THIS NEW FACILITY WILL PROVIDE NEW CARE CHOICES AND EXPAND THE NUMBER OF SUPPORTIVE LIVING SPACES IN SMOKY LAKE

— George VanderBurg, Associate Minister of Seniors

EARTH SHAKING

Among those who broke ground on new supportive living in Smoky Lake were, from left, Associate Minister of Seniors George VanderBurg with granddaughter Brea, Smoky Lake Foundation Chair Rick Cherniwchan with granddaughter Madison, Wendy Harrison of Alberta Health Services, lodge manager Jeanette Rosichuk, and Bar-V-Nook resident Mary Babichuk.

INVEST IN YOUR KIDS BY MAKING TIME

The best investment you can give your kids isn’t fancy sports equipment or a university education—it’s you. Studies show time spent with your children is the biggest factor in raising socially and emotionally healthy kids.

MULTI-TASKING ON THE MULTI-GYM

Patients at the Cold Lake Healthcare Centre are totally pumped about the multi-gym, a new piece of equipment that allows up to four people to complete their physical therapy workouts at the same time.

Influenza Immunization

FALL INTO THE ROUTINE

Influenza immunization is now available, free of charge, to all Albertans six months of age and older.

www.albertahealthservices.ca | 1.866.408.5465 (LINK).
CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM EXPANDS

Did you know that having mammograms regularly (an X-ray of the breast) is the most effective way to detect breast cancer early? Abnormalities or cancer can develop long before you notice any symptoms. Screening can detect these abnormalities early, when treatment has the best chance of working. And did you know the earlier that cervical and colorectal cancers are found, the more effective treatment may be? Screening also helps prevent cancer early? Abnormalities or cancer can develop long before you notice any symptoms. Screening can detect these abnormalities early, when treatment has the best chance of working. And did you know the earlier that cervical and colorectal cancers are found, the more effective treatment may be? Screening also helps prevent cancer.

Screening for Life aims to provide equitable access to cancer screening programs and North Zone health care providers by offering mobile screening units in rural Alberta. In addition to breast cancer screening services during the mobile mammography rural screening day. This project has added cervical and colorectal cancer screening to women ages 21 to 69, and colorectal cancer screening to men and women ages 50 to 74.

In addition to breast cancer screening services offered during a Screen Test mobile visit, the project has added cervical and colorectal cancer screening services during the mobile mammography rural screening day. This project is a collaborative initiative between provincial cancer screening programs and North Zone health care providers. The project was first undertaken at the Buffalo Lake and Idaho Métis settlements in September 2013. There was a two- to three-fold increase in the number of women screened compared to the last time the Screen Test mobile unit visited these communities. The team is looking to integrating cancer screening in other northern communities.

This cancer screening project is both a reflection of AHS’s commitment to meet Albertans’ health care needs, and a testament to the innovation and dedication of our staff to meet northern Albertans’ unique health care needs.

For more information about the breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening programs, call toll-free 1.866.727.3926, or visit www.screeningforlife.ca. For more details on the Screen Test mobile program, or when the trailer will be in your area, call toll-free 1.800.667.0604.
Construction is underway on a facility that will bring more than three dozen new supportive living spaces to Smoky Lake next year.

The Government of Alberta, the Smoky Lake Foundation, and Alberta Health Services (AHS), officially broke ground for the new Bar-V Nook Supportive Living Facility on Sept. 14.

“This facility will help meet the growing and changing needs of Smoky Lake residents,” says Wendy Harrison, from Alberta Health Services North Zone.

The Bar-V Nook Supportive Living Facility will provide 40 new designated supportive living spaces to Smoky Lake and area residents. In addition to the existing 47 spaces at the adjoining Bar-V Nook Manor, this will bring the total number of supportive living units to 87.

Supportive living provides a non-institutional alternative model of care to those who are no longer able to live safely at home, and focuses on health promotion, well-being, independence and maintaining functional abilities.

Half of Bar-V Nook’s spaces will provide care for those with dementia. The dementia wing will be secured with its own dining and kitchen area and outdoor courtyard.

The other 20 spaces will provide various levels of care. Nursing care, rehabilitation, and assistance with personal care are among the services AHS staff will provide, depending on the needs of each individual resident. This wing will also have its own dining and kitchen area and outdoor courtyard. This dining and kitchen area space will be big enough for the existing 47 Bar-V-Nook Manor residents and the courtyard will join together the Bar-V Nook Supportive Living Facility and the Bar-V-Nook Manor.

“This new facility is going to be a tremendous asset to the community,” says Rick Cherniwchan, Chair of the Smoky Lake Foundation. “We are very excited to be moving forward with it.”

The provincial government provided $7.4 million in funding through the Affordable Supportive Living Initiative to the Bar-V Nook Supportive Living Facility. These new spaces are a part of the Government of Alberta’s goal of opening 1,000 continuing care beds each year over a period of five years across the province, for a total of 5,300 additional continuing care beds between 2010 and 2015.

“The Government of Alberta is committed to providing seniors with more care options to address their needs as they age,” says George VanderBurg, Associate Minister of Seniors.

“This new facility will provide new care choices and also expand the number of supportive living spaces in Smoky Lake.”

Pat Palechuk, Chair of the Lakeland Health Advisory Council, says the centre is a big plus for the community.

“This facility and the groundbreaking celebration is great news for Smoky Lake and area residents,” says Palechuk who, as Chair, listens to feedback and concerns of local residents and shares them with AHS, the Government of Alberta, and the Smoky Lake Foundation.

“I do feel like the decisions that have been made are right for the community,” says Palechuk.

“This new facility will really benefit Smoky Lake.”

Associate Minister of Seniors George VanderBurg, left, and Smoky Lake Foundation Chair Rick Cherniwchan took to the podium at the ground-breaking.

**Quote:**

“THIS NEW FACILITY... ALLOWS FOR MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO AGE-IN-PLACE”

---

Story by Lisa Peters
Renaldo Macalalad had a very personal reason for becoming an audiologist. It was 12 years ago, and his daughter, Lara, had been born with hearing issues.

The development of Lara’s hearing was affected when her mother was exposed to the rubella virus during the first trimester of her pregnancy. Lara now has a cochlear implant in her right ear and will be getting one for her left ear.

Macalalad’s keen interest in Lara’s treatment plan was recognized by her audiologist who suggested that perhaps he should look at this career. "I believe I am the first parent of a patient to ever go to school for audiology in the Philippines," says Macalalad, laughing. “A personal experience has definitely led to a rewarding career.”

And it’s a career that moved to Fort McMurray earlier this year as Macalalad began work as a full-time audiologist and part of the Allied Health team based at the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre. He’s now one of three audiologists based in the North Zone of Alberta Health Services (the others are in Grande Prairie and St. Paul).

An audiologist is trained to carry out assessments by performing a number of specialized hearing tests. The majority of Macalalad’s work focuses on the evaluation of patients with hearing concerns which may be due to age, excessive noise exposure, heredity, genetics or other associated conditions. He sees between five and 10 patients a day. Macalalad also works with clients of speech language pathologists in the hospital and school system to ensure hearing deficits are managed properly.

Aside from treating clients who already have diagnosed hearing issues, audiologists provide education on ways to prevent hearing loss, particularly in industrial settings.

“Because our ears are protected, particularly in loud workplaces, it helps to reduce the chance of damage later on.”

HEARING A CAREER CALLING

One man’s personal journey led to a professional career

Story and photo by Heather MacKay

What is audiometry?
Audiometry focuses on the diagnosis of hearing disorders, hearing screening and testing, hearing aid evaluation, education and health promotion.

What’s an audiologist?
An audiologist is a health professional who identifies a hearing loss, helps prevent it, helps caregivers understand a child’s hearing loss, and recommends follow-up (hearing aids, assistive listening devices).

What audiometry services are offered?
Services may include education in the use of hearing devices, auditory training, and counselling for individuals and families of those of any age affected by hearing loss. Some locations currently offer routine hearing assessments to Edmonton clinics since there are limited local appointments, provided by a visiting contract audiologist. Note: for hearing tests, fees may apply.

What audiometry services are available in northern Alberta?
For audiometry services in your area, call your local community health centre or Health Link Alberta at 1.866.408.5465.

• Barhead Community Health Services; 780.674.3698
• Edson Community Health Services; 780.723.4421
• Grande Prairie Virene Building Public Health Centre (hearing-aid fitting and follow-up is not provided at this location); 780.513.8127 or 1.800.732.8981
• Northern Lights Regional Health Centre; 780.798.1377
• Northwest Health Centre; 780.722.6809
• Slave Lake Healthcare Centre; 780.849.2501
• St. Paul Community Health Services; 780.645.3396
• Whitecourt Healthcare Centre; 780.778.5555

Do you have concerns about your health? Visit the AHS website for symptom information.

www.albertahealthservices.ca

SERVICES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

EATING DISORDER SERVICES
Consultation, education, support, resources, and referrals are provided for those with disordered eating, their families and health care providers. The service collaborates with other eating disorder service providers in Alberta, including specialty treatment centres in Edmonton and Calgary. Education services are available for groups including the general public. Call Beaverlodge Community Health Services at 780.342.2383 for more information.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STI) PROGRAM
The Sexually Transmitted Infections program offers confidential and free STI testing, treatment, and contact tracing as well as HIV/AIDS testing and counselling services. The program also offers public education about STIs and related health issues, along with prevention information. Some locations may offer cervical screening (Pap tests). Contact your local public health centre for more information and clinic hours.

SCREEN TEST MOBILE MAMMOGRAPHY
Screen Test provides mammography screening to women ages 50 to 69 – the age group most at risk of developing breast cancer – in rural communities where the service isn’t regularly available. To inquire about upcoming North Zone stops, confirm dates and locations, and to book an appointment, call toll-free 1.800.667.0604. Appointments fill up quickly. For more information, visit www.screeningforlife.ca/screenetest.

FASD DIRECTORY AND RESOURCES
Provides information regarding how to access fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) supports and services in prevention, diagnosis and assessment and supports for individuals and caregivers. Call Fort McMurray Community Health Services at 780.791.8205.

www.albertahealthservices.ca

EAR YE, EAR YE!

• What is audiometry? Audiometry focuses on the diagnosis of hearing disorders, hearing screening and testing, hearing aid evaluation, education and health promotion.
• What’s an audiologist? An audiologist is a health professional who identifies a hearing loss, helps prevent it, helps caregivers understand a child’s hearing loss, and recommends follow-up (hearing aids, assistive listening devices).
• What audiometry services are offered? Services may include education in the use of hearing devices, auditory training, and counselling for individuals and families of those of any age affected by hearing loss. Some locations currently offer routine hearing assessments to Edmonton clinics since there are limited local appointments, provided by a visiting contract audiologist. Note: for hearing tests, fees may apply.
In September, The Westlock Healthcare Centre was honoured with the University of Alberta’s Rural Clerkship Site of the Year for Teaching Excellence. Pictured from the facility are, seated, from left: third-year medical interns Selena Wong and Antonia Johnston, Dr. Daniella Steyn, second-year family medical resident Dr. Lindsey Campbell and third-year medical intern Han Xu. Standing, from left: pharmacist Jane Morrow, Dr. Pamela Coulson, fourth-year medical intern Jennifer Duncan and Charles Wang, Dr. Vicci Fournier, Dr. Mohamed Mydeen, Dr. Noel DaCunha, third-year medical intern Stephanie Frigon and Dr. Magali Benard.

PUTTING DOCS ON COURSE

Westlock site garners praise for teaching rural physicians

Story by Lisa Peters | Photo by Karen Bouman

A

n Alberta Health Services facility in the North Zone has been recognized by the University of Alberta (U of A) for its work teaching medical students.

The University of Alberta’s Department of Family Medicine recently awarded the Westlock Healthcare Centre with the Rural Clerkship Site of the Year Award for Teaching Excellence. It’s the first time the university has granted the award.

“This is an excellent site for medical students to learn the practice of rural family medicine,” says Dr. Mohamed Mydeen, a family physician in Westlock. “All of the physicians and staff here work well together and offer a very hands-on approach to learning.”

Mydeen has been working in Westlock for three years and is directly involved in teaching medical students at the Westlock Healthcare Centre. Last year, he was awarded the Preceptor of the Year Award from the U of A’s Department of Family Medicine.

“We’ve received a lot of positive feedback from students about the observership and clerkship programs we offer here,” says Mydeen.

“Students get to experience a wide range of services that rural medicine has to offer. They spend time with physicians in different health care settings, including acute care and long-term care, and during different medical procedures.”

The Westlock Healthcare Centre teaches between 12 and 24 students a year. Other preceptors at the site include Dr. Pamela Coulson, Dr. Noel DaCunha, Dr. James Keay and Dr. Gina Arps.

“Everyone at the Westlock Healthcare Centre encourages a good learning environment,” says Mydeen.

The recipient of the Rural Clerkship Site of the Year Award for Teaching Excellence was based on evaluations completed by students, the number of students that the clinic taught during the academic year, multi-level learning opportunities available at the site, and general support to the U of A’s Department of Family Medicine. This award was presented to Mydeen at the Family Medicine Clerkship Preceptor Orientations in early September.

The U of A also offers an Urban Clerkship Site of the Year Award for Teaching Excellence. This year, the Erminskin Medical Clinic in Edmonton won the award, which recognize clinics for their dedication in teaching undergraduate medical students.}

ALL OF THE PHYSICIANS AND STAFF ... OFFER A VERY HANDS-ON APPROACH TO LEARNING

– Dr. Mohamed Mydeen, family physician at Westlock Healthcare Centre

What does health mean to you?

Share your thoughts. Use YOUR VOICE.

www.albertahealthservices.ca/yourvoice | #yourvoice

For the latest health news updates in your zone, visit the AHS website.

www.albertahealthservices.ca
TIME IS THE BEST INVESTMENT IN YOUR CHILDREN
Minutes, hours and days add up to a powerful factor in raising kids

Story by Colleen Biondi | Visit applemag.ca

With our kids is not a passe notion in the 21st century. In fact, research shows it might be one of the most powerful factors in creating socially and emotionally healthy adults.

When you spend time with your children, they learn they matter, and it builds their trust in you, says Tanice Jones, co-ordinator of the Parent Link Centre in Grande Prairie.

Jones calls time a “protective factor” against detachment problems and anti-social behaviours as a child grows.

First results from the Early Child Development Mapping Project Alberta, a peek into how ready our children are for school, are cause for concern.

“Our kids are doing poorly socially and emotionally,” says Jones.

The “why” is still being examined, but Jones thinks it is likely to include overworked and overscheduled lives, too much computer and toy time and not enough one-on-one time between parents and children.

“It’s about balance,” Jones says. “Don’t feel pressure about creating ‘teachable’ moments. Take the moment; it will be teachable.”

When your child needs you, press the pause button and pay attention,Patrick Dillon, provincial co-ordinator for the Alberta Father Involvement Initiative (abdad.ca), admits it is a challenge for parents to find time because in many families both parents work. But kids are looking for a sense of belonging and if they don’t find it with family, they may find it elsewhere.

When parents are involved with their children, children and youth are less likely to be involved in gangs or unhealthy relationships.

To find more time with your kids, you can:

• Separate work time from family time.
• Learn to say “no” to work, volunteering and activities that take you away from your family.
• Find things you can do with your kids such as walking, hiking, camping, swimming, reading, playing or listening to music, skating and family games night.
• Try to arrange flexible work hours; let your employer and co-workers know you value time with your children.

For more information, visit:

• healthyparentshealthychildren.ca,
• abdad.ca, or
• MyHealth.Alberta.ca.

BECAUSE KIDS DON’T COME WITH AN OWNER’S MANUAL …

As a parent, you take your role in your child’s healthy development seriously. So do we. That’s why we went straight to the source – Albertan parents – for guidance and feedback as we developed the full suite of new Healthy Parents, Healthy Children resources, now available for all Albertans. Visit www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca, and you’ll find tips, tools and supports designed with you, for you to use, as you foster your child’s healthy future. For more information on the Healthy Parents, Healthy Children books or web resources, you can also email hphc@albertahealthservices.ca.

STARTING YOUNG
EARLY CHILDHOOD IS IMPORTANT

The experiences, relationships and surroundings of early childhood are opportunities to positively – or negatively – influence your child’s life. Did you know …

• Most young children in Canada are developing well. But by the time they go to kindergarten, about 25 per cent have difficulties with basic tasks such as holding a crayon, following instructions and getting along with others.
• A greater percentage of children who grow up in poverty and with other social disadvantages are vulnerable. However, the greatest number of vulnerable children comes from middle-income homes, because of the size of the middle class in Canada (75 per cent of all families).
• Getting children off to the right start reduces juvenile delinquency, addictions, school dropout rates, learning disabilities, obesity and many other problems.
• Investing in the early years pays off. By one estimate, every $1 invested in the early years saves $3 in spending for school-aged children and $8 for adult education.

THE FIRST 2,000 DAYS

The first 2,000 days of your child’s life – the time between birth and kindergarten – are important for the rest of his or her life.

They make an impact on your child’s lifelong health, friendships and relationships, self confidence, success at school and work, future wealth, and ability to get a job.

CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations protect you or your child from dangerous diseases, and they help reduce the spread of disease to others. Childhood immunization schedules may vary in each province and territory. Ask your doctor what shots your child should get. Your doctor may recommend other shots as well, if your child is more likely to have certain health problems.

Immunizations start right after birth, and many are given throughout a baby’s first 23 months. Booster shots occur throughout life. Talk to your doctor, visit MyHealth.Alberta.ca, or call Health Link Alberta at 1.866.408.5465 for more information.
CENTRE’S PUMPED ON MULTI-GYM

Story by Kerri Robins | Photos courtesy Lesley Vivian |

N
o pain, no gain! At least that’s what they say, but patients at Cold Lake Healthcare Centre have some top-notch equipment in their physiotherapy department that’s putting more gain than pain in their exercise routines.

Funded by Hearts for Healthcare and made possible by through donations from the May 2013 Hearts for Hospital gala, the centre now boasts the Hoist 4400, a multi-gym strength training system purchased for $7,350 in August.

Up to four people can use the multi-gym at the same time to perform a variety of exercises depending on their particular requirements.

Kevin Cardinal, 49, is a client at the centre and a fan of the Hoist 4400. He’s been using it for strength training in preparation for receiving two prosthetic legs below the knee.

“It’s easy to use and safe compared to free weights,” says Cardinal. “And it’s helping me improve my technique and getting me ready for my prosthetic legs.”

Centre physiotherapist Lesley Vivian sees a lot of benefit to the machine.

“The multi-gym helps us provide an improved level of care for a variety of clients,” says Vivian. “We can customize individual workout routines based on patients’ injury, fitness level or simply for strength training.”

The multi-gym is accessible for most patients whether they are in wheelchairs or using a walker. The machine has four stations and features a leg press, adjustable cable column, rigid arm pull-down and chest press/leg extension and standing leg curl options.

And for Cardinal, weight training is critical.

“I’m improving my upper body and core strength so I can walk again one day,” he says. Vivian is thrilled with the equipment.

“We were ecstatic when we found out we were getting the multi-gym because we can treat more clients at once,” says Vivian. “The multi-gym also allows us to help our clients choose the best workout based on individual lifestyle – something they can transition to at a community gym or at home.”

Theresa Nickel, Executive Director of Hearts for Healthcare, was at the heart of the Hearts for Hospital gala and is thrilled with its success. It raised a total of $220,000.

“Hundreds of hours went into organizing and planning the event,” says Nickel. “But seeing the benefits and impact our support has on our health care centre and local health care in general makes it well worth the effort.”

For more information, please visit www.heartsforhealthcare.ca.

STONGER ROLE THRILLS ADVISORY COUNCILS

Story by Kristin Bernhard |

Increasing the role of Health and Provincial Advisory Councils is a key priority for Alberta Health Services (AHS).

In a provincewide meeting in Edmonton in September, AHS and government leaders spoke of a renewed commitment to councils, a promise to do a better job of seeking public input, a pledge to explore ways to effectively channel the information councils provide to the appropriate area, and a promise to close the loop on how the feedback provided has been put to use.

“Our councils provide that vital link between AHS and Alberta’s communities,” says Colleen Turner, Vice President, Community Engagement, Public Relations and Communications. “Many decisions need to be made at a local level with community perspectives considered.

“We need our councils involved at the start of these processes so we can effectively listen and respond to local communities.”

And that’s welcome news to the more than 100 volunteer council members across Alberta.

In fact, Larry Albrecht, Chair of the Prairie Mountain Health Advisory Council, says his council is thrilled to have even more input into health care services that affect its communities.

“We are very excited about the opportunity to add local voices into the health care planning conversation,” says Albrecht. “Our council has a huge amount of enthusiasm. We feel we have turned a corner toward a new direction that will allow us to have greater input into zone activities.”

This input also provides the opportunity to expand upon past successes of the Provincial Advisory Councils (PACs) and Health Advisory Councils (HACs).

Many council members have brought their area’s voice to health care planning as part of community working groups looking at Family Care Clinic proposals.

Others have participated in 2030 service planning workshops or have provided informed comment on proposals for service delivery enhancements.

According to Albrecht, the renewed commitment from AHS is worth celebrating.

“We are rejuvenated by the commitment from our health care leaders to include the community perspective.

“Bringing forward the opinions of our community members to AHS and having a real impact on planning and service decisions at the beginning is a very positive step for health care across Alberta.”

And Ruth Martin-Williams, Chair of the Tamarack HAC, echoes Albrecht’s enthusiasm.

“This is good news for local communities,” she says.

“With the commitment from AHS, there will be an improvement in local health care delivery.”

For more information on the Health and Provincial Advisory Councils, visit www.albertahealthservices.ca/communityrelations.asp.
Residents, family and staff members of the Radway Continuing Care Centre gathered in September to celebrate the memory of Canadian cancer activist Terry Fox and his Marathon of Hope, and raise money for cancer research.

“Not only does this event at the continuing care centre help raise money for cancer research and remember Terry Fox, it also care centre help raise money for cancer research,” says Enid Desroches, therapy assistant with Alberta Health Services at the Radway Continuing Care Centre.

Desroches has been organizing the Terry Fox Run/Walk/Wheel event at the centre for the past five years. Every year, staff and family members make a cash donation (no minimum donation is required) and sponsor a resident of the centre. Everyone gathers together in the afternoon and staff and family members take the residents for a walk outside around the garden path.

“It’s not very often we have the chance to have everyone outside together at the same time,” says Desroches. “It always means a lot to the residents to be able to be outdoors on a warm day, and it’s a nice break for staff, too.” With donations coming mainly in the form of loonies and toonies, a total of $87 was raised.

Every year, staff and family members make a cash donation (no minimum donation is required) and sponsor a resident of the centre. A one-mile loop was available for those who wished to use a walker, a wheelchair, or a stroller.

“Run/walk/wheel event at the centre for the opportunity to get outside and spend time together,” says Enid Desroches, therapy assistant with Alberta Health Services at the Radway Continuing Care Centre.

Desroches has been organizing the Terry Fox Run/Walk/Wheel event at the centre for the past five years. Every year, staff and family members make a cash donation (no minimum donation is required) and sponsor a resident of the centre. Everyone gathers together in the afternoon and staff and family members take the residents for a walk outside around the garden path.

“It’s not very often we have the chance to have everyone outside together at the same time,” says Desroches. “It always means a lot to the residents to be able to be outdoors on a warm day, and it’s a nice break for staff, too.” With donations coming mainly in the form of loonies and toonies, a total of $87 was raised.

Every year, staff and family members make a cash donation (no minimum donation is required) and sponsor a resident of the centre. A one-mile loop was available for those who wished to use a walker, a wheelchair, or a stroller.

“Run/walk/wheel event at the centre for the opportunity to get outside and spend time together,” says Enid Desroches, therapy assistant with Alberta Health Services at the Radway Continuing Care Centre.

Desroches has been organizing the Terry Fox Run/Walk/Wheel event at the centre for the past five years. Every year, staff and family members make a cash donation (no minimum donation is required) and sponsor a resident of the centre. Everyone gathers together in the afternoon and staff and family members take the residents for a walk outside around the garden path.

“It’s not very often we have the chance to have everyone outside together at the same time,” says Desroches. “It always means a lot to the residents to be able to be outdoors on a warm day, and it’s a nice break for staff, too.” With donations coming mainly in the form of loonies and toonies, a total of $87 was raised.