



# AUTISM SOCIETY

OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

## ANNUAL REPORT

**2017**

*A summary of our first year supporting the autism community in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.*

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Contents

President's Report	3
Treasurer's Report	4
Ambassador's Report	7
Camp Kids First Report	9
Contact Information	10

# ANNUAL REPORT

## President's Report

### OUR NEW SPACE

A major highlight for the society was securing office space. It is hard to find affordable office space in Fort McMurray, so we are very fortunate that Unifor 707a support local non-profit societies such as ours by renting us affordable space.

### AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The grant we received from Autism Speaks enabled us to employ 2 part-time ambassadors. They have done wonderful work in the last ten months and made many successful connections in the community. We hope to gain more grants in the future to sustain this work with our society. Our ambassadors are working to assist families to connect with and navigate services, supports and programs that are available to them. The grant also allowed us to start working on The Missing Piece project; this project will raise awareness and educate community members on autism throughout the lifespan.

### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

During the last year we have held some engagement and information sessions for families, educators and others in the community interested in learning more about autism. We will continue to offer these sessions; the next few will focus on finances for families with a child with autism and behavior and coping strategies.

We strive to provide opportunities for families to come together socially; our family Christmas party was a huge success with a special visit by Santa and we recently enjoyed a fun afternoon tubing at Vista Ridge. Feedback from families is very positive on these events and we hope to continue them and add many more. Social evenings for adults with autism in our community are in our plans but we have not had the capacity to plan many of these events yet. Families also enjoy the sensory friendly events we organize in the community such as our upcoming Sensory Friendly Easter Egg Hunt at Dunvegan Gardens.

### FUNDRAISING AND AWARENESS SUCCESS

Our first annual Autism Art Gala took place in April and was a resounding success. Not only did we raise much needed funds for our society, but we raised awareness in our community on autism and our society. We are currently busy preparing for this year's Autism Art Gala on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

### THANK YOU TO THE BOARD

I sincerely thank all my fellow board members, all of whom have spent countless hours working to make us so successful. This society has achieved so much because of all of you.

# ANNUAL REPORT

Kirsti Mardell

Kirsti stepped down from the position of Vice-President to become one of our ambassadors. She has gone above and beyond for all the family's she has helped. Although her ambassador position is completed she continues to keep the office open in the mornings. Kirsti has been a major force behind helping this board start and continuing to run successfully.

Tina Delaine - Treasurer

Tina has ensured the society's accounts are accurate and well maintained and has spent untold hours organizing for our fundraisers; Mom's Pantry, Christmas hanging baskets, M&M Meatshop's, hotdog stands and Paintnites to name a few! She continues to do so much for the society I don't know what we would do without her.

Paula Bowen - Secretary

Paula takes minutes at our meetings and keeps us organized. She has gone above and beyond and taken on event planning for our family social events and keeps everybody up to date through social media. Paula also plans, organizes and runs Camp Kids First for children with autism to attend each summer. Without her valuable experience and time, camp would not be possible. We are very lucky to have her.

Nicole Spring - Autism Ambassador

Nicole is our professional ambassador; working tirelessly to provide support for our autism family's. She spends many more hours than she is compensated for working on the programs we are getting up and running, such as The Missing Piece. Nicole keeps our office open two evenings a week and continues to use her expertise and experience to help improve our society we are thankful for everything she does

I would like to acknowledge and thank our board members at large Gerrie-Ann Fielder, April Jones and Natasha Bailey. We are lucky to have them as members, they volunteer many hours for the society and can always be counted on to spread autism awareness in our community.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2018

2018 is going to be an exciting year for the Autism Society as we embark on a journey with another local non-profit society. We are entering a coalition with a local preschool, Educare to gauge our community's ability to support a capital campaign to build the RMWB's first stand-alone support center. Our campaign is called More Than Bricks; we hope to build a central support center for the families of the Regional Municipality for families who face a lifetime of challenges.

Corinna O'Hanley

President

Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Financial Statements

### BALANCE SHEET

#### AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE RMWB

##### Balance Sheet As at 12/31/2017

###### ASSET

###### Current Assets

Petty Cash	575.00
Common shares Savings Bank A...	1.01
Chequing Bank Account	11,196.00
Kids First Account	13,200.63
Gaming Bank Account	3,917.21
Investments	0.00
Accounts Receivable	0.00
Advances & Loans	0.00
Purchase Prepayments	0.00
Prepaid Expenses	0.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>28,889.85</b>

###### Capital Assets

Office Furniture & Equipment	0.00
Accum. Amort. -Furn. & Equip.	0.00
Net - Furniture & Equipment	0.00
<b>Total Capital Assets</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSET</b>	<b>28,889.85</b>

###### LIABILITY

###### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	0.00
Credit Card Payable	0.00
Vacation payable	0.00
EI Payable	0.00
CPP Payable	0.00
Federal Income Tax Payable	0.00
Total Receiver General	0.00
WCB Payable	0.00
Prepaid Sales/Deposits	0.00
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>

###### Long Term Liabilities

Bank Loans	0.00
Mortgage Payable	0.00
Loans from Owners	0.00
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITY</b>	<b>0.00</b>

###### EQUITY

###### Society Equity

Retained Earnings - Previous Year	0.00
Current Earnings	28,889.85
<b>Total Society Equity</b>	<b>28,889.85</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>28,889.85</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>28,889.85</b>

# ANNUAL REPORT

## INCOME

### Autism Society of the RMWB Income Statement 03/03/2017 to 12/31/2017

#### REVENUE

<b>Sales Revenue</b>	
Gift in Kind Donations	0.00
Donations	3,177.99
Fundraising Income	38,482.71
Grant Income	9,955.00
Sale of Merchandise	4,462.45
Interest Revenue	6.16
Membership Income	0.00
Tickets for Member Events	25.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	0.00
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>56,209.31</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>56,209.31</b>

#### EXPENSE

##### Cost of Operations and Fundraising

Advertising	1,060.04
Entertainment	253.68
Catering / Food	1,829.41
Rentals	224.70
Decorations	53.05
Miscellaneous	0.00
Total Fundraising Costs	3,420.88
Merchandise for Sale	7,330.08
Freight Expense	0.00
<b>Total Cost of Operations and F...</b>	<b>10,750.96</b>

##### Payroll Expenses

Wages & Salaries	0.00
EI Expense	0.00
CPP Expense	0.00
WCB Expense	0.00
Employee Benefits	0.00
Subcontractor	10,698.27
<b>Total Payroll Expense</b>	<b>10,698.27</b>

##### General & Administrative Expenses

Accounting & Legal	0.00
Advertising & Promotions	255.13
Bad Debts	0.00
Business Fees & Licenses	50.00
Cash Short/Over	1.51
Courier & Postage	85.38
Amortization Expense	0.00
Insurance	1,025.00
Interest & Bank Charges	184.55
Office Supplies	1,769.20
Property Taxes	0.00
Motor Vehicle Expenses	0.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00
Rent	0.00
Repair & Maintenance	0.00
Telephone	2,446.96
Travel	52.50
Utilities	0.00
<b>Total General &amp; Admin. Expen...</b>	<b>5,870.23</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>27,319.4</b>

## Ambassador's Report

### AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The Autism Society of the RMWB received the Family Services Community Grant from Autism Speaks Canada February 1, 2017. The grant will now extend to May 31, 2018.

The grant title is; Replication of an Ambassador Program in Building Local Community Capacity.

The goal of the grant is to provide individuals access to current and credible information and navigation to supports and services within their community. This grant provided the means for the Autism Society to have two, part time paid ambassadors for our region. The board decided that each ambassador would hold different skill sets that in turn would utilize the funding from the grant to its fullest potential. Kirsti Mardell became the parent ambassador and I became the community ambassador. My role was to connect to community organizations to initiate relationships with them to improve the inclusive nature of our community. As well work on programs that would be created for the Society to deliver.

We, as ambassadors are assisting families and individuals to connect with and navigate the supports, services and programs that are available to them. The need to have ambassadors connect, educate and create partnerships with existing community groups and services became the secondary focus of the ambassador program. We are now able to have consistent office hours, so the public can access the services and information we provide (sensory store, lending shelf and information database.)

Our community is grateful for the opportunity Autism Speaks provided for our region. We are excited to work towards strengthening and growing our new programs and services. A sustainability report has already been created and we are currently working on how to not only continue this program but to increase it after the completion of the grant.

## Ambassador's Report

### **Community contacts:**

- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo
- Fort McMurray Boys and Girls Club
- Regional Inclusive Committee of Wood Buffalo
- Wood Buffalo Regional Library
- Assets in Action (group of community groups that serve youth in the region)
- Peter Pond Mall (provide sensory sensitive Easter Bunny and Santa photos)
- Dunvegan Gardens (Sensory sensitive easter egg hunt and support Camp Kids First)

### **Highlights of the program**

- Providing an office space that was accessible to the public.
- Creating a lending shelf (resources, toys and sensory items) for loan.
- Creation of the Missing Pieces Project.
- Outreach and support for rural and remote communities (including the resource bins)
- Increasing community awareness about ASD and the individuals it affects
- Information session creation
- Capacity to create more opportunities and to connect to adults with ASD



## Camp Kids First Report

Camp Kids First is a summer day camp for children with autism in our region. Campers participate in activities that promote social skills, play and communication.

Camp Kids First ran for three weeks in July 2017 and thirty children were able to attend. Camp was based at Educare, a local preschool and campers enjoyed daily field trips in our local community. Some of the places they visited were; Heritage Shipyard, Wildplay at Vista Ridge, Oilsands Discovery Centre, MacDonald Island, Gregoire Lake and Dunvegan Gardens.

The Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo received a grant from The Red Cross to replace items lost in the 2016 Fort McMurray wildfire. These funds were used to replace toys, sensory equipment, art and craft supplies and administration supplies.

Camp was funded by – grant from Northeast Alberta Children and Family Services and fundraising efforts. The grant paid for the Director and Co-Director to plan and supervise camp.

Each child had a one-to-one support worker provided by McMan Child and Youth Services, Fort McMurray and funded by Family Supports for Children with Disabilities.

Some comments from parents of the children who attended Camp Kids First in 2017:

*“the location was great, lots of things to do there, playground right in there was nice, hope that every year camp can be there”*

*“amazing worker for my son”*

*“loved having Facebook group and receiving updates and pics from camp!”*

*“Wildplay outdoor park was my child’s favourite”*

*“my son, he didn’t want to leave”*

*“wish camp was longer than one week”*



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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