



# NEWSLETTER

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*Building Stronger  
Rural and Remote  
Communities in  
British Columbia*

## Welcome to the BC Rural Network

It was in 2003 that work began on establishing the *BC Rural Network*, in order to enhance the capacity of British Columbia to develop responses to rural and remote community issues. The need and desire to improve networking and exchange of information among rural communities has been clearly identified and requested by rural stakeholders across BC. At the "Sharing Lessons Learned" forum in Prince George in May 2003, the importance of improving communications across rural BC was again recognized as key to building stronger rural communities in our province. While there are many existing networks and resources available to rural communities, no broad information is inclusive of all concerns of rural communities (i.e. social, economic and environmental). It was recommended that a few people take action in order to determine next steps.

After that event, an initial *Working Group* of five representatives of rural organizations met several times to discuss how to build better communication to meet rural needs, and to coordinate and strengthen efforts to build the capacity of rural communities in BC. In March 2005, the Working Group held the *BC Rural Network Planning Forum* to open the discussion to a broader audience for further input and development. The Working Group took direction from the participants to determine key priorities and focus for the BC Rural Network.

It is now the goal of the BC Rural Network to continue the dialogue with rural communities and organizations across BC through a series of regional forums, as well as through the development of a website, listserv, and this newsletter!

The BCRN newsletter will be published twice a year, in the spring and the fall. In this first issue of the BCRN newsletter, you will find information about the upcoming activities of the BCRN, a profile of several rural organizations and initiatives, and an opportunity to provide your comments and suggestions.

**WELCOME!**

**"Strengthening Links Between Rural Communities"**  
 a joint conference of the  
**BC Rural Communities Summit and the BC Rural Network**  
**APRIL 20, 21, & 22, 2006**  
**Osoyoos, BC**

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# “Strengthening Links” Conference

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The “**Strengthening Links Between Rural Communities**” Conference will be an opportunity for rural residents and representatives of rural organizations from across the province to come together and discuss ways to coordinate their efforts to improve networking and build the capacity of rural communities in BC. The first AGM of the BC Rural Network will also be held in conjunction with the conference.

Community Futures Development Corp. of Okanagan Similkameen, the BC Rural Network, and the BC Rural Team are joining forces to organize the conference.

Workshops will share a range of resources, and planning and skill - building tools that have been developed and utilized in other rural communities across BC. Presentations from government and service delivery agencies will provide information on current and up-coming programs and initiatives of interest to rural communities. “Sharing

Lessons Learned” sessions will highlight experiences from rural communities on how to strengthen links between geographical communities, multiple community populations, and communities of interest.

Registration will be available soon. For more information, contact:

Mary Ellen Heidt,  
General Manager, CFDC Okanagan Similkameen  
[maryellen@cfdcokanagan.com](mailto:maryellen@cfdcokanagan.com)

Maureen LeBourdais,  
Coordinator, BC Rural Network  
[info@bcruralnetwork.ca](mailto:info@bcruralnetwork.ca)

Brandon Hughes,  
Policy Advisor,  
Canadian Rural Partnership/Service Canada  
[hughes.bn@shaw.ca](mailto:hughes.bn@shaw.ca)

## LIGHTS, CAMERA, YOUTH ACTION: Red Carpet Youth Film Festival Vixn Przybysz

The **Red Carpet Youth Film Festival** is held annually in Vernon, BC. Now in its fifth year, it has grown to include youth from across the Southern Interior (Thompson, Kootenays and Okanagan regions), with a whopping forty-four entries last year.

Initially organized by *Connections Career Centre* in Vernon (a youth employment centre funded by the Government of Canada), the Festival is now primarily coordinated by youth volunteers in the community, led by the North Okanagan Youth Source Youth Arts Council (NOYS) with the help of its new parent organization, the *Vernon Community Arts Council*.

The two-day event has industry professionals delivering workshops on film production, acting for the screen, editing techniques, special effects and more. In addition, there is a film and television tradeshow that gives rural youth access to information about film schools, networks and resources to make a career in this field more accessible. Youth can receive film scholarships, prizes, and public recognition for their work.

This initiative teaches youth about the impact

they can have by working together in the arts. The Red Carpet Youth Film Festival is a forum that tells stories of life, as perceived through the eyes of youth. Making a movie can be really challenging and involves patience, organization, and an overall vision. It's like giving youth the right tools to be creative, to step into the shoes of a Director, and show us what they can accomplish if given the chance.

The NOYS is currently seeking funding to expand the Red Carpet Youth Film Festival up to Northern BC through other youth councils, high schools, and arts councils. For more information, contact:

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

**Watch for the launch  
of our website:**

[www.bcruralnetwork.ca](http://www.bcruralnetwork.ca)

**December 2005**

## BC Farm Women’s Network Lorraine Jerema

The BC Farm Women’s Network was founded in 1987. In addition to holding annual seminars around the province, research undertaken by the BC Farm Women’s Network has focused on the training needs of farm women, and the Canada Pension Plan as it applies to farm women. Lobby efforts have been directed towards providing telephone service to many rural areas, saving our water, preserving agriculture land in BC, weed eradication and awareness, and grasslands conservation.

Dedicated to networking and communication with members, the BCFWN, has published four newsletters per year since 1987. We also distribute information at fairs and conventions. The Net-

work has established an annual scholarship fund of \$250 for members or their children.

We are a volunteer organization interested in the well being of humanity and doing our best to promote agriculture awareness, good health, farm safety measures and education. We are open to new members. Ideas, suggestions and support are always welcome. We represent all commodities within the agriculture community to discover common interests. Together we can provide a stronger voice for agriculture.

For further information please view our website: [www.bcfwn.100mile.com](http://www.bcfwn.100mile.com) or you can contact Lorraine Jerema, Secretary, 250-593-2384.

## Coastal Community Health: A Social Crisis Coastal Community Network Health Summit

A healthy community with healthy people and families is fundamental to our economic and social progress. Yet on Canada’s West Coast, community health and health care delivery are often left out of other development activities. With the huge economic and social challenges of the past fifteen years, and growing rates of chronic health issues – particularly in remote communities and among First Nations people – this kind of integrated development has become essential to the sustainability and vitality of BC’s coastal communities.

Join the Coastal Community Network in Prince Rupert, BC, January 18 to 20, 2006, for “Coastal Community Health: A Social Crisis”, an

in-depth look at coastal health-care delivery and ways that we can integrate healthcare and economic development to ensure lasting stability in our communities.

This Coastal Community Health Summit will bring senior government leadership, at the federal, provincial, local and First Nations levels, together with directors of the four coastal health authorities and representatives of community service groups, local agencies, businesses, healthcare practitioners and others involved in coastal healthcare delivery and development.

For more information about the Summit and to register, contact Patty Loveridge, Executive Director of the Coastal Community Network at 250-380-

**YOUR TURN...**The BC Rural Network needs your input to help make this newsletter relevant to BC’s rural communities. Please take a moment to complete this form, and return it to us. Thank you!

In the future, I would like to see articles about rural issues related to (check as many as apply):

BCRN activities     Rural organizations     Upcoming events     Government programs  
 local rural projects     Other ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

I/my organization would like to be on the BCRN e- mailing list. E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I/my organization would like to be on the BCRN print mailing list:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Send your responses to: FAX: 250-620-3771    E-MAIL: [info@bcruralnetwork.ca](mailto:info@bcruralnetwork.ca)  
 OR mail to the address on the back page

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### The Coastal Community Network

2006 Coastal Community Health Summit

### **“Coastal Community Health: A Social Crisis”**

January 18-20, 2006  
Prince Rupert, BC

[www.coastalcommunitynetwork.ca](http://www.coastalcommunitynetwork.ca)

### BC Rural Network

Rural Youth Regional Forum  
Vernon, BC

January 14, 2006

Contact: Vixn Przybysz

Phone: (250) 542-6243

[vixn@redcarpetfilmfestival.com](mailto:vixn@redcarpetfilmfestival.com)

### Pacific Community Networks Association (PCNA)

2006 Summit

Vancouver, BC

### **Strategic Use of Information & Communication Technology For Communities**

<http://www.2006summit.ca/>

### Canadian CED Network (CCEDNet)

2006 National Conference on CED and the Social Economy

### **“Rooting Development in Community”**

March 15-18, 2006,  
Vancouver, BC

Contact: Jaie Skalin

Phone: 250-386-9980,

[jskalin@ccednet-rcdec.ca](mailto:jskalin@ccednet-rcdec.ca)

## Meet The BCRN Working Group

The BC Rural Network established an interim Working Group at its first meeting in May 2004. The Working Group is currently made up of 10 members who represent a wide range of rural groups, interests, and geographical regions. A representative of the BC Rural Team is an ex-officio government member, and the Working Group has a part-time paid coordinator. The Working Group will present a proposed structure and business plan for the Network at the BC Rural Network's first Annual General Meeting on April 21, 2006, in Osoyoos, BC.



From L to R: FRONT ROW Ellie Parks, Gail Wallin, Larry Casper, Peter MacDonald, Bev Collins BACK ROW Brandon Hughes, Diane Dessureault, Maureen LeBourdais, Joan Reichardt, Jerry Botti. MISSING Helen Horn, Maryanne Arcand, Dana Welsh

**Community Futures Development Assoc. of BC**  
Peter MacDonald, & Jerry Botti

**BC Community Economic Development Network**  
Ellie Parks

**Fraser Basin Council**  
Gail Wallin

**Pacific Community Network Association**  
Bev Collins

**Columbia Basin Trust**  
Dana Welsh

**Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) of Northern BC**  
Maryanne Arcand

**Seniors Coordinating Society**  
Joan Reichardt

**BC Farm Women's Network**  
Helen Horn

**Association des Francophones et Francophiles du Nord-Ouest**  
Diane Dessureault

**Central Interior First Nations Community Futures Development Corp.**  
Larry Casper

**EX-OFFICIO BC Rural Team**  
Brandon Hughes

**COORDINATOR**  
Maureen LeBourdais

This initiative is supported by:



Canadian Rural Partnerships  
&  
All Working Group  
organizations

## CONTACT US:

Please let us know if you have an upcoming event or project you would like to see highlighted in the BC Rural Network Spring 2006 newsletter. Call, write, or fax us at:

104-197 Second Avenue N., Williams Lake, BC V2G 1Z5 Phone: 250-620-3505 Fax: 250-620-3771  
Or email us at: [info@bcrruralnetwork.ca](mailto:info@bcrruralnetwork.ca)