

ASB honours 2013 Farm Women of the Year

Women celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Farm Women's Conference

The 30th Anniversary of the Farm Women's Conference was an occasion to reflect on the past, reward the present and look to the future.

A great lineup of speakers, the company of over 120 rural women and the presentation of two Farm Woman of the Year awards helped recognize farm women for all they do for their families, communities and society.

The event is hosted each year in February and is hosted by the Athabasca County Agricultural Service Board (ASB) and organized by the Farm Women's Conference Planning Committee.

Virginia Ramsum, who continues to work alongside her husband to cultivate a successful family farm near Atmore, is the recipient of the 2013 Pioneer Farm Woman of the Year award.

Virginia takes immense pride in her farm and keeps including cows, goats, chickens, turkeys, geese and ducks. She actively assists in all farm operations and can even be found alongside her husband hunting, trapping and fishing.

Described in her nomination package as being dedicated to her family and going above and beyond in her responsibilities, Virginia was praised for rolling up her sleeves and making the most of farm life.

She cooks and bakes using products grown and raised right on the family farm such as vegetables, fruit and hand-milled wheat. Yogurt, cheese, butter, preserves, fruit leather, dehydrated fruit, wine from wild berries are all prepared for her family and friends to enjoy. She also takes pride in making organic toothpaste, soap, shampoo and essential oil.

The 2013 Modern Farm Woman of the Year is Tracy Morey from the Rochester area.

Involved in 4-H from a very young age she had a very successful 4-H career with many champion ribbons for her steer, heifer and cow/calf projects.

After graduating high school she attained her Animal Health Technician Certificate from Lakeland College, where she met husband David. Tracy then completed a degree in elementary education at the University of Alberta and married in 1988. The couple soon started a Black Angus herd on a farm they purchased near Mayerthorpe.

Over the years they expanded the farm from 60 Holstein cows to 270 purebred Jerseys and 800 head of livestock in 2013. They also expanded the size of their farm to 3,000 acres of pasture and crop land.

In the spring of 1992 the couple moved to the Morey family farm near Rochester and Tracy began teaching at Rochester School. The first of their two children was born in 1994 and Tracy switched to work full time on the farm and raise their family.

Today Tracy is the Manager of the Dairy Barn, milks on a regular basis and is responsible for the feeding of the young calves (anywhere from 20-50 at a time). She manages all employees, regulating their daily assignments, does all the book-keeping and payroll for the farm and takes an active part in all of the farm's cropping activities.

Among her community engagements, Tracy remains involved with 4-H after 11 years, has been a member of the Jersey West Board, volunteers as a Green Certificate Tester every year and continues to share her passion for agriculture with youth of the region.



Wandering River Pipeline/Reservoir wins pair of awards

While the primary goal of the project was to provide a safe and reliable water source for residents, innovation helped it succeed.

The Wandering River Regional Water Pipeline and Reservoir Design Build has received awards from two separate organizations.

The first award was from the Canadian Engineering Association (CEA) who presented the Design Build Team consisting of Graham Construction, M. Pidherney's Trucking, Stantec Consulting, Associated Engineering and Athabasca County with an Award of Excellence on February 6, 2014.

The second award was a Project of the Year Award presented by the Alberta Public Works

Association to the Design Build Team at a County Council meeting on March 11, 2014.

The Wandering River regional waterline project was seen as being unique for a number of reasons:

- It was the first regional water project in Alberta completed under a Design-Build delivery model;
- It's the world's longest directional drilled fusible polyvinyl chloride pipe (FPVC) system;
- Ninety-five percent of the 88 km system was installed using directional drilling.

In addition to the water transmission pipeline, a system flushing program was developed and implemented to replace the water in all of the municipalities serviced by the Aspen Regional Water Services Commission (ARWSC).

During the design and construction of the project the water treatment plant was undergoing modifications to switch the system over to chloraminated water providing disinfection over a longer period of time. This was of particular importance to the system given the extensive pipeline length.

Also of note is the creation of a new reservoir, pumping station and truck fill in Wandering River as part of the project. The reservoir serves 70 residences near the community.

The project was completed in just 13 months, ending in October 2012. Ownership of the water distribution line has since been turned over from the County to the Athabasca Regional Water Services Commission.



Budget 2014: a snapshot

Athabasca County Council approved the resources to implement its vision and continue to provide a high level of service to County ratepayers.

The 2014 Budget approval followed a series of budget planning sessions to determine strategic priorities while considering which programs and services County ratepayers have grown to rely on.

Maintaining and improving road infrastructure remains a priority of the County. The **Public Works** budget allocation continues Council's commitment to support the needs of residents and the demands of agriculture, industry and commerce.

The **Agriculture Service Board** budget follows through on Council's commitment to support and promote agricultural programs/activities while meeting the needs of residents and producers.

Protecting people and property is an important objective for Council. The **Protective Services** budget continues to support the County's nine fire departments with both infrastructure and equipment, as well as funding for emergency service responses along Highway 63.

Through its **Community Services** budget, Athabasca County continues to promote tourism and economic development through the Municipal Tax Rebate Program.

Additionally, the new FCSS building will be completed, rural addressing is moving forward and upgrades to campgrounds will take place.

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WANDERING RIVER WATER PIPELINE/RESERVOIR PROJECT AWARDED - Amber Mitchell, project coordinator Stantec (left) presents a 2014 Consulting Engineers of Alberta Showcase Award of Excellence to Director of Infrastructure Services, Brian Adamkewicz and County Reeve, Dorise Splane. The County was also presented with a Alberta Public Works Association (APWA) Project of the Year Award by president of the Association Dean Berrecloth. SEE A FULL STORY ON PAGE 4.

Rural addressing moves ahead this year

Six-digit rural addressing signs have become the standard for most municipalities in Alberta and Athabasca County will follow suit.

County Council approved rural addressing as part of its 2014 Budget and County Staff are already working on a plan to implement the program this year.

On March 12, 2014 Athabasca County Council passed Bylaw 3-2014 paving the way for a new addressing system in the municipality.

Although rural addressing will help visitors and deliveries find and reach your home, they are primarily being put in place for emergency responders to quickly find rural properties in times of medical urgency.

This is why the all rural addressing signs will be standardized in colour and reflective properties

and will physically be placed in the same location alongside entrances to developed properties.

How are rural addresses created? Athabasca County assigns the rural addresses and work has already been done to assign numbers to pre-existing developments in the municipality.

In many ways they resemble addresses in a town or city, however, instead of using the streets and avenues as the basis for addressing, rural addressing uses the township and range road grid system.

While legal land locations can identify a specific parcel of land, rural addresses pinpoint the access to your home or business off a range road, township road or highway.

Only properties under development, or those which have residences or businesses on them, will require the installation of a rural addressing sign.

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Athabasca County
at the centre of it all

www.athabascacounty.com

The Athabasca County Connection newsletter is produced bi-monthly and is available to every resident by mail or electronically through email or on our website.

To receive or cancel your copy call the County Administration Office at 780-675-2273/ 1-844-662-2273 or via email: connection@athabascacounty.com

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County offices
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Administration Office
for general inquiries
1-844-662-2273

Public Works
for roadway/ maintenance issues
1-844-675-2404

County Briefs

Roadway & Hamlet Cleanup

Athabasca County offers community groups the opportunity to obtain funding by helping with our Hamlet & Roadway Cleanup.

This incentive program helps enhance the appearance of our Hamlets and roadways for the summer season.

For more information about the communities and roadways it serves, visit athabascacounty.com, call 675-2273, email amilot@athabascacounty.com.

Easter holiday office hours

Athabasca County offices, including Family and Community Support Services, and Public Works, will be closed on Friday, April 18, and Monday, April 21 for the Easter holiday.

The office will reopen for regular business hours on Tuesday, April 22.

Baptiste Lake Range Road speeds reduced

The speed limit along a 2.3 km stretch of Range Road 242.3 (Baptiste Drive) on the west side of Baptiste Lake has been reduced from 80 km/h to 50 km/h.

The affected range road, heads south from Township Road 672 (Grosmont Road), and connects with Baptiste Drive along the north boundary of the Summer Village of West Baptiste.

The change in speed limit became official when County Council established Bylaw 5-2014 at its February 27 Regular Council Meeting.

Approach/Culvert Cleaning

Help us keep spring runoff flowing. If you see a blocked culvert under your approach please call our Public Works Department 675-2404 to report it.

What's your rural address number?

612029
RGE RD 71

612

The number of Township Road

029

Interval 29 of the 40 metre grid **

RGE RD 71

The property's driveway is located along Range Road 71

** Each mile of road is divided into intervals of 40 metres. Numbers increase from South to North on Range Roads and East to West on Township Roads. Even numbers are along the North and West sides of a road, and Odd numbers are along the South and East.

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The cost for the initial installation of signs will be paid for by the County. Once the initial roll-out is complete, a cut-off date will be determined after which the cost of the signs will be included as part of the permitting process.

A contractor will be hired to conduct the installation of the signs. Due to the size of the County and weather considerations the project is expected to be completed over the 2014 and 2015 spring/summer/fall seasons.

There will be a transition period for Telus to provide the new rural addresses to the 911 call centre.

Even though a new rural addressing sign may already be installed, residents are asked not to use the rural addressing number for emergency situations until the County sends them a notice by

mail letting them know Telus has added them to the 9-1-1 system.

In addition, residents should note that the new rural addressing system won't replace existing Canada Post mailing addresses and all current mailing addresses will remain the same.

"We've known a rural addressing system was needed in the County for some time and we are very happy it is moving forward," says Doris Splane, Reeve of Athabasca County.

"The cost of implementing the project was our biggest obstacle but we have planned for it and made it a priority in the 2014 budget."

There are an estimated 4,800 existing properties receiving rural addressing signs. The 2014 Budget has allocated \$600,000 for the overall cost of implementing the rural addressing initiative.

For more: visit athabascacounty.com

New Tourism & EDO joins County staff

Athabasca County welcomes Tourism and Economic Development Officer Laura Barfoot to our staff.

She recently moved to Athabasca from Gore Bay, Manitoulin Island, Ontario where she worked as an EDO intern for the Municipality of Gordon/Barrie Island, a position she held for two years.

Her intern experience followed formal training at two schools: the University

of Waterloo where she attained a Certificate in Economic Development and Mount Allison University where she achieved a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Modern Languages, Literatures, Cultures (French & Spanish).

"Economic development is a way to help everyone keep and improve their quality of life," says Barfoot.

"If we take a sustainable and proactive

approach to development, maximizing the strengths of the region, we should be well on our way to accomplishing this goal."

Barfoot has been familiarizing herself with the region's people and tourism/business community. It's all with the goal of putting together a strategy for accomplishing short-term goals and planning for the future.



Grand Opening celebration held for FCSS building

Athabasca County Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) board members, community & agency representatives, community members, Council and staff celebrated the opening of the new FCSS building.

It was in 2009 that Athabasca County Council recognized the contribution FCSS makes in the region and agreed to take it under the County umbrella and make it a County department.

In doing so, Council had a goal of providing stability to the families who depend on FCSS programs and the staff who run them.

FCSS was already located at the "Old Brick School" and staff continued their important work from that location. In 2012 Council decided to build a new facility and provide a facility that more closely met the needs of FCSS programs.

"I remember the initial discussions after FCSS came under our umbrella," said Doris Splane, Reeve of Athabasca County. "We went about the community looking for a place we thought would be suitable but nothing seemed appropriate."

The discussion soon turned to the possibility of building a new facility and wheels were set in motion to do so. After many months of work, a ribbon cutting and open house was held on Friday, February 28, 2014.

"The County is very happy to be able to provide this space for our staff. They are serving this community and we want to help them do that."

On an initial tour of the facility as it neared completion, Reeve and Council noted not only that the building would suit the needs of FCSS, but something else as well.

"I will never forget the smiles on the faces of the staff. That was so incredible to see," said Splane.

Councillor Larry Armfelt, chairperson of the FCSS Advisory Board, says work conducted by staff doesn't only take place within the borders of the County. One FCSS program has recently been



FCSS Board Chair Larry Armfelt, Athabasca County Reeve Doris Splane and Project Manager Walter Yakowchuk cut a grand opening ribbon for the new FCSS building. The facility will serve the Athabasca region for many years to come. In three years FCSS will celebrate its 50th anniversary of helping children and families in the region.

working on finding meal services for a senior citizen while communicating with her daughters - one located in Cincinnati and the other in Agassiz.

"We have been keeping communication going with those two girls to help make the situation for their mother better here," says Armfelt.

Armfelt went on to thank past FCSS Board Chairperson Emil Zachkewich for his leadership and dedication to FCSS over the last five years, in great part which made the new facility a reality.

"This has been a wonderful move for us," says Debbie Wood, Manager of FCSS.

"We have the space and the accessibility we need. In partnership with other agencies, this will allow us to improve and expand some of the programs we offer."

The County used MSI funding from the Government of Alberta to pay for the \$1.5 million cost for the project.

Council decided to have the County act as the general contractor for the building. This is estimated to have saved \$1 million. All indications show the project will be completed under budget.

Work remaining to complete the FCSS building includes paving the parking lot and landscaping.

Budget 2014

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Partnerships are an effective way to pool resources and expertise. Athabasca County continues to work with the Town of Athabasca, the Regional Multiplex Society, and the Village of Boyle to support recreational facilities which benefit area residents.

Public Works

- Hamlet Maintenance \$205,000
- Paving \$500,000
- Road Reconstruction \$2,075,000
- Graveling Program \$1,831,000
- Bridges Repairs \$833,000
- Roadside Mowing Program \$480,000

Protective Services

- Hwy. 63 Emergency Services \$476,000
- New Rochester Water Tanker/Baptiste Lake firehall \$362,000
- Fire Dept. support (9 halls) \$428,000

Community Services

- Municipal Tax Rebate Program \$50,000
- Rural Addressing System \$500,000
- Complete FCSS Building \$200,000
- Campground upgrades, Community Assistance Grants \$181,000
- Rec. Facility partnerships \$653,000 *
- New Swimming Pool partnership \$275,000 *

* Partnerships between the Multiplex Society, Town of Athabasca & Village of Boyle.

Agriculture Service Board

- Crop Protection/Weed control \$150,500
- Flood/Wildlife Management \$115,000
- Vegetation Management \$132,000
- Landowner/farms programs \$24,000
- Tank loading facilities \$27,000

Overall 2014 Budget Forecast

Identified Revenues - \$34.949 million
Expenditures - \$34.817 million
Surplus - \$131,766

To review a detailed version of the 2014 County Budget, and other publicly accessible documents, click on the 'myathabasca online resources' button at the bottom-left of the County homepage - www.athabascacounty.com