



RANCH EHRLO SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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2nd annual powwow

Dancers, drummers, clients, staff, family, and friends gathered on August 31st at Ranch Ehrlo's Pilot Butte campus. The area was temporarily transformed into a powwow ground and carnival to celebrate the lives changed by Ranch Ehrlo Society.

When they weren't dancing or watching the competition, youth had the opportunity to visit a carnival erected in the hockey rink. Each game was run by one of the group homes. Tickets were awarded for winning a game and one of the most popular places to be at the end of the day was the prize table, where game players redeemed their tickets for an assortment of fun items.

A variety of concession items were available— free snow cones helped everyone beat the heat, and fresh popcorn was available all day. Supper was served from 5 p.m. on and attendees had their fill of hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and pop before heading back to the powwow tent to watch the adult categories of the competition.

The day was filled with smiles and laughter from all in attendance. Ranch Ehrlo's 2nd annual powwow will be tucked safely into the memory box of all who took part.

Buckland turns 20



In 1997, Ranch Ehrlo Society's Buckland campus, located just outside the city of Prince Albert, officially opened. But the idea, and the need, for a northern campus had been around long before.

As far back as the early '70s, the agency felt the need for a presence closer to the client base in northern Saskatchewan. Twice,



Dancers at the 2nd annual powwow

attempts were made to establish what would one day become the Buckland campus – in 1974, financial commitments were finalized but the progress on the program was halted, mainly due to staffing concerns; and in 1984, government support for the campus was pulled after concerns were raised from citizens in the area.

In 1997, the dream was finally realized. The first clients lived in Flegal House, a pre-existing home on the property. Alex Guy House, the first new group home to be built on the campus, was opened the following year.

In 2001, Klassen House was opened. Three years later, Ranch Ehrlo expanded its presence in the area with the construction and opening of Matheson House, the only group home located within in the city of Prince Albert.

“I believe the campus is necessary for a few different reasons,” said Randy O’Shaughnessy, former director of residential treatment for the northern programs. “The opportunity to provide a treatment-based environment in a similar environment to (northern clients’) home environments, is extremely advantageous.”

Buckland campus will be celebrating 20 years of going forward with pride in northern Saskatchewan. Join us on September 19th from 3 – 5 p.m. for a barbeque at the campus!

Community connections

While we at Ranch Ehrlo have long known of the benefits of Equine Assisted Learning (EAL), we don’t often get the chance to share that knowledge. A unique program based out of Prince Albert has recently given others the chance to learn firsthand what benefits can be gleaned from some one-on-one time with horses.

The Homeward Bound program focuses on moving people who are chronically

and episodically homeless from the street or emergency shelters into permanent housing with supports that vary according to participant needs. The program also helps participants access community health services for acute and chronic health issues.

“Everyone was quiet, and initially a little nervous to be around the horses.”

-Amanda Snell, EAL program leader

Organizers were interested in EAL and contacted Ranch Ehrlo’s equine program leader Amanda Snell to see if a partnership could be arranged. The first group of participants arrived at Buckland campus for their lesson last May.



Homeward Bound participants

“Everyone was quiet, and initially a little nervous to be around the horses,” said Amanda. But after a while things changed. “The staff member in attendance pulled me aside toward the end of the session and expressed her astonishment at the way the participants opened up so quickly, discussing how they felt and how the horses made them feel.”

Ultimately, each participant had a different experience; some wanted to race around with the horses from one obstacle to the next and some were content to groom and care for their horse in a quiet area away from the exercise. Another group had the opportunity to physically ride the horses.

Investing in family

A family from the Yukon has made Regina home while they heal. Tara Fraser and Shaun Smith, who are from Whitehorse, have one son named Rylee. He began exhibiting negative behaviours nearly seven years ago. He was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome (a brain-based condition that causes involuntary sounds and movements called tics) plus



Rylee, Tara, and Shaun

other associated disorders including anxiety, sensory obsessive compulsive disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and sleep problems.

Tara and Shaun tried a number of services to help their son's behaviour, but quickly realized that they needed something that would allow their whole family to participate in the healing process.

"We'd done other programs – they were great programs, but I was really looking for something family-based," explained Tara, who advocated for two years for her family to

attend the Ranch's Family Treatment Program (FTP).

The program aims to improve safety and functioning so families can remain together. Intensive in-home services are provided that assist the family in obtaining knowledge and skills including: counselling in child development, effective parenting, mood management, communication, life skills, budgeting, and accessing community resources.

In April, the entire family made the move to Regina and entered the Family Treatment Program. While no two families who enter the program are alike, Tara and Shaun are unique in that they do not face many of the issues that confront other parents in the program. Rather, they were simply looking for a family-focused way of helping their son.

"We had more support in the first three days here than we had in years at home," Tara said of the FTP.

The pair had an immediate appreciation for the approach taken by FTP staff to helping their family.

"They aren't there to tell us what to do; they're there to support us and help us learn new strategies. But it's all up to us, really," Tara explained.

While Shaun has returned home to go back to work, Tara and their son will remain in the FTP until a discharge date has been set.

"If you looked at our family a year ago, we couldn't have imagined this change," Shaun said. "(The program) is life changing."

“If you looked at our family a year ago, we couldn't have imagined this change.”
-Shaun, FTP client

Writing to release the past

One of the more expected, but no less important, aspect of Ranch Ehrlo's Family Treatment Program (FTP) is the treatment groups that families have the option to participate in weekly. Each group is led by one of the FTP's highly qualified clinical supervisors or managers.

The groups cover topics from parenting skills, yoga, horse therapy, recovery, and dad's topics; there is also a group for parents to share and talk about their week.

One group that was recently created focuses on writing. FTP participant and mom of five, Felicia Kakakaway, has been a regular participant of the group since it began a few weeks ago.

"All of the hurtful (experiences) that you can't get out verbally, you can write down on a piece of paper and release them," Felicia explained.

Felicia had a rough start to adulthood. She was a user of alcohol, and suffered from depression and anxiety throughout her early adult years. She was also a victim of domestic abuse. Her eldest child, now 13, was diagnosed with autism at four years old, and her 9-year-old is epileptic. After suffering a stillbirth six years ago, Felicia found herself in a dark place and contemplated suicide.

“And then I thought, I have children here – what am I doing, what am I thinking? I thought, ‘how are my kids going to react, and who’s going to be here for them if I did that?’”

It was then she realized she needed help and began the process of reaching out to get it. Felicia learned of the Ranch’s Family Treatment Program through her social worker and knew it would be the perfect place for her family. They began the program in February of this year.

“It’s been really, really good,” she said. “I was a very angry person because of all the stuff that’s happened, and now I can calm myself faster and easier and I have the support of the FTP therapists if I need someone. I realized I celebrated five years of sobriety and plan to make it a permanent goal. Back home there was nobody to talk to.”

She continues writing about her experiences, and plans to share some of her work through our blog in the future.

Upcoming events

You are invited to all our upcoming events:

Ehrlo Sport Venture Monday Night Football Kickoff at New Mosaic Stadium on September 4th from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Regina Thunder and Rider players will be in attendance to run drills.

Buckland campus 20th anniversary on September 19th from 3 – 5 p.m.

Ranch Ehrlo AGM on September 27th at 11:30 at the Executive Royal Hotel in Regina. Please RSVP to Shelley at 306-781-1800 by September 20th.

Ehrlo Sport Venture Library and the Outdoor Hockey League anniversary party on October 14th from 1 to 4 p.m. at 2730 - 5th Ave in Regina.

Multi-sports camp



Ehrlo Sport Venture has officially wrapped up their second annual Multi-Sport Camp, a partnership with Regina Open Door Society that allows new Canadian youth the opportunity to get some hands-on learning in a variety of sports!

Cheque presentation



We recently received an impressive donation from Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company! It will go toward purchasing specialized sensory equipment for our Learning Centre, a specialized education program designed to support adults with developmental disabilities and sensory needs. (Pictured is Jillian Pacholik from Wawanesa with Ranch Ehrlo CEO, Andrea Brittin)

Tenant appreciation



Ehrlo Housing celebrated 20 years of providing hope and housing to vulnerable individuals in the city of Regina with a come and go tenant appreciation barbeque on June 29th.

CARE kickoff



The agency has recently begun working to implement the CARE model (Children And Residential Experiences: Creating Conditions for Change) to our existing framework. We welcomed CARE team (l to r): Jack, Anton, and Martha to tour our campuses. This model is very congruent with our current practice at Ranch Ehrlo Society. It will provide a more structured way to get everyone aligned across the agency.