



Ten Years of Caring for the Caregiver

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CELEBRATING 138 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE!

March 2011

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The Cridge RespiTality Service has cared for the caregiver for ten years. In recognition of this anniversary its staff and volunteers, its partners in the community who provide accommodation and other gifts, and especially the families it serves, will mark 2011 as 'A Year of RespiTality Celebration.'

RespiTality is a unique program through which hotels, resorts and bed-and-breakfasts in Victoria, Parksville and Vancouver provide a complimentary overnight stay for the parents or primary caregivers of a child with a disability while the child receives respite care at home. A bountiful welcome basket greets the guests at their room, where they often find stay enhancements like a bottle of wine, meal vouchers, or spa treatment coupons. Parents have a chance to relax and restore themselves: sometimes the only break they get in a year.

When we tell people what The Cridge RespiTality Service does, they generally understand that it has something to do with the parents of a child with special needs staying at a hotel and having a break for one night from the otherwise unrelenting task of caring for their child/children. However, when we get a thank you like this one from one of our Cridge RespiTality Service families, it becomes clear that what we really do is give families breathing space so they can continue facing their challenges, as this mom so graciously expresses:

I just wanted to send a brief note to thank you! Our visit to Abigail's provided a much needed break from 'real life' and once again, it couldn't have come at a better time.

The last few months have been particularly stressful. Our son just passed through a series of medical crises which resulted in three admissions to hospital, new medication and a complete change in daily routine.



The Hobbys, one of 400 families supported by respiTality.

Happily, he is back to 'normal' now... but my husband & I were at our wits end! After taking turns at the hospital, working extra hours between visits (the new drugs are not covered by the 'At Home' or Fair Pharmacare programs), and trying to make safety modifications in our house, we were running on empty

Checking in to the Abigail was like walking into a dream. Everything was beautiful, quiet and calm. What an exquisite hotel! For 24 hours, time stopped. My husband & I actually relaxed (and slept) for the first time in months. It was a magical interlude. Now our batteries are recharged enough to face the next set of 'adventures'. The gift basket was perfect! Coffee, tea and chocolate are the fuels that run my body. You are a blessing! The words 'thank you' are not enough. Our son has his parents back too and I know he's grateful!

... continued on page 2

Caring for parents is paramount. This program is an invaluable resource to families who suffer the financial, emotional, physical and social stress which accompanies the caring for a child with disabilities.

Celebrations began January 28 when the Victoria Salmon Kings took on the Las Vegas Wranglers. More than 100 Cridge Centre staff, board members, clients, family and friends were in attendance at the hockey game.

To increase awareness about Respitivity, Mimi Davis, Program Coordinator, hosted an information booth where anyone who entered had a chance to win a sample welcome basket. The evening was a great opportunity to inform people who hadn't yet heard of the service and to reconnect with community members who were already familiar with The Cridge Respitivity Service, many of whom stopped by the booth.

The celebrations will continue with two Spring events.

The first event, hosted by our friends at **HeadStart Salon**, is a **cut-a-thon on Sunday, March 20**.



This precious note and picture were sent to us by the Evans family. The Evans accessed The Cridge Respitivity Service while dealing with multiple health challenges with their daughter Gracie. The family continues to be grateful for the difference Respitivity made, as mom Nelia makes clear. "The black pram is so special to us and holds such meaning as it held Gracie whenever we were at Canuck Place. We look for ways to include Gracie in all we do - as you can see in the family pictures. She remains our love and light!"

Pop by HeadStart between noon and four for a fun-filled chance to get a great haircut for a minimum suggested donation, buy great haircare products at discounted prices, enjoy snacks and drinks, enter to win door prizes, and contribute to The Cridge Respitivity Service.

The talented staff at HeadStart and their hair-dressing friends are donating all of their time for the cut-a-thon, for which we're truly grateful.

'Oh Happy Day' – A Concert to Celebrate 10 Years of Respitivity' on April 22, 2011 at the Alix Golden Performance Hall. The Victoria Sweet Soul Gospel Choir will bring their high-energy, clap-your-hands, get-up-and-dance soul gospel music to the celebration in a family-friendly concert designed to get everyone in the room celebrating.

The concert will be followed with cake, coffee and spectacular 'Respitivity Experience' door prizes.

Thank you to our Accommodation and Community Partners

ACCOMMODATION PARTNERS

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 Sante Spa at Bear Mountain
 Satin Moon Quilt Shop
 Sweet Peas At Home
 The Butchart Gardens
 The Colwood Mini-Price Store
 The Lab Salon
 The Royal & McPherson Theatres Society



School Age Care Makes Learning Fun

Sharon Klein

The combination of busy work schedules and parenting is made easier today with the advent of School Age Care programs in the community. This program, operating between 7:30am and 5:30pm at The Cridge Childcare Centre, offers care for children from Kindergarten to Grade 7 in school District #61.

Children may be dropped off at the centre before school in the morning and are cared for by our team until bused to their school for the start of class. At the end of the school day they are picked up by The Cridge bus and taken to The Cridge Childcare Centre where they receive supervised care until 5:30pm.

When I was a parent of two boys and a single, working mom in the 1980s, my community did not offer such a program. Like myself, many boomer parents raised "latchkey kids." My two boys would leave for school in the morning while I, sipping my first cup of coffee at the office, would cross my fingers and hope that they would make it there in time. After school they would come home to an empty house until I arrived home at dinner time. The parents in our small community developed their own "network" – of course the kids called it "spywork" – to keep an eye on the kids when we were not able to be at home. Luckily things worked out, but I would have felt more comfortable, and the boys would have had more fun, if they could have been part of a School Age Care (SAC) program.

Today, there are several SAC programs offered in communities throughout BC. The Cridge Centre for the Family has a very popular one headed by Davina Antonik School Age Care Coordinator. Davina has a teaching background and is incorporating more fun-filled, relevant skill development into the program.

"It has been seven months since I started as the Coordinator of SAC," says Davina. "I am very pleased with how the year is progressing. We have a fabulous team of leaders, wonderful children and families, and it is great to be a part of The Cridge family. I'm always amazed at the response I receive when people, whether at the bank, grocery store, or one of the schools, hear I work at The Cridge; it seems everyone has a positive story about the Cridge. I just love it!"

"The SAC Program is in full swing after a very busy Fall. We offer play-based programming every afternoon for 75 children, K-Gr. 7. One of the new initiatives this year is to incorporate an educational theme into our weekly activities for each age group. Our leaders are doing a fantastic job making important lessons and issues fun and meaningful to our kids. So far, our Kindies [kindergarten age children] have learned about proper hand-washing and cool wildlife. Our Gr.1's & 2's have learned about friendship values and endangered animals, and our older kids have learned about teamwork and healthy eating. It is very exciting to watch our kids have a blast while learning about new ideas."

In addition to regular programming, The Cridge SAC offers the opportunity to sign-up for clubs with community partners. In the fall children can enjoy Dance Club with Island Studio Dance, Crafty Club with Renee Sala of Crafty, and Art Club with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. New this year were Golf Club and Grandparent's Club at The Cridge Seniors' Centre, both of which were huge successes. Currently, the children can choose Jazz Dance for the older kids, and both Crafty Club and Art Club with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria are back by popular demand for the younger children.



Parents can find out more about School Age Care by visiting The Cridge Childcare Services page on The Cridge Centre website www.cridge.org, or by calling the SAC office (250) 995-6407 and speaking with Davina.



I love seeing all the new little shoots of life sprouting from the ground each spring. It's a time for regeneration and rejuvenation after the cold winter season as the growing season starts and the bounty of fresh products come to market.

For me it's all about using local ingredients whenever possible. Our strong partnership with our local purveyors enables me as Chef to bring those wonderful fresh ingredients to the plate for our wonderful seniors. Local beets, turnips, carrots and fresh leeks become available to us here in beautiful Victoria, and as the season progresses we'll see fresh herbs like thyme, rosemary, savory, baby squash, heirloom cherry tomatoes and my absolute favorite red strawberries.

My thoughts on food are keep it simple and prepare it in a way that emphasizes the natural flavour. Although roasting vegetables is not an ideal preparation because it destroys more vitamins than a quick stir-fry would, for example, what it does do is accentuate the flavour of the food because it releases its moisture and concentrates its natural essence - it just plain tastes good!

My favourite vegetable to roast is beets because their natural sugars intensify to an ambrosial level of taste ecstasy that defies description; if you haven't tried it yet you are really missing out. One last thing - enjoy the eating experience! I encourage you to visit our local farms and help support our producers because the best food is the food that is grown close to home.

ROASTED BEETS

To prepare, wash and dry beets. Do not peel. Put them on a cookie sheet and into your oven at 350°F for about one hour or until fork tender. When they are cool enough to handle, put on some rubber gloves then peel, slice and eat. If you want to dress them up a little drizzle on olive oil, a little lemon or balsamic vinegar, a dash of salt and fresh cracked pepper. I'm sure you'll agree, that poor little beet sure tastes scrumptious. A few other tips I would like to share with you for roasting vegetables is adding some lemon or vinegar when you are coating them with seasoning. The acidity brings out the flavour and also lightens the dish. Generally a good grade oil should be used and include herbs, salt, pepper and spices you like. Use moderate heat - no more than 400°F. I like using 350°F to 375°F.



ROASTED BEET & CHICKEN BREAST SALAD

I make a dead simple salad with roasted beets, grilled chicken breast and maple balsamic vinaigrette for our seniors to enjoy. As above, roast the beets, let cool, peel, slice and set aside. Marinate chicken breast, skin on, for a minimum of 2 hours in a 3:1 ratio of oil to lemon with some rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper. Cook chicken skin side down in a pan until nice and golden. Flip over, finish cooking, and set aside. Cook until juices run clear or internal temperature of 77°C.

Wash and spin dry greens and roughly chop. Slice some red onion and peppers for texture and colour and toss together with some of the dressing. Lay this on a bed of roasted beets. Slice the chicken and fan on top of the greens. Lightly drizzle some dressing around the beets for more eye appeal.

MAPLE BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

(Makes about 1 cup)

1/2	cup	maple syrup
1/2	tsp	salt
1/4	tsp	black pepper
1/2		shallot (peeled and chopped)
1		small clove of garlic
1 1/2	tsp	Dijon mustard
1/3	cup	balsamic vinegar
1/2	cup	olive oil
1/4	cup	grapeseed oil

If needed adjust taste with salt and pepper

Method: In a blender puree all ingredients until smooth. The dressing will be emulsified. If you do not have a blender, mince the garlic and shallot. Add the mustard, salt, pepper, vinegar and maple syrup and whisk to blend. Slowly add in the oil until well blended. The dressing will be less emulsified and perfectly fine to use. Keeps for five days refrigerated.



This past summer, staff of The Cridge Dovetail Program were delighted to again partner with BK Studios Photography for the second annual "Portraits for the People" event.

This event offered families an opportunity to have their portrait taken by Anna Bullock and Rebecca Kirstein of BK Studios on The Cridge Centre property, while enjoying an afternoon of fun activities and delicious treats. These family portraits were taken free of charge, with each family receiving a beautiful, framed 8 x 10 photograph two weeks after the event. This year's event also included families from The Cridge Seniors' Centre and from Kiwanis House. Generous donations of a bouncy castle from Jump Up Inflatables and food from Thrifty Foods and Ooh la la Cupcakes made "Portraits for the People" a huge success.

"Thank you very much to BK Studios for the photo you took of my family. It is very special."

A Cridge Dovetail Program client

"Portraits for the People" is an initiative of BK Studios, which aims to provide professional family portraits for families in need.

Anna Bullock and Rebecca Kirstein have channeled their passion for preserving family history and their creative talent into this moving initiative. Over the past two years, "Portraits for the People" has made a significant impact on the families of The Cridge Dovetail Program. Not only has it given families an opportunity to access a service that they might otherwise be unable to afford, it has allowed families to celebrate a new chapter in their lives together. Many of our families have had to leave any family photographs behind in their former homes, and a professional portrait acknowledges that loss while providing a new start. In the words of one participant, "having a professional portrait taken of my daughter and me turned out to be a surprisingly important step in honouring and reclaiming the new family unit we had become."

The Garth Homer Society STARR Team Shines Brightly

Giving comes in all shapes and sizes over the Christmas season, but when it comes from the clients, volunteers and staff of the Garth Homer Society, it takes the shape of a moving truck filled with dozens of boxes of gifts, stockings, decorations and food for the holidays. For 13 years, the STARR team at Garth Homer Society has given these bountiful hampers to residents of The Cridge Supportive Transitional Housing. The project reaches far beyond just the Christmas season, as the clients and staff at Garth Homer fundraise throughout the year to be able to give so generously. The hampers are so substantial that they literally need to be delivered by truck and brought into the building on dollies! We send a huge and heart-felt thank you on behalf of our clients for the constancy and generosity of the STARR Team.





Together to Learn, Connect and Share at the Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference

Shannon Whissell

On November 17 – 19, 2010 more than 400 acquired brain injury survivors, family members, caregivers, and professionals working in the field met in Vancouver, Prince George and Victoria for the Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference. This marked the return of what had been an annual conference, that has been reconfigured and reinvigorated to better meet the needs of its diverse audience.

The mission of the Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference Society (PCBICS) is to bring together people living with brain injury, their family and friends, professionals and providers of service to support new and innovative education while increasing the awareness and prevention of brain injury.

The quality and variety of the speakers at the conference, and the learning they made available was both broad and deep. From an opening speaker panel of brain injury survivors and their families sharing about their own particular journeys and challenges, to medical research, to strategies for recovery and for care-giver

support, the presentations covered the gamut from the personal and poignant to the humorous and insightful. Hope was also present in many of the presentations, particularly when Capt. Trevor Greene and his wife Debbie spoke; Capt. Greene survived an axe attack to the head while serving with the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan in 2008. Despite overwhelming odds and grim prognoses, Capt. Greene – thanks in large part to the tenacious advocacy of his wife – has defied the doctors' expectations in his amazing recovery, and was even able to stand for most of his wedding ceremony in 2010, just two years after the attack. A consistent theme from the speakers was the inestimable value of involved family and friends in the recovery process, and the importance of treating each brain injury – whether acquired through trauma or illness – with individual care and action.

The Cridge Centre for the Family and The Cridge Brain Injury Services were well represented at the conference, in no small part because Geoff Sing, Manager of The Cridge Brain Injury Services, served as the conference chair. As well, Janelle Breese Biagioni, Cridge Brain Injury Community Program Coordinator and Mark Fournier, Cridge Brain Injury Community Support Coordinator, served on the Victoria

satellite organizing committee and facilitated some of the local sessions.

As Gold Sponsors of the conference, The Cridge Centre for the Family was entitled to have a booth at the Vancouver conference site, allowing it to connect with experts from across the province and reinforcing Cridge Brain Injury

Services' position as leaders in the field of acquired and traumatic brain injury prevention, support and recovery. A key portion of the sponsorship money ensured that those who had the most to benefit from the conference received financial assistance: approximately 20 clients of The Cridge Brain Injury Services and their family members had their registration sponsored. An additional 40 supporters and professionals connected to The Cridge Brain Injury Services also attended the conference.

The evaluations following the conference reveal that the re-configured conference was a great success. Panel sessions balanced inspiring survivor stories with presentations of

medical research. Roundtable discussions ensured that participants had the chance to share their own experiences, lessons, and questions. And multiple social events left participants feeling more connected to others, breaking down the isolation that can be a major factor in the resilience of brain injury survivors and their families.

As one participant stated, "I like the coming together and hearing about new progresses in science and prevention. I like being with other survivors so I am reminded that I am not crazy and what has happened to me in the years since my injury is 'normal.' I like the information and the doors to new ideas that are opened. I always leave the conferences feeling energized that I can do anything I set my mind to."

Providing information, connection, and understanding to those impacted by and working with the field of brain injury is a central goal of the Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference, and is one that The Cridge Centre and The Cridge Brain Injury Services are committed to supporting. For more information about the conference, please visit www.pcbic.org.



Captain Trevor Greene and his wife Debbie shared their remarkable journey of recovery, advocacy, and the power of love.



December was a remarkable time to work at The Cridge Centre for the Family, and as we move further into 2011, I am increasingly aware that the generosity of spirit and deed that so moved me at Christmas is demonstrated here throughout the year.

Here are just a few of the generous ways we received community support over Christmas:

- ever heard of a Twamper? It's a term our CEO Shelley made up when she heard about Christmas hampers being put together for some of our families by the Victoria Twitter community.
- meanwhile, the Sidney Rotary Club chose one of our Supportive Transitional Housing families as the recipient of the 2010 Christmas Car give-away cutting more than three hours of commute time off of the father's day - time that he can now spend with his family.
- a local craftswoman offered hand-made journals and jewelry as gifts for our clients of The Cridge Transition House for Women
- The City of Gardens Chorus raised \$1,000 for The Cridge Respitality Service through their Christmas pantomime.
- A local young businessman donated \$17,000 through the "Donate" button on our website, dispelling any myths about the indifference of younger people towards philanthropy.

What strikes me about this list - incomplete as it is – is the variety of ways that our community supports the programs and services of The Cridge Centre for the Family. Every offering is proof of the generosity and love that exists in our community. Each offer reminds us that it's not the size or shape of the gift that matters, it's the free giving of a cheerful heart.

Shannon



Circle of Care

Yes, I/we would like to join The Cridge Centre Circle of Care!

Single gift amount: \$ _____

- Cheque enclosed.
- Please charge my credit card.

Monthly gift amount: \$ _____

- Void Cheque enclosed.
- Please charge my credit card monthly.

VISA MasterCard Name on Card: _____

Card # _____ Expiry Date: _____ / _____

Signature: _____ (Sign also to authorize bank withdrawals)

All monthly payments will be scheduled the first day of each month. Receipts for your charitable giving tax credit will be issued annually. Charitable Registration # 108079419RR0001

Please use my gift as follows: Where needed most. With the following designation: _____

Name _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Postal Code _____

Please detach and mail this form to: The Cridge Centre for the Family,
1307 Hillside Ave., Victoria BC V8T 0A2

Contact: Shannon Whissell, Manager of Communication and Fund Development

Phone: 250-995-6419 Email: swhissell@cridge.org

Thank you so much for your generous support.

#0311

Spending of funds is confined to Board approved programs and purchases. Each gift designated toward an approved program will be used as designated with the understanding that when a given need has been met, designated gifts will be used where needed most. Gifts will be acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

The Cridge Centre for the Family is a member of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities and the Imagine Canada Ethical Code program.





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The Victoria Soul Gospel Choir presents
OH HAPPY DAY! - a concert in support of The Cridge Respite Service

Come celebrate, sing, dance, and clap for 10 years of Respite

Friday, April 22, 2011
Alix Goolden Performance Hall, 907 Pandora Ave.
7:30 pm (doors at 7:00 pm)
Tickets \$20.00 or \$15.00 (for those under 18 or over 65 years of age)

Email swhissell@cridge.org or phone (250) 996-6419 to order tickets

Winter at The Cridge



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