

Bowen Island Community Foundation AGM for 2012

Report from Joyce Ganong, Chair

May 29, 2013

AGMs provide the perfect opportunity for thoughtful reflection – have we followed the direction we set for ourselves, what additional opportunities did we accept, how did we change to refresh and deepen our commitment to community?

I can honestly say that your Foundation Board has honoured its mandate to be present and active in supporting and nurturing initiatives that will strengthen our community and its members. We have done so through helping donors achieve their philanthropic goals, through grants to community organizations, through presence on other Boards, by offering our individual skills to community organizations, by partnering with other organizations, and by leading a thoughtful discussion on how to address a perceived need. It has been a busy year.

Our activities have been remarkable in the breadth of community that has been involved and touched – as evidenced earlier by the Volunteer Fire Department's demonstration of the thermal imaging camera purchased as a result of a Foundation grant.

But tonight we have chosen to celebrate our commitment to children and youth – the youngest members of our community, and our precious future. We are thrilled to be holding our AGM in this space that our Major Initiative Grant in 2011 helped facilitate. A space that is baby and toddler friendly by day, and youth welcoming by night. An unlikely combination, but through creativity, it maximizes utilization of space and reduces overhead for each group. In the youth space you'll notice musical instruments, some of which were recently purchased through a grant. They are providing endless hours of enjoyment. Outside, the impact of several Foundation grants are visible – welcoming play space for the youngest crowd; relaxation space for their mothers, and for the youth; a garden and compost learning centre. It is wonderful to be here to see all these changes, and to imagine the hub of activity that must be here, day and night.

We celebrate our commitment to youth by supporting their futures and their potential for leadership. In 2012, 8 scholarships and bursaries worth \$6,900 were awarded through the Foundation. We are now partnering with Bowen Island Gives and the Community School Association in bringing the Me to We leadership development camp to Bowen youth. Me to We was started by Marc & Craig Kielburger who were teenagers themselves when they established the Free the Children Foundation. They offer a stunning resource for the youth of our nation.

We celebrate our relationship with BICS which began in 2011 with their "Pennies for Bowen" drive for the Caring Community Endowment Fund, and through which they learned about the Virtue of philanthropy. We believe they were leaders in recognizing the value of the soon-to-be-

extinct penny, and we thank Bill Granger, a Founding Donor, for the idea. Our relationship with BICS continued in December when the students collected items that our vulnerable community members needed to survive the winter – a real demonstration of the Virtues of Compassion and Community Service. Our role was to identify the needs and then find ways to distribute the items.

None of this would be possible without the ongoing and incredibly generous support of our donors. Donations to the Endowment Funds build the long term capacity. Flow Through Donations build the Foundation's immediate capacity to be active in the community - now.

The Foundation was given the gift of a new website, generously donated by Digitally Hip Corporation, which provides IT services and web and graphic design here on the Island. Web Designer Leanne Romak was made available to us to help create our sleek new look. We have designed it to be much easier to navigate – whether you are a donor or a grant seeker; whether you are looking for stories of recent activities on our blog or for details of a particular fund. We've also stretched our social media reach with a presence on Facebook and Twitter, and encourage you to connect with us that way, too.

The website address remains: www.bowenfoundation.com

To John Dowler of Cosmic Idea who created our maiden website, a sincere thank you for putting the Foundation on the virtual map. The first step is a major step.

The new website is just one part of refreshing our image. We have adopted a new logo. It reflects our presence as one of 188 community foundations across Canada, and a proud member of the national organization – Community Foundations of Canada (CFC).

The design captures the essence of the purpose, promise and passion of community foundations: that of community vitality. We do three key things to build community vitality:

- Since vitality takes long-term resources for long-term solutions, we work with donors from all parts of our community to build endowment funds that ensure a vital future for Bowen Island;
- Since vitality comes from all parts of a community, we grant funds to the widest possible range of organizations and initiatives;
- Since vitality needs leadership, we bring people together to stimulate new ideas, build participation and strengthen community philanthropy.

To our donors, our partners, volunteers and colleagues involved in all of the charitable activity on this island we call home – thank you. You are part of the promise of a Bowen Island

Community Foundation that thrives, and therefore be in a position to help our island community thrive.

To the Directors of the Board – thank you for your energy, your ability to focus and get things done, your skills and your commitment to our community. To Mary Letson, who has had to take a leave of absence, we miss you and will welcome you back when it is possible. To Dave Witty, who had to step down, thank you for leading our strategic planning in 2012 – a discussion that continues to guide our decisions.

Finally – Community Foundations generally celebrate their decades based on the year the first grant was awarded. In 2014, we celebrate our tenth year. Let's start planning the celebration!