

Report on Grant Activity for the Pemberton Valley Seniors in 2014

The Pemberton Valley Seniors enjoyed many interesting activities throughout the past year. Many were funded through the Vancouver Coastal Health and coordinated by Francis Hopkins, coordinator Senior Supported Housing while others were made possible through grants.

Bowling for Life (BFL): A UBCM grant secured by VOP for \$?? to run this well attended and popular program for seniors and elders from Pemberton, Mt Currie and the surrounding communities. Participants enjoyed healthy lifestyle activities such as carpet & Wii bowling in addition to a variety of creative craft projects. A delicious healthy meal was served as part of each event. Attendance ranged from 25-50 participants per month and was hosted at either the Pemberton Community Centre or at 'Ullus' Community Centre in Mt Currie.

Seniors Interacting Through Art – UBCM Grant

This grant was applied for through the SLRD and administered by Dan at the community centre. The idea for the grant came about from talking to seniors and elders in the local communities, activities for the grant included painting, performance art, carving wood, making jewellery, origami, quilting, making and painting drums. The events were held once a month at alternating sites in Pemberton and Mt Currie, lunch was provided and all events were very well attended. Recording of the activities was done via a young student who captured the works on video and photo, this was edited and a dvd was published which was launched at the final exhibition of events in mid March...Due to the success of this activity, a program has commenced to bring more art to the seniors and elders throughout 2015.

Early in the year many members of the PVSS were becoming increasingly concerned about the noticeable lack of engagement of older men in the current social and physical activities available to seniors in the Pemberton and District communities. Isolation, particularly for single men who do not wish to engage in the activities available to seniors was recognized as a reduction in quality of life and a health risk for many senior men.

Research was undertaken to identify ways to address the problem. The Men's Shed model for engaging men in a communal and supportive environment was proving successful in Australia/NZ as well as in the UK. It was recognized as having potential for replication in our own communities.

New Horizon for Seniors Program (NHS) An application was made by PVSS in June to the NHS program for \$12,000 funding for a project we named "Breaking the Isolation Barrier ". A needs assessment and promotional activities would be undertaken. Men would participate in a pilot wood - working project following the Men's Shed model. Evaluation of success would enable the PVSS to proceed to plan and lobby with confidence to provide senior men in our communities with an appropriate venue in which to work together on their hobbies and projects to benefit the community. The long term goal is to reduce isolation, promote a sense of self worth and usefulness and improve quality of life and health for disengaged older men in the three communities of Pemberton & Area C, Mt. Currie and D'arcy. In February 2016 we were informed that our application was successful.

Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) In November 2014 the Village of Pemberton applied for a grant of \$20,000 to UBCM on behalf of the PVSS to fund the establishment of a Men's Shed in Pemberton. In December we received word that this application was also a success. Planning and coordination of activities began and the project was promoted throughout the media and our membership.

Caboose as Men's Shed Project In September the Pemberton Museum Society offered PVSS an opportunity to partner with them to obtain a free decommissioned Caboose. The plan was to refurbish it and use it as the venue for the Pemberton Men's Shed. The VOP were lobbied to provide a site and plans were progressing to raise funds to transport it from Squamish. Unfortunately these plans were unsuccessful and the project was abandoned.

Seniors Housing Project In 2014 PVSS representatives, with the help of Fran Hopkins, lobbied VOP Council to re-establish a committee of council for Seniors Housing. Presentations were made to staff and council and the concern and urgent need was recognized. A survey to assess the extent of the need was undertaken by PVSS to support their request. This survey was presented to the new council in 2015. To date no committee has been established and PVSS continues to research options for assisting in the provision of appropriate and affordable housing.

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