

**ALBERTA RURAL PHYSICIAN SPOUSES AND FAMILY**  
Be Understood Be Empowered Be a Mentor Be Taught Be Entertained Be Accepted Be Inspired Be Yourself

## IN THIS ISSUE: DEC. 2007

1. Rural Alberta: What does it Offer Physician Spouses and Families?
2. Fall Harvest – 16th Annual Rural Faculty Development Event
3. Websites and Resources of Interest
4. Upcoming Events: Cabin Fever, February 7 – 10, 2008 Kananaskis
5. Planning Tools
6. Get Involved Planning an Event
7. Spousal Web Pages: Keep Informed



**The Happy Holidays!** Another year is coming to a close and RPAP is as busy as ever in endeavours to support and promote rural physicians and their families. In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, RPAP wishes you holiday cheer as you spend time with your family and friends. This edition of the Hotsheet features upcoming activities and shares the news and events for Spouses and Family of Rural Physicians.

## 1. Rural Alberta: What does it Offer Physician Spouses and Families?

Relocating from large urban areas or other countries to smaller, more remote settings can lead to an exciting change of lifestyle for physicians, spouses and families. As the Calgary Herald has recognized, Small-town lifestyles attract buyers, is now headline news (Calgary Herald, 03/11/07). The qualities and dynamics of small town living are proving to be very popular, and with added resources for physician spouses and families, a great opportunity to pursue.

It is around Christmas time that one especially acknowledges the importance of sharing, not only with

family and friends, but also with the community at large. Growing up in a small town one can attest to the festive community spirit and pride that strengthens the relationships among people. It is not uncommon to see communities celebrating the holidays by singing carols, roasting marshmallows, skating on the local outdoor rink, holding community Christmas parties, and nonchalantly catching up with others. These memories are cherished forever, and shape our values, even while living in larger centers.



The support and acceptance revealed in small towns make the lifestyle very appealing for families and is no longer a hidden secret. Now, more and more people are seeking the high quality of life found in rural areas. The relaxed pace of life and clean environment makes small towns the perfect place to embrace the sharing lifestyle and raise a family while contributing to your career in rural medicine.

## 2. Fall Harvest: 16th Annual Rural Faculty Development Event

*Excerpts from article written by Tamara Mitchell Schultz, Assistant to Associate Dean, Office of Rural and Regional Health, UofA*

The 16th annual rural faculty development symposium, Fall Harvest 2007 took place on Friday, 21 September and Saturday, 22 September 2007.

The Coast Terrace Inn, located in Edmonton's southside, once again provided the conference facilities and accommodation for this U of A/RPAP Faculty Development conference.

Our Family Supper took place on Friday, 21 September at the Old

Timer's Cabin, located just beyond the beautiful river valley. We were pleased to have 12 families from rural and regional Alberta join the 34 University of Alberta families and guests for a fabulous meal. Families then sat back and relaxed, spent some time visiting with friends, or participated in one of the activities that had been planned for the evening!

The entertainment consisted of a Magician Clown who kept the children (of all ages...!) amused

with balloon animals and hats just after supper, then performed a very entertaining magic show for the group after, complete with rabbits and doves. Those wishing a little "memory" of the evening were able to have their caricature drawn by Ms Cathy McMillan, a talented artist who owns the Quirky Art Café.

The food was very delicious, and everyone certainly had more than enough to eat, with a nice selection of beverages for all age groups!

## 3. Website and Resources of Interest

### Web Resources:

Alberta Physician & Family Support Program and Resources  
[www.albertaphysicians.org](http://www.albertaphysicians.org)  
 - Physician & Family Support Program

### Recommended Book:

The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, by John Gottman and Nan Silver

### Recommended Book:

The Medical Marriage, by Dr. Wayne Sotile, Ph.D. and Mary Sotile, M.A.

## 4. Upcoming Events

**Mark Your Calendars: 2008 Cabin Fever is Coming Soon!**  
 February 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> 2008 in Kananaskis.  
 U of C/RPAP Cabin Fever Family Medicine Faculty Development Event

Cabin Fever is a family-friendly event that focuses on all types of fun group activities. Families can connect with other families that embrace a rural medicine lifestyle. Last year, twenty-seven spouse/partners shared their views of the rural communities they live in, such as: a very accommodating community with lots of warm hearted and friendly people, and a family-oriented environment which is friendly and laid back.

In February 2008 RPAP will be organizing a variety of activities to choose from for spouses and children during the weekend. Registration of family members will occur on Thursday evening, at which time a detailed list of activity options will be provided. Some activities will be structured; others will be on a drop-in basis, all will provide excellent opportunities to enjoy the great environment found in Kananaskis!

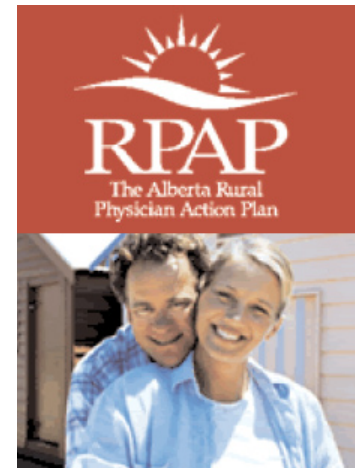
RPAP continues to sponsor spouse/family and children's events at these events. Check the RPAP website [www.rpap.ab.ca](http://www.rpap.ab.ca) for information if planning to attend these events.

## 5. Tools for Planning Spousal Events

The RPAP has developed an Event Planner to help spouses more easily plan local events. The Rural Physician Consultant will support the spouse(s) in completing the Event Planner. The Planner provides a checklist of things to consider when planning for local community events. For more information or to get involved by hosting a local spousal/family event, please contact the RPAP office at 1-866-423-9911 or by email at Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca.

## 6. Consider a Local/Regional Get-Together for Your Area (town, city or region)

Please send ideas to RPAP for a future Hotsheet so other spouses can take advantage of the ideas for their own community.



## 7. Keep Informed - Rural Physician Spousal Web Pages

If you're the spouse or life partner of a rural physician, just provide us with your contact information and we'll send you periodic updates about news and events happening across the province. We do most of our communication by regular mail (post) and by email. We never share or sell our contact lists, and you can ask to be removed from our contact list at any time.

Send us your residential contact information including name, address, postal code, home phone, fax, and email address:

- By email: Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca;
- By phone: 780-423-9911 or toll-free at 1-866-423-9911;
- By fax: 780-423-9917.

Keep informed of activities related to spouse and family programs and rural lifestyle through The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan website: [www.rpap.ab.ca](http://www.rpap.ab.ca).

For more information about the Rural Physician Spousal and Family Programming, contact:

RPAP 1-866-423-9911 or  
 Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca or the  
 Rural Physician Consultant in  
 your area:

South: Monica Kohlhammer  
 403-283-1480 or  
 monica.kohlhammer@rpap.ab.ca.

North: Rebekah Seidel  
 403-843-4879 or  
 rebekah.seidel@rpap.ab.ca.

Rural Physician Spousal and Family Programming is sponsored by The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan. Its mission is to “promote the retention of rural physicians in Alberta through spousal and family networking, communication and programs that foster personal growth and satisfaction with rural living.”