



## 2014 Annual General Meeting

### CHAIR'S REPORT

2014 was a busy year for SPAN Nelson. We began by building upon the tremendous work done in 2013 on the *Ideas into Action* community survey. This survey led to further engagement of the community and fact sheets around the top three reported issues of poverty, affordable housing, and mental health/addiction support. We held a successful membership drive which added new members to the Society and generated more community interest in the work and potential of SPAN. The SPAN Board met on a quarterly basis and members met roughly on a monthly basis.

#### **The following is a list of our activities and accomplishments for 2014:**

- ❖ Collaborated with Touchstones Nelson on their "Good Medicine: Nelson's Healthcare Retrospective" Project
- ❖ Appointed a member to the City of Nelson's Advisory Planning Committee to bring a social issues lens to the work of this committee
- ❖ Participated in SD#8 Education Committee's discussions on poverty reduction within schools/community and our common goals and interests in this area
- ❖ Became a supporting member of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition
- ❖ Formally connected with Vibrant Communities Canada and their Cities Reducing Poverty Project
- ❖ Co-sponsored the Kootenay Chapter of the Council of Canadian's forum on "Progressive Tax Options for BC in April
- ❖ In collaboration with CBT, IHA, and KBCSC's REACH program, SPAN co-sponsored Paul Born's one-day workshop in Nelson in June. Paul's stimulating presentation was based on his latest book "Deepening Community". 100 people attended the day at the Prestige Inn.
- ❖ Collaborated with SPARC BC in the delivery of two LIRN BC workshops (*Learning Initiatives for Rural and Northern BC*). With a small grant from RDCK (CIP-AAP grant) and CBT Sponsorship funds, we convened two community events on April 30th and May 1st -- an evening presentation by Alan Mason, Community Economic Development Officer for the City of Revelstoke. Alan gave a very compelling speech on "The Economics of Poverty". The next day, 50 people participated in an all-day workshop facilitated by Jim Sands from SPARC BC where we examined all the ways that were possibly "within our means" as a community to reduce and mitigate poverty here in Nelson. Jill Zacharias, Community Development Coordinator for City of Revelstoke, presented the strategies and learnings from Revelstoke's recently completed Poverty Reduction Plan. This day firmly planted our feet on the ground and solidified our collective commitment for the work that was to come on formalizing a poverty reduction plan.
- ❖ Formulated our vision and goals around spearheading a multi-year Poverty Reduction Project for Nelson. This project was officially launched in October 2014 following several months of planning, applying for and securing first year funds from BC Healthy Communities (in partnership with the City of Nelson) and Columbia Basin Trust, convening a multi-sectoral

Steering Committee, and engaging two very skilled consultants to guide us through the beginning stages of this exciting project.

- ❖ Held an All-Candidates' Forum leading up to the 2014 Municipal Election. 70 people attended and all but one candidate.
- ❖ Sent letter to Premier of BC and several Ministers calling for an immediate commitment to the development of a Poverty Reduction Plan for BC

This year of activity and accomplishments has been very rewarding for me as Chair of SPAN. I am excited about our projects and their contribution to the overall increase in knowledge and awareness of social issues in our community as well as our projects' potential for increasing the health and well-being of the citizens of Nelson.

I wish to thank Katie Tabor who provided SPAN with many months of coordination and support time. I also wish to thank Kate Nott who overlapped then took over from Katie for a few months before heading off to have her first baby. Among other tasks, Kate willingly trotted "Wilbur" the pig out to the library soliciting memberships to SPAN. Since staff's departures, we have struggled a bit without staff support, but thanks to the dedication of our Board members and general membership, we have managed to get by fairly well and are looking forward to another productive year in 2015.

During this year, Lynn Adams left the Board. I want to thank Lynn for her contribution of the past few years to the work of SPAN. And finally, thanks to all SPAN members for participating in monthly meetings to further the work of SPAN and for spreading the word so positively about the importance of an organization such as this in our community.