



RANCH EHRLO SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Issue 112 November 2020

Ceremonies to begin reconciliation efforts

At Ranch Ehrlo, we pride ourselves on our strong commitment to truth and reconciliation efforts – but we know we can do better.

On September 1st we held flag-raising/blessing ceremonies simultaneously at our campuses. A reconciliation flag will continue to fly at each campus, acknowledging our commitment to further action points laid out in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.

On Pilot Butte campus, a reconciliation flag was raised in front of Schaller Education Centre by a participant after a prayer from Elder Archie Weenie and a few words from CEO Andrea Brittin and board chair Greg Fieger. The event was MCed by Ranch staff Shelley Sayer and Mary Anne LaRocque-Quamar. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, only a handful of staff, participants, and board members were on hand.

“We are beginning the journey of consultation to meaningfully acknowledge the land that we are on and the lands of those nations who trust us to care and support their members,” Greg Fieger, Ranch board

chair explained.

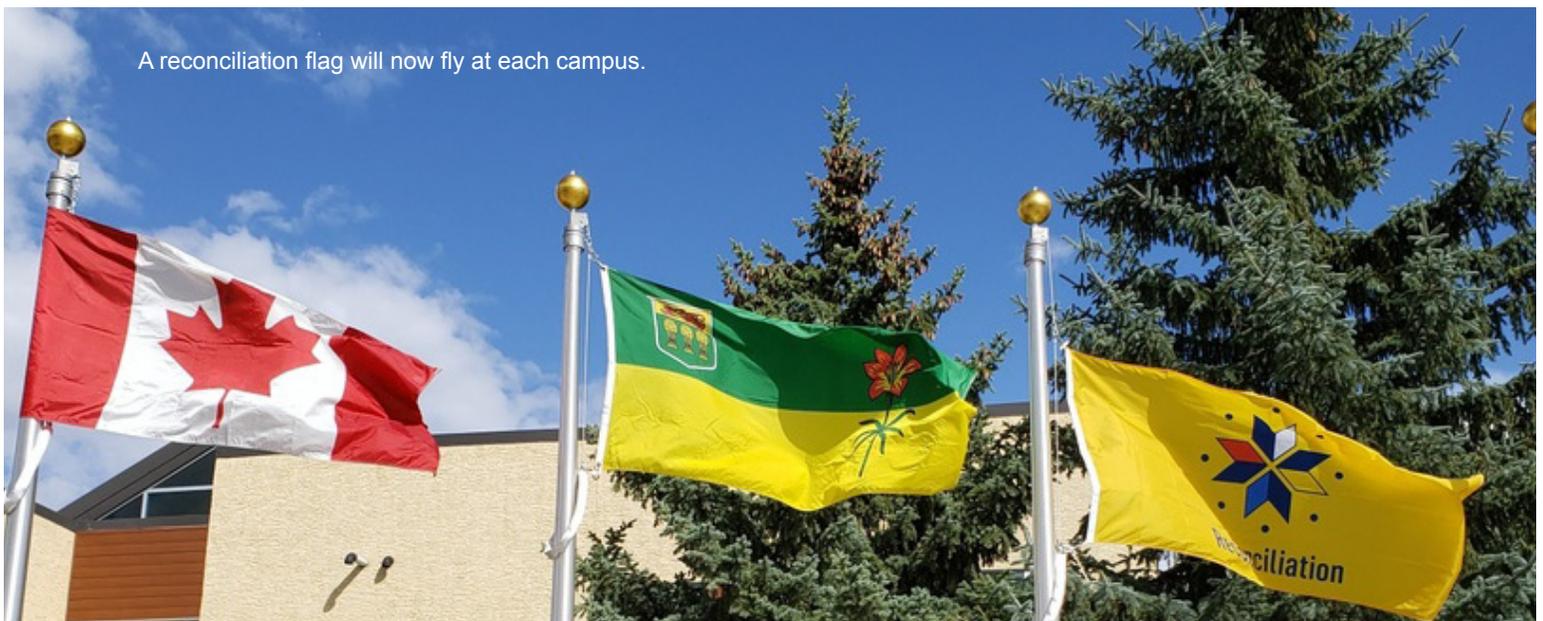
Northern event

In the north, the Corman Park and Buckland campuses joined together to have their reconciliation flags blessed by Elder David Larocque at Matheson House in Prince Albert. The northern powwow club was also at the event and performed. The flags will be raised later in the month.

The flag-raising ceremony acknowledges the agency’s commitment to reconciliation and the beginning of the work of Ranch Ehrlo’s newly created Reconciliation Action Committee which is made up of staff from across the agency.

“Since the Ranch was created, we have been

A reconciliation flag will now fly at each campus.



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

providing services to many Indigenous children, youth, adults, and families and we have been doing our very best to act in the best interest of all of the people that we serve and now it is time to listen - to really listen to our Indigenous partners, young people, leaders, and community members and we need to learn from them,” said CEO Andrea Brittin.

“It is really important that every single participant that comes to the Ranch is proud of who they are and where they come from. Today is a positive day of hope that marks the start of increased understanding and a day to begin to hear the truth and move to reconciliation,” Brittin added.

Youth organizations coming together

On October 6th, Downtowner’s Optimist Club of Regina handed Ranch Ehrlo the “key” to Wilson House.

Named for former board chair and Optimist Club member Alex Wilson, our agency has been operating the premises as a group home for years, renting it from the Optimist Club. The mortgage was discharged in June 2020 and the decision was made to gift the home to Ranch Ehrlo so we could continue to operate the group home.

“The Downtowners Optimist Club of Regina is very excited to bring this story to a happy ending, not only for our club but also for Ranch Ehrlo. This was a wonderful vision from some of our members that dates back 50 years. This is a perfect example of two youth programs working together for the good of youth,” said Garth Chatterson, president of the Downtowners Optimist Club of Regina.

“Wilson House has been an integral part of our programs for many years now, and we are grateful for this gift that will ensure it continues to be a safe space for those who



(l to r) Andrea, Doreen, and Garth

come to us for help,” said Andrea Brittin, CEO of Ranch Ehrlo.

Alex Wilson was a long-time volunteer and supporter of Ranch Ehrlo Society and the former Ehrlo Community Services. Alex first joined Ranch Ehrlo’s board in 1971, and with only a one-year hiatus, remained on the board until 1983, serving as chair of the board from 1974 to 1976.

The house named for him was built in 1969 and the Downtowners purchased the house in 1973 for Ranch Ehrlo to lease. The agency made the house our own with additions and upgrades to better suit our participants and christened it as Wilson House in 1983.

Downtowners Optimist Club president Garth Chatterson was joined by Doreen Wilson, the wife of the late Alex Wilson, to make the presentation to Ranch Ehrlo Society CEO Andrea Brittin. Afterward, a small socially distanced gathering of Optimist members and Ranch Ehrlo staff took place to celebrate the day’s events.

2020 Annual General Meeting

The Ranch Ehrlo Annual General Meeting (AGM) looked a little different this year. Held virtually via Zoom software, Ranch employees and members of the board and senate “gathered” in their own homes or offices for the 54th annual meeting. Board chair Greg Fieger called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Following the approval of the agenda and the minutes from the 2019 AGM, Fieger delivered the chair’s report. He touched on the unique challenges faced this year, but also mentioned the resounding successes we as an agency have experienced, from receiving COA reaccreditation and formulating a new 5-year strategic plan, to being named one of Saskatchewan’s Top Employers, yet again.



AGM attendees

CEO Andrea Brittin, who earlier this year announced her intention to retire in December 2020, spoke next. While, she, too, touched on successes of the agency over the past year, her report was largely focused on thanking all

the employees who work at the Ranch.

“The talent and commitment of our staff has never been more evident than in the past several months. When the lockdowns and restrictions came down in March, staff went above and beyond to create daily activities that adhered to all the regulations while keeping youth, families, and adults, informed, safe, and calm during the process,” she said.

VP of finance and administration Lori Mann presented the year’s financial reports. Overall, the agency had a solid year financially with a net surplus of \$3.2M, up from \$2.0M in 2018-19.

“Strong net surpluses enable the agency to continue with its multiyear capital plan, which for this coming year, includes investment in a new home for the Programs for Person with Developmental Disabilities,” Mann said.

Amendments to bylaws that were passed during the AGM changed the terms on our board of directors from two to three years and removed the position of treasurer from the list of officers.

Outcome and Annual reports released



Ranch Ehrlo has released our Outcomes and Annual reports for 2019-2020. These reports look at our year in a nutshell – from statistics about participation satisfaction to a rundown of all the major events that have happened over the past fiscal year. The reports

contain crucial information about the day-to-day functioning of our agency. They are how we measure our successes. The information assists us in developing plans for improvements where necessary.

The Outcomes Report is comprised of important statistics and information about how well our programs are serving our participants.

The Annual Report highlights the key initiatives in our agency over the course of the year. Both reports are available on our website at ehrlo.com.

Book club adds to family experience

Youth aged 9 – 12 in Ranch Ehrlo’s Family Treatment Program (FTP) have a new program at their disposal. The Very Cool Book Club was started by Keetha Malmgren, a family treatment worker.

FTP is an in-home service that works to either prevent the placement of children out of their home or to assist families to unite after having a child in care.

“Reading is one of my greatest passions,” Malmgren said. “I’ve got this wonderful opportunity working here in the Family Treatment Program to bring this dream to life. It started with a 1-on-1 book club with one of our FTP youth, where we would just talk about books or hang out at the library and browse the shelves.”

Wanting to take the idea further, Malmgren sought out advice from her manager about creating an official book club with youth in the program.

“There are some siblings in the book club, so I have encouraged them to read together or with their parents and make it a family thing. Some of the members live close to one another and have arranged to read the books together. I will also be reaching out to the members over the course of the month to get together 1-on-1 to read to them or read together,” Malmgren said.

The Very Cool Book club incorporates several CARE principles. Keetha is hoping to use the platform to deepen the relationship she has with each member, as well as the relationships between the youth who attend. Family involvement is

encouraged, and Keetha makes sure the youth know there is no pressure to read the book quickly, thereby meeting each youth at their own level.

“The Family Treatment Program offers so much programming to our families and we really try to equip our families with all the tools they need to be successful when they leave us. It’s so important to provide our young people with prosocial activities that they can utilize on their own. Some of our families come from smaller communities that don’t have as many recreational options as there are in Regina. The great thing about reading is that we can do it anywhere in the world,” Malmgren added.

Student finds reading success

Many of us learn to read in the first or second grade. But for some of Ranch Ehrlo’s youth, it’s not that easy. A few weeks ago, in a “getting to know you” activity, third-grader Leslie* disclosed some very vulnerable information – he didn’t know how to read.

“We were sharing our strengths, weaknesses, and fears. He was just very open with the group that he didn’t know how to read and doesn’t know how to spell,” Leslie’s teacher Randee Patton said. “That took a lot of courage.”

Through patience, repetition, and one-on-one time with Patton, Leslie soon had a huge breakthrough – he read an entire book.

When he successfully read the entire book, celebrations were had! Patton videoed Leslie’s reading so his group home could celebrate with him and shared the good news with his family, as well. Patton hopes to have Leslie at a third-grade reading level by the end of the year.

“Just because kids come to us and can’t read, doesn’t mean we can’t teach them.”

**name changed*

Safe training



Many things were changed during COVID-19. While most training was completed virtually, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention training has a hands-on component. As rules around group sizes relaxed slightly, we found a way to make sure our employees could complete the entirety of their training, and stay safe while doing it!

Corman 3-mile



The Corman Park campus 3-mile race was held with a fall backdrop this year due to COVID. But organizers got creative and held the event while maintaining social distancing. Each house took the track separately to try and achieve their best time.

Drive-in movie night



Staff at Jewison House held the first annual Pilot Butte outdoor drive-in movie night. The event had social distancing and hygiene measures built into the planning along with lots of fun! Youth sat in their individually created box cars before everyone relaxed to watch a movie under the stars.

Monday Night Football



Ehrlo Sport Venture was able to hold a safe and fun Monday Night Football league this fall at Mosaic stadium.

Orange Shirt Day



Director of education for programs south, Hayley Maurer, recognizing and celebrating Orange Shirt Day at Schaller Education Centre.