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Better Environmentally Sound Transportation e-News May 2014

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Did you know?

**BEST is a registered Charity!
Donations are tax deductible.**



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vancouver foundation



Community Partner

Hello friends of BEST!

Things are hopping around the BEST office these days, as we gear up for our [Annual General Meeting](#) on May 7, plan for the 2014 Commuter Challenge, add more days to the Bicycle Valet calendar, and organize Living Streets events. Spring has well and truly sprung in this neck of the woods! Read all about it – and about the VGH Cycling Centre and our Bicycle Valet manager's visit to the Portland bike valet – in our May newsletter!

And while you're at it, check out our new-look [BEST home page](#). We've been keeping an eye out for and posting thought-provoking and inspiring stories from the world of sustainable transportation – we think you will enjoy them!

Win great prizes in the 2014 Commuter Challenge!



It's getting exciting with only one month left before the BC Commuter Challenge! Over 130 workplaces have signed up so far from all over BC, with new registrations coming in daily. With Sinéad continuing to contact more workplaces, this year should have our highest level of participation yet! Maybe this is the year BC will beat Manitoba?

Dinah is taking good care of our generous prize sponsors, and there are even better prizes to be won than last year! If you are a sports fan, we have tickets to see the Vancouver Canadians or the BC Lions. If you prefer the arts, we have tickets to the Vancouver Folk Festival, Bard on the Beach, Comedy Mix, and the Vancouver Art Gallery. Kicking Horse Coffee and Left Coast Naturals have donated delicious prizes to fill your belly. Travel Smart and Ride On Again Bikes will make sure you can keep commuting sustainably with ease and style. Open Door Yoga has donated passes for you to de-stress and get strong. Or you can take the whole family for an outing with passes to Science World or the Capilano



Vancity



Beyond, Every Day.



<https://www.myhealthmycommunity.org/survey.aspx>



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Suspension Bridge! All these prizes and more will be up for grabs for anyone participating in the BC Commuter Challenge!

If you would like a chance to win some of these AMAZING prizes, contact Sinéad at (604) 669-2860 or commuterchallenge@best.bc.ca, or check out www.commuterchallengebc.ca. And don't forget to follow the Commuter Challenge on Twitter [@BC_Commuter](https://twitter.com/BC_Commuter)!

Ride to the Vancouver Marathon and Vancity Member Day!

Now that April showers are behind us, we're looking ahead to May! We've got a couple of new events, along with returning events, we're going to be at this year -- so make sure you ride on down!

Sunday, May 4: Our first time at the [BMO Vancouver Marathon](#)! Ride down to cheer on the runners, to volunteer, or to check out the street festival! Find us on Bute Street between Hastings and Cordova. Special thanks to our favourite sponsor [TravelSmart](#)!

Saturday, May 10: Find us at Science World all day for [Vancity Member Day](#)! All Vancity members get 50% off the price of admission, and free and safe bicycle parking of course!

To find out where else we'll be in May, check out the [calendar](#)!

Living Streets welcomes new funder

The [Living Streets program](#) is well underway for 2014, with 12 events scheduled over the next few months. We are happy to announce that we have reconnected with our previous partner SUCCESS settlement agency and will be presenting to 6 of their advanced ESL classes during their Transportation unit in the month of May.

Keep an eye out for other upcoming Living Streets events open to the public -- we'd love to see you and get your input on how our communities can improve access to sustainable modes of transportation!

A big thank you and welcome is in order to our new funder for Living Streets, the Walmart-Evergreen Green Grants Committee! We are so excited to have them on board. Please check out a [list of projects](#) they've supported in the past to get a better idea of how important their work is.



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BEST Tours the new VGH Cycling Centre

Prizes Generously Donated By:



BEST staff Stephanie and Sinéad were excited at the chance to visit the new VGH Cycling Centre! The Centre had just installed its signage that day, so they were able to find the building, but getting in was impossible without an access card. It really is a secure facility! After a small adventure, Arthur Orsini, BEST alumnus and Active Transportation Facilitator for Vancouver Coastal Health, was located, and he gave them a tour of the beautiful new facility.

The building, previously used for storage and laundry, has been converted to hold 162 individual bicycle racks, designed so that you never have to wrestle with your neighbour's handle bars! There is also parking for 12 electric bikes, and 8 bicycle lockers for those with especially high-end bikes. Tools and bike horses are set up for small repairs and maintenance. The change rooms have showers, FREE towels, and aerated lockers that allow gear to dry quickly. To support the bicycling community, the VGH Cycling Centre holds monthly workshops and has a notice board featuring upcoming bicycling events.

Stephanie and Sinéad were very impressed by the facility, and are now wishing they had access to one of their own!

To find out more contact Arthur Orsini, VGH CyclingCentre@vch.ca.



The fantastic secure bike room and lockers at the new VGH Cycling Centre. We want one!

Road Story: Portland Bike Valet (and Beer)



By Stephanie Williams, Manager, The Bicycle Valet

When a couple of friends suggested going to Portland for a few days, I jumped at the chance. In the world of sustainable transportation, Portland is a must see.

The proliferation of microbreweries and coffee shops didn't hurt either.

Before heading down, I contacted [Go By Bike](#), providers of Oregon Health State University's free bike valet, located at the bottom of the aerial tram that connects the waterfront with a teaching hospital at the top of the hill. Think a much smaller version of Burnaby Mountain with the elusive gondola ready to whisk you to the top.



Arriving at 8:30am to catch the morning rush (and a rather early start to a vacation day), I got a behind-the-scenes look at their permanent commuter valet. Besides the heated trailer (it wasn't the warmest day), I was most intrigued with their electronic ticketing system, as I'm always on the look out for a feasible reusable ticketing system. While their RFOI method looked pretty slick, it needs a power source to keep the Ipad charged, and has been known to malfunction. I think we'll stick to our tickets for now.

One of the best parts was seeing the Valet staff greeting all the regular patrons, chatting to some, and smiling to those who were in a hurry. Apparently there's even a Valet Appreciation Day where patrons bring treats to share with the Valets! That might be something we have to implement...

Another great feature was the on-site bike repair. The afternoon Valet doubled as a bike mechanic, allowing patrons to drop their bike off in the morning and pick it up in the afternoon, all ready to go! Now that's efficient service!

After a couple of hours talking shop, I hopped on a bicycle and got a tour of the city's breweries (and bicycle infrastructure of course), led by the awesome Go By Bike Manager. Can't wait to repay the kindness and show off Vancouver when they come to visit!



Ride for an hour, power the brewery, and get a dollar off your beer!

BEST AGM: Join Us!

When: **Wednesday, May 7, 2014**, from 6:00-8:30 pm

Where: YWCA Hotel, Canfor Room, 733 Beatty Street, Vancouver

RSVP: Please email margaret.miller@best.bc.ca or call our office at 604-669-2860.

Details: The BEST Annual General Meeting is a great opportunity for members to speak with the board and staff about our programs and initiatives and to give input as to BEST's future directions. Also featured will be a presentation on the Transit Referendum by Claire Havens of [SFU's Carbon Talks](#). If your membership has expired you can renew online, or you will have the opportunity to renew at the meeting. Food and refreshments will be available.

We are looking forward to seeing you!

Complete the Moving in a Livable Region Survey and Win!

[Moving in a Livable Region](#) is taking the pulse on transportation in Metro Vancouver and could use your help. They want to find out how Metro Vancouverites get around the region and their thoughts on transportation. Complete their [10 minute survey](#) and you could **win a great prize** -- an iPad Mini!

Moving in a Livable Region is doing a lot of good work promoting sustainable transportation in our region, as well as keeping us up to date with the most recent news on the transit referendum. To learn more, and to help them get their message out, visit their [website](#).

Thank you for your continued interest in BEST!

**Our Mission: To advance the transformation to sustainable transportation
Our Vision: Vibrant, healthy communities built around sustainable modes of transportation**

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