



ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT
ASSOCIATION



April 2008

THE BRIDGE

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

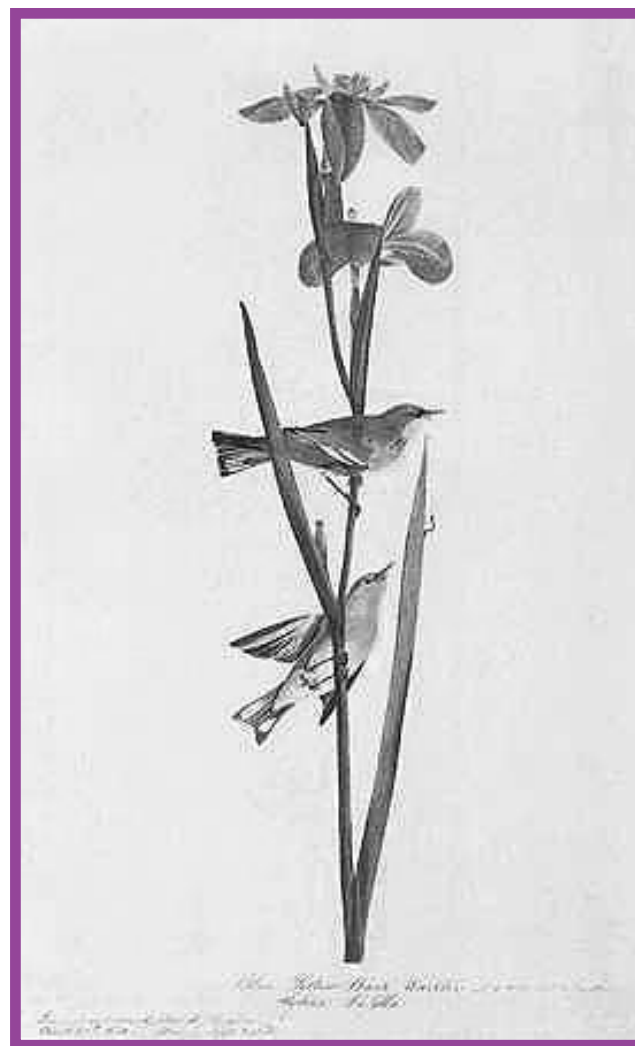
Spring Is Here

Spring arrived today
Aglow in spring time fashion
Spring fever follows

Spring's Dresser changed her
Into winter's chilled soft wrap
Without care or flare

Spring flaunted her smile
Everything she loved slowly
Awakened in praise

by Dorothy (Alves) Holmes



FEATURING...

- **Aboriginal Awareness Weekend**
- **LRCY**
- **Finding the Right Bike**

NOTICE

Deadline for submissions for next BRIDGE

June 01, 2008

Return Undeliverable Canada Addresses to:

ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

Suite 102, 9622-42 Avenue
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Hello Foster Parents! With Spring arriving mother nature comes to life for another season in our lives. I hope you had a nice winter and are looking forward to the warm weather.

This is also a busy time at our James River camp site; we are having several work bees this Spring and are in need of volunteers. We had around forty Poplar trees removed from around the Lodge which were rotting from the inside and becoming dangerous. There are several projects that are in need of your help in making this a wonderful place for children. This will be an exciting time as these projects get completed. Thank you to the volunteers who have come forward at this time.

Please plan to attend our 9th Annual Aboriginal awareness weekend on June 6, 7 and 8th, 2008. You must register for this event as we are limited in space. Last year we had around 260 children and adults participate in this wonderful weekend; more details in this Bridge. Please remember to bring your own bedding with you.

The conference committee is working hard to bring you another excellent training and entertainment weekend on November 6, 7 8 and 9th, 2008. The Jasper Sawridge Conference Centre and Hotel are now taking bookings for this event. We have increased our registration space for conference this year by using two hotels for our training courses.

We are still waiting to hear the results from our negotiations with Children's Services. We will inform you as soon as we get the information.

In closing I thank our Executive Director, Katherine Jones and her staff in keeping the office running smoothly. Thank you to the Board of Directors who give of their time working in their regions, the Foster Allegation Support Team, the After Hours Support Line and the other volunteers who help our Association throughout the year.

Have a great Spring!
Norm Brownell



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Here we are at the end of another fiscal year and for the life of me I cannot figure out where the time has gone. I am sure I am not the only person who feels like this.

It has been another busy year for the Alberta Foster Parent Association. We have been involved in various committees throughout the year as well as keeping up with the day to day business of the AFPA. As most of you are aware, we have had a turnover in staff at the office which has been a struggle at times, however we have managed to stay on top of things and are feeling like a smooth running team again. I thank Brenda Rabie for her continued help in answering questions we had.

It is with sadness that I inform you that David Tunney has left his position with Alberta Child and Youth Services. I wish him well in his new position as Executive Director for a Childrens Aid Society in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. I know he will do a fantastic job for them. I have worked closely over the years with David and will greatly miss him.

The AFPA is very pleased to hear that we will continue to have Minister Tarchuk as Minister of Alberta Child and Youth Services. We look forward to our continued working relationship with Minister Tarchuk and her staff.

All arrangements have been made for our 35th Annual Training Conference being held in Jasper, Alberta at the Sawridge Hotel and Convention Centre so if anyone is planning to attend it might be a good idea to book your room at the Sawridge. Registration packages should be completed by the end of August 2008, so watch for them!

If you do not receive one in the mail please contact the AFPA and we will gladly send one to you. We will also be posting a copy of the Brochure and Registration on our web page at www.afpaonline.com as soon as it is completed. I hope to see many of you there.

The AFPA will be running two one week trial summer camp programs this year. It is very exciting to think that we are at that stage now. It has taken many volunteer hours to get the camp up to the standard we believe will be a safe environment for the children attending the camp. I would like to give a special thank you to CEO Mark Hattori and his staff, the Red Deer Foster Family Association, the Lethbridge Foster Family Association and all the volunteers who have worked so hard at the camp to make it such a special place. Your help and generosity is outstanding! It is because of folks like you that our children will have the opportunity to have a very special camping experience.

In closing, I thank Marie Brownell and her F.A.S.T. members for the exceptional work they do to support their fellow foster families when in crisis. Thank you to Paulette Kopp and her After Hours Support Line for the great work they do in supporting foster families. I thank the Calgary Foster Parent Association for their continued support to the AFPA in many areas especially with helping to run the casinos for us. I thank Melissa Johnson for the wonderful work she does in publishing the Bridge for us. Last but not least I thank my staff for their hard work and support. It is a pleasure working with each and every one of you.

Sincere wishes to all for a wonderful spring!
Sincerely,
Katherine

Vice President's Report

It's hard to believe that we are heading into spring. The time sure seems to go quickly.

Firstly, KUDOS to Katherine and her staff. Things are running smoothly and its a pleasure to go to the office. I hear we have a special person who drops by the office occasionally and lends a helping hand. Thanks so much.

Speaking of helping hands, Linda and I are in great need of many. We have scheduled the first childrens camp (pilot project) for July 27th to August 1st, 2008. The children will arrive after 6 pm on Sunday and be picked up before noon on Friday. The plan is to have about 40 campers attend. They will be both male and female and be between the ages of 7-9 and 10-12. We will then run a second camp from August 17th - 22nd for the same age groups. We definitely need some help. We need directors/supervisors and volunteers for the following areas: Kitchen, Canteen, Crafts, Sports, Janitorial, First Aid (possibly a nurse) and some program assistants. Marlin Meyer has generously offered to supervise the kitchen for the first week for us. We also

need senior counselors and junior counselors. If you are able to help, please come lend a hand. You may call Sylvia at 780-727-3745 or e-mail at rthompson@lincsat.com to volunteer.

Registration for both camps will begin on April 28th, 2008 at the same contact number and e-mail address.

35 years of conferences is a tremendous accomplishment. Planning for a special conference in Jasper November 6 - 9, 2008 is well underway. We have the honor of having a distinguished Scholar-in-Residence again this year. Some of our sessions will be aimed at having fun and taking care of ourselves. Other sessions include Internet Safety, Preventing Identity Theft, Meyers Briggs, Effects of Family Violence on Children, FASD Update, Train the Trainer, Mens Group and First Aid. The list is really much longer but this will give a hint of some of what we planned. We hope you all plan to attend, so start planning now.

See you soon,
Sylvia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORTS

REGION 1 Marlin Meyer

By the time this issue of the Bridge reaches us I hope spring will finally be here. A long winter has been endured by all of us, and the prospect of nicer weather makes me smile.

In Region 1, we were very fortunate to have had the opportunity to have Kier Kutney present to us on January 26. All who were in attendance came away with great knowledge on how to handle behaviors with our children. Thanks Kier.

At our society's January board meeting our president Allan Domier resigned his position due to commitments with his new job. We wish Allan well in his new career and thank him for his many tireless hours spent working for our society.

I encourage all to keep in touch with us through phone or e-mail. We have many upcoming activities for foster families. Our annual spring BBQ will be held June 11 at the Elk's Compound in Indian Battle Park.

REGION 2 Ralph Welzel

Spring is here. Let the summer activity planning begin. The winter seemed to be a long one this year. Brooks and area has been steady with a lot of kids in care, keeping us foster parents very busy. There are a lot of infants in care as well as teenagers, no one in between. The teenagers are looking forward to independent living.

Permanency planning, adoptions and private guardianship seem to be the way things are going these days. I am very impressed with so many families stepping up to the plate for these kids in care.

There are not enough foster parents interested in becoming F.A.S.T. members, so training will be held at a later date. That's all I have at this time so have a good spring and happy fostering.

REGION 4 Heather Guard

Hello everyone, I hope you enjoyed Easter, I know I did. Since we talked last, there has been a change at Central Office. Stacey Stradecki has been promoted to Foster Care Specialist, giving more time to Tracy Leiper on Permanency Planning. Hopefully at the upcoming Spring Retreat we will have the opportunity to congratulate Stacey on her new position.

Our Spring Retreat, the first weekend in May, at the James River campground is quickly approaching. During this time our Regional Board meeting will also be held. At any time during the retreat if you have any questions or concerns you would like to address at the AFPA Board level please feel free to talk to myself or Mike Thompson. I look forward to seeing you all at the retreat. Hope to see you there!

REGION 5 Rene Rajotte

I would like to say hello to everyone from Region 5, and hope that everyone has had a great winter. For those people that enjoy winter, Region 5 was the place to be. We had a lot of snow! It was great for winter recreation even though the temperatures fell to minus 40 and not to mention a wind chill that dropped into the minus 50s. The children were forced to bundle up more than usual, but they still enjoyed the fresh air.

We had our 2nd annual winter fun day; this included a horse drawn sleigh ride, skating and a hamburger/hot dog roast. This was very well attended with about 50 people showing up. The weather cooperated very well for us.

Well, it is sad to see the outdoor rink melting, however we look forward to spring. We are fortunate to be able to experience the different seasons in Canada. Many people are stuck with same weather conditions all year long.

Hope this finds everyone well and all the best wishes to all. Have a great spring.

REGION 6 Linda Krauskopf

It is hard to believe that in 3 months it is the end of the school year. We have had a very busy last couple of months.

Recently, the Sturgeon election took place and Coleen Simpson was elected president and Joanne Crowley became the Vice President; for the Regional Council election. Linda Krauskopf was reelected for region 6 AFPA director. Vina McKee is the Honorary AFPA Region 6 Director. The elections for the Yellowhead Foster Parents Association are going to be held on March 19th and we are hoping for a great turnout.

Regional Council is very busy with recruitment, retention, kinship care and adoption issues in addition to keeping the upper management on the loop with all that we are working on. We are going to be meeting with Bryon Kelly every couple of months and more when needed. We plan to work on different issues as they arise.

We are very short on F.A.S.T members in the region and if anyone is interested in helping us, they are asked to call the AFPA office for all the details or you can also talk to Vina or Linda for more information. Anyone from South Edmonton would be perfect as many of our current reps. are on the North End.

Board Reports Continued on Page 6



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Region 9

Region 9 is currently being serviced by FAST reps from out of Region. New reps from Region 9 are being recruited and will be trained as soon as possible!

Region 10

Region 10 is currently being serviced by FAST reps throughout the many other Regions.

9th Annual
Aboriginal Awareness Weekend

June 6th – June 8th, 2008

Location:
James River Children's Retreat
Sundre, Alberta



Bookings & Costs of Meals:
please call
Lavona Coutts at
the Alberta Foster Parent Association
(780)701-4090
Or Toll Free at 1-800-667-2372

Accommodation Rates:

RV Sites \$25.00 per night, tenting \$15.00 per night,
Cabins \$50.00 per night, Rooms in the Lodge \$50.00 per night

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Welcoming Circle
Smudging Ceremony
Traditional Healing Circle
Pipe Ceremony
Drum Making
Traditional Shield Making
Storytelling/drum/singing
Elder and speeches
Medicine Wheel Teachings
Cultural Teachings
Games for the family/ Volleyball and Organized Field Games
Dance Class
Massage



**** Please bring your own toiletries, towels, sheets, blankets,
and pillows as they are not provided****

Cran-Apple Oatmeal Bars

3 cups large-flake oats
1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt
3/4 cup sugar or Splenda
1/4 cup non-hydrogenated margarine
1 egg
1 egg white
3/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
2 tsp vanilla
1 cup dried cranberries

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line a 13x9 inch baking pan with parchment paper.

2. In large bowl, combine oats, whole wheat flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

3. In another bowl, beat together sugar/Splenda and margarine until fluffy. Beat in egg, egg white, applesauce and vanilla. Add oat mixture and stir to combine. Stir in cranberries. Scrape dough into prepared baking pan and bake for 20 minutes or until cake tester inserted in centre comes out clean. Let cool completely and cut into bars.

Makes 24 bars



March 03, 2008

The Canadian Foster Family Association is appealing to all Foster Parents across this great nation of ours, to purchase a donor membership in the CFFA. Memberships run from April 1st to March 31st.

The cost of a donor membership is twenty dollars (\$20.00) and is tax deductible. Please purchase a membership and encourage other Foster Parents to do the same. Membership is also available to Social Workers and the general public at the same cost of twenty dollars (\$20.00). The CFFA also has a six year membership for one hundred dollars (\$100.00) as savings of twenty dollars (\$20.00) to you for your continued support.

The CFFA does not receive funding from the Federal Government and therefore your membership fees are extremely important in helping us to carry out the business of the CFFA.

Thank you to those who purchased a Donor membership last year. It is due to folks like you that the CFFA was able to accomplish a great deal of work this past year in uniting the fostering community across Canada.

Your support is critical in affording the CFFA the means to continue working on your behalf.

Please fill out your donor membership today and become part of the team.

Thanking you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,
Norm Brownell
3rd Vice President
Canadian Foster Family Association

Board Reports - Continued from Page 4

REGION 7

Bev Towe and Paulette Kopp

Region 7 has been busy; we have a newsletter that we sent out to our foster homes which we call the Loop.

We have finished a respite policy for our area. Currently we are working on a specialized rates policy and a protocol for our investigation process.

Dennis MacNeil and Emile Pelletier did a course/training with our school divisions. It was teaching and explaining our foster children in the school system. The teacher aids enjoyed and we even got inquiries for fostering and respite homes.

With spring around the corner dont forget to claim for your holiday.