

Save the Date  
Rehoboth AGM  
Stony Plain  
June 11

# Flourish!



  
**Rehoboth**

Christian Ministries  
Newsletter



March 2016

[www.rehoboth.ab.ca](http://www.rehoboth.ab.ca)

# Board President Update



## Rehoboth Membership Survey Results

Last summer, the Rehoboth Board of Directors sought valuable feedback from its 3,000 members, inviting them to complete a survey that was mailed to them and made available online. The board appreciates and thanks all those who took the time to share their thoughts in responding to the survey's questions and providing additional comments and ideas.

The Rehoboth Board is thankful for the positive feedback; most people were very appreciative of the important work Rehoboth is doing to serve

people with disabilities. This is also evident in that 94 percent of respondents would recommend Rehoboth Christian Ministries to a family needing service and supports for a person with disabilities.

It is interesting to note that more than half of those who completed the survey are 65 years of age and older. This is not surprising to the board; most of these Rehoboth supporters have been faithful members through much of our 40-year history!

And so our challenge going forward is to ignite or rekindle our connection to the younger generations; to the baby boomers, to their children, and to young people in our high schools and middle schools. Rehoboth's Board and management team is working diligently on strategies and implementation plans to grow our membership in these younger demographics.

The survey results also provided us food for thought in how we can do our work better, or in new areas and programs. Three main themes arose:

1. **Staffing:** retention; quality; and Christian-based
2. **Changing needs of clients:** complex needs; Autism Spectrum; Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
3. **Communication:** newsletters; church liaison; mail and email

Staff retention has always been a priority for Rehoboth. We believe that our internal strategies to support staff, and improved government funding for wages in recent years, have been hugely beneficial to keeping good staff. And our statistics backs this up. A few years ago, our staff turnover rate hovered in the 30 percent range, while two years ago it decreased to 7.1 percent, and last year our turnover rate fell to just 5.6 percent.

We have also made strides in improving the skill sets of our staff through better orientation and training, and the greater use of technology to allow more time for staff mentoring and client support. And we are holding our staff more accountable to the quality of their work.

As a Christian-based organization, Rehoboth recruits staff who, in their day to day work, can demonstrate Christian values and the fruits of the Spirit. But in this increasingly secular world, it is an ongoing challenge. We are not the small organization of a few decades ago that could recruit extensively from our supporting community. The Rehoboth of today operates across the province in five centres, in some 50 group

homes, with approximately 600 staff. Thankfully, our Executive Director began networking last year with faith-based organizations across North America who face similar challenges; this important work will continue this summer with a conference in Michigan. We pray the Lord will bless these efforts so that service organizations like Rehoboth can work together to maintain their Christian identities -- and indeed "shine like stars in the sky".

The needs of clients are certainly changing. Many of the individuals we have served for years are aging, and with age come health and mobility concerns, and thus the need for increased supports. New persons looking for services are challenging government and service agencies alike with support needs for increasingly complex needs. Rehoboth is currently working on strategies and extensive training to enable us to accommodate these new needs, which may relate to FAS or Autism, with quality service and supports.

Rehoboth's Board and management are aware that we need to polish our communication efforts. Survey respondents indicated the preferred methods for us to communicate with them are through mail, email, and the Flourish! newsletter. Eighty-six percent wanted formal communication quarterly or annually. We will continue to improve our communication efforts, also in prioritizing visits and presentations to our churches and schools. If your congregation or school community would like to see and hear about "the Rehoboth story", please reach out Executive Director Ron Bos at [ron.bos@rehoboth.ab.ca](mailto:ron.bos@rehoboth.ab.ca) or 780-968-8481.

This summer, we invite you to join us in celebrating Rehoboth's 40th anniversary at various events and venues across the province – to thank God for a rich and blessed history. We will celebrate our past, while remaining focused on our present and future, relying on His continued blessings.

As always, we covet your prayers.

*Brian de Haan*

President

Rehoboth Board of Directors

## VISION

By the grace of God, all persons with disabilities have a meaningful and dignified place in society where they can live, contribute and fellowship with others.

## MISSION

Rehoboth conveys God's love to persons with disabilities and their families by making room for them and enabling them to flourish.

## VALUES

Rehoboth values are Christ-like, including: Serving; Compassion; Dignity; Inclusivity; Integrity; Commitment

## BELIEFS

We believe:

- That Rehoboth is diligent in using the power of prayer
- That Rehoboth serves God through serving its clients
- That the work of Rehoboth is blessed by God
- That Rehoboth is deliberate in applying and nurturing the God-given talents of everyone involved.

# Grande Prairie

## Big Changes In Our Grande Prairie Regional Office

The New Year brought a new Regional Director, Debra Janveau, and we said goodbye to Barbara Shumik who served our employees, clients and families for 14 years. We wish her only the very best in her retirement.

Debra brings a varied work background in social services which will help us expand, and enable us to serve and offer support to individuals with complex needs and their families.

Along, with this change, they have moved into a brand new office, everyone is so excited. 2016 will bring many changes to strengthen our work helping those we serve flourish! But for the grace of God go we! 🍷





### Three Cheers for Volunteers

Rehoboth in the Coaldale Lethbridge region is blessed by volunteers who put in countless hours of volunteer time in our programs in Lethbridge or Coaldale. We have a golf committee that works for months arranging our local golf tournament which is always a huge success. It sells out almost every year and is one of those can't miss for golfers in this region.

We have volunteers who come to help out in our greenhouse to replant our bedding outs and they also build relationships with our individuals we serve which is a double blessing. They spend countless hours working out in the back helping us prepare for spring. They make all the busy work seem easier as they bring their talents to help out.

Our contact people in this region are absolutely the best. They do such a great job on our membership campaign and if we ever need anything special such as barn board all we have to do is ask and one of them will know someone who might have some for us. It is wonderful watching the Lord move in people.

Then there is our Sunshine Auxiliary. These folks

again amaze me with all the work they do with their three major events per year. They do our Spring Sale lunch of hamburgers and hot dogs, fresh apple pie, donuts and a gigantic bake sale. Then there is our annual Pork BBQ. They serve around 400 people throughout the evening from 5:00 to 7:00 or till the food runs out which rarely happens. They also do a pancake breakfast on the last Saturday in November. All of these events are a time of meeting and supporting those we serve but it is also a time of friendship, good food and fellowship. They also work on projects on our site like the enlargement of our parking lot and landscaping. Currently they are working on our sensory park project. It will be a one of a kind in western Canada. A wonderful project that we will be sharing more details about as we go forward.

All in all we cannot go forward with the confidence we do without our volunteers. It is our belief that the Lord has put all of them in place to serve along with us the individuals he has sent to us. We are all blessed by this organization, by the staff God has sent us as well as those whose hearts He has moved in to support us financially as we serve our individuals. God bless all of you. 🇨🇦



# Camp 2016

By Marianne van der Ahé



Hello friends! It's time to gear up for another year at camp. The renovations and construction of a new mess hall are completed, and we are ready to welcome our campers and counselors back for a great camp season this summer. Not to mention that we have good water and PRESSURE IN THE SHOWERS!! If you've been to camp before you

know exactly what I'm talking about! It's going to be a wonderful time at camp this summer and we are counting on our volunteers to make it happen. If you have been to camp before you know how rewarding and life-changing it is. If you haven't, come on down and experience the joy for the first time. There's nothing like having someone put their trust

in you and want to be your friend the minute they see you. Camp is a place of mutual acceptance and friendship.

I have been volunteering at camp since 2002 as a counselor and then as a director for the last five years. It always amazes me to see our volunteers come and give themselves heart and soul to the ministry. We so appreciate each one who comes and gives of their time and talents to make our camp program a success each year. For many of the campers who come, their week at camp is the only holiday they get all year. Sometimes it is also the only place where they have friends who love to spend time with them, and where they are accepted for who they are. For their families, it is a time of respite where they can do things that they may not be able to with a person with disabilities. We are happy to give them this time! Many parents and caregivers have shared with us how their loved one has returned home with stories of fun activities, good friends, and new songs and stories that they have learned. Camp is a special place, and the relationships that are formed last far beyond the week of camp.

Camp is an opportunity to share the love of Jesus with those who are often marginalized by society and not valued as they should be. Many of our campers are not exposed to the gospel in their daily lives, and we are privileged to be able to teach them stories from the Bible (which they act out with fervor in our chapels!) and pray with them. They have open hearts and it is so rewarding to see them learning important truths for their lives.

The Camp ministry runs four very different weeks of camp. R and R Week is for older and less mobile campers who want a low-key week of hanging out and doing more relaxing activities. Adult Week is for people who want more activity and action, but still need a one-on-one relationship with a counselor. Independent Week is for higher-functioning campers who can share a counselor with one or two others, and participate in more independent activities (golf, anyone?). And Youth Week is for

younger campers who I have observed as being very high-energy and fun!

For the first time this year, we are running four weeks instead of five. Instead of having two Adult Weeks we have invited all our Adult Week campers to one week. This is possible because of our amazing new mess hall, which can hold many more people than the old one. Check out some photos on the website! I am looking forward to enjoying the outdoor covered deck and all the extra space inside.

Each week of camp features a group of campers who are guaranteed to make you laugh at them and at yourself. Campers like Dean, who keeps checking his watch (even if he's not wearing one). Like James, who lives for meals and snacks. Or Daryl, who will remind you often that you owe him 50 bucks!

And each week also features wonderful food prepared for us by our volunteer cooks who are pretty much everybody's favourite people. Every time we turn around it's time for a meal or a snack. Classy Chicken, anyone?

Coming to camp means being prepared for the unexpected every day. Not only do the campers keep us on our toes, but you never know when it might be crazy hair day, backwards clothing day, or twins day! If the weather is nice maybe a water fight; if it's not so nice, maybe musical benches or a puzzle challenge.

Acting out the Bible skit in chapel, playing a game of soccer or mini-golf, doing a craft, sitting on the swing in the sun, jumping off the rope at the pool: there are so many activities for every interest. Campers and counselors alike leave camp tired but fulfilled, excited to come back next year and do it all again. We invite all our readers to consider coming to camp as a volunteer. It is a mind-expanding experience. See you at Camp! 📷

## Giving Back



*'Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.'* (NRSV, 1 Cor 12:4-7)

Much has been said about the wonderful companies and individuals who have made room in their hearts and organizations for the clients of Rehoboth. We have lauded them for giving our clients the chance to prove their abilities and earn their own way in life. But few people think about the other side of that equation, how much these people are giving back to their communities.

Few are aware of how much the clients of Rehoboth give back to the community in the form of volunteer hours. In Stony Plain, Spruce Grove and the Edmonton area, Rehoboth clients fill a wide variety of volunteer positions. Our clients are volunteering in churches, thrift shops, hospitals, seniors' homes, foodbanks, a university, libraries, or working with animals at humane societies, to name a few. These individuals freely give their time and labours to the tune of more than 400 hours each month.

Those organizations blessed to have the services of our clients have enthusiastically praised their work and the joy they bring to the work environment. Our clients are ambassadors for the differently-abled filling needed roles that can be difficult to fill. This is important as many perceive our clients to be a burden on our economy, and by volunteering in the community our clients show the public that each of us has something to contribute, something valuable.

This bounty of labour not only blesses our communities but also allows our clients to create and foster relationships and natural supports. The joy of contributing promotes their self-worth and confidence, and adds fulfillment to their lives.

It does not matter if we have been given great talents, abilities and wealth, or very little. What matters to God is if we use what we have been given. 🇩🇪





This past December our clients, guardians and staff were blessed by the Pastor Fernan Idio and members of the Jesus Our Victory Global Outreach Church in Calgary. They came out to our residential homes to sing Christmas Carols and share the story of Christ's birth. Some of the members played different instruments such as guitars, tambourines, keyboard and a special drum. They sang with such joy that many of the clients were singing and dancing along. It is a memory that will be etched in our hearts forever. The Pastor and members stayed and enjoyed fellowship afterwards. They also gave each client a personal gift which brought tremendous joy to them. Really it was gift enough for them to take the time and come sing for us but the members shared that in the Philippines they go door to door caroling and receive gifts but this time they wanted to be the ones to give. They certainly did! We can't thank them enough for their generosity. They visited three different homes and all clients attended one of the locations. The members took the time to personally greet each person in attendance. I think all of us are hoping for an encore session next year. We are all grateful for the blessing we received listening to them sing. 🎁



## Three Hills



### Volunteering is Giving From the Heart

The theme for this year's Fundraising Banquet in Three Hills, "Volunteering is Giving From the Heart," is a statement that absolutely rings true here in our community. Held on February 6, 2016, we celebrated the volunteering efforts given to the community by the individuals in our services.

Over the last couple years, Rehoboth Three Hills has experienced a great need for volunteers as well and the community has answered. With more than 30 volunteers and well over 1500 documented man hours in 2015 alone, we have been greatly blessed by these community members.

Our most urgent need has been at New to You, our thrift store where a number of clients also volunteer and have the opportunity to learn a variety of job skills. The burden of managing and running the store couldn't be met by our staff – their priority is client services. In October 2015, two volunteers stepped into the role of managers and the store has flourished under their care. From rearranging the store layout, hosting silent auctions, scheduling till operators, and recruiting more volunteers themselves, these ladies have been busy! When asked why she volunteers, Wendy (a co-manager) says, "It started out for the clients – I didn't want them to lose this place where they have a sense of



Volunteers Bobbie & Wendy,  
co-managers of the New to You thrift store

purpose. I keep doing it because it is very satisfying and rewarding, it's become a real community spot. I want to give back and it's a great place to do that. I enjoy seeing the confidence level growing in all our volunteers."

Our other need has mainly been with our Best Years Club. Started in the spring of 2015, it is geared towards people who are at a stage in life where they need to slow down, but still want to be participate in a variety of activities. This group has so far enjoyed arts, crafts, woodworking, sewing, fellowship and games and giving back to the community in a variety of ways – weeding at Anderson Park, Christmas Shoe Boxes, packing Birthday-in-a-Box for FCSS, etc.

We also have several "behind the scenes" volunteers. First, there is the Advisory Committee, which supports Three Hills Rehoboth in a number of ways. From giving guidance and support to the Regional

Director to organizing and hosting our Fundraising Banquet, as well as often providing extras for staff seasonal parties. Then we have a number of people who are rarely seen – slipping in here and there to fix an emergency maintenance issue, mow a lawn or two, set up and take down for banquets and dinners, picking up and delivering office supplies. The list could go on and on.

It is a blessing to be part of the community in Three Hills. It is a place where the individuals we serve can be accepted and appreciated for what they contribute. It is also a community in the truest sense of the word. A community that watches out for one another, helps one another, cares for one another and appreciates one another. Thank you to the community of Three Hills! 🇺🇸

*If you are interested in becoming involved with any of the programs at Three Hills Rehoboth, please contact our office at 403-443-2239 or stop by at 523 Main St for more information.*

# Serving people with disabilities. Helping them Flourish.

## Rehoboth Financial Policy

Spending of funds is confined to programs and purchases approved by the Rehoboth Board of Directors. Each donation that is designated toward an approved program will be used as designated with the understanding that when any given need has been met, designated donations will be used where most needed. All donations are acknowledged and receipted with a tax-deductible receipt.

## Board of Directors:

From a governance perspective, Rehoboth Christian Ministries is led by a Board of Directors, whose members are elected to three year terms by the Society.

Currently, the board consists of:

- |                                    |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Jim Braaksma (Calgary)           | Director  |
| • Brian de Haan (Edmonton)         | President |
| • Stefan Dykema (Calgary)          | Director  |
| • Johan Knol (Coalhurst)           | Director  |
| • Janet Postma (Red Deer)          | Director  |
| • Brian Stoutjesdyk (Lethbridge)   | Director  |
| • Alexander van Geest (Ponoka)     | Director  |
| • Henry Van Steenbergen (Edmonton) | Director  |
| • Mike Wevers (Edmonton)           | Director  |

## Operational Leadership:

Operationally, leadership is provided by:

- |                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Ron Bos          | Executive Director                |
| • Debbie Dietz     | Regional Director, Three Hills    |
| • Karen Faint      | Regional Director, Calgary        |
| • Janice Gerbrandt | Regional Director, Stony Plain    |
| • Alex Hann        | Regional Director, Coaldale       |
| • Debra Janveau    | Regional Director, Grande Prairie |

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