



FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
the place to connect



ANNUAL REPORT

***AUGUST 1ST 2019
TO JULY 31ST 2020***

**Annual General Meeting
October 26th 2020**

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TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association is on the unceded Coast Salish Territories, specifically of the Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ Peoples.

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FGCA VISION STATEMENT

Fairfield Gonzales is a connected, collaborative, inclusive, welcoming, and sustainable community.

*PEOPLE WHO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE:
SUSAN MARTIN*



Susan Martin

Susan Martin started her journey at FGCA as an event volunteer, helping out in 2017 at our annual community celebration, Fall Fairfield. Since then she has become a true pillar of our organization and we are extremely grateful to have her on our team. Driven by her roll-up-your sleeves-and-get-to-it attitude, Susan has been helping with whatever needs to be done, as a true community leader. Her passion for community has led her to get involved with the Repair Café Fairfield, Community Dinners, Climate Action Group and Reconciliation Circle. Susan is this kind of magician that makes piles of dirty dishes disappear at a glance, and she does not secretly use the sanitizer as a dishwasher!

With thoughtfulness and humor, she never stays quiet in front of social injustice. She is not afraid to speak up if something feels wrong, and that is precious in these times of profound change. When COVID-19 hit in Victoria, she was among the first volunteers to step up in Fairfield Gonzales. She played a critical role in the resiliency of this neighbourhood by reaching out to isolated folks, helping her neighbours and supporting health care workers, among many other examples. Susan is self-driven, and in general, she will not need much more than a stack of paper or a piece of chalk to get going!

But still, Susan thinks she is not doing much! Susan, you are an important part of our community and we look forward to many more years together!

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Vanya McDonell

Kristina Wilcox

When the 2019-20 year began, nobody could have predicted what the year would bring. Although it has been a year of unprecedented crisis in our communities and across the globe, we will largely remember this as a year of inspiration. The COVID-19 pandemic stripped things down to what is essential, to show us what is really important. It turns out that what is important are neighbours, connection, a full belly and a roof over our heads. And, it turns out that what we need more than anything is each other, and that together we can solve big problems in small but significant ways.

Across our community, the collective COVID-19 crisis led to a swift collective response. People reached out to make sure that everyone had what they needed. Neighbours bought groceries for shut-in seniors, people shared goods and funds with people who couldn't make ends meet, and a sense of mutual aid prevailed. Despite this, many have been left behind. Inequities in housing, employment, and health have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Our collective response through the recovery period will need to be creative, compassionate, and sustained.

At the FGCA our entire team of staff, Board, and volunteers interpreted our mandate as doing as much as we could to serve the community in this moment of need. Although our doors were closed for a period of time, many of us continued to work behind the scenes. Our work focussed on disseminating important information, assessing community needs, connecting with resources across the City, and ensuring the stability of our organization. We quickly increased food security programs, with the help of a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. We put in place new protocols so we could provide childcare for essential service workers. We continued connecting with families and youth to support mental health and child development. And we worked to slowly bring operations back to some semblance of normal. As we celebrate our 45th year in the Fairfield Gonzales neighbourhood, our commitment to an inclusive and healthy community has helped us thrive despite the challenges, and we look forward to many more years serving our community.



Kristina Wilcox and Vanya McDonell

BOARD & COMMITTEES

*EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE
STREETLIFE/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE
PLACE COMMITTEE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE
NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION LAND USE COMMITTEE*

BOARD MEMBERS WHO SERVED IN 2019/2020

*SCOTT DAVIS
LINDSAY HERRIOT
MICHAEL HIRSCH
JENNIFER MATTHEWS
DON MONSOUR
ANNA PHELAN
CHRIS REED
BRYAN ROWLEY
DAVID THOMPSON
ANNE TOMYN
BRIAN VATNE
PATRICIA WARD
JULIA WARREN*

The Board of Directors consists of up to 14 members at any one time. Board members serve two year terms and are elected each year at the AGM by the membership. Board members bring a broad range of perspective and expertise to the FGCA, and provide governance and leadership to the organization. Board members also participate in community development through committee work.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning subcommittee has delivered the following:

- Passing four strategic directions, including a focus on: People, Place, Programs/Services and Projects, and Process. Each of these strategic directions were given descriptions of what we intend to focus on.
- Drafting a vision statement.
- An opportunity for the FGCA to update its Mission Statement & Values.
- A 'multi-option' model for eliciting feedback from board members, including sending feedback through designed surveys, through emails, and at board meetings.
- Partnering with the Governance committee to deliver training to board members.
- Collaboration with external stakeholders, including the University of Victoria. This collaboration established a foundation for which an official strategic plan can be adopted, and helped to bring forward the FGCA's asset-mapping project, the Community Inspiration Project (CIP).
- A commitment to development of goals and habits to help fulfill the strategic direction of the FGCA following the completion of board training.

Aside from these deliverables, there have been other important, but less obvious effects of our commitment to strategic plan. Board members have demonstrated more strategic thinking in their decision-making, especially important given the current climate we find ourselves in with the COVID -19 pandemic. Further, increased engagement of board members in the strategic planning surveys and motions have been noted.

The strategic planning committee will continue to work with the board to develop an official strategic plan, with goals and habits. The strategic plan will not only help the FGCA to better meet its mission statement, and fulfill its vision, but will help each and every one of us get the most out of being a board member for the FGCA. This is of great importance for helping us to maximize the community benefit that we provide.

STREETLIFE/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

This year, we have spent much of our time working on the "Community Inspiration Project", which is an asset-mapping project that we received a My Great Neighbourhood Grant for. We hosted 5 in-person outreach events in addition to digital outreach efforts, and collected over 50 assets from community members! The map is now live on the FGCA website, and we are continuing to expand on the project, which we hope will include creating a paper version of the map. We also updated our Terms of Reference and gained two new committee members!

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

Since the public health emergency arose in March, we have shifted all of committee activities to virtual methods. While this was an adjustment, we were able to keep up with our regular meeting schedule and still managed to gain some new volunteers even after going virtual! We had hoped to participate in further in-person activities, specifically to continue collecting data for the Community Inspiration Project, but have found ways to adapt and are continuing to explore ways to engage with our community in more virtual and physically-distant ways.

8 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

13 MEETINGS

5 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



FGCA's Emily Hull & Kelly Bohlken with the City's Alex Harned

**COMMUNITY GARDEN
COMMITTEE
AND FAIRFIELD FOOD FOREST**

The Fairfield Food Forest in Porter Park is a permaculture garden that grows perennial fruits, nuts, herbs and flowers. It is a commons - this means it is maintained by a group of dedicated volunteers and used by the community. The Food Forest is also a place of discovery for our Early Years programs, with regular sessions held to encourage children and educators to use and care for the forest. Community work bees are held throughout the fall & spring. In the fall of 2019, we seeded the understory in the fenced area to increase pollinator activity in the garden. We marked pathways and mulched, planted garlic, pruned & tidied for the winter. Our plan for the spring of 2020 was to do early pruning followed by more planting with a focus on native pollinator plants. We succeeded in hosting a wonderful free pruning workshop, pruned existing trees and shrubs, planted understory seeds and mulched the growing areas. We look forward to planting more native plants in the spring of 2021, and continuing to care for our maturing plants.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

At the Food Forest, we worked to find ways to support community connections, strengthen individual food security, and find creative ways to engage folks during the pandemic. In early March, we added a few edible annual plants to the food forest including potatoes, beans and peas.

In April, the City of Victoria reached out to community garden coordinators for their support with the city wide food security program, "Get Growing, Victoria!". We were tasked with coordinating the distribution of mulch, compost, seedlings and a variety of resources to individuals growing their own food in response to COVID-19. This was an excellent way for folks to connect, in a safe and meaningful way, through their common interest of growing food.

- 2 COMMUNITY WORK BEES**
40 VOLUNTEER HOURS LOGGED
12 VOLUNTEERS
- 10 EARLY YEARS FOOD FOREST
ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS**
- 1 PRUNING WORKSHOP**
15 PARTICIPANTS
- 1 FALL FAIRFIELD GARDEN TOUR**
- 2 CITY OF VICTORIA "GET GROWING,
VICTORIA!" LEAF MULCH &
COMPOST DISTRIBUTION DAYS**
15 YARDS OF LEAF MULCH
DISTRIBUTED TO 80 HOUSEHOLDS
15 YARDS OF COMPOST
DISTRIBUTED TO 80 HOUSEHOLDS
- 2 CITY OF VICTORIA "GET GROWING,
VICTORIA!" SEEDLING
DISTRIBUTION DAYS**
2500+ PLANTS DISTRIBUTED TO
200 HOUSEHOLDS
40 VOLUNTEER HOURS

"Thank you for putting together the seedling distribution!"

"The plants I picked up from your seedling pick-up the other day look happy. Thanks again for all the work you and your team did to make it happen."

"Get Growing" Victoria Participants

NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Neighborhood Improvement Committee was formed by the Board, when it decided to separate this Committee's work from that of the StreetLife Community Engagement Committee. The Neighbourhood Improvement Committee addresses issues of social justice, environmental sustainability, the built environment, urban form, transportation, parks, and related matters so as to improve our neighbourhood.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

The Committee shifted to meeting online to reduce COVID-19 risks, and a few projects were adjusted or delayed.

Activities list:

- Finalized Terms of Reference with Governance Committee
- Developed the Fairfield Gonzales Climate Action Group, which is meeting monthly and currently is developing a project list to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Drafted a letter for the Board advising the City of areas of Fairfield Gonzales needing traffic calming.
- Developing Safe Speed Champions project to address speeding traffic near The Place and SJD.
- Developing the idea for a needs assessment project, to complement StreetLife's Community Inspiration (asset mapping) Project
- Liaised with a local community group and developed a Board support letter for the Group's work to implement a People Priority Greenway pursuant to the City's Greenways Plan.
- Liaised with FG Clover Point advisory group, which developed input to City for board approval. Liaised with Cycling Task Force, developed a request letter for the City to extend consultations on Richardson Bike Lane project design.

6-8 MEMBERS

8-9 MEETINGS PER YEAR

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee is a standing committee of the Board. Its purpose is to assist the Board to fulfill its legal, ethical, and functional responsibilities through, amongst other things, the maintenance of the constitution and bylaws, policy development, and committee terms of reference.

Over the past year the Governance Committee's primary contribution was continuing the review of all Board committees Terms of Reference (TOR). This review was undertaken to ensure committee TORs are consistent and compliant with the FGCA's TOR policy, and to ensure TORs are user friendly so they can be easily relied upon to direct committee work. The Governance Committee also took a lead on Board recruitment activities. This included an assessment of current board members' skills and attributes as a starting point to identify potential gaps and direct recruitment. The committee also conducted an annual Board evaluation, soliciting feedback from directors related to the effectiveness and function of the Board.

The committee is currently comprised of 4 Board members, but has previously included hardworking volunteers with a zest for organizational structure from the FGCA membership base. Sounds like something you might be interested in? Please connect with us!

PLACE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Place and Programs Committee is to oversee the implementation of plans, the ongoing and future use and safeguarding of the land, infrastructure, resources, and facilities of the FGCA. The Committee benefits from having members that are from the community, FGCA staff, and board members that all work together to provide their guidance and expertise. Over the last year, the board benefited from having the Committee help guide the effort to open up the Infant-Toddler centre - set to open later this fall. The committee was pleased to play a role in helping to establish this much needed service for our community.

**COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
LAND USE COMMITTEE
(CALUC)**

In 2019-20 CALUC had seven members and welcomed three new members: David Molinski, Dave Thompson, and Owen Sieffert. Continuing CALUC members include Joanna Fox, Michael Hirsch, Don Monsour and Kevin White, (Chair).

Until March 2020, the CALUC held preliminary/community meetings on average once monthly to meet the demand of development in the community. The March and April CALUC meetings were not held due Covid-19 closures.

The CALUC was able to host a hybrid of a physically-distanced in-person meeting and Zoom meeting in May, June and July. These meetings were well received by the community, and committee member Owen Sieffert is to be commended for his technological expertise and patience. These meetings included preliminary meetings to discuss the applicant's plans and Community Meetings that included site specific zoning, rezoning and variances.

Property development proposals spanned from new builds to property renovations. Community engagement was extensive for the multi-unit development on 902 Foul Bay and 933-935 Convent Place. It should also be noted that most of the new developments continue to include appropriate bike storage and one of the multi-unit development proposals is proposed to be part of BC Housing's affordable home ownership program. Parking, traffic, tree-canopy preservation and the development height continue to be main concerns for all developments.

**A "TEMPORARY ALTERNATE"
APPROACH TO COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT:**

In early July 2020, City of Victoria Council adopted the necessary bylaw amendments for an alternate approach to Community Meetings between representatives of proposed developments and the community. This was done in response to concerns regarding various factors influencing public engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic, input received from the CALUCs, and challenges

associated with various forms of remote engagement. City staff provided recommendations to Council with an alternate approach to undertaking community consultation for rezoning and OCP development applications during the pandemic. City staff felt that this temporary alternate process meets the intent of the CALUC pre-application review process, mirrors that process as much as possible, and is as accessible and inclusive as possible, regardless of capacity and individual circumstances.

In summary, the City is not recommending any changes to the initial Preliminary Meeting between the applicant and the CALUCs. However, given the current health orders and the need for physical distancing, there are, for some CALUCs, greater challenges with coordinating the formal Community Meeting. To ensure that the community has the opportunity to learn about and comment on these applications, and for the applicant to benefit from this feedback, the temporary alternate approach was adopted. This approach includes opportunities for online comment, changes to the notification process, as well as the potential for community meetings.

The CALUC has always encouraged potential developers to engage with the community at CALUC meetings in order to get the best development possible for the community. It has worked to make these meetings as seamless as possible for both applicants and community members, offering in-person and virtual (via Zoom) options and is hopeful that applicants will choose to present at a Community Meeting in addition to the city's temporary, alternate process.

Respectfully submitted by: Joanna Fox, Current Chair; David Molinski, Current Vice Chair; Kevin White, Don Monsour, Michael Hirsch, David Thompson, Owen Sieffert.

- 9 PUBLIC COMMUNITY MEETINGS**
- 18 COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

The FGCA runs 2 separate out of school care centres, supporting École Margaret Jenkins Elementary School as well as Sir James Douglas Elementary, and to a lesser extent the greater community as a whole. Our Out of School Care programs continued to operate at maximum capacity this year and remained a pillar of our community for parents. In March, we experienced a shutdown, disrupting our ability to offer Spring Break Camp. We pivoted quickly and re-opened to serve the children of emergency service workers. Once summer arrived, we were able to support a fun-filled summer camp program that saw up to 45 registrants a week. Although we were limited in our ability to get out in the community, we were very lucky to have the community come to us! I would like to take a moment to thank all of the wonderful community partners that shared the space with us through these strange and

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE
218 CHILDREN ENROLLED
26 STAFF

CAMP
316 SUMMER CAMPERS
9 STAFF

COVID-19 EMERGENCY CARE
14 CHILDREN ENROLLED
4 STAFF

COVID 19 RESPONSE:
Following a brief shutdown, we worked harmoniously with other Neighbourhood Associations to set practice standards and create an Emergency Care model that prioritized supporting families working in Essential Services. While initially we were only able to support six families in April, we expanded the program in May to a stage where we had fourteen families receiving care throughout the day. Following the announcement made by the Ministry of Education to support voluntary learning within schools beginning in June, the Out of School Care programs adjusted their programming to accommodate children who were returning to school.

PROGRAMS

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE
CAMAS EARLY YEARS
FAMILY PROGRAMS
PRESCHOOLS
YOUTH
RECREATION



Youth Zone participants

Utilizing the safety standards we had created previously for our Emergency Care model coupled with new policies from the Ministry of Health, we were able to reopen space for children to attend during the days they attended school while maintaining our 5 day a week full-day emergency model.

"Wow, that is incredible! I'm so grateful to be part of such a caring community."

"This is wonderful and much needed news! I can't tell you how appreciative I am to you and your team. Thank you doesn't even describe the relief I'm feeling!"

Parents on learning they will receive free Emergency Care.

CAMAS EARLY YEARS CENTRE

Camas Early Years Programs offers care for families with children between the ages of 2.5 and 5 years old. Predominantly focused on outdoor learning, we explore nature and the land. Camas has become a deeply rooted program that fosters children's experiences in nature, to allow experimentation inquiry and collaborative learning, with the educators. At Camas, educators offer responsive care, we re-imagine education together with children and remain open to the many ways of seeing our world from new perspectives. We foster an inclusive environment and find ways to create a sense of belonging for those children, families, and educators who attend our program. Educators work with the BC Early Learning Framework, and use pedagogical narration, to reflect and learn from our ordinary moments. We host four community of practices yearly with our families, where we think about practice, care, children and our community.



Camas participants

CAMAS PROGRAM

16 CHILDREN ENROLLED

3 STAFF

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

At the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, Camas quickly reacted to provide childcare for essential service workers. During the months of March 2020 to July 2020, Camas operated at half capacity giving quality care to 8 children. More so now than ever, we understand the importance of outdoor learning and how it provides fresh air and healthy environments for our children.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY CARE

8 CHILDREN ENROLLED

2 STAFF

"We were thrilled to be offered a spot at the Camas early childhood centre. Their emergent philosophy and dedication is evident in their practice with young children, and we are grateful our family is a part of this community"

Camas Parent

"In my family's two and a half years living in the Fairfield community and being part of the FCGA, our confidence and gratefulness for the high quality, community based care provided to our children has never faltered. My family and I are very thankful for the community of people we have met and forged positive relationships with as a result of my children being part of the FCGA childcare programs."

Camas Parent

FAMILY DROP INS

The primary goal of our Family programs is to support and engage primary caregivers, as the most important influence in the life of a young child. These affordable drop-in groups are perfect for making new connections for children, parents and caregivers and create opportunities for young families to learn together through social, educational and recreational activities. On Thursdays we offer a parent discussion group, and we encourage community building by providing a healthy hot lunch to all who attend the program. Participant feedback in our programs has highlighted an appreciation for regular opportunities to meet others undertaking the challenging and often isolating job of parenting.

327 PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
354 CHILDREN

146 PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
179 CHILDREN
25 PARENT SUPPORT SESSIONS
27 LUNCH DATES
709 HAPPY FULL BELLIES

4 VIDEOS

97 ACTIVITY KITS DELIVERED

20 KITS DELIVERED

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

COVID-19 required us to shut down in-person family programs from Spring Break onward. We knew that it would be more important than ever for families to continue to connect and receive support so we considered how to keep helping families. We created a number of fun, engaging, educational videos in collaboration with Lelolai musical group and Early Years staff. We established a social media group, so people could still connect with each other. We also did deliveries of activity kits and self-care kits that fostered child development and parent wellness. These were a huge success and a welcome break from online forms of support.

"I am so touched by the kindness this centre shows our community. My family just received a custom art box for our 18 month old daughter!! Very thoughtful than you so much guys !"

"Thank you for the craft supplies! She wanted to make a "park" so we used the pieces of wood to build a teeter totter and a balance beam and the little ladybug buttons played around."

Activity Kit Recipients

"The family programs have been a great support for me and my daughter, we have found a great inclusive community, it is a day I can take a break from making a meal and connect with others."

Drop-In Participant

MOSS ROCK PRESCHOOL

Moss Rock Preschool offers care that focuses primarily on being outside and interacting with our natural environment. Learning through play and exploration, Moss Rock embraces an environment where children are capable individuals and can continue to inquire about the world around them. Children learn through experimental inquiry and opportunities that embrace children as active and inquisitive learners. Educators foster individuality and inclusive care that welcomes all families and children to consider Moss Rock as a welcoming classroom outside or inside.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

We temporarily closed Moss Rock preschool in March. We continued to remain in contact with our families, and as our caring educators did several check-ins with the children during the months that we were closed. We are thrilled to be open again and seeing all of our wonderful families back and welcoming some new children in to Moss Rock Preschool!

26 CHILDREN ENROLLED

2 STAFF

FIVE POINTS PRESCHOOL

The 2019 year marked two significant events for Five Points Preschool- it was the first year without its beloved Preschool Teacher Cathy Roberts, who ran the program for 18 years, and it was its last year of operation. After eighteen years running, we made the difficult decision to close Five Points Preschool. Over its lifetime, it provided a place of belonging for families, embraced community at the core of its practice and fed our appetite for meaningful connection. The last year for this beloved Preschool was less than ideal as it was cut short due to the pandemic. Regardless of its end, the connections and relationships formed throughout the years will continue on. Needless to say, Five Points Preschool will forever hold a special place in our hearts .

15 CHILDREN ENROLLED

2 STAFF

YOUTH

The primary goal of our Youth Zone and Chill Zone programs is to prepare our oldest ages of after school care to move on to middle school. These programs offer our youth new freedoms, responsibilities and privileges. In Jump N Start, we serve youth who are facing barriers with a free, yet enriching after school program.

Pre-lockdown, Youth Zone was having another strong year. We started the year with our maximum of 20 registrants and settled into an average around the mid-teens until March. Even with the shortened year, there were visits to the aquarium in Sidney, the new Island Training Centre in Langford and several photo scavenger hunts around Victoria. Some of the most heartfelt moments were when the group needed to say goodbye to two leaders, before and after the winter break. There were youth-led parties and parting gifts.

After three days of specific programming to begin the week, many of our registered Youth Zoners really enjoy the more laid-back feel of Chill Zone. Although there are no scheduled activities, and more screen time allowances, staff have a greater opportunity to connect with attendees.

Our Jump N Start programs aim to get out into the community as often as possible. The goal for participants is, not just to build a strong sense of belonging, but also to offer experiences they may not otherwise have access too. Last year's groups went to the Dino Lab, mini golf, and The Bug Zoo. The latter was afforded to them by their prize-winning entry into *The Spread the Love Film Festival*.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

COVID-19 required the shutdown of youth programs from Spring Break until June. With schools reopening for a final four weeks, we were able to provide a small number of returning Youth Zone and Jump N Start participants a safe and reliable program, maintaining similar hours to pre-

770 CHILLZONE DROP INS
42 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS IN
YOUTH ZONE & JUMP N START
5 STAFF
1 PRACTICUM STUDENT

RECREATION

The FGCA provides a number of children and adult recreation based registered and drop-in programs. Recreation programs change at times, to ensure the needs and wants from the community are being met. These recreation programs foster health, life learning and wellness close to home. This year we successfully offered a couple of new offerings that were well attended: 2 adult dance programs and a drop-in basketball that drew the occasional national celebrity (see photo).

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

We lost the entire Spring session (April through June). In July, we cautiously re-introduced a few fitness programs with new Covid-19 protocols (i.e. smaller classes with physical distancing markings; increased disinfecting; staggered entrance and exiting; and a flexible refund policy due to illness).

Adult Dance
African Hand Drumming
Drop-in Badminton
Drop-in Basketball
Gentle Yoga & Somatics
Gentle Yogafit
Iyengar Yoga
Richardson Sport Multi-Sport
Richardson Sport Soccer
Spanish for Travellers
Spring Forest Qi Gong
Strong Zumba
Tai Chi
Yin Yoga
Zumba

427 REGISTRATIONS
190 DROP-IN VISITS
10 CONTRACTED INSTRUCTORS



*FGCA volunteer, Natalie Tokgez, with Nav Bhatia
(the Raptors superfan)*

"Thank you for offering Yoga classes in the summer, and for making us all feel so safe!"

Yoga Participant

EVENTS & PROJECTS

EVENTS & PROJECTS

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

Right from the beginning of the pandemic, our team felt like it was now more than ever the time to be there for the neighbourhood. In these days of isolation and insecurities for many people, we felt like it was important for our organization to remain open for the community.

In the first weeks, we focused on evaluating needs, particularly by using social media which became the main source of social contacts for many people. We shared on our website and social media platforms public health information and information about local resources. We supported residents to connect with their neighbours and offer their help (leafleting in mailboxes). We also relayed the call for camping gear donations for people living homelessness who could not stay in emergency housing.

After a few weeks, we focused on keeping essential services running, such as the Good Food Box. Offering an online platform for our groups to keep on meeting remotely became a priority. We provided a paid Zoom account to the Book Club, Climate-Action Group, Community Inspiration Project, and Fairfield Gonzales Village. We identified that many community members were struggling with their mental health, so we organized an online event “Building your resilience during COVID-19,” by partnering with two local doctors who have recently opened a medical clinic in the neighbourhood (WomenMD).

In April, a group of brave volunteers stepped in and home-delivered community dinners every two weeks. Together, we managed to deliver 300 meals to the community! The team also added photo portraits and personal messages from the volunteers. Those flyers allowed families to feel connected to their community, along with a sense of hope in the resilience of our neighbourhood.

One of major COVID-19 response we have developed is the Food Security program, that a group of volunteers, supported by the staff, run on weekly basis. People experiencing food insecurity can choose between diverse healthy foods, in a dignifying way. We also offer grocery store gift cards every week.

*CLOTHING SWAP
ART AT THE PLACE
BOOK CLUB
COMMUNITY DINNERS
CLIMATE ACTION GROUP
RECONCILIATION CIRCLE
TRANSGENDER TIPPING POINT
REPAIR CAFÉ FAIRFIELD
FOOD SECURITY
OBSERVER NEWSPAPER
FALL FAIRFIELD
GIFT OF GOOD FOOD*

Finally, We worked with various non-profits, informal groups, and businesses, to offer food. The FGCA has become a food hub where residents can find bags of fruits and vegetables (Good Food Boxes), home-cooked meals (Red Cedar Café, International Women’s Coop...), and home-delivered food hampers (UVIC students’ group, Haliburton

CLOTHING SWAP

Every month the FGCA hosts a community Clothing Swap where you can bring gently used clothing and swap them for new clothes. It is a completely free service that provides support for people with a limited budget. This year it seems like the current trend of decluttering has impacted the service because we had more and more clothes donated! We were able to increase the quality of the clothes available, thanks to a bigger team of volunteers!

**6 SWAPS, OFFERED MONTHLY
300 APPROXIMATE PARTICIPANTS**

ART AT THE PLACE

The main foyer of Fairfield Community Place acts as a gallery space for local artists to display their work to sell to the wider community. From prints to ink, photographs to paintings; there are many different mediums used by artists on display in the foyer. Since its inception in 2014 colourful installations have decorated the centre's walls.

6 LOCAL ARTISTS

"I am very happy to find a place in my community to exhibit my latest artwork, and have meaningful conversations with both my personal network and the community! "

Art at the Place Artist

BOOK CLUB

This book club meets on the last Monday of each month. They focus on Canadian authors of fiction and non-fiction work and, occasionally, poetry. They choose works that will challenge them, in a good way (through not only reading but also lively discussions with one another and bringing each other's lived experience to contemplation of the stories on the page), to look at our country through cultural lenses that differ from their own. Since the book club's inception, they have explored 45 books. The center provides a loaner copy of each book.

12 MEETINGS

"I need intellectual stimulation and I need social contact, and I am finding it [pandemic life] really limited because I have cut out all the things that I used to do that involve that. It has been really, really hard. I feel like you guys [book club members] are a lifeline to me."

Book Club Participant

COMMUNITY DINNERS

The FGCA hosted monthly Community Dinners in the Garry Oak Room from October through June. Safia from the IWCC (international Women's Catering Coop) is the chef for each dinner, creating deliciously diverse dishes. This year the overwhelming feedback was that what people really needed and wanted was time to talk, to meet new people and to connect, so that will be the focus of this community dinner series. The dinners will also have the benefit of improving food security for attendees by providing a healthy, fresh meal once a month that can be depended on, right in their neighbourhood.

**9 DINNERS
450 GUESTS**

"We look forward to the next dinner. What a wonderful community offering... it brings cheer to so many in these times of isolation."

Community Dinner Patron

CLIMATE ACTION GROUP

The FGCA Climate Action Group was created in the Fall of 2019. It develops impactful and inclusive projects, participates in strategic policy advocacy, and supports individual and collective initiatives that address the climate crisis. Before Covid-19 hit, they were about to launch a community pledge program, to motivate residents to reduce their emissions by participating in alternative forms of transportation. Because of the physical contact involved in the project, the group decided to temporarily pause it. They kept meeting online, and focused on reflecting about their objectives and organization.

**2 MEETINGS PER MONTH
10 PEOPLE AT EACH MEETING**

RECONCILIATION CIRCLE

The FGCA Reconciliation Circle has been working since 2017 to bring issues of truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples to the forefront of our community work. In October of 2019, we hosted historian John Lutz to speak about working on research with Indigenous communities, and the work and legacy of Coast Salish people in the Victoria area. The circle cooked nutritious and delicious meals for guests of the winter shelter run by Victoria Native Friendship Centre. This helped the shelter stretch their small budget and is an expression of hope for the guests there. Children in FGCA programs contributed by making table decorations for dinners during the holiday season.

Circle members also attended the Victoria Urban Reconciliation Dialogue in February 2020, hosted by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and bringing together a cross-sectoral community of organizations to build a blueprint to reconciliation in the Greater Victoria area.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a significant challenge to the Reconciliation Circle, because much of its work is focused on in-person support and relationship-building. The Circle cancelled its next in-person event in March as well as the last shelter dinner of the season. We hope to regroup and continue this important work in a new way.

- 1 EDUCATIONAL SPEAKER**
- 5 RECONCILIATION CIRCLES**
- 7 MEALS HOMECOOKED AND DELIVERED TO VNFC SHELTER**

"I'm always in awe with how people can come together to serve the community. Thank you all for your continued support and dedication to making the guests days a bit brighter with your kindness."

Native Friendship Centre Shelter Staff

TRANSGENDER TIPPING POINT

Transgender Tipping Point is a semiannual retreat with the aim of empowering trans youth to make connections and acquire skills within their own community. We give participants the opportunity to meet friends and role models who share their experiences, and to channel those experiences into unique works of art.

Trans Tipping Point hosted a weekend retreat in October, with a focus this year on building skills in theatre and performance arts. Talented mentors engaged with youth to share their skills and experiences. We also hosted a one-day conference for trans leaders and activists in February 2020 focused on deep inquiry and learning around trans rights, social justice, and activism.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

Camp Trans Tipping Point had a second retreat booked for the spring, and had to rapidly pivot to maintain safety for all. A virtual retreat was held, and although it couldn't take the place of an in-person weekend, attendees valued the time and space they had to be together in support and learning.

- 1 WEEKEND RETREAT**
- 1 CONFERENCE**
- 1 VIRTUAL RETREAT**

"I am coming back, I have made good friends and it is a happy place for me, even when I'm not doing great, and it gets me out of my comfort zone by showing my art and writing to other people."

Trans Tipping Point participant

REPAIR CAFÉ FAIRFIELD

The Fairfield Repair Café is a local community-based group of volunteers who help the public repair personal goods ranging from household appliances, to tools, toys, jewelry, clothing, furniture, bicycles and anything else you can think of. Anything one can physically bring in is fair game. It comes under the umbrella of the Repair Café organization started in Amsterdam by Martine Potsma in 2009. The intent is to reduce waste, reduce consumption, and pass on repair skills. An important side benefit is bringing the community together, especially finding relevant connections with seniors.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

We had 6 events planned, but due to COVID-19, only one event was held. However, the Fairfield Repair Café: continued to manage the regional website that provides a coordinated front to the public about all the repair cafes in the CRD; continued to provide support via email and phone to help individuals repair; helped the North Saanich Repair Café start up; and started discussions with the CRD for more cooperation on the reduction of solid waste.

1 CAFE HOSTED
150 VOLUNTEER HOURS
100+ ITEMS FIXED AND KEPT
OUT OF THE LANDFILL!

FOOD SECURITY

On Tuesday afternoons, individuals and families experiencing financial difficulties affording a healthy diet come to the center. We partnered with the Food Share Network to offer rescued fresh, frozen and dry foods, donated by grocery stores. This program is run by volunteers; some of the volunteers are participants in the program themselves. Together they pick-up, deliver, sort, but also cook the leftovers into soups, smoothies, cakes etc. We put a lot of heart in making the program a welcoming place, where we build a relationship with families. To preserve the dignity of people, we avoid stigmatizing processes. For example, there are no means testing or intrusive questions to access the program. We avoid the traditional lineups, provide consistent support for

the families, and work very hard on providing the best food quality possible. We also offer grocery stores gift cards every week so that people can buy what they need and did not find at the Food Rescue program.

35 INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

"I realized that I have had enough food on my plate every day since I started the program... I am now almost eating twice as much as I used to before I received the rescue food and grocery gift card, which means I have more energy to be active during the day. Also, I am not going to bed hungry anymore. A huge gift and a big step towards a healthier life!"

Food rescue participant

OBSERVER NEWSPAPER

The Fairfield Gonzales Observer Newspaper is the place to find information on all the FGCA's programs and services, along with neighborhood news, events, and local businesses. Shortly after the Community Association formed in 1975, the Observer was created as a way to build community through sharing stories, connecting neighbors, and celebrating where we live, a vision held true by the team that brings each issue of the Observer to print.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

In April we made the decision to cancel our May/June/July issue. There were so many uncertainties about when folks could resume public activities, no one could plan for the next few days, never mind the next few months. Instead we set hopeful sights on the August issue and began planning for that, as a way to reach out to isolated folks looking for a connection to their community.

3 ISSUES
13 500 COPIES MAILED
1500 COPIES PICKED UP

FALL FAIRFIELD

Fall Fairfield is a one-day, free event that celebrates connections at the neighbourhood level. It is a family oriented community festival located in the heart of Fairfield. This year's event was held September 21, 2019.

With giant bubbles, a cardboard castle, hay bales, and harvest hats; it is a celebration of the start of the fall season. Our festival grew again this year, with more silent auction items, booths and fun! And what a pleasure to watch the kids transforming the outlived cardboard castle in improvised slides!

This year the FGCA featured engagement vendors including Fairfield United Church selling Orange Day T-shirts, Usborne books, Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, Tapestry Music, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, and the Compost Education Centre. For this 2019 edition, sustainability outreach happened to be important. We hosted various community organizations, like BC Sustainable energy, Growing in the City and the Compost Education Center. Our Food Forest

2,000+ ATTENDEES
40 VOLUNTEERS
30 INTERACTIVE BOOTHS

GIFT OF GOOD FOOD

FGCA partnered with Fernwood NRG and 15 other organizations to work together to raise \$89,164 to give 178 families access to fresh fruit and vegetables every two weeks for an entire year! We surpassed the goal raising a grand total of \$88,179. This is a great community fundraiser that directly supports families in the greater Victoria area.

176 FAMILIES SUPPORTED
48,498 LBS OF PRODUCE
581 SUPPORTERS

SERVICES

VOLUNTEERS
FACILITY RENTALS
YOUTH & FAMILY

COUN-

VOLUNTEERS

We are lucky in Fairfield Gonzales to have residents who are passionate about their community and eager to give back. We couldn't do our work without them! Here is how some of them volunteer:

Fairfield Food Forest
Food Rescue
Climate Action Group
Observer Newspaper
Photography
Board of Directors
Streetlife Committee
CALUC
Neighbourhood Improvement Committee
Fall Fairfield
Database Support
Observer Newspaper delivery
Drop-In Badminton
Drop-In Basketball
Front Garden
Toy Cleaning
Needle Felting Group
Database build and support
Repair Café
Reconciliation Circle
Community Dinners
Clothing Swap
and much more.....

220 VOLUNTEERS
5500 VOLUNTEER HOURS

FACILITY

We had a number of mid sized capital projects that were planned and completed this fiscal. Our daycare playground was removed and prepped for a new infant toddler appropriate playground to be installed in the late summer of 2020. To accommodate the need for more covered stroller space, we had a new bike shelter custom built and installed. One project we did not foresee was the need to replace the sump pump in the portable. We would like to thank the following companies for their exceptional and timely service: Island Junk Solutions Ltd.; Fix It Fernwood; Roto Rooter; and Osborne Electro-Mechanics Ltd.

Facility rentals were made up of a mixture of on-going renters such as the IWCC, the Samosa King, Salsa Moderna, Don Carlos Tamales, Moss St Market, the Fairfield United Church, and a variety of community meetings, French potlucks, parties, book launches, screenings, community yoga, and recitals.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

We took advantage of the reduced programming to replace the roof on the portable. Special thanks to Roof Rider Ltd. We also pivoted our facility usage to support food security programs by providing free space for a University of Victoria food hamper program as well as adapting our commercial kitchen to meet the increased demand for the Good Food

51 RENTERS
591 BOOKINGS

YOUTH & FAMILY COUNSELLORS

The FGCA employs 13 Youth and Family Counsellors (YFCs) in ten schools in School District #61. Counsellors bring a wide range of skills and experience to their clients. They work with students, families, and the school community to address mental health and wellness, school functioning, and crisis intervention. This year we introduced a new Clinical Consultant role to work with YFCs on practice issues and provide overall support to the program. It was also the first school year under a new contract, which saw a significant wage increase for YFCs that is more reflective of the expertise required to do their important work.

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

When the pandemic closed school over spring break this year, YFCs knew their skills would be needed more than ever in responding to the crisis. They coordinated their work via frequent online meetings and quickly transitioned to connecting with students and families remotely. Food supports became a huge need for families, and YFCs worked hard to support the school district's incredible food distribution program. A big challenge during school closures was that YFCs were no longer able to access all of their clients. For many students, school is a much-needed safe space where people care about them, and it was difficult to lose that connection. For other students, the school environment can be a source of stress and anxiety, and some found they fared better at home. In June, YFCs returned to their schools with increased safety protocols, but with low numbers and short class times, it was by no means a return to normal. As schools focused on mental well-being during this uncertain time, YFCs stepped up and supported their community with creativity, dedication, and talent.

Top concerns that Youth and Family Counsellors are seeing in their schools are:

Stress and anxiety; Relationship issues; Self regulation; Grief and Loss; Poverty; Family conflict/challenges; Peer conflict/bullying/harassment

1,200+ STUDENTS & FAMILIES
13 YFCS
10 SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

WORKING AT THE FGCA

**AUGUST 1ST 2019
TO JULY 31ST 2020**

STAFFING

Our greatest strength is our people! Our talented and dedicated staff team is the lifeblood of our work, and serves as the point of connection for all of our community and clients.

**117
EMPLOYEES IN 2019**

**91%
STAFFING COSTS AS % OF OVERALL
EXPENSES**

FUNDING

**REVENUE
\$ 2,888,562 ACTUAL FOR YEAR**

**EXPENSES
\$ 2,850,981 ACTUAL FOR YEAR**

**5%
CITY FUNDING**

**19%
PROVINCIAL & GAMING FUNDING**

**1%
FEDERAL FUNDING**

**45%
SCHOOL DISTRICT 61 CONTRACT**

**27%
FGCA PROGRAMS & RENTAL
REVENUE**

**3%
DONATIONS, FUNDRAISING &
FOUNDATION GRANTS**

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE FGCA

The FGCA is funded by a diverse range of grants, contracts, and fees-for-service. This year with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, some of our funding streams disappeared. Thankfully government, foundations, and the wider community all stepped up to provide new kinds of financial support to make sure that organizations like ours could continue to provide for the urgent needs of families and individuals.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Fall Fairfield
Gift of Good Food (in partnership with Fernwood NRG)

SUCCESSFUL GRANTS

BC Gaming
Canada Summer Student Grant
City of Victoria My Great Neighbourhood Grants
Victoria Foundation—Trans Tipping Point
Trans Care BC grant—Trans Tipping Point
Tegan and Sara Foundation—Trans Tipping Point
United Way Local Love in a Global Crisis: Healthy Connections Project
Rapid Relief Fund through the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses Capital Region: Emergency Childcare and Food Security funding
Community Food Centres: Grocery Gift Cards
VanCity Branch grant: Fall Fairfield workshop

IN-KIND SUPPORT

We also had the support of many generous in-kind sponsors this year. Their support with items such as tents, products, silent auction donations, or services make our events possible.

IN-KIND SPONSORS

Thrifty Foods
Royal Bank of Canada
Used Victoria
Phillips Brewery
Merridale Cidery
Cook Culture
...and the many local businesses who contributed to our silent auction

DONATIONS

As a registered charity we accept donations for our general work or to fund specific program areas. Often people donate to the programs and services they are most passionate about, such as food security or family support programs. Much of the community-building work we do is not supported by any funders, so donations are an essential part of keeping this work alive.

Your donation also helps build a lasting legacy in Fairfield Gonzales. We have been here serving the community for 45 years and hope to be here for at least 45 more. Please consider remembering us in your estate so that we may expand our reach and respond to the community's changing needs now and in the future.

We thank each and every donor for their generous contribution to a connected, collaborative, inclusive, and sustainable community!

FUNDING FOR THE FGCA

***FUNDING FOR THE FGCA
IS PROVIDED BY:***

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

BC GAMING POLICY AND ENFORCEMENT BRANCH

ISLAND HEALTH

CITY OF VICTORIA

SCHOOL DISTRICT #61

VICTORIA FOUNDATION

TRANS CARE BC

UNITED WAY GREATER VICTORIA



Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada