



community mESSAGES

Volume 26, Issue 2

Summer 2011

A Publication of the Emergency Social Services Association of British Columbia

ESSA's 5th Annual Conference April 2011

ESSA's 5th annual conference was a resounding success. It was held at the Pinnacle Hotel at the Pier, on Lonsdale Quay, North Vancouver. The 130 registrations was an ESSA Conference record. The event started out very positively on Friday night, at the early registration with a social event featuring musician **Sammi Gwain**.

The Plenary and breakout sessions were all very interesting and well received. **Carolyn Sinclair** talked to the audience about her experiences in ESS and how worker care plays an important role both within ESS and in her other work, which focuses on forensic identification.

The morning breakout sessions featured **Jackie Kloosterboer** and **John Gray**, ESSD and ESSD alternate from Vancouver. They shared their experience about ESS in Vancouver and had the audience consider ways in which ESS could evolve in the future. **Mike Carruth**, RCMP presented an interesting and thought provoking session on personal and team security. **Susanne Mackinnon** and **Dave Scott** presented on the link between Health and ESS, another fantastic session that brought important issues to the fore.

Bob Joseph of Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. presented the second plenary which was insightful, humorous and provided practical information for ESS workers to begin the process of engaging in positive partnerships

with aboriginal peoples.

The afternoon plenary sessions were equally engaging as those in the morning.

Deanna Selver led a team building exercise which had people making decisions on how they would respond as a team, in a crisis. **Luana Kaleikini** organized the Reception Centre and National Media response to the Boulder Mountain avalanche. Her presentation demonstrated just how diverse an ESS response can become.

Rob Johns traveled to Christchurch, New Zealand in September following the earthquake that caused some damage to the city. He returned after the December earthquake that significantly damaged the city. He worked in their EOC and toured the city reviewing the damage and issues that were created as a result of the earthquakes impacts. Rob has been a proponent of planning for a catastrophic event in BC. What occurred in New Zealand should be considered an alert to us that we must prepare not just for minor

disruption, but for an actual catastrophic event. Rob's presentation was eye opening to say the least.

The host communities of the 2012 ESSA Conference, City of Prince George and Regional District of Fraser-Fort George attended the conference and presented information on the theme of the 6th Annual ESSA Conference, "Northern Lights to a Path of Integrated Response" They had a prize draw for a free conference registration and accommodation at the 2012 conference. The winner was Ann Martin of the North Shore Emergency Management Office. Congratulations Ann! If the 2012 planning committee is any indication of greatness, the conference is sure to be outstanding!

A huge hug and sincere thanks to everyone who supported, attended, helped to plan, organize, volunteer and present at the 5th Annual ESSA Conference. It was lots of fun – everyone was simply fantastic! We couldn't do it without you! THANK YOU!



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ESSA is a non-profit association established to support ESS volunteers and communities in British Columbia in the development and maintenance of their Emergency Social Services Program.

