

## Moving Forward in Fostering

*A message from the CFFA President.*



The year has gone by quickly, and here it is time to recap the year in my annual report. To begin I would like to share some of the CFFA highlights of the past year.

### **Public Service Announcement (PSA) - "Celebrating Foster Families".**

A media company contacted us and offered to produce a PSA at no charge. They also donated airtime at the Rockton World's Fair held in October. Various television stations aired the PSA during National Foster Family Week. The video was produced so that it can be shown throughout the years in any of the Provinces or Territories. It is posted on our website for viewing.

This winter I had the pleasure of meeting with **Dr. Edward Riley**, a world renowned leader in research on FASD, and his research team. Dr. Riley is based out of San Diego State University, at the Center for Behavioral Teratology. A wide variety of children are tested, including foster and adoptive children, including Canadian children. I had the opportunity to share information about the Canadian fostering system and the role of the CFFA. It was a very interesting and informative afternoon.

A **CFFA facebook page** has been developed, being launched at this

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year's conference. This will not only increase our exposure tremendously, but will assist in our use of social media for fundraising initiatives. Thanks go to Nicole from the Foster Family Coalition of the Northwest Territories, who assisted with the setting up of the page.

**Senator Hubley** from PEI addressed the senate in February, bringing attention to Canadian children in care, foster families, and the child welfare system across Canada. The CFFA sent a letter of response to Senator Hubley thanking her for bringing attention to this National issue. She has been invited to our conference, and at the time of writing I am waiting to hear if her schedule will allow her to attend. It would be a great opportunity for her to meet foster parents from across Canada.

I am currently working with a freelance writer who is writing an article for **Canada Parenting Magazine**. She will be profiling several foster families from across Canada. The article will provide information about foster parenting in Canada "today", and information in the Canadian context. The piece aims to be up beat and informative for readers who may be interested in fostering

I was involved with, and took part in the Living with **FASD webinar series**. Through the CFFA, information was sent out to our email list regarding the sessions which were free of charge. After the initial webinar series, the project offered foster parents the series at half the cost. I am hoping that some of you took advantage of both the webinar series, and the special offer for the series of recordings.

**Videoring of National Conference Workshops.** Over the years foster parents have requested our workshops to be taped. At this years conference we will be videoing a selection of the workshops. I have been working with a foster parent in Ontario who works in this field, and sits on the Board of the Chatham Kent Foster Parent Association. She and her foster parent

association have offered to take this project on and cover the costs of the project. The videos will be available to order during the conference at a special rate, and also for sale after the conference with information being emailed out and posted on our website.

**National Foster Family Week** was celebrated during the third full week of October. A letter from the CFFA was sent to all P/T for distribution recognizing this special event. Letters from PM and GG were also forwarded. Our PSA Celebrating Foster Families was distributed to all our PT organizations for distribution.

**Our Website traffic continues to increase.** We update the site regularly, with e-news alerts going to those who have signed up. There continues to be an increase of visitors to our site and an increase of inquires from how to become a foster parent, to how to find a foster home.

As you can see from this report, and the many projects we have embarked on, we have had another very successful and busy year. It is a lot of work, time and much patience, but with hard work comes success! That being said, **I would like to thank the CFFA Executive and Directors for their work, support, and commitment throughout the year.**

A special thanks to the **Executive, Connie, Sylvia, Mary, Nancy and Sharon** who assist me in the work of the CFFA throughout the year between our Board Meetings.

I am looking forward to continuing my role as your President for another term. There is so much more to do, and I am up for, and look forward to the challenge and work ahead!

***Sheila Durnford***  
*President, CFFA*

## FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I write this report I wonder at how fast the year has gone by since the fall. It has been a quiet winter.

The conference Manual is completed and has been sent to Provinces and Territories. I have printed off and brought to our AGM Printed copies as requested by some provinces.

I have consulted with Nancy in regards to revamping the Poster Contest. When this was completed, I sent it to our Newsletter editor. I also sent it to our Secretary to send out to the Provinces and Territories.

I still think the Contest rules and regulations need to be worked on to improve and make clearer to Foster Families on what is expected. I will continue to work with the Board on this Project and have it ready for next year's Contest. Meanwhile, we will follow the present rules for this year.

I continue to try to find ways to Fundraise. This is a difficult task as most websites I go to are for big Organization that are not Canada wide and do not have small memberships such as ours.

## SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Once again another year has passed. They seem to go by faster each year.

Our Bylaws continue to be a priority. We review them yearly. With the change to the Federal Not-For-Profit Act, we will be making some minor changes this year. Most of these are wording changes.

The flash drive with pictures from the past has been developed. It will have new pictures added to it as I

I submitted an application to Westjet so we could do the same membership drive with Westjet tickets as we did in previous years. We were denied this year but said we could apply again .

If elected again this would be my major task and focus for the following year. There must be something out there for an organization such as ours.

I look forward to looking after our Auction and Fundraising at this year's AGM in Edmonton.

I have worked throughout the winter answering emails and phone calls as needed with our Executive and Board.

This is a wonderful hard working Board and it is a pleasure working with all of you. In saying this I would love to have your support to run again for another term as 1st Vice President.

*Mary Smith,*

*1st Vice President CFFA*

receive them so keep them coming.

We (in Alberta) are looking forward to welcoming delegates to the 2014 CFFA Conference. Our theme is "Coming Together for Canada's Children".

*Sylvia Thompson*

*2nd Vice President CFFA*

### THIRD VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A big thank you to Alberta for hosting our 2014 conference.

For the 2014 renewal at this time we have all the provinces except Quebec have paid up memberships. It was really nice the year we had every province and we can hope that Quebec will one day join again.

We have 4 organizational memberships – last year at this time we had:

**6 memberships**  
**48 Personal (1 year) memberships and**  
**10 - 6 year memberships**

at this time last year we had received 56 renewals and at the conference 7 members renewed

We are hoping to increase this number at the Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference. The

conference committee has invited Connie to set up a table and encourage foster parents to join the CFFA. We would like to see a great number join and here's hoping.

Again I would like to thank Manitoba and PEI for paying memberships for their board. And a big thank you to Alberta who continue to support the CFFA by paying memberships for the board and staff.

I have forms with me if you have not paid membership but would like to – just see me after this meeting.

I hope you all enjoy your time here in Alberta.

*Sharon Joyal*  
*3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President*

### TREASURER'S REPORT

At the time of writing all of our papers, etc are at the Auditors. A full financial report will be available at the AGM.

The DRAFT of our Transition to a Not For Profit Committee By-Laws s have been completed and been sent out to all the Directors to preview. This Committee has worked very hard to make sure that the changes have been made to conform with Industry Canada's Policy and Procedures. This is laid out in Industry Canada's Not-For-Profit Act. This procedure is Step 1 of 5 and is laid out in the Continuance (transition) checklist. These changes will have to be voted on during the AGM, and once approved, the Committee will then work on getting the required documentation completed and filed. In order for the

CFFA to maintain their Charitable Business Status we have to completed the check list and have in mailed out by October 17, 2014.

The position of Treasure is up for renewal at this year's AGM and I will once again be submitting my name as a candidate. I would like to thank the CFFA's Executive and Board, as well as the Members at large for their support.

*Nancy MacFarlane*  
*Treasurer*

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

This year has been another very productive year. I have been busy since our last conference in Richmond Hill and I am very happy to be in Edmonton, Alberta this year. Under Sheila's direction we have continued to make a lot of valuable connections and she has kept me very busy with correspondence and reports.

This year we again had correspondence from the Governor General and the Prime Minister, which was very exciting.

I have done my best over the past year to provide all our members with information about the CFFA. I have tried to provide our Board members with all information and documentation relevant to them. I have also tried to keep accurate and up to date records for the CFFA. I have provided our Directors with

CFFA documentation so that they have everything they require to do their job as Director.

The highlight of my job this year was applying for and securing our acceptance into Techsoup. Through Techsoup, I have been able to order and supply our Directors with the most up-to-date computer programs at a greatly reduced price. It is great to have all our Directors using the same computer programs, it makes our communication and committee work go so much smoother.

It has been another very successful year.

*Connie Mulholland*  
*Secretary*

# FOSTER FAMILY WEEK

## OCTOBER 19—25 2014



**2013-2014 CFFA HIGHLIGHTS**

- Public Service Announcement (PSA) – “Celebrating Foster Families” produced and aired during the 2014 Rockton World Fair. Airtime and staff expertise donated by a media company.
- Workshops at the CFFA Annual Conference to be taped at this year’s conference.
- Conference Manual updated and distributed
- International Awareness increased - Meeting with Dr. Edward Riley, a well renowned world leader in research on FASD
- Foster Parents from across Canada profiled in Canada Parenting Magazine.
- Facebook page developed
- Entitlements of Foster Parents developed and distributed
- Approved with a company that allows the CFFA to purchase computer programs for our Board at a minimal cost
- Senator Hubley from PEI addressed the senate bring attention to Canadian children in care, foster families, and the child welfare system across Canada.
- Involvement with the Living With FASD Webinar series.
- Conference Manual approved and distributed
- Second Board meeting held Fall 2013
- Prime Minister Harper and Governor General David Johnston sent letters of appreciation recognizing foster families during National Foster Family Week
- CFFA Newsletter produced and distributed electronically 3 times yr.
- Participation in Governance of Best Practice Research Project
- National Poster Contest
- Provincial and Territorial Executive Directors held two meetings
- Website updated regularly increasing usage
- Strengthen partnerships with other organizations and groups
- Increase public awareness of the CFFA and fostering in general
- Increase our profile at the Provincial and Federal levels
- Post CFFA newsletter on website

## THANK YOU!

The CFFA would like to thank the Alberta Foster Parent Association for hosting the 2014 National Conference. We are so appreciative and would like to acknowledge all the work that was done to make this an exceptional event!

A special thank you to Alberta Human Services for their generous support.

### 2014 CFFA NATIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT

Our 2014 CFFA National Conference, “Coming Together for Canada’s Children” was held in Edmonton, Alberta, hosted by the Alberta Foster Parent Association (AFPA).

The CFFA meetings were scheduled for the first part of the week, with the CFFA Executive meeting followed by the Board of Directors meeting, the National Working Group and our Annual General Meeting; workshops took place on the Friday and Saturday.

We were pleased to have the Honourable Manmeet S. Bhullar, Minister of Alberta Human Services address the participants at our Opening Ceremonies on Wednesday, June 12th. It is always a thrill to see all

the flags paraded in by the Provincial and Territorial Directors to the bagpipe marching music!

Following the opening ceremonies, the National Working Group took place. Provincial and Territorial updates are given by the Directors, and all present are welcome to take part and bring forward items for discussion. Some of the items discussed were, Community Recruitment and Mentorship.

During our AGM elections were held and this year there were several people nominated for the positions that were up for election. I was re-elected as President, Mary Stubbington-Smith was re-elected as 1st Vice President, and Nancy McFarlane accepted the position as Treasurer as there were no other



*CFFA Conference opening ceremonies*

people running for that position. All positions are on a two-year terms.

A number of workshops were offered on Friday and Saturday, with options of full day and half day workshops. The CFFA arranged to have several of the workshops taped so they can be shared with others that could not attend the conference. They are now being edited and information on how to order copies will be posted on our website in the near future.

The Alberta Foster Family Association arranged for a wonderful closing banquet on the Saturday evening. Assistant Deputy Minister Mark Hattori joined us for dinner and gave a very entertaining and informative keynote.

The CFFA presented a plaque to Norm Brownell, President, AFPA, and Katherine Jones, Executive Director, AFPA in recognition of all the work and dedication it took to organize such a successful conference.



*Norm Brownell, Sheila Durnford, Honourable Manmeet S. Bhullar, Minister of Alberta Human Services.*

The CFFA flag was handed over to Gena Morrow, CFFA Director from Ontario, as Ontario will be hosting the 2015 National Conference in Niagara Falls.

We hope to see many of you at the CFFA Conference in Niagara Falls in the fall of 2015!! Watch our website for updated information as it becomes available.

I would like to take this time to thank everyone for my re-election and I look forward to serving another term as president.

***Sheila Durnford***  
*CFFA President*



*Passing of the CFFA flag. Gena Morrow, Ontario, Sheila Durnford*

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**ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION**

I am honoured to present this report on behalf of the Alberta Foster Parent Association for the Canadian Foster Family Association's Annual General Meeting. Additionally, I am honoured to have the opportunity to welcome you to Alberta! It is exciting to have you here in Alberta and to be able to showcase some of the exciting work that is being done here in the area of foster care and kinship care. I hope you enjoy your stay and leave feeling refreshed and eager to move forward.

Some of the key areas of focus over the past year have been as follows:

- **Transitioning from Care** – Our “Transitioning Youth in Care” resource manual, a joint project between the AFPA and the AASCF is finally completed. This is an online resource which will be up dated as required. If you wish to use this resource please go to the AFPA webpage at [www.afpaonline.com](http://www.afpaonline.com). You and/or your associations are more than welcome to use this as a resource if you wish. We thank everyone involved in providing input into the making of this resource and a special thank you to Jeff Solberg, researcher and author, for the outstanding work that he put into this for the caregivers and youth of Alberta.
- **Provincial Mentorship Program** – This program is now an ongoing program in Alberta. The review of the program was extremely positive. Many suggestions on how to improve the program further were gathered and have been incorporated into the program. One significant change in the Mentorship Program is that it now inclusive of Government and Agency Foster Families and Kinship Care families.
- **Safe Babies** – Safe Babies Training is now provided to all foster/kinship families who are involved with taking in babies. This is a wonderful program

designed to help people to better care for and ensure the little ones are kept safe.

- **Changes in Ministry** – We now have a new Minister of Human Services, the Honourable Manmeet Bhullar. We are pleased and honoured to be able to work with Minister Bhullar in developing a system that truly meets the needs of children and youth in Alberta. If you get the opportunity, introduce yourself to him and let him know what province or territory you are from.
- **Mental Health First Aid** – Foster parents are being provided the opportunity to attend Mental Health First Aid training across Alberta. We have heard that this is exceptional training and are happy to be able to offer it here at the CFFA Conference.

I look forward to the opportunity to talk to you while you are here in Alberta. Enjoy your stay.

*Linda Krauskopf,*

*Alberta Director, CFFA*

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**BRITISH COLUMBIA REPORT**

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations has had a productive year assisting foster parents across the province and spending more time in partnership meetings to develop our network.

After release of the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Foster Family Handbook, foster parents and social workers had more clarity about engaging relief care and babysitters. Interpretation of policy had become very restrictive resulting in some communities being unable to identify accessible resources for day to day babysitting or relief assistance.

BCFFPA continues to discuss the low mileage rates paid to foster parents across the province. We are also receiving reports of challenges and delays in financial reimbursement to foster parents who pay up front for services, activities or supplies.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development has launched their Caregiver Support Network structure in nine communities across the province. This initiative is the result of many years of consultation with stakeholders and research into similar models. The long term plan is to ensure that these networks are developed across the province so that as many foster parents as possible are connected to a group of caregivers and professionals that will offer ongoing, consistent support. BCFFPA participates in regular stakeholder meetings to discuss the roll-out of the network plan. Another key aspect of the Residential Redesign and Caregiver Support Network initiative for change is the retention and recruitment of caregivers. The focus on retention of long term caregivers is a main objective for the Ministry. Foster parents are keen to provide guidance about what would provide enhanced job satisfaction and long term commitment.

Late in our fiscal year we received confirmation of funding to produce a series of informative videos for foster parents. We have become increasingly aware that some caregivers from rural communities simply can't access training opportunities. Though policies and guidelines in print are provided to all caregivers, some learn more effectively through presentation formats. Our upcoming video series titled *BC Foster Basics* will supplement Ministry policy and guideline documents in a format that is engaging, accessible at any time and free of charge.

In the coming year we will be focusing on fund development, a positive media message that targets the

diversity of BC's population so that we can build a more comprehensive and culturally inclusive program that considers the needs all the caregivers and foster children in BC.

***Russell Pohl***

*British Columbia Director, CFFA*

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## MANITOBA FOSTER FAMILY NETWORK

Child Welfare in Manitoba continues to change and evolve from year to year.

Because there are four Child Welfare Authorities that oversee the agencies which fall within their mandate, the system has a tendency to be segmented and inconsistent from one agency to another. Thankfully over the past year there has been a willingness to establish a certain level of system-wide standardization and we have played a role in helping to ensure it is applicable to foster families.

Growth at the Foster Family Network has been amazing so this report will simply highlight some of the biggest areas!

### **Peer Support Program;**

- A call-in peer to peer support for foster parents
- 11 volunteer foster parents who are scheduled on the phone line from 9 am to 9 pm 7 days a week
- Foster Parents call the office phone line and then transferred to the Peer Support Provider's home for assistance.
- We collect data regarding what type of calls come in and provide this information to the province,

agencies and authorities to help identify the needs of foster parent province wide.

**Community-Based Mentorship Program;**

- The concept is based on establishing foster parent mentors in communities throughout Manitoba who can facilitate workshops (designed by the FFN) and function as a mentor to foster parents.
- The program was piloted in 2011 with part of the program in two rural locations and the rest of the program was piloted in Winnipeg starting September 2013 (scheduled for completion in June 2014)
- The outcome of the test pilots are indicating participants feel more connected to other foster parents and find it helpful to consult with others who have had first hand knowledge about fostering and learn about concepts pertaining to the job that they had not considered before.

**Critical Incident Stress Management Program;**

- Call-in line for foster parent who are experiencing a critical incident
- Calls are answered 24 hours 7 days a week

*Cathy Wiebe*  
 Director, MFFN

**NEW BRUNSWICK FOSTER FAMILIES ASSOCIATION INC.**

It is a pleasure and joy to bring greetings from New Brunswick and the NBBFA. Our locals and provincial association have been busy for the past year caring for

the children placed in our care. We are well aware of the challenging cases that arrive at the homes of all Canadians across our fair nation. Our vision and purpose still remain the same,” making a difference in the lives of children one day at time one child at a time.”

Having said that we are trying to keep pace and do more with less. I am sure most provinces are dealing with the same restraints and expectations. The children of our nation are our future and some of them are less fortunate than others. Those others are the children that foster parents are asked to come alongside and help to navigate some difficult days. We , the foster parents of New Brunswick, consider it a privilege and responsibility to do our part to help those “others”. The task sometimes seems too enormous and stressful to carry on but we do anyway.

Not much has changed in the past year, but we continue to learn and share what we have freely with all. Hoping that this week will allow us to learn , hear the stories of other provinces and share our own stories with you.

*Judy Smith*  
 Director, NBFFA INC.

**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR FOSTER FAMILIES ASSOCIATION**

2013-2014 was another successful year for the foster care program in our province. The on-going implementation of the Continuum of Care Strategy is progressing at a much faster pace then we would have anticipated. In only two years, we are nearing full implementation.

The first group of Level 3 Specialized Forster Families

have just finished module one training and the contracts have also been awarded for Level 4 - Staffed Residential Services. Our Association was actively involved in helping to identify the training requirements for Level 3 and sat on the committee that worked with the consultant who developed the training package. The provincial treatment centre for children with complex mental health needs will be opened in the Fall. The Foster Care Program in our province is in the best place it has probably ever been. There will always be challenges because that is the nature of the work but morale is good and there is renewed optimism.

The Foster a Future recruitment campaign continues to bring in new homes and promote positive messages about fostering. Since the campaign started in 2012, there have been 580 inquiries and 94 new foster homes approved resulting in 138 placements. Currently there are no children or youth living in alternative living arrangements in our province. This has been a huge accomplishment.

Due to limited resources this year, we were only able to offer one training day in the regions and this was in Labrador in the fall. Staff did travel to all areas of the province throughout the year to meet with Foster Families and Child, Youth and Family Services staff. We saw an increase in requests for school presentations this year which is really positive. The only downside was that limited resources prevented us from being able to respond to all the requests. This year we were selected as a Charity of Choice to receive funding to bring the "Different Kinds of Families" presentation to more schools. We have been pleasantly surprised by the impact of this presentation in the classroom, beyond what we had originally anticipated. What started out as a tool to educate school children about foster care and reduce stigma for children in care has grown to promote messages of inclusion and anti-bullying for all children and families. Our long awaited Foster Parent Handbook is nearing completion with all content finalized. We are now waiting on graphics and layout.

In recent months, we have had two cabinet shuffles which resulted in two new Ministers for Child, Youth and Family Services. Our current Minister is the Honorable Clyde Jackman who is also a former Foster Parent. We were invited to the budget lock-up and speech in March where we learned that we would be receiving an additional \$50,000 for our 2014-2015 operating grant. This was certainly very good news as we ended last year in a deficit position.

Our fostering community experienced sadness again this year with the deaths of a foster Mom and foster Dad. One of our families also had to cope with the loss of their 20 year old biological son.

On a personal note, I want to add that I am happy to be representing our province on the CFFA Board. I enjoy the opportunity to meet others from all across the country and take advantage of the training opportunities. My time on the Board has been a great learning experience.

*Fronie Blake*  
*Director, NLFFA*

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## FOSTER FAMILY COALITION OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Greetings from North of 60! I will summarize what has been happening since the last CFFA Conference in Richmond Hill, Ontario!

Our summer camp, Camp Connections, is based 65 km outside of Yellowknife and is a weeklong overnight camp that offers a positive, interactive opportunity for children and youth ages 7-18 involved with social services, to connect with the land and each other. The summer of 2013 was extremely successful, again accommodating 90 youth. We have been really busy over the winter working on programming and preparing for this summer. We will be erecting a huge tepee at

camp over the next few weeks and building new outhouses before summer starts. I can't wait to get out there and get started!

We expanded our support services to include adoption and so I attended the NACAC (North American Council on Adoptable Children) conference in Toronto in August. This conference was huge and I was able to gather a ton of information about supporting adoptive homes. We also purchased some new promotional items with a new logo that we are using for recruitment.

In October, I attended the CFFA board of director meetings in Alberta. Our committee got a lot of work done updating the Safeguarding training. Thank you to the Alberta Foster Parent Association for accommodating us every year.

November meant traveling to Montreal for the Executive Directors Meetings. We continue to work researching topics of interest gathering and information to be made accessible to others in the country; the next full day meeting is at the CFFA conference in Edmonton in June.

The FFC-NWT continues to distribute Scotia Capital 'Stay in School Awards' for the Children's Aid Society throughout the year. They are distributed to at risk youth in the NWT to encourage them to focus on furthering their education. Funds are also available for tutoring and graduation. For the 2013- 2014 school year, we have access to \$15,000 for distribution.

I continue to present at the mandatory social worker/ adoption worker training for social workers across the territory. This has been very successful in the past and gives new social workers the opportunity to better understand what the FFC is all about and what it is like to be a foster parent in the NWT.

I also continued to travel to the regions with the trainer from the department to deliver Pre-Service PRIDE

training in the regions. In May we will be in Fort MacPherson, Aklavik and Hay River. I love getting out to the regions to connect face to face with foster parents. I went to Chicago in March to attend the PRIDE Conference that was held at Governor State University where we reviewed the Pre-service PRIDE 2014 online curriculum.

We continue to work with the Department of Health and Social Services, Government of the NWT, on areas that are crucial to successful fostering in the north. Our working relationship has really grown over the past couple of years and we will now be entering into a multi-year funding agreement that will continue to have admin support in the office. There was a report released by the Auditor General of Canada on Child and Family Services – GNWT in March 2014 that has changed some of the direction that the department is heading. All in all, the changes will benefit foster parents and will set the groundwork for addressing some of the issues we have been working on in the past.

This has been the first year that we have taken on the CFFA newsletter "The Bulletin". We seem to finally have a system in place that is more current and we look forward to making some more changes over the next year to make the newsletter process more efficient.

*Tammy Roberts,  
Northwest Territories Director, CFFA*

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## FEDERATION OF FOSTER FAMILIES NOVA SCOTIA

First, I would like to thank Foster Families for the commitment, time and effort put forth in making our most precious children feel welcome in to their homes. Second, the Central Region is busy preparing for our Annual AGM. This year it will be held in the Central Region at the Quality Inn Halifax. Registration

packages have already been sent out, so don't forget to return yours to the Federation office as soon as possible. The weekend for Foster Parents will be entertaining and educational.

The board meets on a regular basis and along with our meetings we have held a meet & greets in all regions of the province in order for Foster Parents to come and meet the Board, Executive Director and other Foster Parents in the area. I would like to thank all the Foster Parents who took time out of their already busy schedules to attend these gatherings.

There was a meeting with the New Minister of Community Services, the Honourable Joanne Bernard on January 13, 2014. The recommendations from the dialogue for Foster Parents were presented at this meeting with favourable approval by our new Minister.

Senator Elizabeth Hubley from Prince Edward Island travelled to the Federation Office in Nova Scotia to inquire about Fostering in Nova Scotia. On January 28th, 2014, the Honourable Senator Elizabeth Hubley addressed the Senate regarding addressing issues regarding Child Welfare in Canada.

Spring training for CPI for Foster parents is required in order to continue to qualify for competency payments. Training is offered twice a year and this years focus is managing anger.

The youth achievement awards were held in Truro, NS again this year. This banquet honours Youth in Care over 13 who have made significant gains in their lives.

Our board members from each region meet regularly with senior staff from the agencies to work on improving relationships and to problem solve when issues arise.

Mikmaq Region now has a Mik'maq speaking person to support Jill when a family is in need of allegation services. Her name is Margaret Poulette, she will be

attending this years AGM. She is bilingual in Mik'maq and English. The Mission statement has been translated into the Mik'maq language and will be displayed at meetings in their regions.

From the Dialogue for Foster Parents some of the recommendations involved the Federation.

A big Thank you goes out to Kimberly Berry for working so hard on some of the recommendations. We now have a map for Foster parents with Board members and Presidents easily identifiable ( this will come out in the Spring Newsletter). Our website is under construction and a new look will be coming soon and the first steps of a mentoring program for new foster parents is in the works.

***Darlene Arseneau***  
*Director, FFFNS*

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## NUNAVUT DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES

Ullakuut, Good Morning, members of the CFFA Board of Directors, Foster parents, colleagues and honoured guests.

I am pleased to bring you sincere and warm greetings from our Foster Parents and the staff of the Department of Family Services in Nunavut.

As I indicated to you last year, we have continued to work on the establishment of our newly created Department and to pursue the essential goals of effective transition and continued service delivery. In doing so, as expected, we have had to contend with a number of minor setbacks, along with several new challenges.

Over the first year of our existence, we have had significant changes to our Senior Administrative and legislative personnel. Our new Minister of Family

Services is Jeannie Ugyuk, a former social worker with a good understanding of the services we deliver, and she is ably supported by our new Deputy Minister, Simon Awa and his ADM, Sandy Teiman. The new legislative principle of 'Sivumuut Abluqta' directs us to continue to focus on industry, education and service to the community.

Our 225 territorial foster parents have continued to provide us with excellent supportive services for the roughly 360 children who are currently receiving services from our department. Of these, approximately 42 % are being supported in the homes of parents, guardians or in a kinship arrangement, and 18% are in treatment placements out-of-territory.

Over the last year, we have continued to recruit some new foster parents, but these numbers are often offset by those who are long-serving and are now seeking a bit of respite.

We have not yet been successful in establishing a territorial foster family association in Nunavut, but continue to strive in this direction. Nonetheless, we were able to celebrate, in the several communities we serve, with the parents we do have, during the recent Foster Family Week. Gifts and Letters of Appreciation were presented to all, at a number of local events full of fun, food and games.

Our territory has continued to maintain its membership in good standing with the CFFA and this has served us well in keeping in touch with our mainstream colleagues and foster parents throughout the Nation.

Best wishes for a successful meeting.

***Ambrose S Ojah Jr.***

*Nunavut Liaison to the Board of CFFA.*

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## FOSTER PARENTS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

Greetings from Ontario,

Election is the news in the province as I write this report. That always seems to put things on hold in every sector, as we wait to see the outcome, and see if our direction and focus will change. It was the Liberal government that put into motion the transformation of the child welfare system in Ontario, but if a different government is elected, what happens next? We will see.

CPIN, our single information system, is rolling out, and I imagine it will continue no matter who gets elected. Here at the FPSO, we had a good training session with those in charge of implementing CPIN. The meeting was filled with presidents and representatives from all across the province. It was revealed that, by moving to this province wide system, the multitude of separate child welfare agencies would have to move towards a more standardized set of practices, just to be able to use it. Finally! Foster parents and the FPSO have been advocating for consistency between agencies for years. Time will tell how the details will unfold, but it looks hopeful.

Conversations have been ongoing about the changes to supports to our Crown Wards as they turn 18, or chose to leave care at a younger age, and transition into adulthood. New legislation was passed ensuring that our young people would receive a minimum amount of funding, around 900\$, monthly, without strings. Leaders in our foster care community have been discussing the different situations that have arisen because of this approach. Previously, funding could be tied to school attendance, or be withheld because of significant drug use, or might not be given if the Ward chose to move back with his or her birth family and not move into independence. Dangerous or inappropriate

living situations were not funded. Provision of funds was at the discretion of each agency. However, our youth saw this approach as flawed, and not responsive enough to the unique needs of former crown wards. The change to legislation came about from the efforts of the former youth in care themselves, with the help of the Provincial Child Advocate. I look forward to watching as we progress with this new approach, to see how it changes the impacts our youth, and how it affect their futures as a population, beyond the individual situations we hear about now, to gauge the overall impact of these changes.

The planning and preparation continues for our joint FPSO/CFFA conference in 2015. Because of scheduling issues though, it will be in September rather than June. I have collected information about the area where it will be held, Niagara, to share with you in the hospitality suite, and look forward to seeing you there. It is a beautiful region and has a great deal to offer. We will have excellent training, and if the past meeting we had at the hotel is any indication, the food will be awesome too. I look forward to seeing you all in Edmonton, and next year in Niagara Falls.

*Gena Morrow,  
Ontario Director, CFFA*

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## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FEDERATION OF FOSTER FAMILIES

The Foster Parents of our beautiful Island send a HUGE HELLO to all the Foster Parents in the rest of Canada. The PEI Federation of Foster Families continue to work hard on behalf of it's members. Some of their accomplishments over the past year include a seven percent raise in the Room & Board Allowance over two years, five percent in 2012/13 budget and an additional two percent in the 2013/14 budget. Although not what we were asking for, it was greatly appreciated,

especially considering the restraint on funds during these tough economic times. But! We are not done yet. We continue to work on a new Level Contract, and like any negotiations, there are two sides with two points of view. This is turning out to be a tough assignment, but the board is confident we can make it work to everyone=s satisfaction. A Board member sits on the Recruitment & Retention Committee. PEI is in the same position as all the Provinces and Territories and is struggling to attract new Foster Parents, in fact we are dwindling, and currently have only seventy-two Foster Families on the Island, so that make Retention a more pressing issue.

Some of our activities over the past year include a successful AGM last Fall where we had Landy Anderson as guest presenter. Her message was widely received by both Foster Parents and Social Workers alike. As usual Landy wowed the audience. We also had a Christmas Party, Sleigh Ride, BBQ, Black Light Bowling, with Pizza, Movie Afternoon. The Board puts in a lot of work and effort to make these events successful, and were really pleased with the increase in attendance, everyone had a GREAT!!! time.

Our Spring Symposium was just completed and the theme was Self Care, the morning was devoted to various methods and activities that we can do to ensure that we look after ourselves. All Foster Parents realize that in order to look after the children in our care, we must first look after ourselves. The Presentation was put on by Peter Mutch, Director of Catholic Family Services and his very capable staff of Counsellors. The day ended with a presentation by Nancy Savoie who spoke on The Results of Self Care. Nancy has conquered her issues, of which she has/had many, and shared her experiences with those in attendance. It was an extremely emotional presentation and was very well received by the group.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board of the PEIFFF for their continued support. The Board is an eclectic group of Foster Parents, who, through their

commitment and dedication are doing a great job looking after the members needs and issues.

*Wayne MacFarlane,  
PEI Director, CFFA*

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## SASKATCHEWAN FOSTER FAMILIES ASSOCIATION

In writing this report for the Canadian Foster Families Association Annual General Meeting, I have an opportunity to reflect on the incredible commitment that Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA) staff, foster parents, and supporters have shown throughout this remarkable year. The SFFA's mission statement is that Saskatchewan Foster Families Association exists to support and encourage foster families through education and advocacy, helping create healthy homes, positive environments, and brighter futures for children and youth in care across the province.

2014 marks a very important milestone for our organization, proudly in June we will be celebrating 40 years of service. The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association will be hosting our biennial conference from June 12-14, 40 Years of Families Helping Families...

During the course of this year, the SFFA again has experienced substantial growth in many avenues of our services. The SFFA's commitment to children and families has been maintained throughout to the families that we serve. Our revised structure (Leadership Teams) continues to support foster parents.

Our In Home Support Program continues to support families in Saskatoon and Regina. This program provides twenty-four hour support to identified families in both centres. We will be working with the Ministry of Social Services to expand this program throughout the entire province.

The association has provided training in CPR & First Aid to over 63% of members, the mandatory training that members requested will ensure the safety of the children and youth placed in members care.

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association has actively participated in numerous meetings with Government as a collaborative agency. The Membership Proposals presented and voted on at the 2013 PAGM were presented to government and presently we are working with the Executive Directors in moving forward in many of the proposals that were presented. I can contentedly report that progress is being made and look forward to reporting to our membership the gains that have been achieved.

Later in June, the SFFA will participate in the Child Welfare Legislation consultations with members from across the province.

April 1st the Ministry of Social Service announced that all Receiving Homes, Practitioner, and Intern foster homes would be compensated at a higher rate of payment than basic maintenance rates for the first 15 days of a child's placement. In addition, that foster families will receive a 2% Cost of Living increase.

Where we are today, we have made significant growth in developing programs and services to better educate and support our members. The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association is recognized in the community as a credible and viable organization. We have strong partnerships throughout the Child Welfare and business community.

In closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Provincial Board of Directors for their guidance over the past year. Thank you to the members of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association, you have given the Board of Directors and the Provincial Office the inspiration to grow in expanding our services. Thank you to the Provincial Office and field staff for

your countless hours and dedication to our members in supporting foster families in the work that they do in caring for the children that are placed in foster care.

***Deb Davies***  
*Executive Director, SFFA*

***Christine Fullawka***  
*Provincial Director, SFFA*

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## YUKON FOSTER PARENTS ASSOCIATION

This has been a challenging year for the Yukon Foster Parent Association. There have been a number of senior staff changes in Family and Children's Services that have impacted all Yukon foster parents as well as the Association.

Meetings and solid communication between the Association executive and the Department management staff that had been going so well, disappeared during the many changes that seem to occur with staff leaving and new staff arriving with new ideas for policy practice. The contracted funding for this year's operation of the Association was withdrawn which impacted the Association's plans for meetings, membership communications and activities in the spring. A meeting took place in March with a view to recapture the positive working relationship developed with the previous administration.

The Association was able to run for a good portion of the year from its contingency fund and put on a few well supervised and successful events for foster families allowing for fellowship between foster parents and much fun for the children.

This year, as in the last couple of years, a good deal of the Board of Directors' time went to assisting fellow foster parents in crisis or conflict with the Department. Support was offered in the manner that best suited each foster parent's needs.

There continues to be a decline in foster parent retention and recruitment in the Yukon, which is placing a greater burden on the current foster families. There have been fewer placements being made in out of family care, however, there are far fewer foster families available to provide that care when needed and foster parents who usually care for two children are now caring for four children. Foster families who usually limit their care to respite are providing full time care. There is an unfulfilled need for more foster families, people excited and enthusiastic about helping their community's distressed families and children.

The Association is working towards getting funding restored; continuing to support foster families in crisis; planning for and providing opportunities for foster parents and foster families to interact in a safe, interesting and healthy atmosphere; aiming towards a respectful and mutually beneficial working relationship with Department senior staff; as well as planning for interesting learning opportunities for foster parents.

***Donna Wilkinson***  
*Yukon Director, CFFA*

## Contact

If you are now receiving your copy of "The Bulletin" by mail and you would like to have it sent to your new residence, you MUST send notification of your new address to Sharon Joyal - 3rd Vice President and CFFA Membership Chairperson. Addresses can be found in each issue of the newsletter.

## Submissions

Do you have an article/report or fostering story that you would like to share with other foster parents? Please e-mail your articles/reports/stories to Tammy Roberts, Newsletter Chair at [info@ffcjwt.com](mailto:info@ffcjwt.com). The submission deadline for the next Bulletin is October 15th, 2014.



## MISSION

The CFFA is a national organization that works in collaboration with the provincial and territorial foster family associations and other national organizations involved with children & youth in care to enhance foster care across Canada.

## VISION

Canadian Foster Families will be respected and empowered in order to better facilitate the best possible environment for children in care.

## VALUES

- Support positive change to fostering in Canada.
- Advocating for the empowerment of Foster Families in Canada

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