



From scenic strolls along Vernon's local trails to exciting day trips to neighbouring communities, we love exploring the great outdoors and spring has been full of fresh air and fun! These outings are more than just recreation—they're opportunities for connection, discovery, and enrichment.



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**Vernon and District Association
for Community Living**

4240 Alexis Park Drive Vernon BC V1T 6H3
Tel 250-542-2374 Email info@vdacl.ca

Employee of the Month

March – Lynne Gibbs

April – Anthony Gioca

May – Rebecca Nordman

Graduation Celebration

Congratulations Nancy, our dedicated Employment Counsellor, for completing her 2-year Diploma in Therapeutic Recreation!

Nancy's achievement is a true testament to her determination and passion for growth. Balancing full-time work, studies, and family life is no easy task. Her ability to give 100% to her role while pursuing further education is nothing short of inspiring.

To celebrate this incredible milestone, the ACT staff surprised Nancy with a heartfelt potluck party last month. Congratulations, Nancy! Your hard work and dedication continue to inspire us all. We're so proud of you!



Staff Spotlight: Lynne Gibbs

We're thrilled to recognize Lynne Gibbs as our March Employee of the Month! Lynne has been a dedicated member of the VDACL team for an incredible 15 years, and for the past 4, she's truly found her heart and home at Dobie House—her favorite program to work in.

Lynne's journey in the helping field began right after high school, and her passion for supporting others has only grown stronger over the years. She finds the greatest joy in making a meaningful difference in people's lives.

Lynne was nominated for this recognition because she consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that the residents at Dobie House feel comfortable, heard, and genuinely cared for. Her professionalism, compassion, and exceptional problem-solving skills shine brightest in challenging moments. She creates a warm, positive environment where everyone feels valued and supported.

Lynne, your dedication and heart make a lasting impact—not just on the individuals you support, but on all of us who have the pleasure of working alongside you. Thank you for all you do!

Surprise Arrival

Warmest congratulations to our cherished and long-serving Program Coordinator, Tammy, on the arrival of her beautiful grandson! Sweet Samuel made his surprise debut in April, and he's absolutely perfect from head to toe. We're overjoyed for you Tammy and wish you and your family endless cuddles, joy, and memories with baby Samuel.



From Dream to Reality: My Journey to Becoming Canadian

From the moment I first set foot in Canada, I knew in my heart that I wanted to make this country my new home. Now, more than six years later, that dream has become a reality—I can proudly call myself a Canadian.

Throughout this journey, VDACL has played a significant role in my decision to stay and build my life here. Being part of this organization gave me a sense of purpose and belonging. I truly feel valued for the work I do, and that has made all the difference.

—Raffy Evarrola



SPRING 2025

Connections Easter BBQ



Venture Connections hosted a vibrant Easter BBQ celebration that perfectly coincided with the first sunny day of spring! Held outdoors in the parking lot, the event welcomed all VDACL programs to join in the festivities. The atmosphere was alive with laughter, music, and the joyful sounds of community coming together. Attendees enjoyed delicious food, fun games, and even bubbles! It was a perfect day to come together, celebrate the season, and enjoy the warmth of community.

PJs in Polson Park



The entire Venture Connections program celebrated spring with a fun-filled Easter Egg Hunt at Polson Park—and to make it even better, it was Pajama Day! Participants and staff showed up in their coziest PJs, ready to enjoy the sunshine, fresh air, and a little friendly egg-hunting competition. With laughter echoing through the park and colorful eggs hidden in every corner, it was a perfect way to welcome the season.

VENTURE TRAINING

Pajama Day and Night Staff Appreciation



In April, our teams got cozy for Pajama Day—not just for fun, but to show heartfelt appreciation for our incredible night staff. These dedicated team members work through the night to ensure the health, safety, and comfort of individuals in our 24-hour Community Housing programs. To recognize their vital contributions, our Chief Operating Officer Janet made special early morning visits, personally delivering doughnuts and a thoughtful gift to each night staff member. It was a small gesture to say a big thank you for the care, commitment, and quiet strength they bring to their roles every night.



Q: Why did everyone wear pajamas to the Easter egg hunt?

A: Because it was an eggs-tra cozy competition!

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: Growth and Gratitude



This spring marked an exciting period of growth and transformation for our supported work programs. In alignment with our funder's vision to expand services, we restructured our programs to offer greater flexibility and choice—all while maintaining our current operations and staff.

Participants were given the opportunity to explore expanded Community Inclusion and Day Service programming, or to continue with the work programs they've been part of for decades. Everyone was empowered to choose the path that best suited their goals and interests. This shift also allowed us to extend our support services into evenings and weekends, helping us better meet the evolving needs of our community.

Amid these changes, we also celebrated a bittersweet milestone—the retirement of Brent Zerr, one of our most beloved Vocational Support Workers. Brent has been a cornerstone of VDACL since 2002, known for his advocacy, humor, and unwavering dedication to the individuals we support.

To honor his more than 20 years of service, Brent's program hosted a farewell BBQ, and he was gifted a meaningful piece of art from the ACT Program—a token of appreciation and a reminder of the lasting impact he's made. Thank you, Brent, for your kindness, care, and commitment. We wish you all the best in your well-earned retirement!



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 17 - Participant Advisory Committee Meeting

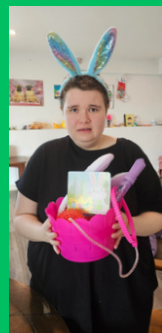
June 24- VDACL Annual General Meeting

June 24 and 25- Enderby Pool

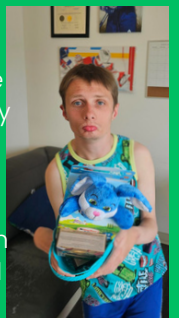
July 23 - Celebration Day and 70th Anniversary

July 28 -August 8 - Summer Program Closure

Hoppy Easter!



Breanna and Mathew from Cedar House were all dressed up and ready to celebrate Easter in style! With big smiles and festive spirit, they dove into the holiday fun—hunting for treats and spreading joy!



SPRING 2025

David's Vancouver Adventure



In April, David and his staff, Blinda, took an unforgettable trip to Vancouver to watch a thrilling NHL game between two of David's favourite teams—the Vancouver Canucks and the San Jose Sharks.

The pair flew down on a Sunday and attended the game the following night. Although the Canucks came out on top, David—ever the fan of the underdog—found himself cheering for the Sharks! One of the highlights of the night was sitting near the TSN sportscaster station, where David spent much of the game watching his favourite hockey broadcasters in action. What a treat to see them live after years of watching them on TV!

The adventure didn't stop there. David and Blinda spent five days exploring Vancouver, soaking in everything the city had to offer. David especially loved riding the SkyTrain to Granville Island, where he sat in the very front seat and pretended to be the driver!

At Granville Island, David explored the bustling market, enjoyed a delicious seafood clamburger, watched talented street performers, took a trip on the Water Taxi, and spent time at the Kids Market, where he played games and had a blast. That might have been his personal highlight of the entire trip!

A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who helped plan and support this amazing experience. Your dedication made a lasting memory for David—and we're so grateful.



Dreams Take Flight

Venture Connections recently took a trip to the Aviation Museum in Kelowna, and it was a soaring success! The group explored vintage aircraft, learned about aviation history, and even got up close to some incredible planes. From interactive exhibits to fascinating stories of flight, the visit sparked curiosity and excitement in everyone. It was a day full of discovery, smiles, and a few dreams of becoming pilots!



Fishing in the Park!



Each May, VDACL participants join the Kalamalka Fly Fishers Society for a fun-filled learn-to-fish event at Polson Pond. It's always a seasonal highlight—full of smiles, splashes, and great catches!



Congratulations and Celebrations!

Mike's Milestone!

In March, Mike B celebrated his 50th birthday with a fun gathering at ACT, inviting participants and staff from several programs. Guests were treated to homemade nuts and bolts snack mix and a big birthday cake!

A special highlight was a surprise gift from Blake—a print of Mike's hero, Roman Reigns which made the day even more memorable. Happy 50th, Mike, and thanks for sharing your celebration with us!



David Turns 49!

In April, David celebrated his 49th birthday surrounded by love and laughter. 40 friends and family gathered at A&W to mark the occasion. What a fantastic turnout for a fantastic person!



Welcome Home, Cody!

We're so excited to welcome Cody back to Cedar House, a place he once called home—and now does again! Staff are working closely with Cody to re-establish familiar routines, encourage his independence, and ensure he feels heard and supported every step of the way. Welcome home, Cody!



Celebrating Sisters

These two sisters celebrated their birthdays in March. Alice (left) turned 73 and celebrated with her sister and friends at Kelly O'Bryan's. Esther (right) turned 68 and celebrated with a trip to Catelowna Cat Cafe, where visitors can connect with adoptable rescue cats and experience the joy of pet companionship.



THANKS FOR READING!

Comments can be emailed to: info@vdacl.ca

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vdacl.ca

