



Health Matters Newsletter May 22, 2015

Today's Health Matters Includes:

- Meeting Schedules
- Community Meetings and Events
- Cowichan Housing Association May Events
- Poverty and School Readiness problem at Lake Cowichan
- Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association 2015 Ride- a-Thon
- Parkside Academy has community space for rent
- Transportation emerges as crucial to escaping poverty
- *Poverty Reduction and Economic Inclusion Act re-introduced in the BC legislature*



Our Cowichan- Network Member Meetings-

- ✓ **Next Our Cowichan Network Meeting June 11, 2015**, CVRD Board Room. Light dinner at 5:30 pm Meeting starts at 6:00 pm
- ✓ **Next Admin Committee Meeting- June 17, 5:30 pm CVRD Committee Room 2**

Workshops and Events

- **Walk of the Nations- Saturday May 30-** 10 am start- Everyone welcome- Wear cultural and traditional clothing: bring flags, signs and banners- 9:30 am marshalling at VIU

Cowichan Housing Association

May 2015 Upcoming Housing Events you won't want to miss

- ✓ **Cowichan Housing Association Logo Design Competition** – The newly incorporated Cowichan Housing Association wants to hear your ideas. We are looking for a new logo that captures the essence of the work we do. We are inviting submissions for a friendly design competition. For more information see our webpage at: <http://www.socialplanningcowichan.org/affordable-housing.html>

- ✓ **Next Meeting of the Regional Affordable Housing Directorate** - Mark your calendar and please join us for the next meeting of RAHD – Thursday, May 28 – 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Island Savings Centre, Mesachie Room. Presentation and updates on the **Housing Trust Fund**, plus viewing of the logo design entries and updates on all of our work.
- ✓ **Walk of Nations** – Saturday, May 30, 2015.

Poverty, school readiness problem at Lake Cowichan

[Lexi Baines](#) / The Citizen
May 20, 2015 12:00 AM

• Cowichan Valley Citizen •

Our Cowichan's Cindy Lise talks about the group's need for direction from the community during a meeting at Lake Cowichan to discuss a wide-ranging report. Photograph By Lexi Baines/Citizen



Our Cowichan's Cindy Lise talks about the group's need for direction from the community during a meeting at Lake Cowichan to discuss a wide-ranging report. Photograph By Lexi Baines/Citizen

The Cowichan Lake area learned on May 4 that children in the area are disproportionately not ready for school, many are living in poverty, and retaining youths in the community is also an issue.

Cindy Lise of Our Cowichan Communities Health Network, the new name for the group that emerged after Cowichan Lodge closed, said the group has been helping to spread the word about a massive 207-page state of the region report from Island Health, covering the 12 determinants of health.

"We've now got this network. But we need to find out what we need to tackle," she said.

"We're bringing the profile to you. We need to know if we've missed anything. What else can we do?" Paul Hasselback, Medical Health Officer for Vancouver Island, went through the sections of the document that were most germane to the Cowichan Lake area, noting that income and social status is one of the most important and that a weak, less sustainable economy is more sensitive to problems.

No area in the Cowichan Valley is successful in retaining its youth but Lake Cowichan is especially hard hit in this regard.

And in Lake Cowichan "one in every three children is living in poverty."

There's been a huge jump in that; the area really got hit harder by the recession than other parts of the Valley, he said.

However, the Cowichan Lake area is pretty good when it comes to children in care; it has the second best rate on the Island, he said.

Lake Cowichan Mayor Ross Forrest, one of a group of high-level representatives of governing bodies and agencies who attended the meeting, told Hasselback that more availability of affordable housing at the Lake may be skewing the area's demographic to include more low-income families.

Hasselback agreed but said that an important part of helping people achieve a better social environment overall is a community that takes time to focus on the family.

Civic participation in elections is also good in Lake Cowichan as is satisfaction with public transit, and residents' standards of personal health practices and coping skills, he said.

But when it comes to getting children ready for school, Lake Cowichan is in trouble, with their little ones seen as the most vulnerable on the Island.

It's not the first year he's pointed that out but he reiterated that there is a need to tailor programs to what the community needs.

Comments from the public after his presentation showed that there was a lot of concern about the community's young children and distress at discovering how many students at Palsson Elementary School had been going to school hungry.

Food bank representatives say they don't necessarily see those families and the meeting also heard that there are more children using the "hungry kids cupboard" at that school.

However, it also appeared that now the community had heard about that situation, there's a willingness to try to address it.

In addition, school district efforts already underway and programs planned to start in the fall should have a beneficial effect on the area's children.

Another subject, aging in place, also came up, as over the years Lake Cowichan people have expressed a wish to be able to stay closer to the area they love.

Again, Forrest said that the Town of Lake Cowichan was looking at the situation.

"We got a grant to hire a consultant to look at this. There is an age-friendly workshop for everybody on Saturday, May 23 from 2-4 p.m. at the Over 50 Centre in Lake Cowichan. It's not just about getting Lake Cowichan a home or housing, it's everything to do with aging. I would encourage everybody of all ages to attend the workshop," he said.

- See more at: <http://www.cowichanvalleycitizen.com/news/poverty-school-readiness-problem-at-lake-cowichan-1.1940661#sthash.np2kple0.dpuf>

...And They're Off!

The Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association's Annual Ride-a-Thon is Officially Underway.

This year our theme is "Off to the Races" with participants (our "jockeys"), staff and volunteers ("our grooms") racing as teams!

Its going to be a close one folks!

Read on to learn what's at stake this year and how you can get in on the action!



What's Going On?

This May and June the Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association will once again be holding our annual Ride-a-Thon fundraiser and this year's event is racetrack themed! The pledge race is off and running and the special Ride-a-Thon course will be ridden by program participants during the last week of our spring sessions, June 13 - 19.

The money raised by this event will go towards supporting the CTRA program – providing therapeutic riding and equine-based therapeutic services for persons with disabilities. CTRA welcomes hundreds of participants each year and the program is made possible through the generosity of many dedicated volunteers.

The Ride-a-Thon provides a wonderful opportunity for participants, families, volunteers, and community supporters to come together in support of the life-changing opportunities made possible through CTRA's

services. This year CTRA hopes to top last year's Ride-a-Thon total of \$14,000 by raising at least \$15,000 for the program!

This year, fundraising teams are organized around each of the 13 therapy horses. The horse teams will race to bring in the most pledges and the winning team will celebrate victory with their very own pizza party. For the individuals collecting pledges, there will be participation and incentive prizes along the way as well as a special trophy for the participant that raises the most money. Sitting in the back bleachers? No worries - an interactive sign will keep everyone up to speed on the progress of the race – right down to the photo finish!

Want to Get in on the Action? Here's How:

Place a "bet"

Pledges can be made in support of individual participants as well as horse teams. Donations to the event or program generally are also greatly appreciated. Contributions can be made via individual participants, through the CTRA office, or via our [Canada Helps Campaign](#).

Care to check out the post parade before selecting your lucky pony? Learn all about the contenders [here](#).

Sponsor the Ride-a-Thon

Sponsors are integral to the success of this event! Sponsorship is a great way to enhance brand or business visibility while giving back to a popular and widely-respected community cause. Sponsorship is available in two levels as either an **Event Sponsor** (\$500) or **T-Shirt Sponsor** (\$200). If you would learn more about sponsoring this event, please check out our [event webpage](#) or [contact our office](#) for more information.

Join the Party!

Grab your sunhat! **Saturday June 20th** from 2-4pm CTRA will be wrapping up the Ride-a-Thon with our annual **Celebration Picnic** at the CTRA facility (1843 Tzouhalem Road, Duncan).

In addition to Ride-a-Thon awards there will be games for the whole family (including beach volleyball!), great food (including our chili cook off!), and lots of other entertainment. This year's celebration will also mark the **GRAND OPENING OF OUR NEW OUTDOOR ARENA!** We invite the public to come celebrate with us – it's a great opportunity to meet the program participants, mingle with our dedicated volunteers, network with our supporters, snuggle with the therapy horses, check out the new digs, and have an all-around great time! No RSVP is required, but do not hesitate to [contact us](#) for more information. We hope to see you all there!

2015 Ride-a-Thon Information

[Event Webpage](#)

[Canada Helps Campaign Page](#)

[Participant Pledge Sheets](#)

[Participant T-Shirt Order Form \(due May 25th!\)](#)

Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association

Registered Canadian Charity # 891723843RR0001

1843 Tzouhalem Road, Duncan BC, V9L 5L6

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Parkside Academy - Space Available in Somenos School

Parkside Academy Child Care Society seeks community partnerships to fully use our new building at Somenos School on Spratt Road, next to North Cowichan Municipality Office. We have a gym and an outdoor soccer/baseball field for community use for sports or activities/events. We also have an empty classroom & portable during the day & several classrooms that could be used after 6:00 pm. We'd love to have a community hub! Please call us to inquire: Adriana at 250 746 1711

Parkside Academy - Space Available

Somenos School, 3039 Spratt Rd.

To inquire about available space, please contact Adriana
250.746.1711



Transportation Emerges as Crucial to Escaping Poverty

MAY 7, 2015 James Baker was pedaling to work along a slick, snow-covered road in Frederick County, Md., when a traffic light changed abruptly. He braked and skidded to the ground, unhurt but making a mess of his clothes before a long day of work and school.

He was on his bicycle that snowy morning last December, about an hour northwest of Washington, because the bus service in Frederick was so erratic. Routes were far apart and the buses often late, making a 30-minute bike ride, whatever the weather, a better option.

His commuting problems highlight a central theme for many low-income people trying to build a better life: A lack of reliable and efficient transportation is often a huge barrier.

In a large, continuing [study](#) of upward mobility based at Harvard, commuting time has emerged as the single strongest factor in the odds of escaping poverty. The longer an average commute in a given county, the worse the chances of low-income families there moving up the ladder.

The relationship between transportation and social mobility is stronger than that between mobility and several other factors, like crime, elementary-school test scores or the percentage of two-parent families in a community, said Nathaniel Hendren, a Harvard economist and one of the researchers on the study.



Photo

Andrea Zona, James Baker and their 8-month-old, Quinn, at home in Frederick, Md. Credit Matt Roth for The New York Times

The study notes the connection in places with notoriously long commutes and poverty, including Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles, New York, Orlando, Fla., and Birmingham, Ala.

A separate report focusing on New York, from New York University's Rudin Center for Transportation, came to a similar conclusion. The study compared neighborhoods by accessibility to mass transit and the number of jobs within an hour's commute. It found that residents of the areas least well served by mass transit relied on personal vehicles. Areas in the middle third — those with some, but insufficient, access to transportation — had the highest rates of unemployment and the lowest incomes, the study found.

For Mr. Baker and his fiancée, Andrea Zona, the lack of good transportation has been one of the few downsides of moving to Frederick County. He grew up in Washington and moved to the city of Frederick four years ago to study at Hood College, where he met Ms. Zona.

Mr. Baker has worked at two \$8-an-hour jobs — one as a lifeguard and another running a student activity room on campus — while interning at the Interfaith Housing Alliance. They live paycheck to paycheck, he said, with a little help from the state in the form of food stamps. Ms. Zona, who hails from northeast Pennsylvania, volunteers and works a \$15-an-hour job in an archaeological laboratory. She hopes to get a job as a volunteer coordinator for AmeriCorps, a national organization focused on community service. Eight months ago she gave birth to their son, Quinn.

"We're working our way up in life," said Mr. Baker, who has lined up a job coordinating financial classes with AmeriCorps after graduation.

The family lives in a one-bedroom apartment, which costs \$900 a month — a rent that would require them to live in a rougher neighborhood in Washington, where he said he wouldn't want to raise his son. "You don't have to worry about getting hurt at night in Frederick, compared to the way I would be living in D.C.," Mr. Baker said.

The couple feels that the town offers Quinn a bright future and that Frederick's school system will set him on a better path. "I want him to have a better education than I had," Mr. Baker said.

The high priority assigned to access to good paying jobs via an efficient means of employee transportation is unsurprising. Jobs empower...

The data from the [Harvard study](#) supports Mr. Baker's hopes. It has tracked more than five million people who moved as children during the 1980s and 1990s and controlled for a variety of factors in an effort to isolate the way that a place affects children.

The researchers concluded that Washington is roughly an average place for a lower-income child to grow up — but that Frederick is above average. Children who have previously moved from an average place to Frederick end up earning about 8 percent more as adults than similar children who did not move. Moreover, the younger a child is in such an above-average place, the more impact that place has on future earnings and other factors of social mobility.

[Continue reading the main story](#) [Write A Comment](#)

Frederick does not lift the odds of upward mobility quite so much as Washington’s closer-in suburbs, like Montgomery County, Md., or Fairfax, Va. — which have more expensive housing and better public transportation.

But Mr. Baker and Ms. Zona seem to have solved, at least for now, their transportation problems. In January, they discovered a silver 2001 Toyota Corolla listed for \$1,700 on the website of a local nonprofit, Second Chances Garage. Spotted with old stickers for Chicago sports teams, it has changed their daily routines. Commuting is easy, and they can now get to less expensive stores like Walmart and Target.

“The car,” Mr. Baker said, “is the key to life in Frederick.”

David Leonhardt contributed reporting.

Poverty Reduction and Economic Inclusion Act re-introduced in the BC legislature

Nelson-Creston MLA Michelle Mungall has recently re-introduced the Poverty Reduction and Economic Inclusion Act. Bill M218 calls on the provincial government to develop and implement a strategy with legislated targets and timelines in order to reduce the breadth and depth of poverty. Now's our chance to pressure our politicians to pass this great bill!

Take Action: Go to the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition webpage to find more info and take action to support the bill.

Do you have a resource, event or information you would like to share?

Send it to cindylisecchn@shaw.ca and it will be included in the weekly
Health Matters Newsletter