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Fall has arrived! What a gorgeous September we have had. The leaves have given us their brilliance of color to match the arrival of fall. Time to refresh the RPAP Rural Spousal and Family Hotsheet. This edition of the Hotsheet will update you with upcoming activities and share a story of one male spouse and his journey with his physician wife to Alberta.

**BE UNDERSTOOD BE EMPOWERED
BE A MENTOR BE TAUGHT BE ENTERTAINED
BE ACCEPTED BE INSPIRED BE YOURSELF**

1. PERSPECTIVES FROM A MALE SPOUSE

- HIS ARRIVAL TO ANOTHER DAY FULL OF PROMISE

This article was written by Jeff Blanchard, the spouse of a rural physician, sharing his experience of moving to Alberta and his physician wife's experience in finding her career in rural medicine.

The Beginning....

It seemed only a short-time ago, I was settling into my 'new' position (within a large multi-national pharmaceutical company) when I suddenly found myself exchanging unexpected farewells with friends and colleagues.

As the spouse of a physician, I knew there would be times when sacrifices had to be made. No doubt, leaving my career in Montreal would be one of them. Still, with Lily's acceptance into medical residency at the U of A, whatever sense of trepidation I may have experienced at leaving my job, felt imperceptible compared to the exuberance I fought so hard to contain.

Coming to Canada....

With the news of Lily's acceptance still permeating my thoughts, I was reminded of our first meeting several years ago, in China. Although she had already impressed me by the astuteness of her knowledge and skill; what struck me most was her sense of compassion towards others. Years later, when Lily immigrated to Canada, I saw in her the same qualities and zeal for medicine, as I witnessed back in China.

Like most IMGs living in Canada, Lily faced her share of hardships. Admittedly, some obstacles presented greater challenges than others. Despite these difficulties, Lily persevered.

Given the opportunity, I knew her talents as a practitioner would shine in Canada, as they did in China. With a common vision, we drew strength and patience from each other; fuelling the courage to pursue what now became her greatest dream: to become a medical doctor in Canada. With many thanks to the U of A, Lily can now realize that dream.

The Opportunities Unfold....

This opportunity is both a "treasured gift", and the result of hard-work and determination. While recent months have brought us great change and transition, it is also the mark of a novel

beginning, not only for Lily, but for both of us. Our path together has brought us to a new setting, where we can now pursue our individual goals. For my part, I have chosen to further my own studies at the U of A - as Lily completes her residency.

In the end, moving to Alberta not only changed the course of our lives, ultimately, it also provided us with the means on which to broaden our potential; proving once again that with every new sunrise, comes another day full of promise.

For more information

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Copies of the RPAP Orientation Guide can be received by contacting the RPAP office at 1-866-423-9911 or by email at Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca.

2. NEW RURAL PHYSICIAN CONSULTANT - NORTH

Rebekah Seidel has joined the RPAP team as the Rural Physician Consultant for the North. Rebekah brings a wealth of international and community development experiences to her position. Rebekah is eager to meet with rural physician spouses and their families as she travels to the local communities from her home in Rimby. She can be contacted at (403) 843-4879 or rebekah.seidel@rpap.ab.ca

3. UPCOMING EVENTS

1. January 19-21, 2007 Banff Rural Emergency Medicine Conference.
2. February 10, 2007 - Kananaskis -UofC/RPAP Cabin Fever Faculty Development Event.

RPAP will sponsor spouse/partners and childrens' events while attending these conferences. More information will be available in the December issue of this newsletter or via the RPAP web site.

4. 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 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.



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

RPAP 1-866-423-9911 or email Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca or contact 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.