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Community Relations Report – Annual General Meeting October 6, 2016

The Community Relations position is challenging, rewarding, and fun—the perfect job! Our office environment continues to be positive and collaborative. Marcie, our Executive Director, is accessible and inspiring to work with. Board Directors, Lesley and Judy, play essential roles up front and behind the scenes to ensure the office is running smoothly. Our Board Directors have done an outstanding job utilizing their individual strengths to support YANA. I am very grateful for the dedication of our community; volunteers, donors, supporters who have committed so much to our YANA families in the past year.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

This year we were able to further our community outreach with the production of our services rack card. This piece presents YANA's programs briefly, yet succinctly, in a colourful and well-designed format. Initially, we have been able to place these in some strategic locations around the Comox Valley. We will continue to source further locations for the rack cards.

Facebook continues to be very effective in reaching supporters and directing traffic to our website.

Our press coverage during the year was really fantastic. As well as seeing our YANA fundraisers featured in the Record, many third-party events were also featured in both the Record and the Echo, as were some cheque presentations. We were also included in other stories from our community, notably in a feature article about volunteering in the Record and a story about Royston Nano Brewery in the CV Collective. Our local radio stations, as always, have been generous and have helped promote a number of community-led events.

We were able to take part in Comox Valley Art Gallery Youth Media Project and were very happy with the resulting short video featuring YANA's services created by Natasha Sam.

YANA Week in the Schools, led by Board Director Hugh MacKinnon, was a huge success. This is a highly valuable part of our outreach where we are able to bring awareness around YANA to so many. Among the many fundraisers and events in the schools that we were able to attend, a ceremony at Vanier Senior Secondary was particularly special as it featured YANA videos and two courageous YANA children.

BRANDING

Our brand identity and messaging is very consistent in all of our printed materials and in our on-line presence.

Our new office space is in line with our brand and has a very specific 'YANA' look. Thanks go to Marcie for envisioning our new space and for executing that vision. The amazing generosity of Grant Construction as well as the efforts of Marcie, Judy, Kelly, Robbie, Lesley and Ron who helped realize this warm, lovely workplace.

Marcie has worked diligently to ensure our new location is noted on all print and on-line locations.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

We are so fortunate to have so many great volunteers at YANA.

Trends in volunteering are seeing a preference for one time positions, such as special events. We offer these opportunities to our volunteer base through direct e-mail, postings on our website, through our Facebook page, and on the Volunteer Comox Valley site. We have been very successful in meeting our volunteer needs through these avenues.

YANA is additionally blessed with a number of volunteers with the ability and willingness to make some extraordinary commitments and take on leadership roles. These volunteers provide the backbone of our YANA events; Big Love Benefit, Simon's Cycles YANA Ride, YANA Kids' Clutter, and the YANA Christmas Crackers campaign. Our capacity as an organization depends heavily on these dedicated volunteers.

We are profoundly grateful to our volunteers for their generosity of spirit, hard work, and big hearts!

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Darlene Nelson and I are able to send personal thank yous to all of our donors. We love this job and hope we are able to adequately express how deeply their support is felt. Event committee members provide assistance in ensuring all our event contributors are acknowledged as well.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook continues to be our primary use of social media. Our Twitter account is linked to Facebook and generates Twitter posts directly from Facebook. Though still extremely effective as a way of reaching our supporters we will be exploring the use of other social media applications in the coming year. I was able to attend a couple of social media workshops during the year and make an effort to stay informed about current trends.

This year on Facebook we were able to increase our 'likes' by 13%. Facebook analytics show that our audience is most interested in posts of personal stories, gratitude, client stories, and

services outreach. Promoting YANA events and third-party fundraising through Facebook is still an extremely effective tool.

THIRD PARTY FUNDRAISING

There were over sixty, third party fundraisers last year. In addition to be an important revenue stream for YANA they also bring excellent awareness to our organization. They represent the caring this community has for YANA and are full of heartfelt warmth.

We support these wonderful events by adding them to our events calendar on Facebook and on our website. We also share them through social media posts and post any available news stories to our website. We are able to provide YANA signage and informational materials for these events and, when requested, volunteers.

These fundraisers are diverse, from bake sales at Coastal Community Credit Union and barbeques at Comox Fire Rescue to the Potter's Place Chili Bowl Fundraiser and the Easter Eggstravaganza led by Investors Group and the Town of Comox. Our supporters find creative ways to integrate YANA into the things they are passionate about, 'It's Not Just Beer It's Love', made a huge splash and little Naomi shared her talent with 'Naomi's Art Sale'. Myself, Marcie, or one of our board directors were able to attend most of these events and be a part of the incredible community spirit that motivates them.

CLOSING

In closing this has been a great year for YANA and I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as Community Relations Coordinator. I look forward to the next year with this fantastic team of volunteers and supporters.

Ocean Varney | YANA Community Relations Coordinator