



Neighbourhood Small Grants

Newsletter, Summer '23

Projects are happening throughout the South Okanagan | Similkameen this summer and fall.

- Penticton
- Summerland
- Naramata
- Kaleden
- Marron Valley
- Okanagan Falls
- Oliver
- Gallagher Lake
- Osoyoos
- Anarchist Mnt
- Cawston
- Keremeos
- Princeton
- HWY 3

72 PROJECTS

THAT CELEBRATE WHERE WE LIVE

In June, the volunteer Neighbourhood Small Grants Advisory Committee awarded seventy-two individuals a Neighbourhood Small Grant (NSG) to build deeper connections and celebrate where they live.

With a small grant of up to \$500, people are empowered to effect change within their communities at the grassroots. They extend invitations, extend warm welcomes, and recount their experiences that serve as sources of inspiration, encouraging others to embark on similar paths of connectedness.

With many projects to celebrate, this newsletter will feature some of the events held in Summerland and Penticton over the summer.

We invite you to enjoy the stories and photos the NSG project leaders shared.



Cleland Drive Festival, Penticton

The Neighbourhood Small Grants program is grateful to learn and learn on the sacred and unceded homelands of the Syilx Peoples.

A DEER RIDGE WELCOMING WITH PANCAKE BREAKFAST

"We selected the theme **Hearts & Heritage - A Ukrainian Welcome!** for our event.

This choice held a significant purpose: to raise awareness in our Deer Ridge neighbourhood about a Ukrainian family's settlement here, supported by a generous host family.



During the breakfast, the Ukrainian family shared their poignant journey of escaping from occupied Melitopol, which deeply impacted us all. Their story was a powerful reminder of the hardships people face in times of war and invasion, aiming to cultivate empathy and understanding.

Neighbours presented gifts to the Ukrainian couple, toys for their young son, and flowers to express our gratitude to the host family.

Beyond the emotional connections formed, the event served a dual purpose: to create a space where neighbours could connect for work or friendship.

One heartening example was the meeting between a woman from Poland, fluent in Ukrainian, and our Ukrainian guests. They connected immediately, exchanging contact information and engaging in meaningful conversations.

We also extended an invitation to another Ukrainian couple from Penticton, who had established a Ukrainian bakery cafe in Summerland. Their presence fostered a personal connection, fulfilling another goal of the event.

After a generous pancake breakfast and story-sharing, everyone expressed heartfelt gratitude for this beautiful event. As we look back on the day, we're reminded of the power of community, empathy, and shared experiences to bring people closer together.



GLEN PLACE AN ARTISTIC HAVEN

It all began with a casual conversation between neighbours An and Jo-Ann; the idea of bringing neighbours together for a paint night took root as they imagined the possibilities of turning their little neighbourhood into an artistic haven for an evening.

A small group of neighbours gathered in a room adorned with canvases, easels, and vibrant acrylic paints; and, the atmosphere held excitement and creativity,

While the paint night had concluded, its impact lingered on. The following discussions were filled with enthusiasm, and the prospect of including the neighbourhood children in future events began to take shape.

In the end, what began as a simple conversation transformed into a night of creativity, connection, and community.



CAMBIE/NANAIMO BLOCK PARTY



"We live on a corner, making it convenient to invite neighbours from both streets to our gathering. Twelve households could join us, totalling twenty attendees, while a few couldn't make it and sent their regrets.

Prior to the event, we talked with some neighbours to gauge their preferences for food and the flow of the event. It turned out that people just wanted to eat burgers and visit!

With the support of a grant, we ensured that everyone could relish a sumptuous meal: burgers adorned with all the fixings, a variety of salads and veggies, a platter of fresh fruits, and delectable squares for dessert. For door prizes, we found lovely potted plants available at a reasonable cost, ensuring each household had a plant to take home. The joy expressed by everyone upon receiving these potted plants was truly heartwarming.

Everyone was so happy to have the opportunity to gather, and we would like to express our thanks and appreciation for choosing to award us a grant for our event. We held a block party last year on our own, but having the grant money took the pressure off a lot of preparation and allowed us all to relax and connect. We hope to continue this event yearly on an ongoing basis."

ALYSEN PLACE SUMMER SOCIAL

"The event went off without a hitch; it was a lovely day, quite warm, thank goodness for some shady areas in the backyard. We had some tents set up to protect the food from getting warm and provide further shade to attendees.

We put out all the games around the area, including the new purchase of a game. This year, we had a barbeque and plenty of coolers and ice to keep food chilled.

We had a great turnout of 36 people, an increase from last year's event. This event is meant for the residents of our complex to be more social and join in on all the fun together.

These kinds of events build better communities since people get to know one another and provide support and help to one another since they have made long lasting friendships, which we have already witnessed from last year's event."



A VISION TO REALITY REST, READ, OR CONNECT IN POWELL BEACH PARK

Mary T, a resident of Summerland, received her first Neighbourhood Small Grant in 2016 to establish a small lending library at Powell Beach Park's northwest corner in Summerland. Assisted by Greg R in the library's design, which included a bulletin board on the other side, the location capitalized on its popularity among cyclists and walkers.

When the pandemic happened, the health authorities encouraged outdoor social connections. At this point, Mary and Greg conceived the idea of improving the library area with benches, a shade tree, and bike racks. This addition would provide a safe outdoor space for reading, resting, and socializing for pedestrians, cyclists, and readers, particularly those in rehabilitation.

In 2020, Mary and Greg garnered community support for the project, receiving backing from both the District of Summerland and residents. They used these resources to purchase and plant a tree, lay concrete foundations, and install benches and bike racks. Generous donations of benches from Cherry Lake Shopping Centre, bike racks from Swagman Canada, and advocacy from the Rotary Club of Summerland further fueled the project.

Financial contributions, along with grants from CFSOS and the Summerland and District Credit Union, led to the achievement of the \$5,000 goal in 2022!

Navigating timing challenges, the tree planting took place in the fall of 2022, while the remaining work had to wait until May 2023 due to municipal staff commitments and a carpenter change.

In June, the neighbourhood gathered to celebrate the project's completion. Personal invitations were extended to donors, and widespread invitations were posted on Facebook, at the library, and via email to 100 residents. Despite concurrent events, around 30 attendees enjoyed the celebration.

Mary and Greg thank the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan | Similkameen for their support. The new enhancements promise enjoyment for many individuals.



MOUNTAIN FEST ON PINETREE WAY

This year marks the fourth of our beloved gathering, which we aptly named "Mountain Fest." What began as a response to unforeseen circumstances has transformed into a cherished tradition that invigorates our community spirit and strengthens the bonds.

Our event has become a beacon of unity, attracting both neighbors and friends to immerse themselves in the festivities year after year. The talents of Dennis C, who not only graced us with his performance but also unearthed the remarkable talents of our youth, who took the stage with their own mesmerizing acts. The festivity-packed schedule included a parade, a day of sun-soaked fun at the beach complete with sandcastle sculpting, a spirited neighbourhood hike, a talent show, an open mic night to showcase diverse artistic expressions. Games, coveted prizes, vibrant stickers, gleaming trophies, and a delightful spread of delectable food was offered.

The year 2023 brought a remarkable turning point, thanks to the support of the Neighbourhood Small Grant. With gratitude, we extend our thanks.



CLELAND DRIVE FESTIVAL

"We were thrilled to welcome an impressive turnout of nearly 60 neighbours.

As hosts, we provided hotdogs, chips, and refreshing beverages, and the spirit of potluck further enriched the offerings. A dedicated "kid zone" ensured our younger attendees had a blast. The towering balloon arch proved to be an inspired addition, serving as a fantastic backdrop for countless photos."

The event not only brought neighbours closer but also kindled a renewed sense of togetherness, Kaylee and neighbours are already talking about their next gathering."



Njamba, Kim, Rachel, and Kirsten at the June 2023 NSG Summit held on the traditional homelands of the Semiahmoo People and hosted by the Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC.

The Neighbourhood Small Grants program serves communities across BC.

To learn more, contact:

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