

Living Room helps make living easier for homeless

Scott Stanfield
Record Staff

Living Room Pharmacy is doing its bit to help those with a little less.

The Courtenay business donates medications to the Dawn to Dawn CARE-A-VAN Program, a mobile health care unit that supports homeless and at-risk individuals in the Comox Valley.

Pharmacy owners Jane Wareing and Greg Oksanen were approached by their friend Helen Boyd, the CARE-A-VAN co-ordinator who asked the couple for their assistance.

"She has the biggest heart in the world," Oksanen said of Boyd, the Professional Merit Award recipient at the



GREG OKSANEN IS pictured at Living Room Pharmacy, which he co-owns with his wife Jane Wareing. The Cliffe Avenue business donates medications to the Dawn to Dawn CARE-A-VAN Program.

SCOTT STANFIELD PHOTO

2010 Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce Annual Community Awards.

Together with Boyd and several physicians, the couple came up with a sustainable formula

for non-prescription medications designed to make people comfortable. The medica-

tions can be used to treat afflictions such as nausea, dehydration or itchiness, as opposed to diabetes or high blood pressure.

"We looked at basically some simple products or medications that would treat conditions that could be quite threatening in a homeless population," Oksanen said. "It's really not that big of a deal."

That said, pain killers, anti-inflammatories and even multi-vitamins can make a big difference in the well-being of homeless individuals.

"When they go through them we just replenish them, and we've been doing that as long as the CARE-A-VAN's been running," Oksanen said. "That

part of it has gone absolutely swimmingly. It's been a real success.

"Coming up with that formulary and deciding what was essential to treat in people was the key...What the CARE-A-VAN is really working at is offering that ounce of prevention as opposed to a

pound of cure. If you get these things early enough and prevent them from happening, it's immense the grief it saves the public and the person."

Oksanen is aware of other mobile health care units in Toronto and Portland.

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Aboriginal Day storytelling at library

In honour of National Aboriginal Day, the Courtenay Library presents a special program for the entire family with First Nations storyteller David Spirit Eagle Somerville. He

will tell stories including The Journey of the Jumping Mouse and will review some of the teachings woven into the tale.

The free program will take place at the

Courtenay Library, Tuesday, June 21 at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call 250-334-3369 or visit www.virl.bc.ca.

Somerville resides in the Comox Valley and is a faithkeeper/healer, as well as a retired clinical counsellor and one of the founders of the B.C. Association of Clinical Counsellors. He comes from the Mohawk people and for the past 20 years has been an adopted member of a Kwakiutl family.

Proclaimed by the Governor General in 1996, National

Aboriginal Day provides an opportunity to acknowledge the unique achievements of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in agriculture, the environment,

business and the arts.

The federal government chose June 21 for National Aboriginal Day because it is the summer solstice, the longest day of the year.

PCOP available on Canada Day

All operators of motorized vessels, including personal water craft, must be able to show a form of competency such as the Pleasure Craft Operators Certificate.

The Cape Lazo Power Squadron will be sponsoring PCOP exams at Lewis Park during Canada Day on July 1. Times will be between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. and the cost is \$25.

Registration not required. The Boating Handbook for the exam is available from Staples. This is the only card that is also recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard.

If further information is required, contact 250-339-1964.

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