

PRESIDENT/CEO report

Issue 60, September 2011

Ranch shines in COA visit

The Council on Accreditation (COA) peer review team had a whirl-wind visit to the Ranch Ehrlo Society from September 11th to September 15th. The four-member team conducted on-site file reviews at the agency's three campuses (Pilot Butte, Corman Park, and Buckland), toured various facilities and conducted meetings and one-to-one interviews with staff, youth, and board members.

COA accreditation demonstrates that the organization meets the highest national standards of best practice and that it is delivering the best quality services, which aligns with the commitment to excellence in the agency's

continuum of service delivery.

About 50 employees from various areas of the agency gathered for the "exit meeting," held on September 14th at Schaller School.

During the exit meeting, team-lead Jane Swanson, provided very positive feedback. "You are a premier organization, absolutely terrific with what you do and how you do it," said Swanson who has participated in over 165 peer

reviews in the last 22 years.

Peggy Walker, another peer reviewer, shared her experience reviewing the Ehrlo Early Learning Centre. She talked about an interview she had with a parent who had experience with another daycare provider. "He could not say enough wonderful things about the program and the difference they noted in their child."

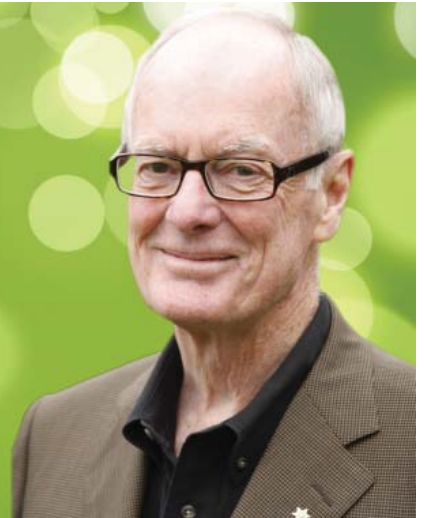
Anne Snudden, who was also

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



Ranch Ehrlo Society

Ranch Ehrlo Society President/CEO
Geoff Pawson



part of the team, was impressed with the agency's ethics and culture, risk management policies, the work of the front line staff, and the Family Treatment Program. "I thought it was amazing, I haven't seen a program like that before." Snudden had a chance to speak with parents in the program and she commented that one parent said, "I just don't know what would have happened to me and my family if this wasn't here."

David Moorehead, the last member of the team, had the chance to view residences across the province and remarked on, not only the great condition of the units, but the attention given to the evolution of the residences to make them safer for youth and staff while still maintaining a 'homey' atmosphere.

Moorehead was also impressed by the agency's

commitment to family involvement and the use of the therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI) model. "This is the only agency I've seen that uses the TCI model as intended-it is not an excuse to do a physical restraint, it's all about de-escalation and avoiding a restraint," observed Moorehead.

The peer reviewers collectively indicated that the Ranch Ehrlo Society was doing something special and the organization showed a lot of creativity and innovation in its programming.

The agency is currently waiting for communication from COA's pre-commission review team regarding any areas in the agency that might need to be addressed. Once the report is received, the agency will have a chance to respond before the final report and reaccreditation are issued.

The Ranch Ehrlo Society was first accredited in 1971 and has successfully maintained accreditation since that time. It is the only residential treatment program in Saskatchewan that is accredited by COA.

RBC donates \$30,000

To commemorate the opening of the new RBC Cornerstone branch in Prince Albert, the RBC Foundation has donated \$30,000 to Ehrlo Sport Venture Outdoor Hockey League. The Ehrlo Outdoor Hockey League, founded in Regina in 1992, is Sport Venture's flagship, having inspired the creation of subsequent leagues and an equipment lending library in Regina.

Approximately 400 young people participate in the league which operates for 14 weeks a year in seven inner-city communities in Regina. Last year, with the support of RBC, the program expanded to Prince Albert where approximately 100 participants played on two outdoor rinks.

Participation in sport and recreation programs is known to have a positive impact on children and youth's social and emotional development. Unfortunately, due to the high cost of organized sports many young people miss out on these opportunities.

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Carole Bryant, vice-president of administration and quality improvement

With this donation an Ehrlo Outdoor Hockey league will be established in Saskatoon and the one in Prince Albert expanded. It will also support the continuation of the league in Regina. The funds will be used to purchase new jerseys, new hockey equipment, and assist in covering some travel and administrative costs.

By removing the barriers of equipment cost, transportation and registration fees, the RBC Foundation will help support hundreds of underprivileged young people to experience the

enduring benefits that physical activity and team sports can provide.

“Together with RBC's support, we are able to remove barriers for young hockey players this season, who may otherwise not be able to play,” said Carole Bryant, vice-president of administration and quality improvement, who participated in the opening of the branch on September 10th.

The survey results are in...

As part of the agency's ongoing dedication to quality improvement of programs and services, the annual parent satisfaction survey and annual employee survey were recently completed. The results were positive in both surveys.

An overwhelming number of employees are proud to work at the agency. They agree that there are an adequate number of staff to do their jobs. Employees also feel that the salary and benefits offered are fair. Finally, most employees believe that adequate safeguards are in place to protect their safety.

The results of the parents satisfaction survey were also positive this year. The majority of parents surveyed feel that their child has a safe place to live. Most believe that their child is being helped during his or her stay at the agency and that their children are receiving quality education and/or vocational training. The majority of parents are satisfied that the youth care workers are doing an effective job in helping their children.

Olser Street project gets new name

The construction of a \$6 million, 40 unit mixed-use housing development at 2035 Olser Street is nearing completion. This project has taken nearly four years to progress from identification of the community need to the construction phase. It will provide supportive affordable housing to individuals with serious mental health issues.

The building has officially been named McEwen Manor after former chair of Ehrlo Community Services, R.M. (Bob) McEwen. McEwen was an active board member for many years and was the chair of ECS from 2005 to 2007.

When notified of the official naming, McEwen was speechless and greatly honoured to have the building called McEwen Manor and is looking forward to the grand opening in the fall.

This project received funding support from the City of Regina, the Province of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada. The program is a broad partnership bringing together Ranch Ehrlo Society, the Phoenix Residential Society, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Regina Branch, and the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan.

Awards nights

The month of June was busy for students as awards were handed out in a variety of categories at the Learning Centre, programs north, and programs south.

Learning Centre

On Wednesday, June 15th, the Learning Centre held its Awards Night. Thirteen winners received medals and celebrated their achievements of this past year. Everyone in attendance enjoyed the festivities and shared in the successes of the winners. A job well done by Vicky Reiman and her staff of the Learning Centre, who organized and hosted this event.

Programs north

The northern programs fifth annual Awards Night was held June 16th, at the Art Hauser Center in Prince Albert. The evening was a grand success as over 250 people attended the presentation of the annual awards and enjoyed an evening of great food, fellowship, and entertainment. Awards were given in five different categories: Education, Creative Arts, Social Development, Athletics (including equine participation and riding awards), and the President's Trophies.

The evening was capped off with the traditional performing of skits from each unit. It was a very special night for those who had attended, full of smiles, some tears of joy, and an overwhelming feeling of pride.

Programs south

Awards Night for programs south was a huge success. The event, held on June 23rd, at the Conexus Arts Centre in Regina was attended by over 700 people. Awards were given out to youth in five categories: Education, Athletics, Social Development, Creative Arts, and President's trophies.

There was also entertainment from staff and youth, including skits from all the houses and a final performance of the night from the Ranch Powwow Club.



Learning Centre Awards Night

Hard work pays off

The youth from May House, a unit on the Ranch's Corman Park campus, stayed at the Onanole Campground and RV Park in Manitoba this summer. During the stay, the youth helped the campground owners with some of the maintenance and grounds keeping. The youth would get up every morning and help clean

the pool, hot tub, and washrooms. Youth also helped cut firewood for other sites and picked up beer cans and bottles that other campers had left behind. This was not planned but the staff and youth decided that they wanted to help, as the owners were very friendly and tried to accommodate any requests that the youth had.

Throughout the campsite, the May House youth were well accepted by all other campers and represented themselves and Ranch Ehrlo in an exemplary manner.

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Cam Banning, unit manager,
May House

On day ten of the camp, the owners brought a gift to the May House site as the youth were getting out of bed – fresh baked cinnamon buns and a donation of \$500 to be added to the house's work fund. The youth were shocked at this generosity and very thankful as it allowed them to do more activities. Some discussion was held on passing some of the money on to others in need. It was decided that May House would use a portion to adopt a family during the Christmas season.

On the last day of camp, the owners also refunded half of the camp rental amount in return for all the hard work and friendly attitudes the youth had shown over the past two weeks. They explained that this money was to keep the camping program going strong in the future.

“This serves as a good example about how our youth's positive attitudes in turn had a positive affect those around them in the campsite, “ said Cam Banning, unit manager, May House.

Drumming for change

The Drumming for Change therapeutic drumming group, led by instructor JoAnne Crawford, put on a spectacular performance at the Cathedral Village Arts Festival and on National Aboriginal Day. The group demonstrated all its hard work and practice with an hour-long performance.

The group consists of residents of the SILP, SLP A, SLP B, Jillings, Pasqua, and Fitch programs. Lisa Brownstone, the Ranch's resident occupational therapy consultant, explained the therapeutic benefits of the drumming group.



Drumming for Change

“Drumming for Change is not only a great time for residents, but also assists in building relationships, coordination, sense of rhythm, and memory skills. The groups work cooperatively, helping each other out and cheering when something new is accomplished,” said Brownstone.

Kruzeniski House adopts 16 community youth for back to school adoption program

A back to school adoption program was Regina-based Kruzeniski House's fall “Community Helping Hands” project. The youth and staff of Kruzeniski House along with the help of the Regina District Area Council, the Human Rights Committee, and the Women's Committee of Regina adopted 16 community youth for their back to school adoption program.

The three committees each donated \$500 for a total of \$1500, along with six boxes of much needed school supplies. Kruzeniski House also



Kruzeniski House's “Back to school adoption program” allowed these community youth to purchase back to school supplies and clothing.

contributed \$500 towards the program raising the total to \$2,000.

The families in the community were notified of their selection and met with Kruzeniski House staff and youth to discuss their needs for the upcoming school year. The children adopted in the back to school adoption program ranged in age of 5 to 14 years of age. The children were met with individually to go through the school supplies and then taken on a shopping excursion to

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Cam Huberdeau, youth care leader,
Kruzeniski House

purchase their much-needed back to school clothing. Each adopted youth spent an average of \$140 towards clothing.

Organizer, Cam Huberdeau, explained the effect this back to school adoption program had stating, “One parent told us that if it hadn't of been for this program she could not of afforded to have purchased any supplies for her four children. She could not believe that there were still good and caring people in this world and she became very emotional while we were shopping.”

For most of the community youth adopted as part of this back to school program, Christmas came early for them this year, as most had never been able to go out, purchase their own clothing, and be able to get what they wanted. One adopted youth commented that it was, “great not to have to shop at Value Village this year for my back to school clothing.”