

President/CEO *Report*

..... A monthly report on Ranch Ehrlo Society's activities

Ranch Ehrlo employees present at World Forum

issue 56, December 2010

During the course of any month, there are a number of activities which occur that go unreported to Board Members, our Senate, key Stakeholders and staff. This bi-monthly newsletter will attempt to capture some of that activity and give you a broader perspective on Ranch Ehrlo and Ehrlo Community Services.

Dr. Geoff Pawson
President/CEO

Dr. Geoff Pawson has been recognized provincially and nationally for his passion and commitment to the well-being of young people. Therefore, it was not surprising that Pawson was invited to once again present on the international stage, this time at the International Forum for Child Welfare (IFCW) in Palisades, New York.

Founded in Finland in 1989, the IFCW is a world body dedicated to the rights and wellbeing of children. With membership in 50 countries, IFCW regularly highlights key issues of children's rights and development through annual "World Forums" which assemble delegates from around the world.

The theme of the 2010 WorldForum, which was held November 8th to 11th, was *A World Fit for Children: Advancing the Global Movement*. Delegates were in attendance from 26 countries and the event was co-hosted by The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. and Mentoring USA.

In addition to exploring and sharing information on practices and innovative approaches to child welfare, discussion occurred on child protection and violence, the changing role of grandparenting, support for education, and changes in technology and medicine, all from a global perspective.

Pawson, along with Osvaldo Elissetche from Argentina, spoke about the

successful technology exchange between the Ranch Ehrlo Society and Estudios y Proyectos, an agency in Buenos Aires that runs a number of programs to assist vulnerable children and youth.

Pawson and Elissetche first met at the 2004 World Forum in Buenos Aires and have since developed a strong, collaborative relationship that continues to grow and flourish. In addition to exchange visits, the two agencies have worked together to promote the rights of children internationally.

Also presenting at the Forum, were Patti Patrucka, clinical manager, and Sharon Achtemichuk, family preservation therapist with the Ranch Ehrlo Society's Family Treatment Program. Petrucka and Achtemichuk provided an overview of the Family Residential Treatment Program which was implemented in 2006 to help families reunite after having a child in care. They also presented on the Intensive Family Preservation Program, introduced in 2009, which is designed to keep children and families safe and prevent the unnecessary out-of-home placement of children.

In reviewing the program measures and indicators, and the positive outcomes, Petrucka noted that 45 children have been taken out of care and reunified with their families.

For more information on the Forum go to www.worldforum2010.org.

Annual General Meeting

The 44th annual general meeting of the Ranch Ehrlo Society was held at a luncheon at the West Harvest Inn on Tuesday, September 28th. Chair Deb Jordan welcomed members to the meeting, introduced special guests, and provided an overview of the highlights of the past year.

The members thanked retiring board members, Donalda Hansen, Dr. Cyril Kesten, Punam Burnett, and Sherri Pooyak for their contribution to the agency. New board members elected at the meeting were Heather Collins, financial consultant, Duane Hayunga, director of operations, SaskTel, Hugh Hudson, public sector executive, IBM, Dan Perrins, executive-in-residence, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, and Ernestine Starr, formerly with the Ministry of Social Services.

Keith Hanson, chair of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, was the keynote speaker.

A copy of the Ranch Ehrlo Society 2009-2010 Annual Report, along with the audited financial statements and performance outcomes report can be found at www.ehrlo.com.

Agencies set to amalgamate

Following their respective annual general meetings, the membership of the Ranch Ehrlo Society and the membership of Ehrlo Community Services agreed to amalgamate the two agencies at a special members meeting held on September 28th. The effective date of the amalgamation will be May 31, 2011.

Dr. Geoff Pawson, president and chief executive officer of both agencies, provided an historical overview and the rationale for the initial creation of two agencies. "Ehrlo Community Services was created as a stand-alone agency because the board of Ranch Ehrlo Society was concerned about potential risk in assuming responsibility for the Lakeshore Village apartments," said Pawson. "After 10 years of successful operation, it is clear that this is no longer an issue."

In discussing the benefits of amalgamation, Pawson referenced the continuum of services that have been created among the programs provided by the Ranch and ECS. "These services, however, do not always dovetail, and there are always challenges when working with two stand-alone organizations," said Pawson. "Amalgamating the two agencies will augment programs, streamline services, and provide a seamless continuum of service delivery in the community."

Ranch Ehrlo joins UNESCO

Ranch Ehrlo Society has become the first residential treatment program to join the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

UNESCO hosts an Associated Schools Network among its 192 member countries of which Ranch Ehrlo is now included. "As an agency, Ranch

Ehrlo has been working hard to build meaningful relationships with our children, youth, and young adults, teaching positive coping strategies to resolve conflict peacefully," said Marion MacIver, executive vice-president and director of education for the Ranch Ehrlo Society.

"Joining UNESCO will...provide our youth with a global understanding of how we all contribute to bringing peace to the world."

Marian MacIver

"Joining UNESCO's Associated Schools and sharing its resources on *peace education* and a *culture of peace* will strengthen this important work and provide our youth with a global understanding of how we all contribute to bringing peace to the world."

Grand opening of Buckland riding arena

Approximately 150 guests attended the official opening of the riding arena on the Buckland campus on October 5th. The program included opening remarks, an official ribbon cutting by board chair Deb Jordan, a grand march, a

performance by the Ranch Ehrlo powwow clubs, and a musical ride performed by Ranch youth.

During the formal program, the mayor of Prince Albert, Jim Sparrow, paid special tribute to Dr. Geoff Pawson for his vision and contribution to the province. “You have had the courage to create a path that has provided direction to youth and to the members of the community.”

The arena has been fully utilized since the opening. In addition to housing the campus’ many equine assisted therapy programs, the arena has been used for numerous training sessions and as a meeting place for the Buckland powwow club.

Heather Chow, arena manager, hosted an information session on November 21st for the 4-H clubs from the surrounding Prince Albert areas. Approximately 35 people attended and the feedback was extremely positive.

Chow also hosted an open house on November 28th for various local and provincial participants in the equine industry where she demonstrated effective furrier practices and skills.

For more information on the Buckland riding arena or on its equine assisted therapy programs, contact Heather Chow at heather.chow@ranchehrlo.ca.

Minister visits campuses

The Honourable June Draude, minister of social services, along with her officials, visited the Pilot Butte campus for lunch, a presentation, and tour of the campus on October 25th.

During a meeting with Dr. Geoff Pawson and the vice-presidents, the minister discussed a number of the government’s priorities including affordable housing, services for individuals with disabilities, the Child Welfare Review panel, and the need to work with First Nations in the delivery of services.

The minister paid a subsequent visit to the Corman Park campus on November 19th where she toured the Ellen Gunn Education centre, Welke and May units and interacted with the youth.

Corman Park chili cook-off

On Friday, October 29th, Corman Park campus hosted its third annual chili cook-off, an event which has become a Halloween tradition at the campus.

The cook-off drew a crowd of about 50 tasters, sampling chili prepared by the four competing cooks. Randy O’Shaughnessy, senior director of programs north, took first place for his cooking of a recipe provided by one of the youth from Welke house.

Jason Kotyk, winner of the two previous chili cook-off competitions did not compete this year.

Pilot Butte open house

Ranch Ehrlo Society hosted an open house at its Pilot Butte campus on the afternoon of November 17th. Approximately 20 neighbours had a tour of the campus, enjoyed a performance by the powwow dancers, watched the agency video, and ate hamburgers and salads prepared by the youth.

“This event was an opportunity to get to know some of our new neighbours,” said Malcolm Neill, vice-president of Ehrlo Community Services who helped organize the event and was master of ceremonies for the program. “We’ve been part of the neighbourhood for almost 45 years, and with all the new development in the area we thought it important that they get to know us as well.”

The event was also an opportunity to re-establish the neighbourhood advisory committee for the campus. Three families agreed to participate on the committee which will meet at least annually, in conjunction with the three-mile race, or more often on an as-needed basis.

Former chair recognized

Congratulations to Tim Young, former board chair, who received the Champion College Alumni of Distinction Award for Professional Achievement at a gala event on November 5th. The award recognizes individuals who have distinguished themselves in their profession and who have also made significant contributions to the community.

Resident feedback survey

An annual resident feedback survey was recently completed as part of the Ranch Ehrlo Society's ongoing commitment to quality improvement. "Resident feedback provides the agency with an opportunity to understand the residents' satisfaction with a variety of programs and services that they receive," said Andrea Antonishen, program director, who helped coordinate the survey results. "Specifically, resident feedback is used to identify areas of strength and good practice as well as areas that require improvement within the agency."

The overall results of the 216 residents, who voluntarily participated in the verbal interview process, indicated that they are benefitting from residential care, recreation, work, and clinical services at the agency.

"Resident feedback is used to identify areas of strength and good practice as well as areas that require improvement within the agency".

Andrea Antonishen

Most residents reported satisfaction with activities such as recreation (84%) and opportunities to do work projects (78%). The majority of residents report that they feel safe and well cared for by staff (81%). A majority of the residents (56%) perceive the agency is doing an excellent or very good job at helping residents address their issues and problems. Similarly, most

residents like their school (80%) and the vast majority feel safe in these learning environments.

The majority of residents report having family involvement in their program (86%) and the resident's relationships with caregivers are particularly encouraging.

Program areas that residents identified as requiring attention and improvement include helping residents to understand and achieve their goals and more participation in cultural activities from their traditional heritage.

Library Voices

Amanda Scandrett, therapeutic arts facilitator and member of well-known Regina music group, *Library Voices*, recently received a grant for a project that gave Ranch Ehrlo youth an opportunity to work with the group in the recording of a song to be used in an iPad application.

Library Voices performed a free concert on Friday, November 12th for Ranch youth and staff to familiarize the youth with the band, live music, and to help them decide if they wanted to be part of the recording project.

"At the concert the youth really opened up to us," said Scandrett. "You could tell they really identified with the music and for many of them this was their first time to experience music live."

On November 21st, seven Ranch youth recorded "Artmaker" with the band. The youth sang, clapped, and played percussion. The song is expected to be available to the public by February 2011.

For further information on the recording project contact Amanda Scandrett at amanda.scandrett@ranchehrlo.ca.

Queen City Kinsmen donation

On Thursday, November 25th members of the Queen City Kinsmen visited Schaller School to be recognized for the club's \$10,000 donation which was used to purchase recreation equipment for the school and some of the units.

The club members toured the school and campus to see where their donations were spent. Some of the funds went to a specially designed volleyball net to fit inside the Liksi Gym and adjustments to the gym floor.

A plaque was presented to the club by vice-principal Ian MacLellan. A representative from Pasqua House also presented artwork to show appreciation for a bike donated to one of the clients. The event ended with a friendly game of volleyball at the new net.

Ehrlo Community Services¹

Sod turning ceremony held for community housing project

A sod turning ceremony was held on Friday, November 19th, at 2035 Osler Street in Regina's Heritage Neighbourhood. Honourable June Draude, minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, joined federal, other provincial representatives, and municipal officials as well as representatives from Ranch Ehrlo Society and Ehrlo Community Services to commemorate the construction of a community housing project.

The project is a three-storey, multi-use building which will include 40 housing units for people with serious mental health conditions and cognitive disabilities who require support to live independently.

The project is a partnership between Ehrlo Community Services, who will be managing the project, and Phoenix Residential Society, who will be providing support services to the residents. This is a unique partnership in Regina, with two community groups coming together to meet an identified need.

"A key to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations is bringing together stakeholders to leverage their strengths to solve problems."

Malcolm Neill

"A key to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations is bringing together stakeholders to leverage their strengths to solve problems," said Malcolm Neill, vice-president of Ehrlo Community Services. "Ehrlo is extremely proud of this project, which focuses on a priority population as

outlined in 'Regina's Community Plan 2007: A Home for All'."

The federal and provincial governments are contributing \$3.8 million to the project through the Economic Action Plan, with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada providing an additional \$600,000 in federal funding through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. Funding contributions were also provided from the City of Regina (\$400,000) with Ehrlo Community Services assuming responsibility for the remainder of the cost through a \$1.5 million mortgage. Construction of the project has started and it is expected to be complete in late 2011.

India Night a success

Ehrlo Community Services was earmarked as the recipient of the proceeds from this year's annual fundraising dinner sponsored by the India Canada Association of Saskatchewan. Renu Kapoor, a key organizer with of the event, presented Malcolm Neill, vice-president, with two cheques totalling \$28,000.

The fundraising dinner, which was held on September 25th on stage at the Conexus Arts Centre, was sold out in advance. It was an elegant evening of Indian cuisine and entertainment. The evening featured special guest, Ashok Das, Consul General of India from Vancouver along with guest speaker, Murray Oliver, journalist.

Ranch Ehrlo's powwow club was one of the featured entertainers. The youth were well received by the audience.

"We are thrilled to be a part of such an amazing organization that has provided financial support to Regina community based organizations for the past 30 years," said Neill.

Avant-Garde partners with local schools to provide free haircuts

Avant-garde is developing some unique partnerships in the community. The esthetics and cosmetology school is collaborating with three

¹ ECS was established as a non-profit organization in 1995 with a mandate to provide community-based prevention and intervention services.

"The schools we have partnered with have a high number of low-income families and spending money on haircuts may not be a high priority."

Lori Pawson

elementary schools to provide students with free bi-monthly haircuts.

"The schools we have partnered with have a high number of low-income families and spending money on hair cuts may not be a high priority," explained Lori Pawson, manager and principal of Avant-Garde.

Avant-Garde has also collaborated with the

Balfour Collegiate Tutorial Program. This program offers support services to pregnant and parenting young women so that they may continue their education. Avant-Garde has offered Balfour students discounted haircuts and manicures as further added support. This service will also help to promote career options for the students in the field of esthetics and cosmetology.

Ehrlo Community Services hosts training conference

On November 8, 2010, Ehrlo Community Services hosted a one-day training seminar with Dan Dubovsky, an FASD specialist with SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) in Rockville Maryland. Dubovsky has consulted and presented internationally on FASD, and specializes in developing strategies and interventions for those affected and their families.

Dubovsky focused on adapting the therapeutic technique of Motivational Interviewing (MI) for use with those who have an FASD or other cognitive limitations. He provided participants with a basic understanding of MI, explained why it is problematic in its basic form for those with cognitive limitations, and provided strategies for changing MI techniques to make them more applicable. Participants were able to practice some of these skills in small groups and receive feedback from Dubovsky and the larger group.

Two hundred participants from a variety of human services agencies, school divisions, and health regions from across Saskatchewan attended this training. Evaluations from the workshop were extremely positive. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Health provided funding for this training seminar.

Ehrlo Counselling welcomes a new counsellor

Janet Miller, a master's prepared social worker with over 13 years of experience in the human services field, recently joined the Ehrlo Counselling team. Miller began her career with Ranch Ehrlo in 1997 and has since held many roles including youth care worker, youth care leader, and caseworker.

"I am excited about the opportunity to work in the community providing preventative and proactive services to children, adults, and families," said Miller when asked about her new role.

Ehrlo Monday Night Football league wraps-up season

Notwithstanding the inclement weather, Monday Night Football wound up a successful season. The league concluded its year with a tournament at the Credit Union EventPlex with approximately 70 participants in attendance.

Crown Investments Corporation was once again recognized for its sponsorship of the league.

Laura Logan, manager of Sport Venture, thanked the volunteers who helped to make the league successful. "This year the number of volunteers increased due to a partnership with the University of Regina's ECS 200 Community Based Service Learning Class," said Logan. Each student was required to complete 20 hours of volunteer services within the community. As a result, six students joined Sport Venture to help coach football. "A few of these enthusiastic volunteers have committed to helping out with the Outdoor Hockey League (OHL) and have indicated they will come back for Monday Night Football next fall," added Logan.