

# mark your calendar: The Box—Inside and Out

» DENYSE KOO

You may have noticed a large container at the back of the Fernwood Community Centre. This container is from the Victoria Emergency Management Association (VEMA) with the City of Victoria. What's in it? Well, right now—nothing. What will be in it? Supplies to help take care of you. In case of an emergency situation such as fires, earthquakes, snowstorms, etc., if VEMA needs to set up either a receiving centre or shelter they may come to the Fernwood Community Centre and use the building to provide emergency services and support. The contents of the box will be for these purposes.

What will be outside the box? That's up

to you! We are seeking proposals (drawings) for a mural on the outside of the box. VEMA will pay for equipment and supplies for a mural to be painted on the container sometime in the spring, and will then top coat it to protect it. Please submit your ideas to [info@fernwoodnrg.ca](mailto:info@fernwoodnrg.ca) or at the Fernwood Community Centre, 1240 Gladstone Ave., and rally your friends to help with the spring painting of your design if it is chosen!

If you are interested in finding out more about what happens during an emergency, VEMA is planning a one day emergency simulation on Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are required to play the parts of clients needing help. Please ask at the desk for more information. ☎

# buzz: Micro lending goes local

» ELIZABETH WELLBURN  
AND DERYK HOUSTON

As many people trying to run a small business have discovered, big financial institutions will lend you money only if you can prove that you don't need it.

In Fernwood, a group called Community Micro Lending is providing a wonderful demonstration of how to see things differently. Community Micro Lending facilitates loans between lenders and entrepreneurs in the Greater Victoria community.

Community Micro Lending entrepreneurs are local citizens who need small loans and mentorship to take action. They are turning their dreams into a reality, creating local jobs, and embarking on business or employment opportunities with a socially conscious focus. At the same time they are contributing to a sustainable local economy and helping our community to flourish. An example is Natalie, the owner and operator of Stir it Up Authentic Caribbean Soul Food Restaurant in the Fernwood Square.

Lenders are local people too, investing what they can in people whose stories they understand and whose businesses are part of their own neighbourhood. Natalie's story was posted on the Community Micro Lending site just before Christmas, and by mid-January, combined contributions from multiple lenders equaled the \$4095 that Natalie had requested. Now she can begin the upgrades to her restaurant and continue to keep us all well-fed with her delicious Caribbean fare.

Technology definitely plays a part in spreading the message of Community Micro Lending. Tools like Twitter (@VicMicroLending), Facebook (search for the group "Community Micro Lending"), and LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com/](http://www.linkedin.com/))



"Micropreneur" Natalie. Photo: Mila Czerny

company/community-micro-lending-society) connect people to the projects.

And yet, though the concept has a high-tech, 21st century component, it is really a very old idea – neighbours helping neighbours to strengthen the community. Something the Jimmy Stewart character of George Bailey in the 1946 movie "It's a Wonderful Life" would thoroughly understand. In the movie, George runs a tiny mortgage and loan company that constantly experiences friction with the big banker in town. Here's a beautiful George Bailey quote from the scene where he has to explain the process of his business to a handful of skeptical investors: "Your money's in Joe's house, right next to yours. And in the Kennedy house, and Mrs. Macklin's house, and a hundred others. Why, you're lending them the money to build, and then, they're going to pay it back to you as best they can."

Today, 65 years later, George wouldn't have to provide such an explanation because as micro-lenders, we're already completely aware of who our investments support.

The main website of Community Micro Lending, for a "deeply sustainable vibrant local economy" is: <http://www.communitymicrolending.ca/> ☎

**FERNWOOD NRG WINTER PROGRAMS**  
JANUARY – APRIL 2011

**MONDAY**  
Awesome Mommies (DI) 11:00am – 12:30pm  
Nuu Chah Nulth Drumming (DI) 7:30pm – 10:00pm  
Kundalini Yoga Plus for Men (DI) Feb 7th to April 25th 7:30pm – 8:30pm  
Life Ring (DI) Ongoing 6:45pm – 8:00pm

**TUESDAY**  
Parent and Tots Play Group (DI) Ongoing 9:30am – 11:30am  
Baby Sings (Reg) Jan 4th – Apr 26th 9:30am – 10:00am  
Tot Sings (Reg) Jan 4th – Apr 26th 10:00am – 10:30am  
Family Music Experience (Reg) Jan 4th – Apr 26th 10:30am – 11:15am  
Victoria Boot Camp (Closed Group) Jan 4th – Feb 22nd 5:30pm – 6:30pm  
Floor Hockey (DI) 7:00pm – 9:45pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
Kundalini Yoga Plus (DI) Feb 9th to April 27th 9:30am – 10:30am  
Parent and Babe Play Group (DI) Ongoing 9:30am – 11:30am  
Best Babies (Reg) Ongoing 12:00pm – 3:00pm  
Mussels Floor Ball (Closed Group) Jan 5th – Mar 16th 5:30pm – 6:30pm  
Hand Drumming (Reg) Jan 26th – Feb 23rd & Mar 2nd – Apr 6th 7:00pm – 8:30pm  
Soccer (Closed Group) Jan 5th – Apr 13th 7:30pm – 9:00pm  
Good Food Box Pickup, every third Wednesday, 1:00pm – 5:30pm

**THURSDAY**  
Parent and Tot Playgroup (DI) Ongoing 9:30am – 11:30am  
Mother Goose (Reg) 9:30am – 10:30am  
Best Babies (Reg) Ongoing 12:00pm – 3:00pm  
Victoria Boot Camp (Closed Group) Jan 6th – Feb 24th 6:00pm – 7:00pm  
Laughter Yoga (DI) Jan 6th – Apr 28th 7:00pm – 8:00pm

**FRIDAY**  
Kundalini Yoga Plus (DI) Feb 11th to April 29th 9:30am – 10:30am  
Autumn Glow Seniors Group (DI) Ongoing 12:00pm – 3:30pm  
Youth Drop In (DI) Ongoing 6:30pm – 9:00pm

**SUNDAY**  
Swap & Shop Jan 16th – Apr 24th 9:00pm – 2:00pm  
Preschool Creative Movement (Reg) Jan 9th – Apr 24th 4:00pm – 4:45pm  
Ballet Jazz Combo (Reg) Jan 9th – Apr 24th 5:00pm – 6:00pm  
(Reg) Registration Required (DI) Drop In

**SPECIAL EVENTS**  
Family Literacy: Jan 29th  
Hand Drumming Workshops: Jan 16th & Feb 11th  
Father Daughter Sweetheart Dance: Feb 18th  
VintAgeous Vintage Fair: Feb 25th & 26th  
Women's Wellness: March 5th  
Pacific Mobile Depot: Feb 12th, March 12th, & April 9th

**For More Information Contact:**  
Fernwood NRG  
1240 Gladstone Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8T 1G6  
(250) 381-1552  
[info@fernwoodnrg.ca](mailto:info@fernwoodnrg.ca)  
[www.fernwoodnrg.ca](http://www.fernwoodnrg.ca)  
Room rental opportunities also available.

**LOOKING FOR A GOOD TIME ?**

Volunteer with Fernwood NRG  
[info@fernwoodnrg.ca](mailto:info@fernwoodnrg.ca) || 250.381.1552

**COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS**



**Community Office**  
1084 Fort Street  
Victoria  
P: (250) 952-4211  
F: (250) 952-4214  
[carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca)  
[www.opposition.bc.ca](http://www.opposition.bc.ca)

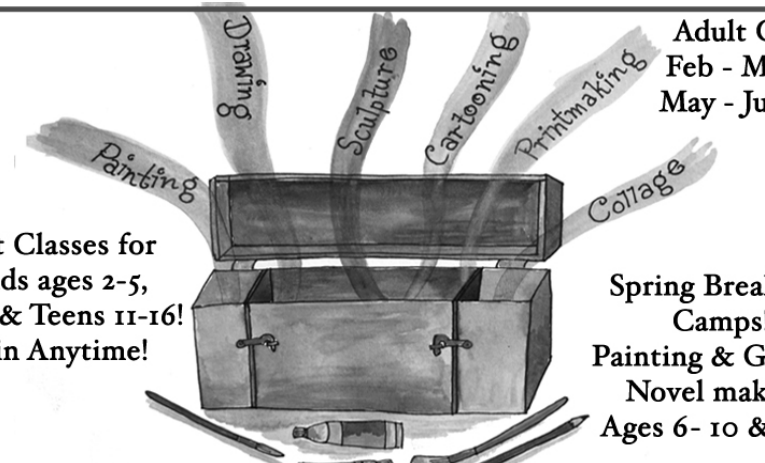
**CAROLE JAMES, MLA**  
VICTORIA • BEACON HILL

**SOMA ACTIVEHEALTH**

MASSAGE THERAPY ACUPUNCTURE PRIVATE PILATES

**ONLINE BOOKING AVAILABLE!**

1358 GLADSTONE AVE / 250 590 6612 / [SOMAVICTORIA.CA](http://SOMAVICTORIA.CA)



**Art Classes for Kids ages 2-5, 6-10 & Teens 11-16! Join Anytime!**

**Adult Classes Feb - March & May - June 2011**

**Spring Break Art Camps! Painting & Graphic Novel making! Ages 6- 10 & 11-16**

**The Paint Box School of Art**  
[www.thepaintbox-victoria.com](http://www.thepaintbox-victoria.com) 250-418-0924 [thepaintbox.vic@gmail.com](mailto:thepaintbox.vic@gmail.com)