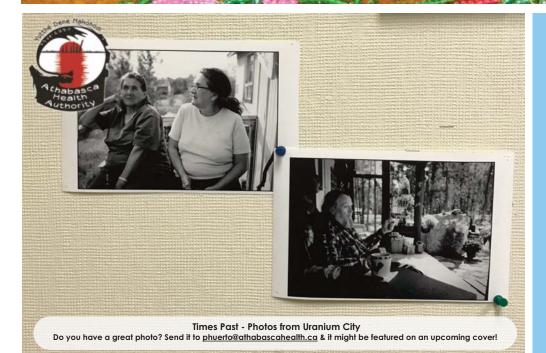
Northernhernhe Output AHA Newsletter ~ Newsletter Contact: phuerto@athabascahealth.ca IS029 April 2018

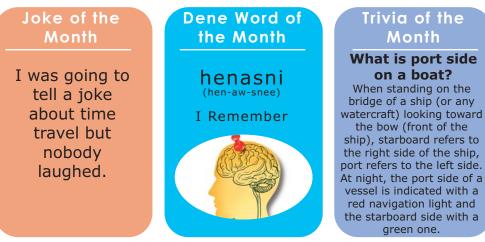


Special Edition - A Look Back

AHA Through The Years: Recently, a copy of the very first newsletter that was printed following the opening of the AHA Health Facility was found. We enjoyed flipping through the pages & thought we should share the experience with everyone!

It is so great to see how much AHA has grown over the years and to see the amazing developments that have taken place over time, and yet the heart & soul of AHA is still the same - providing a place for northern people to heal. We hope you enjoy the trip down memory lane as much as we did.

If you have stories, updates, events or information you'd like included in the next monthly issue please contact: Pam Huerto - <u>phuerto@athabascahealth.ca</u> / 306-439-2647



In this issue:



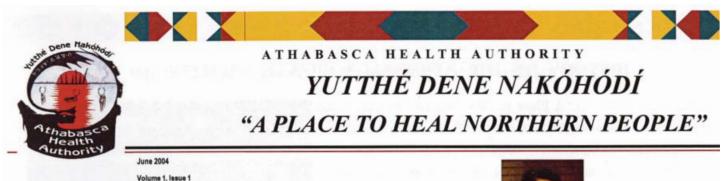
Read our CEO messages - past & present on pg. 2 & 3



A history of the Health Facility on pg. 4



Learn more about autism on pg. 13



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

February 15, 2004, was my anniversary date of three years with the Athabasca Health Authority. I am very proud of the accomplishments which we have achieved and the growth which we have shown. Unlike other authorities in the province who had their programs and personnel in place when they switched from health districts, we did not. We began from scratch. We now have a workforce of approximately fifty employees. I am grateful to many people for their help and to the wonderful staff we have.

I want to congratulate Sandra Hansen and Cheryl Sandypoint for finishing their training with Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology. It is not easy to leave your family, friends and communities on a regular basis to pursue your goals, but you stuck to it. We are proud of you both.

I want to welcome Noel and Celina McIntyre to our growing staff. They have accepted very challenging positions with us in the fields of addictions and mental health, but I know that they are equal to the task. We hope that you will soon feel at home with us. We are very pleased that you have joined us.

Well, it finally happened! Our first baby was born in our new facility on Saturday, March 13, 2004. Congratulations to the proud parents, Tracy and Gilbert Broussie. Our hospital staff did a fantastic job. Mother, baby and father are doing fine.

Over the past three years, we have had some major events. We had the grand opening of the new facility last July, and a "Blessing" of the new facility with Father Murray, the elders and staff taking part in a feast also. These events were special but we still have much work to do. We continue to work on policies and programs. We need your patience as we do this. Some day soon, everything will come together.

Thank you, Lena May, for your leadership in putting this newsletter together. We were concerned about the communities not knowing what was happening with the authority so we will try to have this newsletter out on a regular basis. I will have the opportunity to write to you again, so I will say goodbye for now. Take care.

AHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fond du Lac Georgie McDonald Caroline Isadore Rose Pacquette

Black Lake Edwin Boneleye Martha Toutsaint Edwin Alphonse

Hatchet Lake George Tsannie Joseph Besskkaystare Jeanette Tsannie

Camsell Portage Mary Stenne

Uranium City Margaret Powder Stony Rapids Doris MacDonald

Special points of interest:

· C.E.O.'s Message

- Madeline Lidguerre's Birthday
- · Blessing of the Facility
- · Our 1st New Born Baby

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Chief Executive Officer's Message



April 11th was the anniversary of the first time that I stepped into the Stony Facility. My official start date was May 29th, 2017. My wife and I had been on a trip to Stony Rapids and Black Lake to see the facility and meet everyone, prior to my official start date. What a great year we have had!!!! I am very proud of what we have accomplished over the past year, the obstacles that we have faced and dealt with in such an amazing manner. We are stronger, we are a family, and this is what makes AHA great.

We continue to grow and build on the foundation that has been laid for us. We continue to improve upon services and programs that we offer to our

communities. Our growth and development has been consistent and focused on meeting the needs of the communities that we serve. AHA has started to utilize technology in a manner that not only improves and cuts down wait times, but enables our staff to provide these essential services. Local people providing the much needed services to the members of the basin; this is part of our organizational HR plan. By offering employment and educational opportunities to our community members we are strengthening the fabric of the Basin.

The focus on long standing sustainable programming for the people and the communities continues to be a priority for the Athabasca Health Authority. We will continue to work with outside agencies to develop services that meet the unique need of the people of the north. Our assumption of medical travel has not been without its challenges, as time progresses we continue to make adjustments in the program and expand to meet the needs of our communities.

As Athabasca Health Authority expands and continues its increased service delivery, we must not forget all of the hard work and dedication of the people that have created this organization. The dedication of the Board of Directors and the community Leaders to the improvement of services to our communities has been amazing. I would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of the entire AHA team. We have a responsibility to care for each other, and this has been expressed and observed many times over the past year. Thank You to each and every person that has assisted in any way over the past year.

The late Georgina Macdonald assisted in creating AHA. She had the vision and dream to want something more for the people of the Athabasca Basin. Without her tireless efforts we would not be here. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her and her family for this. **We stand on the shoulders of our elders, making improvements for the generations that follow.**

Merci Cho Darryl Galusha, CEO

AHA Board of Directors

Fond du Lac Doris Lidguerre Marilyn Fern Georgie McDonald **Black Lake** John Toutsaint Elizabeth Alphonse Ambrose Boneleye **Stony Rapids** Mervin MacDonald

Uranium City Jodi Mercredi Camsell Portage Claire Larocque

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HISTORY OF THE ATHABASCA HEALTH FACILITY

2004

Yutthe Dene Nakohodi "A Place to Heal Northern People" is the name given to the headquarters of the Athabasca Health Authority.

The Athabasca Health Authority is the first health authority in Canada to establish an integrated federal, provincial and First Nations health service organization. It is the first time a provincial government built a facility on a reserve.

The project began in 1994 with the formation of a steering committee and in 1996 a "Unanimous Members Agreement" (UMA) was signed at Black Lake to confirm that the Athabasca First Nations Bands and provincial communities would jointly administer health services in the region.

The building is located on the Chicken Indian Reserve #224 near the Northern Hamlet of Stony Rapids. The facility is owned and operated by the Athabasca Health Authority Inc., is accountable to the Athabasca First Nations Bands and provincial communities and staffed, wherever possible, by people from the region. The building houses' administration, a fourteen-bed health facility, outpatient and emergency facilities along with program employees. A number of AHA employees are housed, in accommodations located in the Northern Hamlet of Stony Rapids, provided by Sask Housing but administered by the Authority.

The Indian Child and Family Services rent space from the Authority and a number of its employees will be housed in the five mobile homes recently installed on a site near the facility.

Both the Athabasca First Nations Bands and provincial communities were involved with the planning and design of the structure. The building is designed to provide a view of the beautiful Fond du Lac River, from the patient/resident rooms and to reflect community priorities and to utilize natural and contextual materials and colors. It is a flexible and energy efficient environment. The materials used in the construction of the building were chosen bearing in mind the harsh northern climate with building systems designed to maintain a healthy, warm and safe environment for clients and employees.

The facility provides a setting for both modern and traditional native health care practices and an integrated and holistic mans of supporting, nurturing and restoring physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health. Traditional values,

concepts and health practices are maintained and respected in partnership with contemporary health care.

The Athabasca Health Authority is the northernmost geographic health authority covering an area of 59,680 square kilometers along the Northwest Territory border. Approximately 3,000 residents live on the shores of Lake Athabasca and Black Lake in five communities. The two participating First Nations of Fond du Lac and Black Lake contain 83% of the population with the remaining 17% residing in the three provincial communities of Stony Rapids, Uranium City and Camsell Portage. More than 90% of all residents are members of First Nations and other aboriginal groups.





The health facility still provides a beautiful space for clients & employees. Our maintenance team have helped us to keep the building in great shape so that it can continue to be a setting for holistic care. And an additional garage was built last summer. Our staff also keep it looking festive depending on the season!



Influenza Vaccine Reporting - Audrey Johnson

2017/18 Community of Stony Rapids

18 and under	18-64	65 and over	Total
44	39	7	90

Athabasca Health Facility Workers (Employees and Independent Contractors): 70 of 78

Numbers are down from last year for community members. Last year we had a total of 135 StonyRapids residents received the flu vaccine. Health care staff numbers stayed very much the same from last year to this year.

Good job to those who got vaccinated & helped keep our community healthier!





FAY MICHAYLUK, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

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January 2003, I began employment with AHA as the Director of Operations/Human Resources. As staffing arrangements were finalized I then became Director of Community Services. This position I love very much as I enjoy working with the communities. I make every effort to visit each community every three months. I make more frequent visits to the larger centers usually every month.

We are fortunate to have all nursing positions filled in the community services area. This past year, I am very proud of both Black Lake and Fond du Lac Nursing Staff who have worked hard to keep the immunization stats at 100% in most age groups.

This past several months has been one of the biggest challenges in my entire nursing career. I must say though it has been one of the happiest times and the most satisfying times. The people I have had the opportunity to work with and to work for are the reason I look forward to my work everyday. Have a great summer.

EVELYN DUPUIS, DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL SERVICES

The Athabasca Health Authority is a unique organization and is the only one of its kind in Canada. As Director of Regional Services, my main responsibility is the operation and management of the Athabasca Health Facility, which consists of three long term care beds, one respite bed, one new born bassinet, one birthing room, one pediatric observation and eight beds for acute care.

We are very fortunate to have a full quota of registered nurses, emergency medical technicians and combined laboratory/x-ray technicians who provide services on a rotation basis every fourteen days. In addition, as part of the interdisciplinary approach to client focused care, other team members consist of dietary, housekeeping, laundry, pharmacist, medical records, receptionist, special care aides and a licensed practical nurse.

Physicians are provided by Northern Medical Services. Dr. K. Abbasi is a resident physician and is assisted by temporary staff physicians who provide service on a regularly scheduled basis. A number of medical consultants and other specialists conduct clinics as required.

I would like to thank the employees, independent contractors and physicians for their dedication and hard work.

I look forward to working with the Authority to provide a high quality of care for our clients.

NAP DUPUIS, DIRECTOR OF SUPPORT SERVICES

It is an honor and a privilege to work for the Athabasca Health Authority and to live in Northern Saskatchewan. The quality of care provided by AHA is of the highest standard and we should all be very proud of the Authority's achievements.

The morale, work ethics and dedications of our employees are all outstanding and I wish to thank them for reaching and maintaining such high standards.

AHA is a young and struggling new organization with lots of tasks ahead to accomplish, policies and protocols to write, lessons to learn but most of all, to collaborate to serve our clients.

Employees come and go, but there will always be others to take their places to ensure the goals of the Authority are met. Sheila Robillard, Senior Finance Officer is leaving AHA on a one-year maternity leave and she will be missed. I would like to welcome Dean (Dino) Martsinkiw who joined AHA on April 19, 2004 as Facilities Manager.

Congratulations to Lena May Seegerts, Human Resources Officer for producing this excellent first AHA Newsletter.

I look forward to my continuing involvement with AHA.

Beverly Peel, Director of Community Services

It is an honor and a privilege to work for the Athabasca Health Authority as the Director of Community Services and to live in Northern Saskatchewan. We should be proud of what AHA has achieved and continues to achieve, the quality of care and services provided at AHA is exceptional. Community Services includes mental health and addictions, children's services, dental services, IRS, health promotion, homecare and quality improvement through the accreditation process. Our staff use collaborative approaches in working with community members, partners and other stakeholders. Last year we were fortunate add three youth workers to our staff complement which supports our future direction of supporting wellness for youth, Elders and the community as a whole. We have been gifted with the addition of a Case Manager for Children's Mental Health and are receiving funding to construct a therapy room for children and their families. We have supported our staff with numerous training opportunities and have opened the training opportunities to band members and other agencies in the community. We continue to develop resources for the communities, expand relationships with external stakeholders and provide information to support all community health priorities.

Sheila Robillard, Director of Corporate Services

Medical Transportation for the Athabasca region was transferred to AHA in July of 2017, offering transportation-private mileage, meals and accommodations directly from our clinics, we currently staff 5 employees in this department and hope to increase the 2 First Nations offices as well as an on call service line. This is a trial basis and our future goal is to completely transfer the whole Medical Transportation agreement including transportation via air to the Athabasca Health Authority.

JD Miller, Director of IT Services

Athabasca Health Authority is a leader in First Nation Health Care technology in Saskatchewan. AHA provides immediate access to the tools required for the provision of Acute, Primary and Long Term Care as well Mental Wellness Services. The Athabasca Health Facility is an advanced health care facility with access to Digital Imaging services (Xray, Ultrasound and Tele-robotic Ultrasound) that is unmatched in any hospital in the province. The AHA lab boasts one of only two Gene Xpert testing analyzers in the province for TB Control and will have all of its analyzers integrated with the provincial labs in 2018 bringing the lab services on par with any provincial lab. The Electronic Medical Record (EMR) has been in operation for 18 months now in all facilities and provides secure access to all personal medical information for any resident in the basin whenever they are seen by a Doctor or Nurse. With access to the provincial eHR Viewer, all medical professionals can have easy access to the necessary information to provide the best care possible. Mental Wellness services to adults, youth and now children.

With the remoteness of the AHA communities, telehealth services which include video conferencing (traditional telehealth and Doc in a Box) allow for easy access to a wide range of services. Oncology, Nephrology, Neurology, Medical Genetics and other specialists are available right in each community. The Tele-Robotics program has now brought tele-robotic Ultrasound to the basin and our resident robot for pediatrics in Stony Rapids (Dr. Nezu) has on call pediatric intensivists available when necessary. The Google glasses remote viewing station is currently being tested and will provide an easy way for specialists to "see" what the Doctors are seeing and provide immediate consultation.

It is an exciting time in the history of health care provision at AHA with the continuing advancements in health care technology. AHA IT services aims to realize the AHA mission, "creating a place for northern people to heal" by putting the most advanced IT systems into hands of all providers in the Athabasca Basin and help bring the AHA vision to fruition – Healthy Land, Healthy People.

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JOHN MERCREDI-ONE HARD WORKING MAN

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John Mercredi, Maintenance Worker, has been an employee of the Athabasca Health Authority since June 1, 2004. He has lived here all of his life and is married to Florence and has four children and two grandchildren. His home is located next to the facility and he is able to be on site within a short time after he has been called.

6 · 6 · 6 · 6 · 6 · 6 · 6

He is a general handyman and is a very valuable employee. His duties include delivering and picking up of supplies, mail, specimens, etc., transporting clients, employees and visiting consultants, performing building and vehicle preventative maintenance, maintaining the grounds and equipment, security checks, keeping the maintenance department clean, snow and garbage removal, performs carpentry and mechanical repairs and does whatever is asked.

John also drives the Horizontal Transportation Vehicle (HTV), which was brought over from Uranium City in September 2003. Although the HTV is not licensed as an ambulance, it is used to transport emergency cases from Black Lake, to and from the Stony Rapids airport and in the event of an accident within the immediate area of the facility. John is on call twenty-four hours every day, unless he is ill or wishes some time off, then the Director of Support Services provides relief. John provides translation services for the doctors and nurses and is always available to provide assistance when required.

As busy as John is, he also drives the sewage pump truck owned by the Northern Hamlet of Stony Rapids. Due to a blockage in the sewage line a few feet from the AHA pump-house, John has to drain the holding tank every two days and this amounts to approximately 3,600 gallons or two truckloads. He also provides this service to a number of other residences located in Stony Rapids and on the reserve.

Construction of the facility began in June 2001 and John was on site working for PCL as a laborer. His duties were varied and ranged from cutting brush to transporting workers. He had many experiences while working on the building construction, such as, working in -35 degrees centigrade when the equipment would freeze and break down and working conditions were difficult. When the PCL crew went on leave, John maintained the facility and had to check water lines, maintain vehicles and equipment and ensure everything was secure. He is proud of his work record of 4,300 hours of work without missing a day.

John is a good source of information about the building and water and sewer lines because he was present during all of the construction.

He keeps busy at home, using his limited free time, by gathering firewood and maintaining his beautiful home, which offers a spectacular view of the rapids. His hobbies include ski-dooing, fishing and hunting caribou and moose.





HAPPY 95TH BIRTHDAY MADELINE LIDGUERRE

Happy 95th Birthday to our "granny" Madeline Lidguerre of Fond du Lac who is one of our long term care resident.

Madeline enjoys singing and talking with everyone who sits beside her. She enjoys everyone's company.

Monthly Birthdays



At AHA we celebrate staff birthdays on a Friday towards the end of each month. These are organized by our HR manager, Elizabeth MacDonald, and for special occasions she also comes up with fun games & quizzes! We also have to applaud the kitchen staff who always provide us a beautiful cake & sometimes other treats like homemade pizza or fresh fruit.







Yoga in the Basin!

Congratulations to Adison Messett & Carly Tinkler for completing the Basic Yoga Teacher Certification Course & receiving their certificates!

As a school teacher, Carly has a special interest in teaching yoga to children so we look forward to seeing some flexible & relaxed kids in the future.





And a big shout out to our Uranium Clty participants, Denise Bougie & Margaret Powder who aslo attended the training but due to scheduling will have to complete the final steps of their training with a little long distance technology.

Each of these ladies has committed to giving back 60 hours of yoga classes or workshops to their communities, so keep an eye out for upcoming classes & come support them while getting a good stretch and a little physical activity into your day!

Oral Health Month

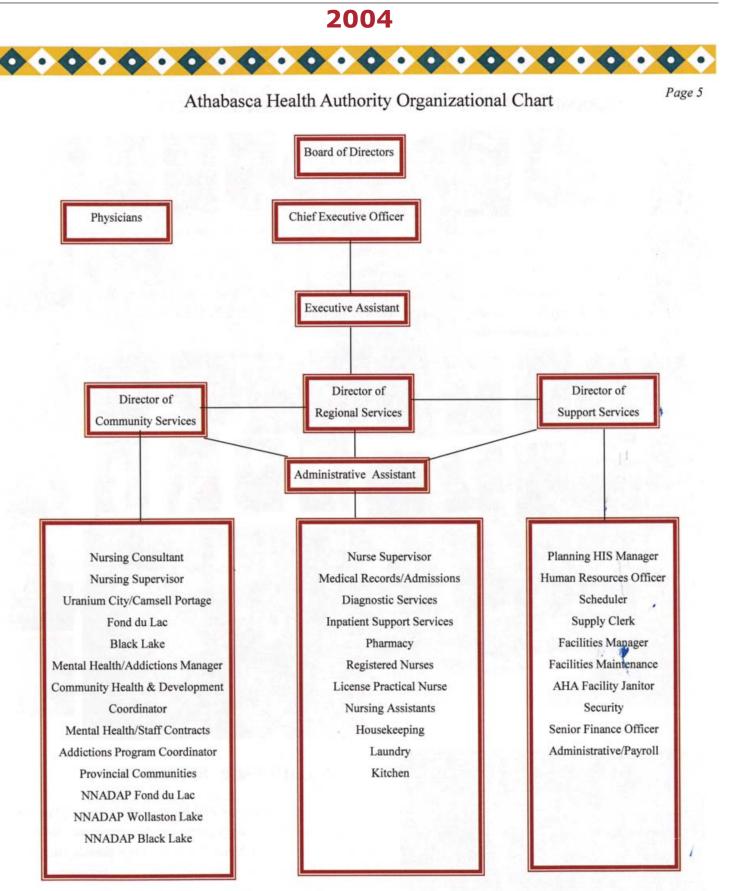
April is Dental Health Month! Our dental therapist team (Rose Mercredi-Zinck & Rèjeanne Lameman) have great activities planned this month in the schools & communities.

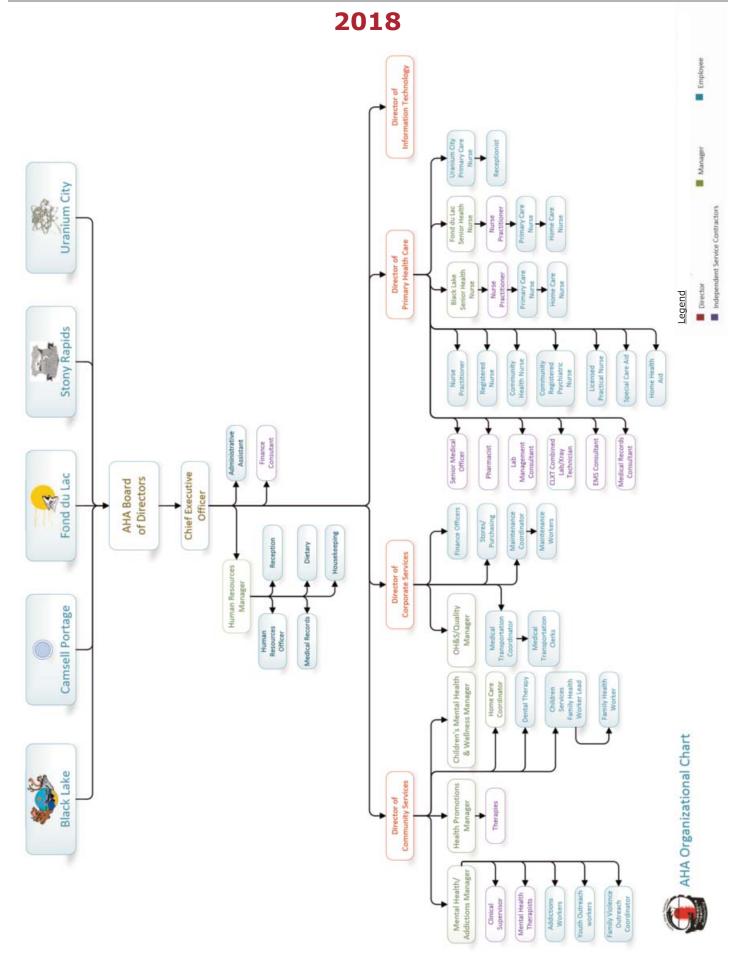
Black Lake: April 9-13 Fond du Lac: April 16-20 Stony Rapids: April 23-26 Uranium City: April 27

Dental Therapists Week is April 22-28th, so give your local dental therapist a big smile & a thank you if you see them!









BLESSING OF THE ATHABASCA HEALTH FACILITY

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On October 2003, a special event, the Blessing of the Athabasca Health Facility had taken place. Father Murray along with numerous elders, staff members and dignitaries had made this special event a memorable and everlasting day. There were approximately 150 people who had lunch and later walked with Father Murray to bless each room in the Facility. While Father Murray was blessing the rooms, there was awesome singing in Dene by the people. This was truly a memorable event.







PILGRIMAGE SPRING 2004

The residents of Black Lake and Stony Rapids had a pilgrimage in late May 2004. Approximately 60 people had walked from the community of Black Lake to Stony Rapids carrying the Virgin Mary Statue. The pilgrimage is a religious event where prayers and hymns are in the Dene language.

The pilgrimage had stopped at the Facility where a visit with Father Megret was truly an enjoyable experience for us all.



Pine Channel Pllgrimage

These summers, Pine Channel is an important pilgrammage and community members attend for a number of reasons. During this week, AHA arranges a BBQ event for attendees, and typically gives away items as well. In 2017 it was first aid kits & water bottles, & the previous year was umbrellas, which worked out well because it was raining!

April is Autism Awareness Month

Our Autism Consultant, Olivia O'Neill, visits every month to work with children in the basin, and she wrote this great article for us!

What is Autism? Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex lifelong neurodevelopmental disorder that typically appears within the first three years of life. It is considered to be a spectrum disorder meaning the primary symptoms can be expressed in varying degrees of severity. In other words, Autism can look very different from one individual to the next.

Individuals with Autism can have difficulty with verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and can display a range of rigid or stereotyped, repetitive behaviors, often with insistence on a specific routine that they will show resistance to changing.

There is no known cure for Autism; however; it is highly treatable. Symptoms can be lessened and skills can be acquired with treatment and support.

Who is affected by Autism? The latest statistics indicate that as many as 1 in 68 children are affected by ASD. What was once viewed as a rare disorder is now recognized as one of the most common neurological disorders affecting children.

What causes Autism? Exactly what causes ASD is still unknown. The current theory is that ASD is caused by a combination of "risk genes" and environmental factors in the early brain development period.

Autism Mythbusters:

Myth: Poor parenting causes autism. Fact: While there is no one known cause for autism, it is known the disorder is not caused bypoor parenting.



Myth: Children with autism just need more love and a good spanking. **Fact:** Autism is not caused by a lack of love, and it is not cured by punishment. Parents need support to manage difficult behaviours with structure and consistency.

Myth: People with autism have to be in special programs for the autistic. **Fact:** Individually designed programs best meet the needs of a person with autism. Those with autism should be learning, living and working in settings where there is ample opportunity tocommunicate and interact with others who have the skills they lack.

If you would like to know more about Autism, or would like to refer an individual for support and treatment, please contact **Olivia O'Neill, the AHA Autism Consultant** at 306-665-9374 or email her at: <u>ooneill@autismservices.ca</u>





We were fortunate to have the services of Dr. Du Randt as he was one of the "First Doctors" on staff when the facility opened in June 2003. He transferred from Uranium City where he was on staff for approximately two and a half years. Dr. Du Randt moved to South Africa where he is residing with his family. We wish him and his family all the best.

OUR FIRST BABY BORN

Our first baby, a son, was born to Tracy and Gilbert Broussie on March 13, 2004 and was a most memorable occasion. Dr. A. Bhagat delivered the baby and was assisted by Dr. K. Abbasi, Judy Macdonald, RN and Evelyn Hegedus, RN. This indeed was a memorable event.



CHRISTMAS 2003

The first AHA Christmas was indeed a celebration; it was a memorable experience where a Mrs. Santa Claus played the role of our Mr. Santa Claus.

Our gift exchange was a lot of fun and we should have used the Dene gift exchange game because we used the Chinese gift exchange game and did not quite know or follow the rules. The gifts were wonderful and everybody enjoyed taking gifts from one another. The top gift that everybody wanted was a baby fleece blanket and it went from person to person until the very end of the game. Whoever managed to claim the blanket truly had a warm winter.

The Christmas dinner was superb and tasted delicious. Thanks to all who brought food for the potluck and a special thanks to the Dietary employees who cooked the ham, turkey, fresh pies and homemade rolls. It was a memorable experience and will be remembered by all who attended.



Babies in the Basin

Although we don't routinely deliver babies at our facility we still have new additions to the community every year! AHA is encouraging moms to breastfeed & this mom (Sharel Toutsaint) was a successful participant in the 'Breastfeeding Peer Support Training" program. Our community nurses & other staff provide support to the prenatals as well as some great prenatal supplies!

Special Note

Lena May Seegerts & Irene McDonald who are featured in the top photo (on the previous 2004 page), are still part of the AHA team!

Festivities

We still have terrific Christmas parties at AHA, but more recently we had a little bit of St. Patrick's Day Fun!







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NELLA'S ADVICE COLUMN

In every issue we will have an advice column where anyone can write a letter to Nella. If you would like to write a letter to Nella, please address the letter to Human Resources c/o Nella's Advice Column. This advice can be from having problems with your spouse, job, etc where you would like to have a second opinion.

An example:

Dear Nella: Please help me as I am having problems with my boyfriend, he doesn't talk much and I know there is something bothering him. I am 41 years old and he is 43. What do you think I should do?

Thank you, From a Frustrated Lady

Dear Frustrated Lady: You have to understand that it's harder for men to communicate and they need help getting started. Their brains are just wired that way. Start off by sharing an activity (fishing, camping, dancing) and talking about the fun you had. Don't start with problems or feelings, start with events or fun memories. Keep building on that every day and never give up. Above all—don't you talk too much! Nella.

New School PLUS Web Site Article

The provincial government has launched a new Virtual School PLUS Doorway web site. The site can be found at www.schoolplus.gov.sk.ca.

This innovative web site provides children, youth, families, community-based organizations, educators and service providers as well as others with an overview and access into the world of School PLUS.

The objective of School PLUS is to give Saskatchewan children and youth what they need to be successful in school and in life. It focuses on schools as centers of learning and support. For our children and youth to be successful, schools need to serve two functions: to educate children and youth and to provide support services to children, youth and their families.

The web site is the entry point to School PLUS activities. It provides links and information regarding a broad range of programs and services supporting Saskatchewan's families.

