

Neighbourhood Small Grants North Okanagan

STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Neighbourhood Small Grants is a grassroots granting program that offers a small grant of up to \$500 to individuals for projects that connect people socially or involve sharing skills or talents.

Some of the amazing projects we saw this year brought neighbours together by teaching garden workshops, community block parties, clown therapy training, exercise motivation groups, seniors entertainment, and a local outdoor movie night in Polson Park! And so many more.

Projects are reviewed and approved by a local grant committee comprised of past project leaders and community knowledge experts.

Neighbourhood Small Grants North Okanagan is delivered by:



In partnership with



2022 PROJECT SUMMARY



Thank you to each and every one of our 37 project leaders! You made community connections and brought joy to many during a very difficult year.

Please enjoy these project highlights.

For more information about how to apply for a small grant visit www.cfno.org/grants/neighbourhood-small-grants/

HENRY HOPE'S BLOCK PARTY

Thanks to the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan for supporting this event. It was such a success, everyone was asking (and continues to ask when I pass them on the street) if we'll be having another one next year.

The July 2022 Henry Hope Block Party was a celebration of Armstrong past and present; pulled together by the love-force of community and connection that started with little conversations over fences or out shovelling snow which led to a full fledged community celebration.

Everyone helped and shared their offerings whether it was bringing games and party needs, scrumptious plates of food, decorating or performing. The neighbourhood kids hand-made each invitation and distributed them. Local talent such as the band Roots and Strings and our symphony violinist Denis Letourneau and others wowed the crowds by casually gracing the drive way stage with their sound!

Ice cream was donated by Pink Rock Ice cream Shoppe and the neighbourhood small grants fund as well as other donations helped make the festivities more colourful and welcoming than we could have imagined.

Most of the colour was provided by the people- big and little. The kids had so much fun with a paddling pool and water balloons, street hockey and other games. They were jacked on sugar and the rays of the sun who showed up for the party too.

We hope it will be an annual event and more kids on the block will come along no matter their age; 1 to 102!

Yolanda, Project Leader



FRIENDSHIP PLANTING

Our goal with this project was to teach young families with kids how to create a sustainable food source, while learning about the benefits of companion planting (nature's best friends!). With the help of a friend, we designed simple instructions on how to plant tomatoes in a pot or garden plot, with the vegetables, herbs, and flowers that should be grown with them, to optimize flavour and health of the plants. It's so easy to reduce watering, eliminate herbicides and pesticide, while boosting the taste of the tomatoes using this method!

We made a post on a local buy and sell Facebook group, looking for 10 local families who wanted to learn alongside us, with their own starter gardens. Within a few hours, we had a list of 10, with 10 additional families on the waitlist. On the weekend of July 9/10, we visited local farmer's markets and locally owned plant nurseries, filled the car to the brim with a variety of 8 different plants, and went home to assemble the packages. Families arrived at our home to pick up their flat of locally grown plants with printed instructions to learn more about gardening.

Mums and grandmothers were ecstatic to have the opportunity to teach their kids about growing food, with many sharing how difficult this year has been, and that this was the first good thing that had happened to them in a while. With many of the plants being perennials, families will be able to watch them grow for years to come.

Adrianna, Project Leader



FRIENDSHIP PLANTING

Companion Planting (or as we like to say, friendship planting!) is the practice of growing different plants together for mutual benefit. The idea is simple; it involves planting two or more different plants next to each other, that are known to support each other's health. Tomatoes are easy to grow, in a vegetable plot or pot, that benefit from growing near these vegetables, herbs and flowers (AKA - natural best friends!).



BASIL

Repels insects, specifically flies and hornworms, and is believed to improve yield.

Repels aphids, nematodes, and mites.



GARLIC

Repels spider mites.



FRENCH MARIGOLD

Repels tomato worm, slugs, and general garden pests.



PARSLEY

Attracts a range of beneficial insects and helps to enhance the flavour of the tomatoes.

CHIVES



THYME



LETTUCE



Neighbourhood Small Grants (NSG) are funded by the Community Foundation North Okanagan and the Vancouver Foundation. Delivered in partnership with the Regional District of the North Okanagan.



CLOWNING FOR YOU

The Clowning for You Project was offered to teach individuals to become a caring (therapeutic) clown through a two-day weekend training workshop. Once trained a clown could go into a hospital, nursing home or other environment. They will be specially trained with listening skills, the psychology of laughter and about diversity issues and how to be inclusive of all people they may meet in their journey as a therapy clown. Therapeutic clowns educate the community regarding the benefits of laughter and foster community spirit through organized related community functions.

Doris (Bubbles) and Donna (Gizmo) gave the workshop and initiated several new clowns this August 2022. "We are very grateful to Community Foundation North Okanagan for giving us the funds to hold this workshop."

Doris, Project Leader

THE VALUE OF SENIOR IN OUR COMMUNITY

Hearing Their Stories

It has been such a pleasure to be involved in the 2022 Small Neighbourhood Grant program. It was fun to plan, but more fun to host. We had fabulous success engaging in conversation for 2 hours. The group shared stories about their childhood, marriages, families and day-to-day activities. It started out a bit slow, with us encouraging conversations about where they had come from and what drew them to 3 Links Lodge in Armstrong. We heard some very funny stories, some endearing conversations about marriage, children and grandchildren, and about their previous occupations. We also heard how isolated and lonely they felt during COVID and how it impacted their ability to stay connected not only with the world, but also with their fellow 3 Links Lodge neighbours.

We definitely feel the experience was worth our time and effort in embracing our seniors, in relating to them we greatly value their stories, their relationships, and listening to their future hopes. They enjoyed the tea, coffee, cake and the visit. Everyone seemed to enjoy many chuckles and we also noted the twinkle in their eyes as they shared their stories with us. My partner and I received sincere 'Thanks You's' from the attendees. We were even asked if we could return once a month to repeat the event!!!

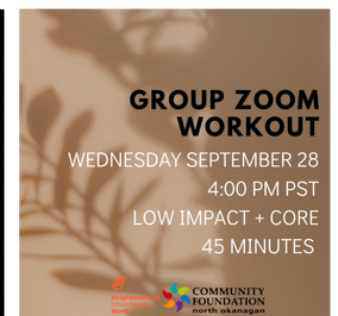
Catherine, Project Leader



FITNESS IN THE OKANAGAN: Running, Group Workouts, Yoga, and Wellness Workshops

The project this year was well-rounded with many activities planned including hiking, running, walking, Zoom workouts, group workouts outdoors, and also mental health mindfulness on Zoom. Doing a combination of these activities helped both mental and physical aspects of health, and also helped re-gain that connection we have been missing with interaction since COVID-19.

Bianca, Project Leader



ONE NIGHT STAND

Bike maintenance and repair workshop for women

We planned for a beautiful night with our bikes in the park and expected 16 participants. The day of the event was a random day of crazy weather that included record rainfall. This, along with sick kids and the other things life throws at us, resulted in only 10 participants. The venue was changed at the last minute from the park across the street from my home, which was full of puddles, to my driveway and garage. Large tents were set up in the driveway and bike stands were spaced out between the garage and tents. It wasn't the sunny park event we had envisioned, but it worked out really well.

Johnny, our bike mechanic and presenter, started with an introduction and then asked the participants about their biking experience and their goals for the session. Though the existing knowledge and experience of the participants varied, most were interested in basic care and maintenance of their bikes and had a goal of being more independent. Johnny explained the various components of a mountain bike and touched on the things that typically go wrong - gears not shifting smoothly, brakes rubbing, chains coming off, etc. For each of these scenarios there seemed to be a bike in the crowd that he could demonstrate the issue and the repair process.

Lara, Project Leader



UPLANDS BLOCK PARTY

Pre-COVID, our neighbourhood would have had a pot-luck get-together twice a year. Like most neighbours, we were just seeing each other in chance encounters. This made the need to plan a block party a great plan!

Our neighborhood block party was a huge success with more than 50 attending! There has been a lot of turnover in the neighbourhood, so it was awesome to welcome newcomers and connect with everyone after a few years of COVID.

Please pass along our gratitude for the grant!

Ken, Project Leader

COMMUNITY MURAL AT THE BMX MOTOSHED

We partnered with a young local artist Melody, a local grade 12 student. Melody designed two unique art pieces for the Motoshed window covers to commemorate Vernon BMX's 40th Anniversary this past August.

The BMX community and club are ecstatic with the results and its made such an improvement to the cinder block structure!

The panels cover the two windows used for the clubs concession where food and drinks are ordered and served. When the concession is open, those two big panels slide and their windows are open for business. The panels were complete for our year end banquet where we hosted a free club dinner of pizza and walking tacos so the club members were excited about Mel's art to say the least!!!

Lisa, Project Leader



HEATHER HEIGHTS RAISED GARDEN BED

The reason I wanted to apply for this project was twofold, mainly to address the issues of food security for subsidized folks. My hope was to inspire people to help themselves as well, by mentoring & encouraging them to help put fresh food on their own tables when physically and mentally able.

The building of the raised vegetable garden at Heather Heights in Armstrong was successful. The garden was filled with good quality soil & planted with tomatoes, peppers, carrots, beets, parsley and cucumbers. A volunteer took on the seasonal supervision of the raised bed, and checked in often to ensure things were going well.

One great thing that happened, was the community feed back for doing this project. The neighbours, the Armstrong Legion, relatives of the residents, and Communities in Bloom volunteers all recognize the value of the Neighbourhood Small Grant program, and how small amounts of seed money can bring volunteers and services in kind together, to make very worthwhile projects come to fruition. We are ever so grateful to this program, and I will forever be an advocate to encourage people to apply. Your small grants DO make big things happen!!!

Shirley, Project Leader

WOODEN FLOWER PLANTERS

On July 27 the first ever Women's workshop was held at the Men's Shed Vernon facility. Ten women were selected randomly after numerous replies to a call out for participants on Facebook. A safety brief and tour was given prior, explaining the layout of the woodshop and all members issued PPE. The overall project was to build a 22" long succulent planter, stain/paint/decorate, plant 4 succulents of their choosing and take home their creation.

Overall, it was a hit. The costs exceeded the grant, however Men's Shed Vernon was kind enough to donate the use of their facility along with left over stains, paints and sand papers.

Thanks for letting me take part.

Pat, Project Leader



ENTERTAINING AT SENIOR HOMES

I was able to coordinate, along with the Kalamalka Highlanders Pipe Band, a visit almost every Thursday evening during June, July, August and part of September to a Senior's Residence in Vernon. This ranged from the Regency Retirement Complex to Assisted Living Facilities like Heritage Square and Seniors Residences such as Carrington Place and Coldstream Meadows. The Band, as always, was well received, especially with the addition of ice cream! For us, it is so rewarding to see the happiness on the faces of so many of our Senior Citizens!

Thank you so much again for welcoming us as participants in this program. The audience seems to love it, as do the members of the Band!

Sharon, Project Leader

CONNECTING PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Parents of children with disabilities had the opportunity to meet and connect in two casual and unstructured environments this summer. This grant covered the costs of meals.

Parents representing children with a diverse range of abilities, including Downs Syndrome, Trisomy differences, Autism, ADHD, Rhett Syndrome and more, gathered to discuss how the kids had transitioned back to school like, the supports that are available in the various schools in our community, as well as the upcoming IEP (Individualized Education Plan) that all children with disabilities are involved with at the outset at each school year.

"Both of these events offered parents a unique opportunity to form connections with parents and caregivers that they otherwise may not meet in their regular day to day activities. These events offered an invaluable opportunity for this group of advocates to meet, be included and to share their unique perspectives on the challenges and joys of parenting children with special needs."

Bree, Project Leader



POLSON MOVIE IN THE PARK

The popular flick from 1991, My Girl was featured at an outdoor movie night to kick off the Labour Day long weekend!

Over 300 people attended the movie free in the park event, held on Friday September 2, 2022.

The project leader Mayla was able to leverage the grant from this NSG program and partnered with the Museum of Vernon to assist in obtaining the movie copyrights, and raised additional funding from Tourism Vernon and the Polson Night Market.

The event was free and accepted donations to support the Upper Room Mission.

Mayla, Project Leader



**Neighbourhood
Small Grants
North
Okanagan**



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
north okanagan

For more information about how to apply for a small grant visit
www.cfno.org/grants/neighbourhood-small-grants/