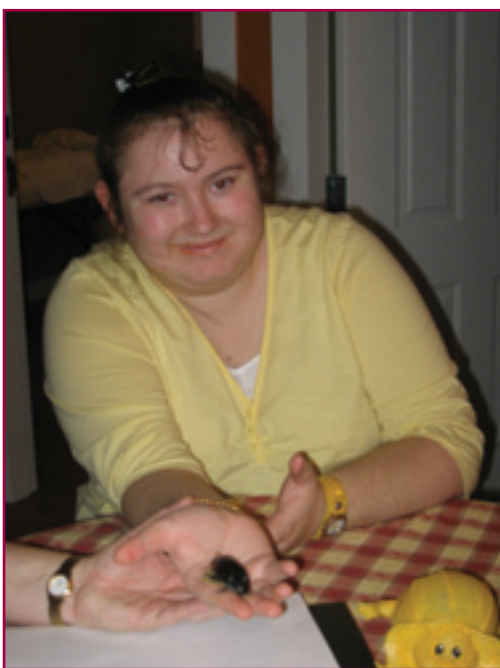
[www.BethesdaBC.com](http://www.BethesdaBC.com)

**Spring Edition, 2008**

## Zoology and more...

Have you ever pet a cockroach? Have you ever stroked a hairless rat or watched a stick bug shed its coat? That's just a sampling of what's happening in Zoology at Bethesda's new Graduate Day Services. This exciting service was developed for Grade 12 graduates who have special needs and require specially trained support workers. Although each individual has significant challenges in his/her life, the day service focuses on the interests and gifts of the people involved and we seek to help each individual engage in activities that will help each individual discover a path for his/her adult life. Areas of interest include continuing education, exploring interests, volunteering, finding employment and expanding networking with friends.

Partnerships are being developed with the individuals, families, friends and people in the community who



*Ashley loves Zoology!  
Ooo - what's that she's holding?*

provide instruction, leadership and support in the areas of interest. An example of this is the current art program. Gerry Keryluik and Peggy Bradshaw are professional artists and teachers who have teamed up with us to offer quality art instruction. This is made possible through the financial support of many friends and family members.

We are looking for more individuals, companies and organizations who would like to explore a partnership with us. Some areas of interest include mechanics, woodworking, small jobs that include labeling, organizing, etc. For information and discussion please call Tanya at 604-853-3156.

Bethesda will be expanding its Graduate Day Services by helping more individuals as they conclude their final year of schooling. The new services will be developed in the Lower Mainland and new opportunities for employment will be offered and posted at [www.BethesdaBC.com](http://www.BethesdaBC.com)



*Cameron and Ben express themselves through art.*

**Caring for People with Disabilities and Their Families**

## Brotherly Love

Laszlo and his younger brother Emery have lived together in Matsqui Home since the home opened in 1991. The family is so very grateful and appreciative that their sons can live together in a Christian based home. This was an answer to their prayers so many years ago after asking Bethesda to care for their sons who had previously lived in Woodlands. Mom and Dad visit on a regular basis and their sons also go to their parents' home on occasion.



*Laszlo and Emery share a devotional together with their housemates and staff.*

Emery and Laszlo share a strong brotherly bond as they spend a lot of time together and share many of the same interests. Unable to speak, the brothers communicate in different ways such as when Emery reaches out to touch his brother's arm to indicate friendship or a caring gesture. When their home is filled with friends, music and laughter, both brothers share in the enjoyment of interacting with others, often greeting people with a gentle smile.

Emery and Laszlo enjoy having someone read to them or sing to them. Both brothers display a sensitive spirit to the Lord through times spent in devotions, prayer, sacred music and worship services. Laszlo and Emery also enjoy spending time outdoors on a sunny day, going for walks or attending a concert.

Those who support the brothers frequently comment on the sense of joy that the brothers have and the source of strength that they are to those around them. The brothers always have a sense of contentment in all things and staff love supporting their good friends Laszlo and Emery.

## Welcoming Individuals & Their Families New to Bethesda

A warm welcome to William, David, Jessica and Franklin who are enjoying residential, day and/or family support services in Kelowna, Abbotsford and Chilliwack.

## Remembering a Friend

We are saddened by the loss of a good friend who has recently passed away. Yet we are comforted by the knowledge that a new, wonderful and endless life in the presence of Jesus is being enjoyed by Beverley Vander Wijk (June 3, 1954 – February 28, 2008) of West Abbotsford Home.

## In Appreciation

Sincere appreciation to those who have given generously over the past year to help Bethesda meet its financial obligations and to help plan for the development of more support services:

- To the Church Community of BC for your gifts
- To the many Individual Friends who gave throughout the year
- To the Business Community for supporting Summer & Winter Camps
- To Timothy Christian School for their Thanksgiving Day gift
- In Memory of Henk Zonruiter
- In Memory of John Vander Graaf
- In Memory of Pieter Oostlander
- In Memory of Johanna Van Harmelen
- To the Unrau Endowment Fund
- To Individuals Redirecting Union dues to Bethesda
- To the Golfers of Bethesda's Charity Challenge
- To the Bikers of "Cycling for Kids"
- To the Fraser Valley Christian Hockey Junior & Adult Association for their Hockey Benefit Game

## A Notable Quote

*"When we do the best that we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another."*

-- Helen Keller



A primary mission of Bethesda is to design, develop and maintain housing options for individuals with developmental disabilities. Adults and teens live in either group homes, family care homes, apartments or basement suites in the Lower Mainland, in the Okanagan and on Vancouver Island. Homes are owned either by the B.C. Government or by Bethesda or the homes are rented.

It has taken considerable teamwork to meet housing needs to date and we want to acknowledge the strong commitment by the

B.C. Government and by the many donors of Bethesda over the past years. Together, you have strengthened the range of housing options that individuals and their families can choose from to meet the unique needs of their loved ones. We continue to explore new options in the effort to meet individual needs as well as to meet the cost pressures associated with the purchase and maintenance of each home.

Affordable housing is generally recognized as a key determinant of the overall health of any society. We want to continue providing safe, affordable housing and we are asking for your participation to realize the benefit such housing opportunities has for our friends with disabilities.

We are currently focusing on a number of adults who desire to live on their own and who can successfully do so with some help with life skills such as food preparation, budgeting and searching for employment. As each person experiences the joys and challenges of independent living, he/she gains confidence in making good and responsible decisions. Family Support staff are trained to provide assistance that is always “teachable” in nature so that the individual receiving support learns necessary skills for daily living.

A significant barrier that each of these adults face is the lack of financial resources to meet the costs of everyday living. Employment is very difficult to secure which then forces individuals to be dependent upon financial assistance from the B.C. Government, family, friends and agencies such as Bethesda. Add in the expensive real estate market of today and it becomes clear that these adults are in need of affordable housing.

Bethesda is working on two housing plans – one in Northern BC and the other in the Lower Mainland. The Northern BC plan has property purchased and is in the fund-raising and building design phase. The Lower Mainland plan is in the early development stages of discussion, land acquisition and building design issues.

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**We need to develop more affordable housing for adults with developmental disabilities who desire to live on their own and we are asking for your help during this Spring's Lend-A-Hand Campaign.**

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The Northern BC project, located in Smithers, is a joint effort between Bethesda and Sparrows Christian Housing Society to help meet housing needs in this community and surrounding towns. Sparrows Society shares a similar mission to Bethesda and is a registered charity operating out of Smithers for the benefit of individuals with developmental disabilities. Property has been purchased and both societies are busy working out funding and building design details. The Smithers project’s capital costs will be entirely donation-based on funds raised by both societies for the construction of an apartment-style building.

We will be providing more details on each housing plan in upcoming newsletters.

## A Tribute to Friendship Ministry in B.C.

Friendship Ministry exists to help churches share God's love for people who have disabilities. Friendship teaches about God's Word and in return our friends teach us about caring and compassion. There are a number of

Friendship groups that meet regularly in British Columbia communities – Abbotsford, Vernon, Chilliwack, Ladner and Smithers. Each chapter shares in Friendship Groups Canada's mission statements:

- **Advocates** for the inherent rights of people with cognitive challenges to experience the fullness of God's love by means of spiritual formation, inclusion and integration
- **Encourages** individuals, churches and organizations to "live" God's love with people with cognitive challenges
- **Fosters** the establishment of Friendship Groups while providing resources and training and funding for research and development
- **Provides** training, support and resources to individuals, churches and organizations and to mentors and volunteers of Friendship Groups across Canada.



*Friendship at Trinity*

One of the Friendship groups meet at Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Abbotsford where approximately 40 – 50 people connect every Tuesday at 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall and have done so for the past 25 years. The evening begins with worship and praise – lots of it!! Singing, clapping hands and playing musical instruments all contribute to powerful worship. The story teller leads the Bible story which involves group participation; this might even include a drama presentation. Students and volunteers spend one on one time together in prayer,

sharing with one another or making a craft. The kitchen committee ensures there is plenty of coffee and cookies to go around.

Many volunteers work together to make Friendship ministry successful. Leaders, drivers and kitchen help all contribute to make Friendship a vibrant and highly anticipated weekly event. A big thank you, volunteers, for your dedication and commitment to your friends with disabilities.

## Registered Disability Savings Plan Announced – (from Canada Revenue Agency News)

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is a new plan that will allow funds to be invested tax-free until withdrawal. It is intended to help parents and others to save for the long-term financial security of a child with a disability. The plan structure is similar to a Registered Education Savings Plan.

Contributions to an RDSP will be eligible for the new Canada Disability Savings Grant. There is also a new Canada Disability Savings Bond for individuals with lower family net incomes.

Any person will be eligible for the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) who is:

- Eligible for the Disability Tax Credit and is a Canadian resident; or
- A parent or legal representative of a person who is a resident in Canada and is eligible for the Disability Tax Credit.

Anyone can contribute to an RDSP; however, contributions are limited to a lifetime maximum of \$200,000 in respect of the child, with no annual limit.

Contributions will be permitted until the end of the year in which the child attains 59 years of age.

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) come into effect as soon as possible in 2008. Check our Web site often - all new forms, policies and guidelines will be posted on the CRA's Web site as they become available.

The **Canada Disability Savings Grant** and the **Canada Disability Savings Bond** are two programs designed to augment funds in the RDSP. The government will contribute, in the form of Canada Disability Savings Grants, funds equivalent to 100% to 300% of RDSP contributions, up to a maximum of \$3,500 depending on the net income of the beneficiary's family. The government will also contribute up to \$1,000 annually in Canada Disability Savings Bonds depending on the net income of the beneficiary's family.

More information about Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) will be available shortly. Please check the CRA's Web site regularly for updates. In the meantime, please consult the Department of Finance's Budget 2007 documents ([www.budget.gc.ca/2007/bp/bpc3e.html](http://www.budget.gc.ca/2007/bp/bpc3e.html)) for details.

*The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) came about at the initiative of Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN), a non-profit agency in British Columbia. The RDSP will benefit many Canadians with disabilities to supplement income, enable home ownership, purchase services and supports to enhance quality of life. Please visit PLAN at [www.PLAN.ca/SocialPolicy](http://www.PLAN.ca/SocialPolicy) to read more about this important development.*

## BETHESDA'S "LEND-A-HAND" CAMPAIGN

*Walking with Families – Today & Tomorrow*

Bethesda supports families in meeting the unique needs of a loved one with a disability through donation-based services including *Affordable Housing, Family Visitation, Respite Care, Assistance with Special Equipment, Crisis Support, Short & Long Term Planning, Parent Support Groups, Church Ministry Support, Outdoor Adventures and Transportation.*

**Last year you helped to raise \$131,558. Please consider helping us again during this year's campaign.**

**A Campaign Worker will be in contact with you to ask for your support. Our sincere thanks for your kindness, generosity and dedication to Bethesda's ministry.**



**Caring for People with Disabilities and Their Families**

## Foundation Supports Students

Bethesda Christian Foundation is pleased to announce its 8th year of offering bursaries to post-secondary students engaged in studies leading to work in supporting individuals with disabilities and their families. Students wishing to apply for a bursary for the 2008/09 school year can do so by requesting an application package from Bethesda Head Office.



## Congratulations Grads of 2008!



*Following school, Richard is looking forward to joining Bethesda's Graduate Day Services.*

**SUMMERcamp**

Day Camps: July 2 - August 23  
Summer Quest: July 22 - 25  
Camp Bethesda: August 18 - 23

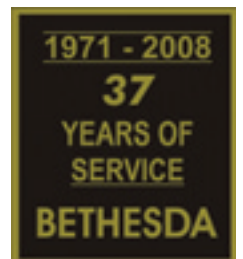
See [www.BethesdaBC.com](http://www.BethesdaBC.com) for more information including Employment & Volunteer Opportunities

*For Employment Opportunities please see [www.bethesdabc.com/employment.htm](http://www.bethesdabc.com/employment.htm) or call 604-850-6604 for information*

## Financial Policy

Spending of funds is confined to Board approved services and purchases. Each gift designated toward an approved service will be used as designated with the understanding that when any given need has been met, designated gifts will be used where most needed. Gifts are acknowledged and receipted with a tax deductible receipt. Bethesda is a charter member of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC).

*Bethesda's mission is to support individuals with disabilities and their families with a value & belief system that, as ambassadors of our Lord Jesus Christ, we will honour God and each person in all we do and with all of our resources.*



## BETHESDA CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

Klaas Jagersma, President  
Bert Altena, Executive Director



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