

# Welcome

## New Rural Alberta Physician Families

Please join us in welcoming the following physicians and their families who moved to rural Alberta since January 2002. The RPAP News will regularly welcome newcomers, using information supplied by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.

### JANUARY

Dr. Ilne Portwig – High Level

### FEBRUARY

Dr. Donella Anderson – Camrose  
 Dr. Adarine Mary Anderson – Grimshaw  
 Dr. Louis Jahannes Coetzee – Bonnyville  
 Dr. Gert Cornelis Du Plessis – High Level  
 Dr. Maria Cornelia Hauptfleisch – Bonnyville  
 Dr. Sunail Kumar – Camrose  
 Dr. Wadea Mahmud Tarhuni – Medicine Hat  
 Dr. Jan Gerhard van der Merwe – Fort McMurray

### MARCH

Dr. Bruce Massie Anderson – Cowley  
 Dr. Vickie Ann Byman – Camrose  
 Dr. Handre De Ridder – LacLaBiche  
 Dr. Karan Ruth Glendinning – Drayton Valley  
 Dr. Tanya Koren Pentelichuk – Banff  
 Dr. Frederick Christopher van Rooyen – Didsbury

### APRIL

Dr. Eduard Buchner – Drayton Valley  
 Dr. Manjula Easwara Murthi – Grande Prairie  
 Dr. Stephen Kwan – Ponoka

Dr. Hetta Naude – Barrhead  
 Dr. Tanya Koren Pentelichuk – Banff  
 Dr. Neel Saini – Camrose  
 Dr. Niel Franklin Smit – Carstairs  
 Dr. Viktor Yakymovych – Cold Lake

### MAY

Dr. Glenn Philip Jessop Anderson – Red Deer  
 Dr. Leslie Stuart Bowers – Lethbridge  
 Dr. Brent William Caton – Red Deer  
 Dr. Humphrey Cheung – Lethbridge  
 Dr. Rian Du Plooy – Lloydminster  
 Dr. Cecile Catherine Herrmann – Three Hills  
 Dr. Udell Trevor Larsen – Lethbridge  
 Dr. Lourens A.P.A. Munnik – Slave Lake  
 Dr. Hetta Naude – Barrhead  
 Dr. Joseph Olabisi Oyeyemi – Drayton Valley  
 Dr. John Patrick Taliano – Strathmore  
 Dr. Maher Toulaymat – Medicine Hat

### JUNE

Dr. Jacques Vivian MacRae Branch – Okotoks  
 Dr. Marlene Tan Dytoc – Red Deer  
 Dr. Leon Cornelius Groenewald – Grande Prairie  
 Dr. Stewart Ian Llewellyn Higgs – Fort Macleod  
 Dr. Balvinder Singh Jassar – Westlock  
 Dr. Abdul Majeed Khatri – Ponoka  
 Dr. Craig Lawrence King – Vulcan

Dr. Martin Lavoie – Red Deer  
 Dr. Giang Thuy Nguyen Letcher – Taber  
 Dr. John Myron Loge – High Prairie  
 Dr. Mark C. Musk – Lethbridge  
 Dr. Johannes Lambertus Myburgh – Swan Hills  
 Dr. Monica Margarite O’Gorman – Banff  
 Dr. Jacobus Francois Oosthuizen – Fort Vermilion  
 Dr. Bobbi-Jo Whitfield – Red Deer

### JULY

Dr. Tahmeena Tabassum Ali – Whitecourt  
 Dr. Coenraad Hendrik Basson – Hanna  
 Dr. Vincenzo Botha – Fort McMurray  
 Dr. Jacques Vivian MacRae Branch – Okotoks  
 Dr. Mohammed Ali Gauri – Manning  
 Dr. Leonard William Henson – Fort McMurray  
 Dr. Ann Patricia Mary Jansen – Fort McMurray  
 Dr. Abdul Majeed Khatri – Ponoka  
 Dr. John Myron Loge – High Prairie  
 Dr. Zahid Rafiq – Ponoka  
 Dr. Tejinder Sainbhee – Camrose  
 Dr. Gregory Lane Smith – Raymond  
 Dr. Victor Andre Starke – High Prairie  
 Dr. Johannes Daniel van der Vyver – High Level  
 Dr. Catherine Anne White – Cold Lake  
 Dr. Norris Alvin Wong – Whitecourt



# NEWS

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## RPAP Programs Shifting

Rural health care faces some unique challenges not seen in urban areas – large geographic distances and the rural or remote lifestyle impact on the ease of access to health services. As well, recruitment and retention of nurses, physicians, rehabilitation and mental health therapists, laboratory technicians, and diagnostic imaging practitioners can be more difficult than in urban communities.

Rural health professionals work together as a team to provide care for residents. They often have a special relationship with their clients as they also live and work alongside them as family, friends, neighbours, and community volunteers. Their health care skills and practices contribute to the quality of rural life and help to strengthen local communities.

While there are many positive things happening in Rural Alberta, financial pressures are significant.

“Rural health is at a crossroads. Historically it has provided exemplary care for its citizens but it is at a point now where, if it is not properly nurtured, that level of care may be dramatically lost,” says Dr. Odell Olson, Chair of the RPAP Coordinating Committee. “The pressure to transport every case to major centres may seem like a good solution at first glance, but may result in the removal of necessary skills and resources from local communities. Good quality emergency care, routine obstetric and chronic illness care and follow up of illnesses treated in tertiary care centres must be available locally.”

Over the past ten years since it was established, the RPAP has worked to respond to the needs of rural Alberta. Programs and initiatives have been added when they were needed and retired when they were not. Today, the RPAP Coordinating Committee foresees a need to

shift medical education towards a greater emphasis on clinical skills and to significantly improve the recruitment of Alberta trainees. The Committee is also concerned that further hospital closures/conversions may produce a decline in access to medical care and accelerate a loss of physicians, nurses and other health care professionals with needed special skills.

Balancing these concerns is the promise of health system improvement due in part to the efforts of the Health Reform Implementation Team lead by Dr. Larry Ohlhauser, as it guides the building of a better public health care system and improved quality of patient care.

Over the next few months the RPAP Coordinating Committee and the RPAP will continue to work to introduce programs and initiatives in support of future health design and the “Rural Advantage.”

Further information and details on the RPAP and its initiatives may be obtained from:

David Kay, RPAP Program Manager  
 Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan  
 1000 Manulife Place  
 10180-101 Street Edmonton  
 Alberta, Canada T5J 3S2

Phone: (780) 423-9911  
 Toll free 1-866-423-9911  
 Fax: (780)423-9917  
 Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca  
 www.rpap.ab.ca

Funded by



# New Programs for Med Students

Two new RPAP programs aim to introduce interested medical students to rural medicine and to begin teaching them basic medical skills.

## SHADOWING PROGRAM

First and second year medical students participating in rural medicine tours over the past year have often indicated they do not get enough exposure to rural medicine to make it a career choice. So Bev Garbutt (wife of Dr. Alan Garbutt of Blairmore), on behalf of RPAP, is now organizing a rural Shadowing Program that will enable interested students to follow a rural physician around for all or part of a weekend on call. The new program is expected to get under way the end of September. It is expected that this additional exposure will result in heightened interest in rural medicine.

## MEDICAL SKILLS TEACHING PROGRAM

Often undergraduate medical students are keen to get started learning skills they will use in practice but have to wait to first complete the necessary theory classes. Now undergraduate students involved with the Rural Interest Groups at the U of A and U of C will have an opportunity to learn some basic medical skills as a result of a new Medical Skills Teaching initiative launched by RPAP. Interested physicians will donate their time and staledated materials to teach

skills ranging from patient assessment and phlebotomy, to casting, dressings, injections and I.V. starts.

For more information about either of these programs, contact Bev Garbutt, RPAP Medical Students' Initiatives Coordinator at (403) 628-3222 or [bgg@telusplanet.net](mailto:bgg@telusplanet.net)



# Hinton Celebrates with Award Recipient

Some 350 two-stepping Hinton and area residents joined Dr. Brendan Bunting, RPAP Vice Chair, Health and Wellness Minister Gary Mar and a host of other dignitaries at a community celebration June 19 to honour Dr. Stuart Iglesias as the 2002 recipient of RPAP's Award of Distinction.

It was obvious by the interest and the hard work of the community in helping to co-sponsor the event with RPAP that Stu has touched many hearts as well as contributed significantly to teaching,

research and medical practice over the past 18 years. Following tributes and presentations of gifts, community members kicked up their heels with Stu on the dance floor. Stu just loves to two-step!

The new award honours and recognizes the work of all rural physicians, especially those unsung heroes who provide Alberta rural communities with outstanding medical services and who also make huge contributions to medical practice and their communities. The award will be presented

annually in June to a practicing rural family physician who lives and works in rural Alberta and has done so for at least four years, and who demonstrates a superior commitment and contribution to the community through medical practice, teaching other health professionals, conducting research, or volunteering in the community. The new award was developed by RPAP as one element in its comprehensive retention work plan to address shortages of physicians in rural Alberta.

# Enrichment Training

More than 150 rural physicians have taken enrichment training through RPAP since the program was launched in 1994-1995; 17 have completed a program so far this year and five are currently in training. The Enrichment Program is intended to assist physicians in rural communities to upgrade existing skills or gain new skills in order to meet the

medical needs of the community.

A minimum of two weeks and a maximum of 12 months training can be taken. RPAP reimburses participating physicians \$6,333/month or portion thereof. Preceptors are paid \$1,000/month for their efforts. If you are interested in applying for Enrichment training, discuss your

training request with an RPAP Skills Broker:

**Dr. Ron Gorsch**  
(403) 652-4257  
[rgorsche@telusplanet.net](mailto:rgorsche@telusplanet.net)

**Dr. John Hnatuik**  
(780) 753-6447  
[jnhpc@telusplanet.net](mailto:jnhpc@telusplanet.net)



## ENRICHMENT TRAINING LEADS TO GREATER COMFORT LEVEL

Dr. Melanie Robles of Fort Saskatchewan decided to take enrichment training in emergency medicine after nearly a decade of rural practice.

"Training was a wonderful experience," says Robles, "and it was a treat to be back functioning as a resident in an academic milieu. Over the past six months since I completed the training, I have compared standard practices in our emergency with those in a tertiary care centre and feel

better able to decide whether we're meeting the mark or not. I understand the roads of referral and consultation significantly better and am much more comfortable using them and in communicating with casualty officers in Edmonton. Even though most major traumas would likely bypass a place like Fort Saskatchewan, I don't carry as much fear now of something coming in that I don't have a clearly entrenched basic approach to."

# Special Week Launched

Seventeen organizations, representing many provincial and regional rural health interests, joined RPAP to help launch the first Rural Health Week in Alberta, June 16 - 22. The new special week will provide an annual focus to raise awareness and showcase some of the success stories, innovation and quality skills of rural health professionals and organizations.

Through special events, displays and a joint news release, many specific positive initiatives taking place throughout rural

Alberta were highlighted as well as some of the issues rural health faces. Partnering organizations will begin planning Rural Health Week 2003 early in the new year. If your organization is interested in participating,

contact Rhonda Crooks, RPAP Communications Consultant (403) 208-5402, E-mail: [startingpointsinc@shaw.ca](mailto:startingpointsinc@shaw.ca)



# RURALbits

RPAP Rural Physician Consultants Monica Kohlhammer (south) and Terri Taylor (north) are a resource to physicians and their families, health authorities and community representatives. Following are some newsy items they have collected from their connections, travels and phone calls throughout Alberta over the summer months. If you need information or assistance relating to physician resource issues or RPAP programs, contact the consultants through the RPAP's toll-free line 1-866-423-9911 or directly.

## NORTH



**TERRI TAYLOR**  
(780) 469-6442  
RPAP-Consultant@  
rpap.ab.ca

**Town and hospital anniversaries** in the communities of Fox Creek and Two Hills included appreciation for their local physicians and medical staff. More than 200 people attended each function. Northwestern Health Services Region is also holding a physician appreciation dinner this fall.

**New Opportunity North recruitment materials** were developed by the Northern Alberta Development Council with a cross-sector group including a health region, college, school division, government and industry. The materials are available for use by northern Alberta employers, and include a website ([www.opportunitynorth.ca](http://www.opportunitynorth.ca)), interactive CD-ROM, brochure, business cards and logo. Copies are available from the Council at 780-624-6274 or e-mail [nadc.council@gov.ab.ca](mailto:nadc.council@gov.ab.ca)

**While WestView Regional Health Authority develops its transition plan** for its integration into three surrounding regions – Aspen, Capital and Crossroads, services continue as usual. Recommendations for the change will be going to the Minister of Health and Wellness in September.

**Keeweenaw Lakes Regional Health Authority** is stepping up efforts to recruit physicians for the communities of High Prairie and Wabasca. Town and community representatives are keen to make improvements to contribute to enhanced recruitment and retention of physicians.

**The key issue affecting satisfaction for physicians is 'quality of care'** – including the need for improved regional funding and the impact of stress – of the Northern Lights Regional Health Authority, according to survey results released by the Fort McMurray Medical Staff Association this summer. The news release outlining the results is posted on the Alberta Medical Association's website [www.albertadoctors.org](http://www.albertadoctors.org)

## SOUTH



**MONICA KOHLHAMMER**  
(403) 283 1480  
mkohlhammer@  
HSSAssociates.com

**RPAP has agreed to provide funding** to study the implications of introducing sabbatical leaves, in response to a proposal from RHA #5 in September 1999. RPAP, in partnership with RHA #5 and David Thompson Health Region, created a Sabbatical Leave pilot project to determine if the program will help retain physicians in rural Alberta communities. Applications will be accepted from practicing family physicians currently working and living within the two health regions and will be managed by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives of stakeholder groups. Four sabbatical leaves will be awarded in October 2002.

**Technology is alive and well** at the Brooks Medical Clinic. The clinic, housing four physicians, is fully automated using the Jonoke software system. The clinic is about five years old and the system was installed upon opening of the clinic. Billings, scheduling and health record documentation can be done electronically.

**Palliser Health Region** has formed a Board-approved recruitment and retention committee for physicians.

# Spousal Initiative makes employment easier

**A** new program by Citizenship and Immigration Canada – the Spousal Employment Initiative – makes it easier for spouses or partners of International Medical Graduates to work in Canada. The Rural Physician Spousal Network (RPSN) and RPAP are working with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to ensure physicians and their spouses are aware of the program.

Through the program, spouses or partners who have declared their intention to work can apply for an "open" work permit when they apply for entry to Canada. Alternatively, spouses who accompany the physician to Canada first as visitors, but who later decide to seek employment, may apply to the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Case Processing Centre in Vegreville for a work permit. The spouse can apply for a job-specific permit if he or she has a job offer, or for an open permit if not.

*For more information contact:*  
**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION CANADA**  
Call Centre 1-888-242-2100, [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)  
(click "News" Nov. 30, 2001 for Spousal Employment Initiative news release).

Also related to employment, the International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) helps spouses educated outside of Canada obtain recognition for the education they have. The Assessment Service issues educational certificates that indicate how the level of educational credentials received in another country compares to a similar educational program in Canada. The certificates may help the spouse enter the labour market, gain membership in professional licensing organization and admission into post-secondary institutions.



*For more information contact:*  
**INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS ASSESSMENT SERVICE (IQAS)**  
[www.learning.gov.ab.ca/iqas](http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/iqas)  
E-mail: [comm.contact@learning.gov.ab.ca](mailto:comm.contact@learning.gov.ab.ca)  
Toll-free 310-0000 then 780-427-7219

These and many other helpful hints are included in an Orientation Guide to be published by the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan this fall. It will be provided, with personal contact, to all new rural physicians and their spouses.

The Spousal Network is also working with the Alberta Medical Association's Physician and Family Support Program to establish an employment assistance service for spouses and physicians. If you would like to help "pilot" the program, please contact Administrator Terri Taylor (780) 469-6442, E-mail: [tt4hope@telusplanet.net](mailto:tt4hope@telusplanet.net).

## Did you Know

The RPAP has a Rural Physician Innovation/Retention grant program that might be of assistance to you. The grants are intended to provide one-time funding for a short-term project or seed funding for a long-term project to foster the development of innovative program ideas for the benefit of rural physicians, or project ideas for physician retention targeted at the local level.

For more information check the RPAP website at [www.rpap.ab.ca](http://www.rpap.ab.ca) or contact David Kay, RPAP Program Manager, Toll Free 1-866-423-9911, Fax: (780) 423-9917, E-mail: [Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca](mailto:Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca)

# Upcoming Events

## CONFERENCES

### 14 September 2002

Emergency Medicine Conference, Jasper. With thanks to sponsor Roche. Gardener's Cabin, Jasper Park Lodge.

### 17-19 January 2003

Emergency Medicine for Rural Hospitals, Banff. Banff Park Lodge.

### 6-9 February 2003

Family Medicine Faculty Development Workshop, Kananaskis. Delta Lodge.

## PHYSICIAN AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM WORKSHOPS

### 4-6 October 2002

Diamond Buffalo Guest Ranch, Sundre. Reclaiming Equilibrium.

### 1-3 November 2002

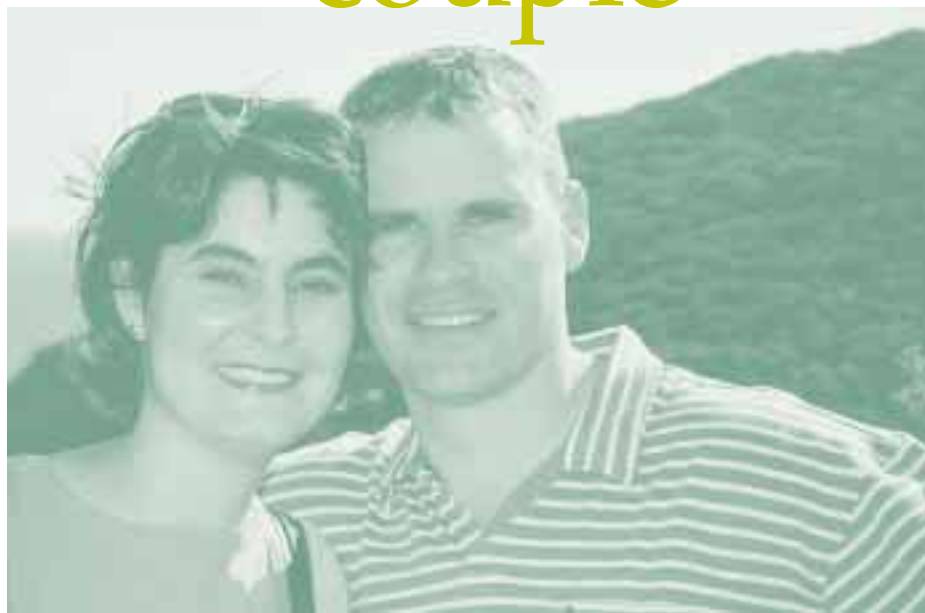
Delta Lodge at Kananaskis. Enriching Your Couple Relationship. To register, contact PFSP administration toll-free at 1-877-262-7377 or e-mail robin.robertson@alberta doctors.org.

## LOCAL/REGIONAL GET TOGETHERS

Volunteers are organizing a series of get-togethers for October 2002 throughout the province. Watch for more details through the Spousal Network by mail and e-mail.

If you want to receive Spousal Network mailings and e-mail, please contact the RPSN Administrator Terri Taylor at (780) 469-6442, E-mail tt4hope@telusplanet.net

# Physician couple *thrives in small town Consort*



Carin Strydom and Gerhard Malherbe came to Consort, within the East Central health region, from South Africa.

Consort residents are benefiting from the business and personal partnership of Dr. Gerhard Malherbe and Dr. Carin Strydom. The South African couple has been the only two physicians in the East Central Health Region community for the past four years. "We are committed to this wonderful community, and strive to not only maintain excellent medical services, but also to expand on the existing services," Carin says.

Gerhard and Carin met during their residency rotation in George, South Africa in 1995. Their first Canadian experience was doing fly-in clinics in Northern Saskatchewan starting in 1996. They began their practice in Consort, Alberta two years later. Currently they are landed immigrants, and plan to become Canadian citizens in 2003. They both have passed all exams leading to the Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada (LMCC) as well as certification with the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CCFP).

Their medical practice is diverse. Both perform obstetrics. Gerhard is the medical director for East Central Ambulance Board (serving an area 180 km by 150 km, including four communities). He is also medical examiner for the same area. He enjoys doing presentations in the community regarding health issues. Carin is chief of staff for the physicians in the "3 C" towns of Castor, Coronation and Consort. In addition, both are preceptors for rural residency training.

Innovation and improvement are common themes. Carin started a diabetic clinic in collaboration with a nurse and dietician serving the three towns one and a half years ago. Very shortly Gerhard will start to do diagnostic and screening flexible (fibre-optic) sigmoidoscopies. He also plans to expand his existing surgical procedures done under local anaesthetic. The couple are constantly advocating for improved laboratory services.

In their spare time, Gerhard and Carin enjoy golfing, music, art and travelling.

# Milk River Physician Contributes to Profession & Community

Dr. Susan Lea, her husband Neal Gilchrist and their children Heather and Ellie ranch in the Milk River area near the Montana border. Milk River is on Canamex – the main highway corridor from Canada to Mexico.

After graduating from the U of C Faculty of Medicine in 1985 and completing her CCFP, Susan established a very satisfying rural practice in Sundre and practiced there from 1987 to 1992. In that year she moved back to Calgary due to family commitments. While she practiced in Calgary for five years, it didn't take long for her to realize that her passion for rural medicine needed to be fulfilled.

After meeting a Milk River area rancher, Susan began to provide regular weekend and short-term locum coverage to the physicians of Milk River and surrounding area through the Rural Locum Program. This continued for three years after her move to Milk River in 1997, where she continued to raise a family. When one of the two area physicians moved away in 2000, Susan established a practice there and now has a two day/week practice with a group that includes two part-time female and a full-time male physician.

Susan has been instrumental in developing a public health education program for several communities in the local area. For the past five years she has delivered 8 – 10 topics per year on topics such as women's health, stress, heart health, sleep, and "ask the doctor." She also teaches

sex education to high school students.

Driven by an interest in the work of their comprehensive health program, Susan expanded her practice about 10 years ago to include the Calgary-based Foothills Health Consultants. For two to three days each month, she works with executives in downtown Calgary to provide them with a detailed fitness profile, pulmonary function



Neal Gilchrist, Susan Lea, Heather (12) and Ellie (3) live on a cattle ranch 45 minutes south east of Milk River near the Alberta Montana border.

screen, complete physician examination, lab profile, health screen and health coaching as appropriate.

Besides raising a family and running a practice, Susan has found many ways to contribute to the profession. From 1989 to

1992 she coordinated the rural clerkship rotations in Sundre for the U of C Medical School. In 1992 she was a member-at-large for the Alberta Chapter of the College of Physicians and Surgeons followed by a position as treasurer for the same chapter. In 1997 she received a Fellowship from the College of Family Physicians of Canada. And because of her enjoyment of writing and teaching, Susan contributed to the editorial board for the Alberta-based Family Health magazine from 1993 to 1998. Susan is currently an associate clinical professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the U of C.