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**ACCREDITED**

Winter 2003

## Portraits of Board President's Unveiled

**In a recent ceremony, Lethbridge Family Services (LFS) unveiled portraits of those board presidents who have served the agency over the last decade. We honor these individuals for their significant contributions to the growth of our agency.**



### **Jeanne Beaty, 1990-1991**

As the first president to preside in the new facility located at 1107 - 2nd Avenue "A" North, Jeanne played a key role in making the move a reality. Using her skills as a retired journalist, Jeanne initiated the LFS newsletter and established the Friend of the Family Award.



### **Sylvia Oishi, 1998-1999**

Sylvia's presidency was a time to look inward and refine measures to ensure quality and accountability. Continuous Quality Improvement Committees were established in all departments and client outcomes and measurement strategies formalized. As a lawyer, Sylvia was known for running very efficient meetings which never failed to end on time.



### **Peter Gabor, 1991-1995**

Under Peter's leadership, the first public policy committee of the board was established and the agency sponsored its first MLA candidate debate. As a full professor in social work, Peter provided excellent guidance in the re-establishment of the agency's counseling program.



### **Gary Bowie, 1999-2001**

LFS experienced another period of rapid growth during Gary's tenure with the addition of the Immigrant Services Program and the completion of a 5,000 square foot expansion of the facility to accommodate growth in the DaCapo Program. Also during this time, the agency was successful in being re-accredited by the Council of Accreditation of Services to Children and Families.



### **Debbie Goodridge, 1997-1998**

During Debbie's term, board governance was reviewed and a new model of governance adopted based on the Carver Model. Working to strengthen our ties with elected officials and advocate for those in need, Debbie was instrumental in sponsoring the agency's second MLA candidate debate.



### **Hazel Mitchell, 2001-2002**

Growth continued to be the theme during Hazel's presidency. With a new and expanded contract from CHR (see related article on page 5), the volume of clients served in the Home Services program doubled and significant expansion took place in the rural areas. As a program administrator in the LCC Health and Human Department, provided invaluable guidance in this expansion effort.



### **Connie Cook, 1995-1997**

Connie served in a time of major growth for LFS with the transfer of services from the Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and the establishment of the residential program for youth with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. During this time, Connie also represented the agency on the board of directors of the Alberta Association of Rehabilitation Centres.



## Two New Members Join Board of Directors

### Jamie Hilts

As a Centre Leader for the Health and Human Services Department of Lethbridge Community College (LCC), Jamie Hilts brings a wealth of knowledge to the board. According to Jamie, "From a professional perspective, many of the programs I supervise at LCC are closely related to LFS, thus making stronger relationships between LCC and LFS possible. Personally I have been involved over the years with many services similar to those offered by LFS. I have seen the need and value to these services and believe that I should participate and commit to seeing that they continue". Jamie received a B.Ed. from the University of Regina and a M.Sc. from the University of Oregon. Currently he serves as Zone Coordinator for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Zone Canvasser for the Canadian Cancer Society. Prior to moving to Lethbridge in 2001, Jamie was employed at Northern Lights College in British Columbia as an instructor, student services coordinator and an administrator.



### Gary Bowie, Ph. D.

After serving six years on the LFS Board of Directors and taking a one year break, we are pleased to announce that Dr. Gary Bowie has rejoined the board. As a retired full professor from the Physical Education Department at the University of Lethbridge, Dr. Bowie is a well known contributor to our community. He is an active member of his church and currently serves as Chairperson of the Social Housing and Action Committee; Chairperson of the Lethbridge Sports Bid Committee; and still has time to coach a basketball team with his son. His prior community involvement includes serving Chair of the Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; participating for 15 years as both School Board Trustee and Chair of Lethbridge School District #51 and chairing the Canada Winter Games held in Lethbridge in 1996. Welcome back Gary!

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## 2001-2002 Friend of the Family Awards Presented



Ralph Himsl, Chair of St. Patrick's Refugee Committee

Each year Lethbridge Family Services (LFS) recognizes individuals, groups or non-profit organizations and businesses that have demonstrated excellence to a family life cause or issue, excellence in direct service to a family or families, or highly exemplary action on behalf of an individual or distressed family. The awards for 2001-2002 were presented to the St. Patrick's Church Refugee Committee and the Adoptive Parent's Support Group.

The St. Patrick's Church Refugee Committee has had a long-standing tradition of co-sponsoring refugees coming to the Lethbridge community. The group has worked very closely with the LFS Immigrant Services staff making themselves available at all hours to assist new Canadians in crisis

situations as well as to provide them with support and counsel as they integrate into Canadian society. Congratulations to committee members including Ralph Himsl; Chair, Bill Sauve, Jean Kazala, Pat Postman, Mersha Mandefro, Gabrehuet Ekubazgi, Nasim Mangal, Gerry Van Istelrooy for your role in strengthening our community.

The Adoptive Parent's Support Group is a dedicated group of adoptive parents who meet regularly to support other parents considering adoption as well as those families who have already adopted. Members provide support to one another in times of stress including the cancellation of a proposed placement and the anxiety experienced by couples as they wait for their child. The group is also involved in sponsoring guest speakers, supporting local adoption conferences, hosting social events and coordinating clothing exchanges for its members. We were very pleased to welcome several members of this group along with their children at the award ceremony.



Representatives from the Adoption Support Group (left to right) Michelle Willms, Cheremi Schalk, Connie Boulton and Fran Thiessen

## Interpreter and Translation Program Integral to Success of Immigrant Services Program

Integral to its successful delivery of settlement services to Lethbridge's newly landed immigrant population is the Interpreter and Translation program. Currently, Immigrant Services is able to call upon 39 interpreters operating in 24 languages. As well, LFS-Immigrant Services can access interpreters and translators from lists held by both the Lethbridge Police Service Victims/Witness program and the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association. Similarly, referrals from both these programs and many others in the community can be responded to by the Immigrant Services team as a result of ongoing efforts at building community capacity to serve the immigrant population.

Interpretation, or the bridging between languages, is vital to the effective communication of important information and orientation upon first arrival. Many new immigrants come to Lethbridge with little or no English ability and the use of a familiar tongue does much to alleviate initial confusion and fear. A lot of the informational material delivered during the first months after a new immigrant's arrival in Lethbridge is fairly complex though necessary and clarity and understanding makes the settlement process that much smoother.

While the interpretation portion of the program is more frequently requested, no less important is document translation. Many foreign trained professionals are required to submit their educational and professional documents for Canadian equivalency assessment; however, these must first be translated into

English. The process of assessment and retraining can be a long and costly one and access to translation service makes one step a little easier.

All interpreters and translators contracted to work with Immigrant Services are specially trained and must agree to adhere to Lethbridge Family Services confidentiality and other personnel policies. It is important that the client be assured of the interpreter's professionalism and integrity. By definition, refugee clients arrive in Canada having been pushed out of their own country due to persecution for reasons of race, religion and political or social persuasion. Given that their departure was under duress, refugees can initially be reluctant to provide too much personal information to too many people for fear of further interference; either to themselves or members of family remaining abroad.

The Immigrant Services department invites applications from community members with second, and more, languages who are interested in both volunteering and contracting their language ability to assist with the delivery of orientation services. Lately, Arabic, Spanish, Kurdish, Dari, various eastern European, and Kakwa speakers have been most required.



Barnabas Laku Ladu, Bozana Sijuka - Interpreter/Translator Coordinator  
Mr. Rawhy Cassis - Interpreter, Paul Jackson Inyani, Valentino Dhour Chol

A public forum - **Celebrating Diversity: Issues of Discrimination** - is planned to complement activities marking Anti-Racism and Discrimination Day (March 21, 2003). The forum is an offshoot of the City of Lethbridge Social Housing in Action Initiative and is being planned by members representing CHR, LFS-IS, City of Lethbridge, Sun Country and others...

The forum will be held on March 24, 2003 between 9:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Lethbridge Exhibition Grounds (Grandstand).

The forum is intended to increase community awareness of and commitment to the celebration of diversity. Members from the aboriginal, youth and immigrant sectors will be invited to participate and bring to the fore the various issues and barriers faced by these groups.

## DaCapo Clients Volunteer for PARTY Program

### (Preventing Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth)

Hundreds of volunteers and thousands of Grade 9 students have participated in the PARTY Program at the Lethbridge Regional Hospital in Lethbridge, Alberta. The program's emphasis is on the serious consequences of drinking and driving, failing to wear seatbelts or helmets and making poor choices and taking unnecessary risks leading to either injury or death. The program runs from 8:45 am to 2:30 pm every Tuesday and alternating Thursdays. The PARTY Program has been in practice for over ten years.

Grade 9 students and their teachers from schools across southern Alberta attend the program and are involved in many different activities. This includes a video of an accident due to drinking and driving, a tour of the hospital and simulation exercises. These exercises place the students in bandages and braces, as if they were accident victims. Discussions take place on topics such as the realities of injuries, taking smart risks and making smart choices. The program offers

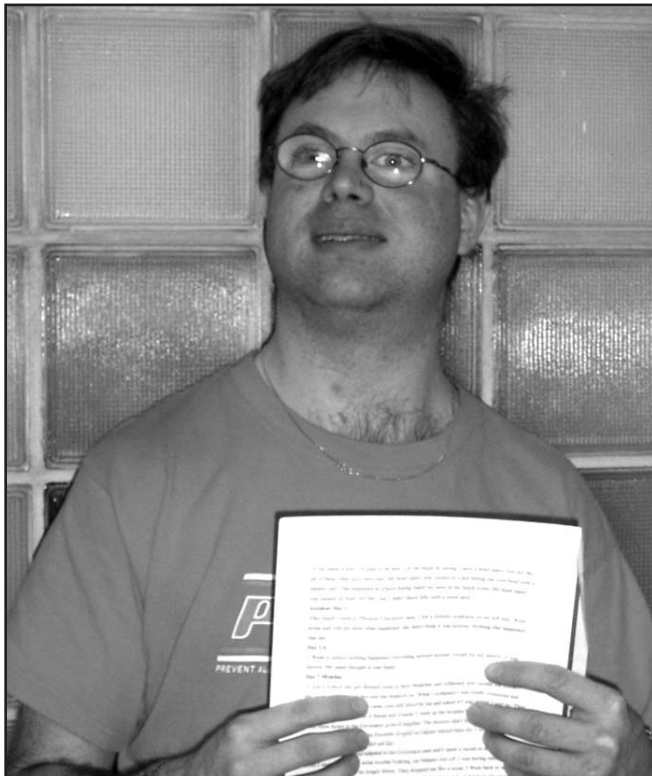
talks with paramedics, nurses, the police and accident survivors, which is where DaCapo comes in.

Four brain injured clients who participate in the Lethbridge Family Services, DaCapo program are volunteers for the PARTY Program, and have been for many years. These clients attend the program on a regular basis, each one attending approximately one session per week. This particular session runs one hour each scheduled day from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Darlene Yeoman, who is the PARTY Program Coordinator, schedules the clients to come speak to the Grade 9 students. The group session includes Darlene, two or three DaCapo clients, the Grade 9 students and any teachers/principals who attend the program. One by one, the brain injured clients tell their stories and answer questions. If the client has problems remembering the event, Darlene provides a typewritten speech. Once the client has told their story, the students ask questions. If the client is ever in need of support, or if they need assistance answering the questions, Darlene steps in to assist.

The clients who participate in this program are enthusiastic about their involvement. Not only do they enjoy telling their stories, the clients believe they are making a difference. Their influence on the students is very important to them. One client stated, "If they (students) do everything right they won't be in the position that we are in now." Darlene Yeoman believes this part of the program is very influential. She has stated, "The injury survivors portion of the program has the biggest impact on the students because it is reality."

The involvement of DaCapo clients in the PARTY Program is important to both the students and the clients themselves. If you would like any information on the DaCapo clients' involvement, or on the PARTY Program itself, contact Darlene at (403)382-6159. Listening to the clients tell their stories is worth the time and can motivate anybody to make smart decisions.



Ken Goodman presenting to audience at PARTY Program

## 2002 - A Year of Major Expansion Home Services Program

In response to a new contract to provide homemaking and personal care to Community Care clients of the Chinook Health Region (CHR), the Home Services Department initiated services to a greatly expanded region on February 1, 2002.

Prior to the contract award, four agencies provided service to clients dispersed throughout Lethbridge as well as in designated rural areas. The Coutts, Milk River corridor was the territory assigned to LFS.

In the new contract, the region has been divided into the following three areas:

- Lethbridge West, Fort Macleod, Pincher Creek and Crowsnest Pass
- Lethbridge East, Taber, Coaldale and Picture Butte
- Lethbridge South, Cardston, Magrath, Raymond and Milk River

LFS was assigned to both the East and West regions and Greystoke Homes to the South region.

What a year this has been! We extend our sincere congratulations to the Home Services staff for their Herculean efforts in making the expansion go so smoothly. The following statistics alone are staggering:

- The number of frontline Health Care Aides expanded from 60-140
- In-office positions increased from 10-17
- The client caseload in Lethbridge grew from 450 to 975 and the rural caseload from 50-350.
- Lodges served increased from 1 to 7 with an additional 129 clients.
- The number of scheduled monthly service visits increased from 10,000 to 20,000.

In reflecting on the past year, Director Deborah Henry notes that, “After surviving many obstacles, we discovered strengths within our staff group that we didn’t even know existed. I take great pride in the accomplishments of all of our staff and also extend my sincere thanks to our clients for their patience, the other LFS departments for all the extra help and the CHR for their support.”

### Congratulations to the In-Office Team



## A Special Thanks to Our 2002 Donors

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Glen Livingston	Mary Ellen Ramias	Zuidhof, Ingrid

## Service Awards Presented to Long Term Staff



Frances Bogle  
presenting fifteen year  
service award to  
Heather Todd

Deborah Henry  
presenting the Twenty  
Year Service Award to  
Shirley Dorchak



Deborah Henry presenting the Ten  
Year Service Award to Miguel Bran



Deborah Henry presenting the Fifteen  
Year Service Award to Patricia Wright

# Angel Tree Donations Far Exceed Expectations

For the ninth consecutive year, Lethbridge Family Services has sponsored the Angel Tree, a program designed to provide holiday gifts for children in need. Angel cards were placed on Christmas trees located at the Homestead Village and A&B Sound. The general public was invited to select a card from the tree and purchase a gift for the child described on the card. The program was greatly enhanced this year by donations of over seventy wooden toys made by the woodworking program at the Lethbridge Correction Centre. A record high of almost 400 gifts were distributed to children.

Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who made this holiday a special one for a child in need. Also, a big thanks to the following sponsors:

- CFCN
- Wesbridge Construction
- Homestead Village
- A & B Sound
- Lethbridge Correctional Institute Staff  
and Woodworking Program
- Edward Grain Guard
- McKillop United Church, Explorer Group
- Glenn Varzari, National Salvage
- Peter Gabor



Maureen Chrusch, Angel Tree Coordinator



Wayne Gurtner, Lethbridge Correctional Institute Woodworking Program

We wish you all a very happy new year!



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**YES, COUNT ME IN AS A CONTRIBUTING FRIEND OF LETHBRIDGE FAMILY SERVICES!**

*In this time of renewed budget cuts, your support is needed even more.*

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- Family Service Friend – \$50
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- Family Service Benefactor – \$250
- Family Service Trust – \$500+
- \_\_\_\_\_
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Postdated cheques are welcome.

**Please make your cheque payable to:**  
**Lethbridge Family Services**  
**1107-2nd Ave. 'A' North**  
**Lethbridge, Alberta T1H 0E6**

*Thank you for your gifts.*