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To make a written contribution to Prairie to Peak, please submit your articles by e-mail to the Editor, Wayne Steer, at wayne@alsab.ca. If you do not have email access, please contact Wayne Steer at (403) 228-3857 to make alternate arrangements.

Due to limited space articles may not be printed in their entirety. Additional articles may be published online at www.alsab.ca.

New Look & New Name for the ALS Society of Alberta's Newsletter

As you may have noticed, the ALS Society of Alberta has changed the name and the look of the quarterly publication. The change reflects the expanded scope and evolution that the society has undergone in the past few years. As well, the new look matches the imaging of the Society's website (www.alsab.ca).

The new name of our newsletter is "**Prairie to Peak, a quarterly publication of the ALS Society of Alberta**". The quarterly publication dates for 'Prairie to Peak' will be at the end of January, April, July and October. Proposed submissions should be received no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the publication date.

"**Prairie to Peak**" will be published in a black and white format in the future. However, downloadable full-colour and grayscale formats will be accessible from the ALS Alberta website at <http://www.alsab.ca/newsletters.aspx>.

We welcome your feedback and comments may be made directly by e-mailing Wayne Steer (Editor) at wayne@alsab.ca or by calling toll free 888-309-1111. To receive this publication in electronic form, email Wayne Steer at wayne@alsab.ca.

The ALS March of Faces

The **ALS MARCH OF FACES** is a campaign project that has been undertaken by the ALS Society of Canada to mark their 25th anniversary. Banners are created for each province and they display the faces of those who are fighting, or who have fought, ALS. The campaign is powerful in that the public can gain a glimpse at the faces of some people with ALS and see the indiscriminate nature of the disease. It is a tool that has been used to effectively bolster public awareness at local events and activities.

Each **ALS MARCH OF FACES** banner has 20 full-colour portraits of people living with ALS or who have died of ALS from each province. This project has become one of the very best awareness tools that we have to date. The banners always seem to create a lot of interest when they are displayed. (*Cont. on page 2*)

The Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of Alberta's Provincial Office is located at: Suite 400, 320-23 Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta, T2S 0J2
Telephone: 403-228-3857; Toll Free: 1-888-309-1111; Fax: 403-228-7752;
Website: www.alsab.ca

The North Region Office is located at:
Suite 410, 11456 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 0M1
Telephone: 780-487-0754; Toll Free: 1-866-447-0754; Fax: 780-486-3604

(MARCH OF FACES Continued from page 1)

We now have nearly 600 people participating in this project. If you are a Canadian living with ALS or have had a family member or friend with ALS, we invite you to add a portrait to this project.

For further information on how to participate in the ALS **MARCH OF FACES**, can be found by visiting <http://www.alsab.ca/events/marchoffaces.aspx>. At this site you will be prompted to fill out a permission form and forward a portrait to the **MARCH OF FACES** Coordinators.

All participants will receive regular updates on the development of the banners. To arrange to use a banner at a local event please contact the ALS Society of Alberta.

To those of you who have taken part, Thank You!
... it really does make a difference.

U of A Hospital's ALS Clinic

- Original article written by Dr. K. Ming Chan -
The ALS Clinic at the University of Alberta Hospital has been providing services to ALS patients in Alberta since 2001. In addition to delivering medical care to ALS patients and conducting research to discover better patient care, the ALS Clinic also helps ALS patients deal with other issues relevant to the situations they and their families face. These issues include functional, spiritual and social concerns.

From the base at the University of Alberta Hospital, the Clinic has been steadily expanding the range of services it offers to meet the changing needs of ALS patients.

Physicians work closely with other professionals including speech pathologists, respiratory therapists, dietitians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, social workers and people involved in pastoral care. Staff from the ALS Society of Alberta are an important partner to the Clinic as they

provide links to the community, education and support as well as access to equipment not available from other sources. To maximize efficiency, this multidisciplinary team is coordinated by the Clinic Nurse.

In addition to the University of Alberta Hospital site, the Clinic is also held at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital and Miseracordia Hospital to take advantage of additional services offered at these locations.

The main advantage of the multidisciplinary setup provided by the clinics is that patients can gain access to all the different services in a "one stop shopping" manner without having to travel multiple times to see individual healthcare professionals in different facilities.

Because clients may be seeing several practitioners in one appointment, clinic visits are often long. Patients are encouraged to bring along a book or magazine, a water bottle and perhaps a snack.

Having an active and vibrant clinic is important to ALS patients. It provides an easily identifiable entity with whom other specialists and agencies such as Home Care can liaise.

Editorial Note: Dr. K. Ming Chan is an associate professor in the Division of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Alberta

Website Discussion Boards

The ALS Society of Canada has Discussion Boards that are intended for discussions regarding ALS. People with ALS, their families, caregivers, volunteers and health care professionals may all find the discussion boards useful.

The discussion boards are mostly utilized by Canadians but there are visitors from around the globe who provide their input and queries.

Visit the website to find out more about this valuable networking and support resource: the URL for the ALS Society of Canada On-Line Forum Community is http://www.als.ca/_forum/alstopic.php?p=2787.

Condolences

Our sincere condolences go out to the families of the following people who have recently passed away:

June Burns	Colleen Hayward	Ken Leibel	Joyce Pirnak
Stanley Carlstad	Nina Jones	Miguel Lopez	Patrick Swiney
Albert Chow	Chris Mann	Amy Matthews	Ralph Totman
Laura Dorrans	Rosemary Hinecker	Mowat (Ed) McIlwraith	Richard Woodham

A special thanks goes out to all those who kindly sent donations to the ALS Society in memory of friends and loved ones affected by ALS. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Delectable Art Shows Support

On Wednesday November 16, 2005 the Calgary Winter Club (4611 – 14th Street NW) hosted the 6th Annual Delectable & Art Show. The event featured the handmade crafts and homemade baking of Alberta's various artisans. The event ran from 10 am until 8 pm and the \$2 admission fee was donated to the ALS Society of Alberta; children 12 and under were admitted for free.

This is the first year that the ALS Society of Alberta has received the admission proceeds from this event. The Society is thrilled to be receiving this support and the publicity that accompanies it not to mention the \$ 1,752.00 that the door proceeds amounted to.

ALS Fashion Statement

On the afternoon of Sunday, September 25th the Metropolitan Grill at Mount Royal Village, Calgary was abuzz with activity. Models from "i Model Management" had donated their time and their 'struts' to a fashion show benefiting the ALS Society of Alberta. The event, hosted by CityTV's own Aisling Slattery, showcased clothing from shops along the Uptown 17th strip and ranged from elegant to funky to down-right cheeky!

The show was the kick-off event for "Fashion Week" and was organized by the **Artemis Foundation**, a dynamic charitable "organization of forward thinking women who strive to build friendships and collaborations which inspire positive change and impact throughout the community."

Proceeds from the event raised \$2,019.00 for the ALS Society of Alberta. The event was not only a means to raise money, it also was a fabulous tool for educating the community about ALS. The Artemis Foundation dedicated a full page of its week-long program to describing the work of the ALS Society of Alberta.

The **Artemis Foundation** dedicates funding to programs that support women and children in the community. How does this mesh with the mandate of the ALS Society? The funds donated from the Artemis Foundation are designated to a newly established program that seeks to provide normalcy for children in households that are affected by ALS. The money will provide opportunities such as scholarships, camp and sport registration, attendance to cultural events, and other activities that foster healthy childhood development.

Betty Norman has Inspired a Decade of Fundraising

The Betty's Run for ALS Committee is gearing up for the planning of the 10th annual Betty's Run for ALS - the most recognizable and publicized ALS fundraiser in Calgary. If you would like to be involved as a volunteer with the Betty's Run Committee contact Jane Rivest at (403) 228-3857, extension 102. Planning sessions are currently underway for the June 11, 2006 event. Also, planning for the June Walks for ALS across the province will be underway shortly. For information about how to become involved in the planning of a Walk for ALS near you, call Wayne Steer at (403) 228-3857, extension 108.

A Sweet Reason to Indulge Your Sweet Tooth

The ALS Society of Alberta would like to recognize **World's Finest Chocolates** as a very generous and innovative corporate supporter. **World's Finest Chocolates** approached the ALS Society of Alberta with a unique proposition for extended support.

Since February 2005, **World's Finest Chocolates** has been selling chocolate covered almonds in Edmonton with a substantial amount of the proceeds coming to the ALS Society of Alberta. Prior to the Walks for ALS, some of the product labels provided free advertising for the Edmonton Walk, as well as a phone number and website address to call for more information about the ALS Society of Alberta. Each box costs \$3 and includes a \$5 coupon to Pizza Hut, making the purchase even more worthwhile for pizza lovers.

This arrangement is very generous on the part of **World's Finest Chocolates**, as they do not require ALS Society of Alberta staff or volunteers to sell the chocolates directly; we merely cash the cheques and use the money to sustain our programs such as the Equipment Bank and Client Services Programs!

A similar program is being introduced to the Calgary market in November 2005 and will include information about the 10th Annual Betty's Run for ALS.

World's Finest Chocolates has contributed almost \$30,000 to the ALS Society of Alberta since February 2005. Look for the specially marked wrappers of World's Finest Chocolates' covered almonds and support this corporation as they support us. If you know of a business location that would be receptive to having these chocolates placed at for sale please call Wayne Steer at (403) 228-3857 Extension 108.

This is truly a sweet deal.

Executive Director's Message

Over the next few months I will introduce the ALS Society of Alberta Staff - that amazing team who provide the services to those living with ALS, raise the dollars needed to provide the services and keep the office systems running smoothly. Together, with the Board and many volunteers all around the province, they "...make everyday the best possible day for people with ALS..."

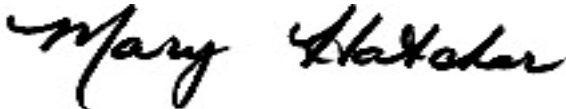
This issue, I will begin by introducing Helen Desjardins (Provincial Office Coordinator) and Phyllis Javorsky (Alberta North Region Administration and Volunteer Coordinator), as they are the usually the first person you speak with when you call the offices.

Helen has been with the ALS Society of Alberta for almost 7 years. Originally from Scotland, she immigrated to Canada in 1967 and spent 30 years working in the financial sector. She has adapted her knowledge to help support the many hats she wears at ALS AB, including managing the receipting of all the donations we receive. So far, in 2005, about 8,500 receipts have been sent out. Thank you Helen, for your dedication and attention to detail.

Phyllis came to the ALS Society of Alberta from Muscular Dystrophy Canada just under a year ago. As the person responsible for Administration and Volunteers in the North Region, she brings over 15 years experience in the non-profit/volunteer sector. Phyllis uses her professional skills and academic knowledge (including a degree in Community Rehabilitation, a Social Services Diploma and a Counseling Certificate) to help those with ALS and their families, as well as the general public. Thank you Phyllis for the care and support you share with us all.

These two dedicated women work diligently to make sure that the administrative functions of the Society are covered.

Thank you,



Helpful Hints

Purchasing a Wheelchair Accommodating Vehicle

Are you looking for a used wheelchair accessible van? Often vendors have ads for vehicles for sale in their foyer. Here are some additional places to look.

Websites:

- www.canparaplegic.org Click on Shop 'n Swap and go to 'show ads by province'
- www.altamobility.ca
- www.autotrader.ca

Before purchase, it is important to consider whether or not you will be sitting in a manual or power chair while riding in the van. If so, a raised roof may be necessary to accommodate your height while sitting in the chair.

Grocery Shopping

Shopping for groceries can require a lot of time each week. Some clients and their families have identified the following stores as providing a delivery service.

- **Sunterra Market:** shop@sunterramarket.com
Available in Calgary (coming to Edmonton)
- **Pic 'n' Del (Co-op):** www.picndel.com
Available in Calgary and Edmonton and some other areas.
- **Sobeys - Medicine Hat:** Search 'Sobeys delivery Medicine Hat'
- **Safeway:** go to www.safeway.com, click the shop online tab and following the directions to find out if Safeway delivers in your area.

Contact your local grocery retailer to see if they offer home delivery service.

Equipment Donations

The ALS Society of Alberta would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those families, individuals, and businesses that have donated to our equipment bank in one way or another over the past years. These pieces of equipment and funding to purchase equipment are an integral piece to fulfilling our mission to "make everyday the best possible day for people with ALS". These donations really have made a positive difference in the life of someone with ALS and are truly gifts of comfort, communication, mobility, dignity and independence.

The ALS Society is always grateful for donations of used equipment to add to our equipment bank. If you have any equipment that you would like to donate, please call Lauren at (403) 228-3857 or Phyllis at (780) 487-0754.

OUT AND ABOUT – AROUND THE PROVINCE

2005 ALS Remembrance Service

On October 16th, a Remembrance Service for ALS Society of Alberta clients deceased over the past two years was held at Pilgrims Hospice Society in Edmonton. Families and Staff from the various ALS Clinics attended.

At the service, tribute Celebrant Verna Klimack spoke eloquently of the grief process, the journey and "walking with grief".

The safe, secure and supportive environment was much appreciated. For further information on Bereavement Support please call the ALS Society of Alberta Provincial office at 888-309-1111 or our North Region office at 866-447-0754.

Volunteer Profile

We would like to take a moment to thank those individuals who have tirelessly given of themselves for the benefit of the organization.

"IT'S A JOB FOR BOB"

In Spring 2002, Bob Brown visited the ALS Society of Alberta's North Region office in Edmonton. Bob's wife had recently died from ALS and he caught us in the act of compiling a request for an office volunteer. This position was initially to ensure that a real person answered the phone as, at this point in time, the administrative staff person was only part-time.

When this kindly gent read our request he immediately asked if he could reply. Bob promptly outlined his years of administrative experience with the RCAF and Canada Post. After having met and far exceeding the criteria, Bob soon became a regular Monday morning volunteer.

Naturally his knowledge and interest in ALS and the work of the Society has increased. Bob has taken the opportunity to attend conferences about ALS and has become an integral part of the office. Nearly four years later he continues his Monday mornings with us and says he enjoys "being in charge" and "gets great satisfaction from returning the favours he received from the Society when Evelyn was ill". He has in turn taught us how to make proper coffee, keeps us organized and always has a smile to share. We rely on his good and generous spirit and are never at a loss to assign "Bob Jobs".

Thank you, Bob Brown - you mean so much to us all.

Written by Patricia Ordynec
Manager, Alberta North Region

Red Deer Support Groups:

When: Saturday December 3 (1:30 to 3 pm)

Where: MS Society Office at 4322 - 52 Avenue, RD

Co-facilitators: Patricia Ordynec and Jane Rivest

Topic: "Where do I go from here? Living with ALS"

Calgary Support Groups:

Saturday Support:

Participants: These groups are intended for people living with ALS, their families, friends and caregivers.

When: Saturday, November 19 (1:30 to 3 p.m.)

Where: ALS office at 400, 320 – 23rd Avenue S.W.

Facilitator: Jane Rivest, Client Services Coordinator

Tuesday Social Event:

ALS Community Christmas Social

(Client, Family, Friend, Volunteer, Staff & Board)

When: Tuesday, November 29th at 6:00 pm

Where: St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church Parish Hall (5340 – 4th Street SW, Calgary. Please save this date on your calendar for a pre-Christmas Pot Luck Supper and social. Phone Jane Rivest to coordinate dishes at 228-3857 Extension 102.

First Annual Hike 4 ALS (Jumpingpound Loop, Kananaskis, Alberta)

The day started like so few mid-October days in Alberta. The early morning Hike 4 ALS volunteers were greeted by sunshine and the weatherman's promise of a beautiful, warm day.

The fair weather drew crowds larger than anticipated for this, the pilot year, of the event. The 9 km hike was trekked by nearly 40 people with the youngest participant being only 4 years old.

There were several encounters with wildlife that were reported including a heart-stopping, face-to-face meeting with a cow and several entertaining squirrels and chipmunks.

With the help of national sponsors Hi-Tec Sports and Explore Magazine as well as local sponsors, Arrowhead Spring Water and Horizon Resource Management Limited, the event's thirty-one participants and eight volunteers raised more than \$4,000 for the ALS Societies of Alberta and Canada. More importantly, this event, along with the three others that occurred across Canada, helped to lay the foundation for a successful annual event.

Mark your calendar to participate in the 2006 Hike 4 ALS during the third weekend in September, 2006 – we anticipate Mother Nature will treat us all to an even more spectacular display of beauty then.

ALS Society Braces for the Bracelet Demand



Many clients, family members of clients, and volunteers have been asking us why we do not have custom rubber silicone bracelets that are a popular fundraising and awareness tool used across Canada and the United States.

We are happy to announce that we have a batch of custom ordered purple ALS bracelets. The bracelets are debossed (indented lettering) with the message "ALS It's About Loving Someone" and the ALS Logo. The ALS Society would like to thank Mike Shirley for his great contribution to the design of these bracelets – it is truly a message from the heart.

The bracelets can be purchased from the ALS Society of Alberta for a minimum donation of \$3. To order your bracelets call Wayne Steer at 228-3857 Extension 108 or Jane Rivest at 228-3857 Extension 103.

Innovative Bank on the Horizon to Benefit Charities

Although it might seem an oxy-moron, the birth of a Canadian bank that is also a charity is close to becoming a reality. The ALS Society of Alberta - along with many other charities - was invited to participate in an information and question forum with key organizers of Vartana Bank.

This bank is unique because it has a mandate to serve only charities and other nonprofit organizations with charitable purposes, with the primary motive to help its client's build sustainability and capacity in order to better serve the community. The name "Vartana" is a Sanskrit word that refers to the intersection of community and commerce.

Unproven Treatments: International Alliance of ALS/MND Associations

Alternative treatments are a source of debate within the ALS community. Following are excerpts from the recently released Statement on Alternative Treatments from the International Alliance of ALS/MND Associations. ALS is known as Motor Neuron Disease (MND) in European countries. To view the document in its entirety, visit http://www.alsindependence.com/Alternative_Treatments.htm.

Statement on Alternative Treatments:

"The International Alliance of ALS/MND Associations [The Alliance] believe[s] that treatments for, and research into, ALS/MND should be legal, have sound scientific rationale (sic) and have the potential to bring us closer to the cause, treatment or cure for the condition [and] only recommends treatments that have been proven through scientific testing and clinical trials (sic) to be safe and effective.

The statement provides some guiding principles for those seeking or considering alternative treatments. It suggests consideration of the following questions. The full document offers more probing sub-questions as well:

1. "What claims are being made for the treatment?"
2. "How are people finding out about the treatment?"
3. "Who is offering the treatment?"
4. "What are the risks involved?"
5. "What follow-up monitoring is carried out after the treatment?"

"The Alliance [recognizes] the interest that people affected by ALS/MND can have in seeking out alternative forms of treatment, ... supports the individual's right to choose treatment ... [and] strongly encourage(s) anyone considering treatment to fully discuss ... such treatment with their doctor, health care professional and family."

What Do You Want to Read About in the Next Prairie to Peak?

Are there some handy hints that you would like to request or share with the rest of the Alberta ALS Community? Are you planning an ALS fundraiser and would like to publicize the event? Are you searching for an answer to a particular question about ALS? If so, contact Wayne Steer at either wayne@alsab.ca or (403) 228-3857 extension 108. Our story deadline is the 15th of each month in which a publication is released (January, April, July and October). We look forward to providing stories and information that our readership requests.