



# athabasca county connection

A newsletter for residents and businesses of Athabasca County

August 2014



## New fire truck delivered to Baptiste Fire Department

**NEW WHEELS** - Baptiste Fire Department Fire Chief Robert Laackman accepts delivery of a new fire truck which will help members of the volunteer department serve the summer villages of Whispering Hills, West Baptiste, South Baptiste, Sunset Beach, Island Lake, Island Lake South and the surrounding County region.

It was delivered in July and has since been outfitted with equipment used by the fire department. Training for use of the truck has also taken place to ensure all members of the fire department are familiar with how it operates.

The truck, which has a turret mounted nozzle on the front allowing its operator to tackle grassfires remotely, will be a key piece of equipment at a new fire hall being built near Island Lake.

Athabasca County has a replacement schedule in place for fire and rescue trucks. All totalled there are 30 vehicles in service within the County. The Baptiste Fire Department is one of nine volunteer fire departments to provide fire protection in Athabasca County.

## GLOW program to empower and support area girls

A new program coming to Athabasca County's Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) will help area girls develop strong life skills.

The Girls Leading Others Wisely (GLOW) program enriches the lives of girls between the ages of 8-14 in communities across Canada.

GLOW Girls provides girls with the opportunity to engage in open forum discussions that sees them sharing and listening to their peers.

In Athabasca, GLOW Girls will initially have a theme of 'The Authentic Me' which will help girls to focus on their strengths, or superpowers, and how to stay true to themselves.

A proposal by FCSS staff made it possible to have

the program brought to the Athabasca region. Not only was it selected, but it was named the Grand Prize Winner by the Field Law Community Fund Program qualifying it for \$15,000 in funding.

"We are very excited to bring this very successful program to Athabasca," says Darlene Woodward, an early intervention worker with Athabasca County FCSS.

"When children are exposed to a variety of positive experiences, such as the GLOW program, it can help shape their adult lives."

How are girls selected for the GLOW program? Participant referrals will come from Family

School Liaison Workers, Aspen View Inclusive Education Coordinators, school therapists and school counsellors.

"With the family and community dynamics changing, this program fits within a delivery model that includes girls in seven schools located in our County," says Karen Wintonyk, FCSS community programmer.

"It is our hope that the program will encourage girls to overcome any challenges they may be facing in their lives and give them the tools to deal with any new ones that may come along."

*Continued on Page 2.*



# Save Lives and Learn New Skills Become a Volunteer Firefighter

For more information about volunteering contact:  
**Bryan Hall,**  
Regional Fire Coordinator  
780-675-2273  
bhall@athabascacounty.com

# County Briefs

## 2015 seasonal camping site applications now available

Applications for 2015 seasonal camping sites at Forfar Recreational Park and Hope Lake Campground are now available.

Applications open September 2, 2014 and must be received at the County office by January 2, 2015. They provide seasonal sites between May 15 (weather permitting) and September 20, 2015.

The applications can be downloaded from the County website by looking for a link on the homepage or paper copies attained from the County Administration Office in Athabasca or from campground managers.

## Wildland Fire Suppression

Athabasca County has a policy and bylaw in place to protect residents from firefighting costs due to wildfire.

The County policy and bylaw are necessary to allow the municipality to get reimbursement for firefighting costs back from insurance companies.

Residents are encouraged to check with their insurance companies about their insurance policy to ensure it includes coverage for wildfires. Many insurance policies do contain a provision for losses in the case of wildfire, however some do not.

## Application deadline for community celebrations

Community anniversaries or festivals in 2015 may be able to qualify for funding help from the Government of Canada's Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Fund (BCAH).

There are three deadlines for applications depending on the date of your event:

- between July 1, 2015 and August 31, 2015 the deadline is September 30, 2014;
- between September 2, 2015 and December 31, 2015 the deadline is January 31, 2015;
- between January 1, 2015 and June 30, 2015 the deadline is April 30, 2015.

If you are planning a community anniversary between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 the application deadline is January 31, 2015.

Questions about the BCAH program can be answered by calling 1-855-811-0055 or sending an email to: [wr-ro@pch.gc.ca](mailto:wr-ro@pch.gc.ca)

# Planned road upgrades progressing



Heavy equipment works to load roadbase material at a road construction site in Meanook. The road was due for an upgrade and was experiencing drainage issues making the road difficult to drive on during periods of lengthy rain.

## Road infrastructure upgrades help improve safety of the travelling public on County roads

Each year Athabasca County's Public Works Department prioritizes which roads require upgrading.

It does so by looking at a number of factors beginning with safety and taking into consideration school bus routes, commercial traffic, drainage, and future uses of the road due to development.

One of the roads to be tackled in the summer of 2014 was Township Road 645.3 near Meanook. The road sees use by school buses and local residents to access their homes via the old highway and the main highway.

Providing access from the bottom of the Tawatinaw Valley to the top, the road was experiencing some drainage issues due to water flows coming down the slope of the valley.

These drainage issues made the surface of the road soft during periods of extended rainfall.

In early August County staff and contractors began work to widen the roadway, elevate the grade and create drainage.

"Each road has its own unique challenges to solve," says Brian Adamkewicz, Director of Infrastructure Services.

"We have to continue to invest in maintaining our system of roads to provide the travelling public with a safe means of getting where they need to go while protecting our road infrastructure."

The County maintains over 2,400 kilometres of roads. There are a total of 26.5 kms of road reconstruction and shoulder pulls planned for the 2014 construction season, an investment of \$1.4 million.

For more information contact the Infrastructure Services Department by calling 780-675-2273.

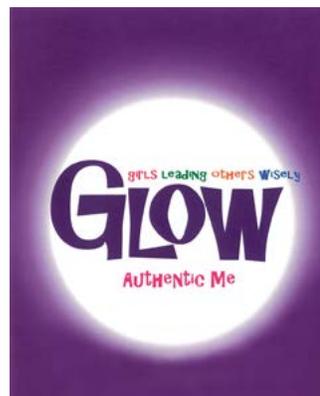
# GLOW will build on existing program

*Continued from Page 1.*

Currently Athabasca County FCSS offers the 'Dove' program which focuses on self-esteem & body image only.

The GLOW program has taken the Dove concept and further enhanced and developed the goal of the Early Intervention Program: "To improve and enhance the wellness of students by meeting their social needs."

GLOW Girls will replace Dove



in local schools and will offer an expanded field of discussion over coming years.

As the program grows and develops over the course of the coming school year, FCSS staff will be working to develop a summer camp component which will likely be offered during the summer of 2015.

More information can be obtained by contacting Athabasca County FCSS: 780-675-2623 or [info@athabascafcss.org](mailto:info@athabascafcss.org)

# New County Manager joins administrative team

A new leader for the administrative side of Athabasca County might be a familiar face to some in the region.

Ryan Maier has been the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for the Town of Athabasca since September of 2012 and was offered the position by Athabasca County Council following a candidate selection process.

He accepted the offer and began work with the County on Monday, August 11, 2014.



**Ryan Maier**

The new County Manager comes with over 10 years of experience working in municipal government.

Prior to moving to Athabasca, Maier was the assistant CAO in Rimbey, Alberta for two and a half years, worked as a CAO in Millet, and Director of Parks and Recreation in Wainwright and Esterhazy, Saskatchewan. These positions have given him a variety of experiences in many facets of municipal government.

"We are confident in Ryan's ability to help lead our County into the future and feel he will be a good fit not only for our staff but the County as a whole," says Doris Splane, Reeve of Athabasca County.

"There are many challenges and opportunities ahead. We feel we've found the right person to help

County Council and Staff continue to build a brighter future for all of us."

Maier attended the University of Regina and the University of Alberta to prepare himself for a career in municipal government. Educational achievements include a Certificate in Local Government and an Advanced Certificate in Local Government.

"I'm thankful for the opportunity to work with Members of Council, County Staff and all those who comprise the many commissions, committees and organizations working to build our region," says Maier.

"It's very exciting to work in a region that has so much potential and has people who are driven to make the place they live and work succeed."

# 4th Annual Fly-In Barbecue hosts nearly 500

It was the fourth year the County hosted its Fly-In Barbecue at the Athabasca Regional Airport and nearly 500 people took time out of their weekend to attend the event.

Despite a morning shower on the day of the event (July 19), the skies cleared to allow 31 aircraft and their pilots, including two out-of-county pilots from Montana and Alaska, to make the trip to the event.

The Fly-In Barbecue has become a great way to help bring members of the aviation community together with residents of the region while helping to promote the facility. Displays, food and prizes were all part of the day.



# Rural addressing update: signs now being installed



Blue rural addressing signs are going up around the County and soon there will be a new way for emergency responders to reach the homes of residents.

Carmacks Enterprises was contracted by Athabasca County to conduct subsurface locates and install the signs.

Two crews are currently working to move forward with the project. The first crew conducts the locates and marks the location of the signs with a wooden peg. Residents are asked to leave the pegs in place to allow for more efficient installation of the signs.

This is followed-up by a second crew that installs the sign posts using a pneumatic hammer and bolts the new blue signs on the posts.

The primary purpose of the rural addressing signs is to mark the main entrance to rural properties in the County. This helps emergency responders choose the right entry and reduce response times.

The numbers on the signs correspond to a grid of range roads and township roads used in Alberta. Residents are asked to continue using their legal land descriptions when calling in emergencies until the new addressing system is registered with the 9-1-1 database system in the region.

Information about the numbering system can be obtained by visiting the County Office or clicking on the rural addressing link on the County website.

Direct any concerns or questions to Rural Addressing Coordinator Bryan Hall | 780-675-2273.

# Pilot project sees health care students visit Athabasca

## Encouraging rural careers through community visits

Athabasca County wants our region to be considered a viable option for graduating health care students.

With this goal in mind, the County's Tourism and Economic Development Committee hosted a reception for four students participating in a new pilot project being run by the University of Alberta and the Northern Alberta Development Council.

The goal of the pilot project is to facilitate visits to communities in the north and let the students experience the communities for themselves.

The four students visiting Athabasca were first welcomed to the region at a meet and greet barbecue hosted by Athabasca County. Here they had a chance to speak with members of the Physician Recruitment Committee, locals working in the health care field, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, as well as members of Athabasca County Council.

The students visited local pharmacies, the hospital and took self-guided tours of the community and the region. It was done in



A pilot project by the University of Alberta and the Northern Alberta Development Council saw four University of Alberta students visit the Athabasca region over the weekend of August 15. They were (L to R) Haruna Meguro (nursing), Paras Sattijis (medical), Oksana Dacko (pharmacy), and Sarah Lim (nursing).

this way to allow them to see the region through their own eyes and experience it in much the same manner as they would if they moved here.

They will prepare a report on their experiences and present it to the University of Alberta and the Northern Alberta Development Council. A copy will be shared with Athabasca County.

The report follows the First Impressions Community Exchange Program designed by

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA).

The hope is to continue the pilot project to include similar visits for students in other career paths.

"This is a great way to introduce university students to the potential of rural communities," says Doris Splane, Reeve of Athabasca County. "We can tell them about it all we like but there is no better way for them to make an educated decision than to see it for themselves."

## Partnership / Profile / Aspen Regional Water Services Commission



Located in Athabasca, the Aspen Regional Water Services Commission began operating a state-of-the-art water treatment plant in October 2010.

The Aspen Regional Water Services Commission (ARWSC) is the primary supplier of municipal drinking water within Athabasca County.

It has three member municipalities: Athabasca County, the Town of Athabasca, and the Village of Boyle.

A water treatment plant located in Athabasca connects to a regional water distribution system that provides potable water to the communities of Athabasca, Colinton, Boyle, Grassland and Wandering River.

Prior to the extension of the water distribution system to these communities they faced costs associated with upgrading, maintaining and operating their own municipal

drinking water systems. Athabasca County saw the need and potential for a regional system in its communities and signed on to help build the distribution line.

Since that time the water distribution line has been turned over to the Commission to manage along with the water treatment plant.

"The water distribution system has paid dividends to our region and will continue to do so into the future," says Doris Splane, Reeve of Athabasca County.

"People in the region recognize the importance of a reliable, safe and cost effective water system and the County values our role in helping it succeed."

**County Office**  
for general inquiries

780.675.2273 | 1.844.662.2273

**Public Works**  
road & maintenance issues

780.675.2404 | 1.844.675.2404

**After Hours Emergencies**  
safety issues evenings/weekends

780.689.9000



**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](mailto:connection@athabascacounty.com)

Join us on  
social media

