



## Seven: Living and Learning at Ranch Ehrlo Society debuts at Darke Hall

Music Therapy participants from Ranch Ehrlo Society's Supported Living Program (SLP) and youth Group Living Treatment Services (GLTS) proved that music has no barriers and belongs to everyone.

Participants poured their hearts into an original production titled *Seven: Living and Learning at Ranch Ehrlo Society*. Inspired by the Seven Sacred Teachings, the production supported a wraparound approach to Indigenous cultural learning that was accessible, inclusive, and thoughtfully adapted to meet diverse learning needs.

The musical was led by certified music therapists Melanie McDonald and Emma Cameron, with support from directors.

"This was a big step for many of the participants," said McDonald. "While they had shared music within the welcoming walls of Ranch Ehrlo, cheering each other on during peer performances, stepping onto a public stage was a new and exciting experience. Their hard work and enthusiasm

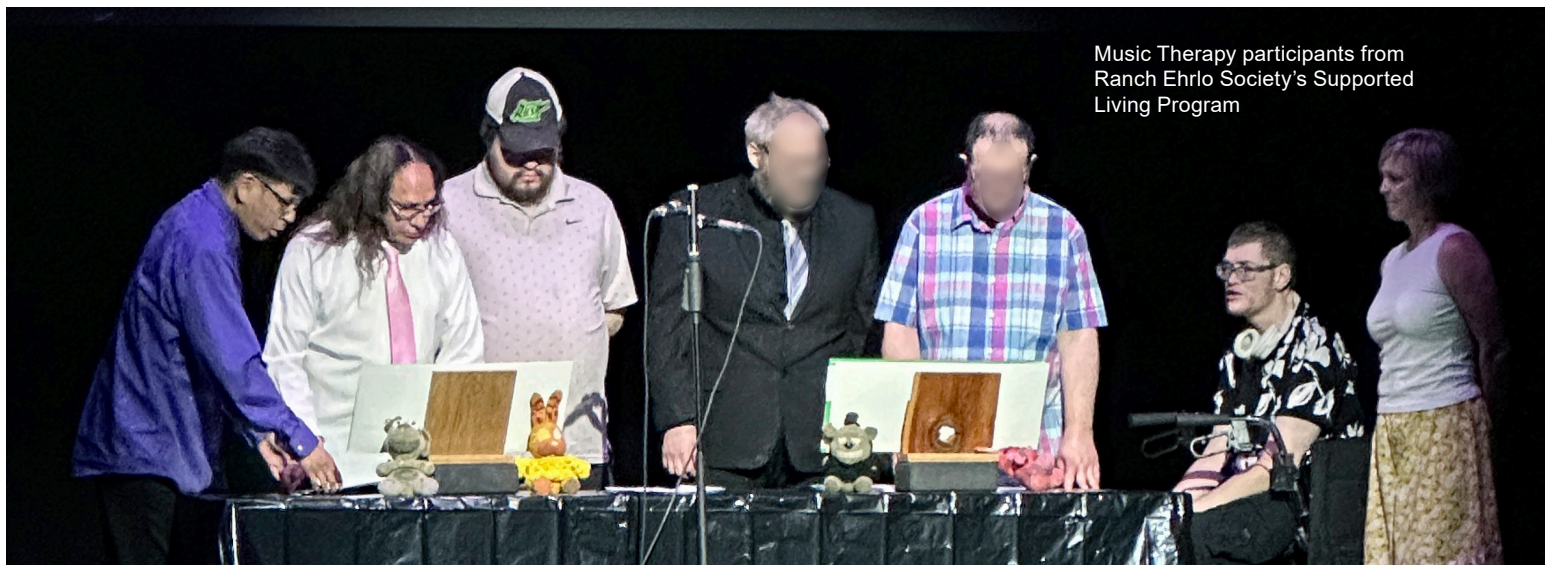
spoke volumes about their courage and belief in themselves."

Ranch Ehrlo's music therapy program has flourished in recent years, supported in large part by the National Music Centre (NMC) Music Therapy Initiative. Through grant funding, NMC has helped expand programming to reach more than 175 individuals across a range of programs.

### New training spaces

Ranch Ehrlo has added two new spaces to support staff training and program growth.

Northern programs now have a dedicated training and meeting space at #200 – 1008 1st Ave., W. in Prince Albert. The space includes a main training area for about 30



Music Therapy participants from Ranch Ehrlo Society's Supported Living Program



New space in Regina

people, a meeting room for six to eight, and a private office. It has already hosted team meetings and training sessions, providing staff with a central location for learning.

In Regina, Ranch Ehrlo purchased a new multi-purpose building at 1304 Lorne Street to serve as the home for Ehrlo Sport Venture (ESV) and Paper Crane.

The building features a boardroom for up to 24 people, a kitchenette, washrooms, and program spaces that allow both organizations to operate independently while sharing the location. The move supports ESV's growing free leagues and equipment lending library, while Paper Crane will continue its therapeutic expressive arts programs.

“These new spaces reflect our commitment to supporting staff, strengthening programs, and building community partnerships,” said Shelley Reddekopp, vice-president of support services.

## Kohkum in the classroom

Ranch Ehrlo's education programs are embracing the wisdom and experience of Indigenous Elders to foster connection, cultural competency, and learning in classrooms.

A new initiative, launched this past semester, has introduced Kohkum Sherry Cochrane into eight unique classrooms to enrich the educational experience for both students and teachers.

Elementary and middle-years students now spend one hour each month with Kohkum Sherry, who will share Indigenous teachings, worldviews, and stories while assisting with activities and programming that align with the curriculum.

The concept arose from feedback by education staff, who expressed a collective desire to have their students work with Elders – to hear from a voice of wisdom and gain stronger cultural perspective.

“I think there is great value in having an Elder presence – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous,” said Scott Landry, vice-principal. “When students engage with someone older, it creates a different experience and exposes them to a different perspective.”

Cochrane is a familiar face to many of the youth at Ranch Ehrlo, spending the past few years visiting participants in their homes. Her gentle approach and deep connection to her cultural roots inspire youth as she helps create safe space for participants to learn and explore the world around them.

Educators look forward to seeing the initiative evolve over the coming months and are confident that positive outcomes will be realized by all involved.

“It's still so new, but I think the sky is the limit,” said Landry.

## A place on the team: One child's story of inclusion in hockey



A seven-year-old boy is setting a powerful example of inclusion in sport, reminding us that every child deserves the opportunity to belong.

Trevor\* had a dream of playing minor hockey. When he first stepped onto the ice, few expected him to make it as far as he has. But Trevor

has beaten the odds and continues to persevere, showing everyone what's possible when a child is given the chance to believe in himself.

“While Trevor may not be the strongest player on the ice, he is a valued member of the team. His commitment, effort, and determination to succeed shine through and inspire those around him — both on and off the ice,” said Chelsie Piesinger, clinical caseworker for Ranch Ehrlo's Treatment Foster Care (TFC) program.

Whether he's quietly watching and learning from the bench or facing off for the first time during a game, Trevor has proven those who doubted him wrong. He has become the hockey player he always knew he could be.

“The coaches he has now are phenomenal and are learning a new way of responding and adapting,” said Piesinger. “And everyone is learning about inclusion in the game.”

Last year marked Trevor’s very first time on skates. After his second school skate session, he made up his mind that he would join a hockey team. He asked his foster parents, Sue and Craig, if he could play and the pair moved mountains to make it possible.

Trevor was registered in the U9 Moose Jaw Minor Hockey (MJMH) league this past season.

On evaluation day, Trevor skated a little slower and listened a little longer. Some questioned whether he belonged, and one team deferred his participation. With strong advocacy from his foster parents, support from Chelsie Piesinger, and collaboration with Hockey Saskatchewan and Moose Jaw Minor Hockey, a plan was put in place to support his success. With one-on-one on-ice guidance from a disability inclusion worker, Trevor began to thrive.

Not defined by past trauma or diagnoses, Trevor now steps onto the ice as an equal. He may learn, communicate, and play differently, but his love for the game matches every teammate beside him.

Today, he no longer needs on-ice support. He plays every position with confidence, shines on defence, and earned “player of the game,” golden stick in hand. During a recent tournament, he played three back-to-back games, once again proving what’s possible when a child is given the chance to believe in himself.

“He is a hockey player now,” remarked Sue. “It’s the first thing he wants to talk about when he sees you in the morning and the last thing he talks about at night.”

\*Name changed to protect privacy.

## Seeing foster care through a birth parent’s eyes

Foster families with Ranch Ehrlo’s Treatment Foster Care (TFC) program gained a powerful new perspective during a recent training session led by a birth mother who experienced reunification.

Martine Ahenakew shared her story of loss, addiction, and the difficult decision to place her children in care, offering honest insight into the emotions birth parents face.

“Her story is one of resilience, hope, and transformation,” said TFC director Kate Lagen.

In a smaller group setting, Ahenakew connected with foster families, answering questions and encouraging stronger relationships between foster and biological parents.

“These parents are often carrying guilt and shame,” she said. “You have to find a way to build a relationship — start by getting to know them.”

The discussion focused on communication, co-parenting, and supporting children through complex emotions.

Today, Ahenakew is studying social work and continues to work with Ranch Ehrlo’s Family Treatment Program. She has had full custody of her children since 2021 and maintains a relationship with the foster parents who once cared for them — a reflection of the lasting impact of compassion and collaboration.

## 9th annual powwow features 60th anniversary campus tours

Ranch Ehrlo Society invites the community to its 9th annual powwow on August 27, 2026, at the Pilot Butte campus on Treaty 4 Territory. This year’s event is especially meaningful as part of the Ranch’s 60th anniversary celebrations.

The day begins with male and female pipe ceremonies at 8:30 a.m., followed by a feast at 10:30 a.m. Grand entry starts at 1 p.m., with competitive dancing, dancer registration, and family carnival activities throughout the afternoon. Rain or shine, festivities will go ahead. We encourage everyone to bring a lawn chair.

As part of the anniversary, campus tours and a guided history of the Ranch will be offered at 11:30 a.m. Former youth, staff, families, and community partners are encouraged to attend. Registration for the tour is required via [ranchehrlo.news@ranchehrlo.ca](mailto:ranchehrlo.news@ranchehrlo.ca).

Explore the vibrant inclusion of  
**Ranch Ehrlo Society's**

# 9th annual powwow

A celebration of cultural connection, tradition, and togetherness.



**August 27, 2026**  
Treaty 4 Territory  
Pilot Butte campus

Pipe ceremony at 8:30 a.m.  
Feast at 10:30 a.m.  
Grand entry at 1 p.m.



## Still making our mark



Artists from Ranch Ehrlo Society at the fifth annual Make a Mark art showcase, Sacred Animals, at the George Bothwell Library, Regina.

## First family welcomed



Ranch Ehrlo Society's new Clinical and Community Living Supports (CLS) program welcomed its first family to the Respite Care program in Regina, providing person-centred, in-home support for children, youth, and adults with disabilities or medical challenges.

## Thank you to our sponsors and donors

Thank you to all of our donors and sponsors who helped Ranch Ehrlo in the past several months:

- United Way Regina - \$323
- KidSport EBL grant - \$5,000
- Professional Hockey Scouts Foundation, OHL grant - \$7,000
- Jay's Care Foundation, EBRL grant - \$4,500
- HomeDepot grant - \$11,873.38
- Carmen Lien - 400 Pats tickets to OHL

## Welke winter camp



Youth from Ranch Ehrlo Society's Welke House program spent a weekend skiing, ice fishing, exploring trails, and sharing stories around the fire. The annual winter camp builds connection, confidence, and resilience, giving youth the chance to try new activities, learn skills, and create lasting memories with peers and staff.

## Orange Door success



Thank you to everyone who supported the Home Depot's Orange Door Holiday Campaign in December 2025. Your generosity helped Ranch Ehrlo Society receive \$11,873.38 to support youth in our care. Funds raised through Saskatoon stores stay local, enhancing programs for youth in northern programs.

## Strengthening ties



Chief Lynn Acoose and councillors Tamara Peepeetch, Huey Acoose, and Sarah Rain (with her daughter Tamara) met with Ranch Ehrlo leadership on March 5 at the Pilot Butte campus to discuss programming and reconciliation initiatives with First Nations communities.

