



RANCH EHRLO SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Art from the Heart

Ranch Ehrlo's artists showed off their artistic achievements at the 14th annual Art from the Heart calendar reception. Staff and families had the opportunity to get the first glimpse of the calendars at the reception held on Dec. 19th at Schaller Education Centre on the Pilot Butte campus.

The calendar was unveiled and the artists had the opportunity to showcase their work and sign autographs for those in attendance.

Each year the calendars are printed and distributed to Ranch youth, staff, board members, and partnering agencies.

Playground donation

Thanks to a generous donation by the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN), youth at our Corman Park campus have a playground.

The multi-use playground designed for different types of exercises has been installed on the campus north of Saskatoon this fall.

Having a play structure is extremely beneficial to the youth on campus

who range in age from nine to 16 explained Dionne Baergen, director of residential treatment.

She added, "We didn't have any playground equipment at Corman Park. So, we have to go off site if we want to utilise any recreation equipment."

SUN annually makes donations to community organizations to promote healthy communities across the province. The organization contacted Baergen last fall and encouraged her to submit an application for funding.

"Low and behold they gave us \$14,000 towards this park. It was amazing," she exclaimed.

A plaque will be erected by the park in



Art from the Heart

We are guided by the CARE, Children And Residential Experiences: Creating Conditions for Change, multi-level model. We work to improve services for our clients through six practice principles:

developmentally
focused

family involved

relationship based

trauma informed

competence centred

ecologically oriented

honour of the generous donation from SUN. A second sign will also be added for the generous discount from Shercom who supplied the rubber pelts that cover the playground floor.

The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses represents almost 10,000 Registered Nurses, Registered Nurse Practitioners, and Registered Psychiatric Nurses and graduates employed in rural and urban healthcare.



Stay in School Award

Over the past ten years, hundreds of Ranch youth have received the Stay in School Award in recognition of their educational achievements.

The award is an annual grant received from the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada through the Scotiabank Stay in School Program. The program, introduced to Ranch students in 2008, was established to recognize students who are doing exceptionally well in school given their difficult personal circumstances. This year, Ranch Ehrlo received \$22,000 to help encourage students to stay and succeed in the classroom.

Ranch students are eligible for the award each semester. Students are reviewed and nominated by criteria including: overcoming significant academic challenges, demonstrating academic excellence, participating in extra curricular activities, and having overcome a particularly challenging experience.

“Many of the youth who come to the Ranch have experienced difficulties in school. The fact that they are attending every day and that they are working towards their goal is very impressive,” explained Corinna Hayden-Fidler, vice-president of education at Ranch Ehrlo. “This award is extra motivation for the youth to exceed their goals, to be involved in school sports and activities, as well as move forward in their education plan.”

She added, “The students love receiving this award! They talk about it often in class.”

Last year 214 kids received the Stay in School Award. The award is also intended to encourage students to complete their high school education. Grade 12 graduates receive an additional \$300 grant.

“On behalf of all the students who have received awards in the last ten years, we are very appreciative of the support provided by the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada. Without their support we wouldn't be able to provide the students with this additional incentive to do well in school,” Hayden-Fidler commented.

Youth group receives grant

Ehrlo Counselling Services' True Colours youth group has received a \$5,000 grant from the Lorne and Evelyn Johnson Foundation.

Founded in 2015, the group allows youth ages 11 to 16 a safe space to discuss topics or raise questions related to sexual orientation or gender identity. It is open to youth who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, or are Questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQQ) as well as their straight allies.

“We want to help reduce the shame and stigma and fear around identifying as somewhere on the LGBTQQ scale,” explained group founder Sherry Rapley, who is also a psychologist at Ehrlo Counselling.

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-Sherry Rapley, psychologist

The group plans to use the grant to rent a space to hold meetings, as well as purchasing resources, books and supplies. They will also use it for honorariums to bring in speakers. True Colours is open to youth from Ranch Ehrlo Society, as well as the community, so part of the grant will also go toward advertising so more young people within the city can learn about the group.



“We are so very thankful for this grant from the Lorne and Evelyn Johnson Foundation and the benefit it will provide to the youth attending this group,” said Ehrlo Counselling director Natasha Schoenroth.

The Lorne and Evelyn Johnson Foundation was established in 1962 with the objective of furthering the religious, educational, and cultural life of Regina and the province of Saskatchewan.

Holiday donation

Christmas can be a difficult time for some families.

Many of the families in Ranch Ehrlo’s Family Treatment Programs (FTP) struggle with poverty, which can lead to disappointment and unmet hopes for children and stress and struggles for parents.

“Poverty leads to challenges in having Christmas gifts, or food during the holiday season.”

-Patti Petruka, Family Treatment Program director

“Poverty leads to challenges in having Christmas gifts, or food during the holiday season,” explained FTP director Patti Petruka. “There is much worry about being able to buy your child a gift to open on Christmas morning.”

But the families in the programs got a hand up thanks to some generous local businesses this Christmas.

BASF Agriculture has once again chosen the family program to be the recipient of gifts and the proceeds from a raffle held at their annual Christmas party.

“We are so grateful that BASF Agriculture chose our families for this generous donation,” Petruka said.

Students from Megaw’s Montessori Academy also donated toys to the children in the FTP and Intensive Family Preservation Service (IFPS). Each year, students typically raise \$400 to \$500 for a charitable cause within the city and this year chose the family programs as their recipients.

The FTP currently has 87 children, while the IFPS has 20, all of whom benefited from these generous donations.

The program also received a generous donation of handmade winter wear from an anonymous donor to keep families warm in the chilly weather!

Finally, families also had the opportunity to get photos with Santa at no cost thanks to local photographer Daryl Fraess of Just Us Dogs Pet Care. He attended the program Christmas party and took photos for the second year in a row.

Basketball program a slam dunk

Two years ago, Buckland area multiple program worker Victor Wojcichowsky had an idea. He wanted to create a free basketball program for youth in the community of Prince Albert.

“I brought it up with Kevin [Mugford, director of residential treatment] when I first started here. I realized there wasn’t really a basketball program for the youth, and it’s something I always wanted growing up,” he explained.

In its first year, attendance at the once-weekly program, which is open and free to all youth in the Prince Albert area, was hit and miss. But over the last two years, Wojcichowsky has built relationships with the youth who attend the program and attendance has exploded.

“Kids from last year have come back and have recruited their friends as well,” he explained.

Wojcichowsky has witnessed youth using basketball as a way to keep themselves entertained during lunch hours and breaks at school. He has seen participants grow in other ways as well, from lessening shyness to becoming more focused.

“One little girl was upset that she couldn’t play basketball in gym class because she really wanted to practice – so I can definitely see the positive effect of it, already.”

“For me, basketball was a sport that I

thrived at. It was my outlet,” Wojcichowsky said of his reasons for starting the program. “It’s pretty cool – it’s something I didn’t really expect to explode the way it has.”

The program runs on Tuesday evenings from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at Parkland Hall in Prince Albert. Bottled water and a snack are provided for the participants.

Sticks for Kids



It’s pretty hard to play hockey without a hockey stick, but thanks to the Optimist Clubs of Regina, our Ehrlo Sport Venture Outdoor Hockey League (OHL) players never have to worry

about that!

Regina’s four Optimists’ Clubs (Optimist Club of Regina, High Noon Optimist Club of Regina, Downtown Optimist Club of Regina, and Sundown Optimist Club of Regina) have been providing sticks for all the OHL’s participants since the league began with their program known as Optimist Sticks for Kids. The donation is in line with the club’s motto, “Friend of Youth”.

“It’s such a great project for the community, especially for those who perhaps might be in a position where they are unable to buy their own sticks,” said Larry Schneider, president of the High Noon Optimist Club of Regina.

Each year, the clubs donate approximately 450 sticks to the participants of the OHL. Two years ago, they also donated sweaters to the league, so the teams could have a sense of cohesion and identity, both inside the OHL and within the larger community of Regina.

Christmas at the agency Chili cook off



When December rolls around, so do Christmas celebrations at Ranch Ehrlo Society! Here are two of our housemothers at their annual bakesale. All the proceeds go to the Mary Miller fund which helps former clients.



This year was the 10th anniversary of the chili cook off competition in Corman Park. This year there were three teams competing and after intense competition, the winner was a team made up of two youth and staff.

Day of giving



Special thanks to staff from Avison Young who helped dress hockey players at Ehrlo Sport Venture for their day of giving.

New sign



New signage at our Pilot Butte campus

Agency conversations



In the spirit of continual improvement we have engaged Paul Allen, child welfare consultant, to assist us at looking at our residential programs. Here he is meeting with staff in our northern program.

International volunteer



For the past seven years, Ranch Ehrlo has been part of the International Volunteer Exchange Program, administered by the Mennonite Central Committee. Keren Sagastume from La Ceiba, Honduras is currently volunteering as an education assistant in Regina.