



EPIGRAM



Epilepsy Association of Calgary

March 2006

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To support independence, quality of life, and community participation for people with, and affected by, epilepsy.

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CALLING 1-866-EPILEPSY

If you live outside the Calgary and Red Deer local calling areas, you can reach us at no cost to yourself at our toll free number to ensure that support, information, and answers to your questions are just a telephone call away.

If you live within the Calgary calling area, please call us at 230-2764.

If you live within the Red Deer calling area, please call us at 358-3358.

The Jazzy Penguin



Wasn't That a Party!

On December 5th, the Epilepsy Association of Calgary celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a

real jazzy bash – or should we say a “Jazzy Penguin”! Held at the Rose and Crown, the evening featured great food, a silent auction, a 50/50 draw, and the delightfully entertaining music of the **Johnny Summer's Band**. We were extremely fortunate to have had this ‘man on the move’ with us. Without question, Johnny Summers and his band members are talented musicians - and there is no doubt that those present really enjoyed their music!

Pam Atkinson, a volunteer and very talented artist, was on hand doing caricature portraits, with funds all raised donated to EAC. She was so popular that she never got a break the whole evening. People loved her fun and witty drawings and we were thrilled that she was willing to share her artistic talents. She also created and donated a special painting to our silent auction, “Let the Spirit Soar”, in memory of David Rouzault, a young man lost to SUDEP. Thanks to David's mom, Donna, who inspired this beautiful work! Thank you Pam for making the evening special and meaningful!

It was a great honor to have **Ben Shykora** with us as well. For those who don't know, Ben Shykora was a member of the Calgary Jaycees, who partnered with the Epilepsy Association of Calgary to build our building – and from all accounts, Mr. Shykora was the one person who

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Three Cheers for Our Volunteers!

Pat Frank
George Jacob
Lisa Nowlin
Donna Bernreuther
Dan Pyper
Kathryn Robson
Lyn Swanberg
Roy Swanberg
Bill Broens
Ken Davidson
Pam Atkinson
Marcel Ouimet
Lena Allan
Derek Fyfe

Bouquets to Our Prize Donors

Karat Patch Jewellers
Kacz's Kids
Donna Bernreuther
Cindy Davis (“Just Cindy's”
Baby Boutique)
Lynne Barisoff
Pam Atkinson
Petroleum Joint Venture Association
Kathy Fyfe
Grand & Toy



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS SUPPORTING THE CALGARY COMMUNITY

Wasn't That a Party!
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really helped drive the project. On such a special occasion, it was a wonderful opportunity to extend our thanks for his involvement in such a major event in our organization's history. The Board of Directors also made Mr. Shykora an Honorary Life Member of the Epilepsy Association of Calgary in recognition of his contribution. The inscription on the plaque presented to Mr. Shykora reads in part, "We Dared to Dream – You Dared to Build One". And it's so true – dreams need movers and shakers to give them life, and EAC is blessed to have had Mr. Shykora to help make ours happen! We were also pleased to have current Jaycee members – now known as JCI – with us as we extended recognition to one of their alumni.

The assistance of the staff at the **Rose and Crown** was greatly appreciated. They were both welcoming and helpful and we enjoyed working with them! Thanks are due as well to all of the 50th anniversary committee members and volunteers who assisted in planning the 50th Anniversary Celebration. We mostly want to extend a huge thanks to those who attended the event, participated in the activities, and helped share in celebrating 50 years of EAC! Without you, there would have been no celebration. Finally... thanks to the generosity of all those who donated prizes to our silent auction. Your assistance in making the 50th Anniversary of the Epilepsy Association of Calgary such a special event is truly appreciated!

NEWS FLASH!

The Jazzy Penguin is set to return in November of 2006! We'll keep you posted in upcoming editions of the Epigram on all of the details!

50th Anniversary Award Winners

At our 50th anniversary AGM in June, the Epilepsy Association of Calgary paid tribute to some special volunteers who have made a significant contribution to the Epilepsy Association of Calgary. Unfortunately, not all of our award winners could be with us. We are pleased to share the complete list with you now, and extend a huge thank you to these very special people who have contributed their skills, knowledge, talent, and enthusiasm with us – some over many, many years, some more recently. What they all share is dedication and commitment to making a difference in the lives of those living with epilepsy. Many thanks to these incredibly special people:

Lyn Swanberg
Donna Bernreuther
George Waite

Roy Swanberg
Ken Davidson

Martin Blanchard
Kathryn Robson



5th Anniversary Award Winners

Our time in Central Alberta is not as extensive as Calgary, but the efforts of volunteers is no less important – and we have been blessed with some great ones. It was an honor to celebrate the contributions of some very special Central Albertans at our 5th anniversary celebration held on December 1, 2005 in Red Deer. Thanks to:

Alicia Tschabold

Erin Viala

Brad - our office volunteer



Epilepsy Makes Headlines

During Epilepsy Month in November, and the lead-up to our 50th anniversary celebration, the Epilepsy Association of Calgary was featured in nearly all local media – including television, radio and print. Part of the success must be attributed to our volunteers, who so willingly shared their stories so that others could understand what it means to live with epilepsy. Thanks to **Adeline Maxim, Donna Bernreuther**, and **Dr. Klein** of the Rockyview Hospital, for their efforts in helping us get the word out! Thanks as well to our volunteers in Central Alberta, who also shared their stories during our 5th anniversary celebration and Epilepsy Education Month.

A huge thanks to all the volunteers who assisted with our Epilepsy Month activities in Calgary and Central Alberta!!!!

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Joyce McPherson for sharing her 50th anniversary poem with us. She also wrote a poem for our 40th – and we are truly blessed to have had these milestones memorialized in poetry thanks to Joyce! Here's hoping you are as thrilled as we were!

The Stepping Stone By Joyce MacPherson June 2005

*It's wondrous to imagine ...
Half a century ago...
W.D. Taylor began his dream...
Of helpin' folk grow...
His focus became One...
With multiple faces...
Each lent their talent...
At slow and fast paces...
Hands joining hearts...
In united direction
Together we gather...
For sweet recollection...
Five decades later...
Overcoming trials and tears...
We're 'Out of The Shadows'...
And into our 'Cheers'!
Looking to each coming year...
Remembering seeds sown
We see not the stumbling block...
Just the stepping stone...
We've joyously learned...
There's naught we can't do...
Epilepsy Calgary...
We're so proud of YOU!*

Volunteer News

Hats Off to Karen!

We'd like to congratulate volunteer **Karen Wood** for being nominated for a Calgary White Hat Award.



The Calgary White Hat Awards honours individuals who provide outstanding customer service and are committed to the continued development of the hospitality and tourism industry in Calgary. Winners will be announced at the Calgary White Awards Gala at the Jubilee Auditorium on the evening of Thursday, April 6, 2006. For tickets or more information email Betty McLeod at betty@tourismcalgary.com or call her at 750-2361.

Good luck Karen! We think you're already a winner!

A Penguin Welcome!

Welcome to our new volunteers **Jodi Rogers, Monica Black, Pam Atkinson** and **Rob Stephenson**. Rob has been helping us out for a several years... and now he's "official"! Jodi, Monika and Pam bring with them LOTS of enthusiasm and skills. We welcome you all... and look forward to all the great things we will do together!

Calling All Volunteers...

Mac's Milk has allowed us to put our donation cans in 92 of their stores in and around Calgary for the months of April, May and June. We need your help to get them in as many of those stores as possible. If you'd like to help, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Melanie Grace Burnell.

If you are interested in doing "great things" with us, please contact Melanie Grace Burnell at 230-2764 to volunteer.

Low Income Transit Pass Program

Effective January 2, 2006 the Calgary Transit Low-Income Monthly Transit Pass will be available to all eligible residents of Calgary. Those eligible for the pass will be able to purchase one Low-Income Monthly Transit pass at the reduced rate of \$35 per month. The Low-Income Monthly Transit Pass is valid on all regular Calgary Transit and Access Calgary Shared Ride Services and Special Services with payment of the applicable premium.

To qualify you must be:

- a resident of Calgary for a minimum of 12 months
- 18 years of age or older
- able to provide documentation proving that total single or family income is less than 75 percent of the Low Income Cut-Off as determined by Statistics Canada, Income Statistics Division
- registered with Calgary Transit prior to purchasing the Low-Income Monthly Transit Pass

Information and application forms can be obtained from Janice at the Epilepsy Association of Calgary, or by visiting www.calgarytransit.com.

Board of Directors 2005 – 2006

Pat Frank
President

Donna Bernreuther
Secretary

Bill Broens
Director

Dan Pyper
Vice President

George Jacob
Director

Lisa Nowlin
Director

Marcel Ouimet
Treasurer

Kathryn Robson
Director

Linus Murphy
Director

The staff and Board of Directors of the Epilepsy Association of Calgary extend heartfelt thanks to all our donors, members, and volunteers for support of our Calgary and Central Alberta offices.

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epilepsy.kfyfe@telusplanet.net

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Carla Archer, Public Education Coordinator
epilepsy.carla@telusplanet.net

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epilepsy.calgary@telus.net

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Krista Anderson, Program Coordinator
epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net



**TOGETHER
WE ARE MAKING
A DIFFERENCE**

EPILEPSY ASSOCIATION OF CALGARY



Epilepsy Discussion/ Support Group Meetings

Wednesdays - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

At the Epilepsy Association of Calgary

4112 – 4 St NW, Calgary AB

March 29, 2006 – April 26, 2006 – May 24, 2006

For more information contact Janice at 230-2764

or email at epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net

Join us on Saturday June 24th for the

CELEBRATE SUMMER PICNIC

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Date: June 24th, 2006

Location: Glenmore Park



We'll roast hot dogs, play some games, and generally have some fun and celebration to usher in the summer season. We hope to see you there!

Please RSVP to Graham by June 19th, 2006 – 230-2764

For more information contact Janice at 230-2764,
1-866-EPILEPSY, or by email at epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net

Taking Control of Your Wellness Skills Development Program

On-going registration is available for this program based on the work of Joel Reiter, MD., Donna Andrews, and Charlotte Janis, who developed a book and program, "Taking Control of Your Epilepsy". Taking Control of Your Wellness Skills Development is a holistic health approach that considers the entire individual including the physiological, psychological, and interpersonal, dimensions of the person. The program provides a variety of skills and tools that help participants learn to minimize the negative impact of epilepsy their life, while enhancing an overall sense of wellness. The program consists of weekly individual sessions over 12 to 15 weeks. **If 2006 is the year you'd like to make some positive changes in your life, then this could be the program for you!** For more information, contact Janice at 230-2764.

Upcoming Information Sessions

Emotions and Epilepsy: Understanding the Links and Taking Control

Guest Speaker: Dr. Sophie Macrodimitris

Wednesday March 22, 2006 – 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Dr. Sophie Macrodimitris has recently been hired to start up the clinical psychology service in the comprehensive adult epilepsy program at the Foothills Medical Centre. She will present information on the biological, psychological, and social factors that can accompany a diagnosis of epilepsy - emotional changes such as depression, anxiety, and anger. She will also teach us about how our thinking and our behaviors can be used as powerful tools to better manage our emotions and enhance our quality of life. This workshop may be of interest to both individuals with epilepsy and family members who want to better understand the mind-body connection and want to learn some basic strategies for managing and minimizing the negative impact of epilepsy.

Self-Advocacy – Speaking Up for Yourself or Others

**Guest Speaker: Hazel Orpen, Housing Advocate,
Community Housing Support Program**

Wednesday April 5th, 2006 – 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Our guest will teach us skills and strategies on becoming our own self-advocates. Learning how to make a difference for ourselves decreases a sense of being powerless and helps increase a sense of confidence in our abilities to contribute to change. This workshop will explore the process of self-advocacy and provide valuable tips and tools that participants can use to start making their voices count.

The Health Benefits of Tai Chi

Guest Speaker: Taoist Tai Chi Association

Wednesday May 10, 2006 – 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Tai Chi has become a popular form of exercise that helps energize, create balance, flexibility, and a sense of calm. The use of deep breathing and mental imagery helps integrate the mind and body and can help reduce stress. Our guest from the Taoist Tai Chi Association will give a demonstration of some of the basics of tai chi – and we'll all get a chance to try them out. Wear your comfortable clothing!

**All Sessions will be held at the Epilepsy Association of
Calgary, 4112 – 4 Street NW, Calgary, Alberta.**

**Anyone with or concerned with epilepsy (parents, friends,
spouses, peers) are welcome to attend these sessions.**

**Check our website for additional sessions and updates
(www.epilepsycalgary.com)**

**For more information contact Janice at 230-2764,
1-866-EPILEPSY, or email at epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net.**

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CENTRAL ALBERTA OFFICE



Upcoming Epilepsy Discussion/ Support Groups

Thursdays from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

at the Epilepsy Association of Calgary – CENTRAL ALBERTA OFFICE
#303, 4822 – 50th Street, Red Deer AB

March 2, 2006 – April 6, 2006 – May 4th, 2006

Check our web-site (www.epilepsycalgary.com – Central Alberta Link) for updates.

We are currently seeking space in which to hold information sessions and support and information meetings. If you know of something accessible and inexpensive – please contact Krista at 358-3358 or 1-866-EPILEPSY; e-mail: epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net.

Calgary Area Events continued from page 4...

May is Women's Health Month

In recognition of Women's Health Month, we have partnered with the Grace Women's Resource Centre to highlight issues of importance to women with epilepsy, and to establish links with the Grace Women's Resource Centre. They have many resources for women of all ages, stages, backgrounds, and needs. Together, we will present:

Life Issues for Women with Epilepsy

Janice Shaw, BSW, RSW & Irene Jackson, RN, SCM, MN

Wednesday, May 31, 2006 • 7:00 – 9:00 PM • Fee: \$25

Women with epilepsy can face unique health challenges. This workshop will cover life issues such as periods, pregnancy, menopause, bone health, and general wellness for women with epilepsy.

PLEASE NOTE THE LOCATION FOR THIS SESSION:

WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE: 1441 – 29TH STREET NW

(we thought this would be a great opportunity to see what the Centre has to offer you!)

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED: 944-2260

FEE SUBSIDIES ARE AVAILABLE BY CALLING JANICE AT 230-2764

Join us on Saturday June 24th Red Deer where we'll also usher in the summer season at the

CELEBRATE SUMMER PICNIC... Central Alberta Style!



Time: 11:30 a.m.

Date: June 24th, 2006

Location: TBA

We'll roast hot dogs, have some fun, and generally look for ways to soak up summer in Central Alberta! Mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Please RSVP to Krista by June 19th, 2006 – (403) 358-3358

Teen Program for Central Alberta Teens Living with Epilepsy

A small group of young people affected by epilepsy began meeting last fall. If you are a young person living with epilepsy, and would like to learn more about the opportunity to meet others who share your concerns – the group would love to meet you. There are no meeting dates scheduled at this time; however, if you are interested, contact us and we will let you know when and where the next gathering will be held. This group is interested not only in meeting and supporting one another, but in looking for ways they can contribute to creating understanding about epilepsy.

For more information contact Krista at 358-3358, 1-866-EPILEPSY, or email: epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net.

WANTED

Donated items for our upcoming activities including our raffles (Calgary & Central Alberta), silent auction, and other special events. If you have access to an item that would make a great prize and help the association raise funds, we want to hear from you!

In Calgary – contact Kathy at 230-2764

In Central Alberta – contact Krista – 358-3358

Or use the toll free number – 1-866 - EPILEPSY

Focus on Kindling

Carla Archer, R.S.W.

Public Education Coordinator



Most people, when hearing the word “focus”, instantly think of paying more attention. Similarly, when a person hears the term “kindling”, they tend to think of thin, dry wood used to start a fire. People with epilepsy have a much broader sense of these terms.

In terms of epilepsy, a focus is defined as a local area of abnormality in the brain. This abnormality is usually the point the individual’s seizures stem from. Focal Seizures, which are more commonly known as Partial Seizures, only involve a portion of the brain when a seizure occurs.

“Kindling” is another word heard in relation to the brain and seizures. In a way, the preconceived notion of kindling as thin, dry wood used to start a fire is similar to what happens within the brain during the kindling process. Rather than wood and fire, kindling involves a small electrical stimulus which proceeds to cause a sudden burst of activity within the brain. This activity shows up both in people without seizures and some individuals who are known to have epilepsy.

The kindling phenomenon, like most great findings, was discovered purely by accident. Graham Goddard was originally studying the electrical stimulation of the amygdaloid complex and its effects on learning. The amygdaloid complex (amygdaloid meaning “almond-like”) is a small oval structure in the temporal lobe and is involved with the sense of smell, motivation and emotional behavior. While Goddard was conducting his study on rats, he noticed that the brain was changing in response to constant stimuli. Cells being exposed to the intense stimulation showed an increase in response with each repetition of the experiment. Eventually the cells reacted without prompting and, at times, would spread to neighboring cells, initiating a seizure.

Since Goddard’s study in the late sixties, other studies have been performed demonstrating that kindling may be involved in creating a “mirror foci”. This means that the repetitive seizure activity in the focus on one side of the brain spreads to the corresponding point on the other hemisphere. At first it is like a mirror image, depending on the original focus to initiate seizures, but eventually, the cells can become an independent focus. This is why it is important that medication for seizures is taken consistently, not only to stop the seizures that are visible but to stop the ones that are not; preventing kindling and the mirror focus.

Fall Raffles in Calgary and Central Alberta

We’d like to extend our thanks to all those who supported our fall raffles in Calgary and Central Alberta. Whether you bought tickets, or helped us sell them – our hats are off to you! Proceeds in Calgary were \$662.00. Central Alberta proceeds were \$446.00 50% of which we forwarded to the United Way of Central Alberta. The prize draws were made in December at the Christmas Parties in Calgary and Central Alberta. We also extend our sincere thanks to the companies below who so generously donated the prizes. Thank you!

THE WINNERS ARE...

CALGARY

Canadian Rocky Mountain Resorts Get a Way • C. Wankel
Setting the Mood Candle Package • G. Bowland
Princess House Mugs and Beverages • G. Taylor
Copper Mugs and Tim Horton’s Certificates • S. Cobb
Chianti’s Dinner Certificate, Movie Passes, CDs • Sayam
Dogue Salon and Spa – Dog Grooming • G. Lietz
Sunnyside Greenhouses Gift Certificate • M. Soron

CENTRAL ALBERTA

Alberta Praire Steam Train Tickets • D. Fyfe
Scrapbookers Paradise – Giftbasket & Membership • L. Beaver
Black Knight Inn Sunday Brunch & Save On Food North Floral Arrangement • K. Petriew
Boston Pizza – Pizza & Mugs, Block Buster Gift Card • C. Glass
Body Shop Makeovers & Chatters Salon Haircut – Red Deer Centre • Emily
Body Shop Makeovers & Chatters Salon Haircut – Bower Place • D. Soos

Dinner Certificates to Our Winning Ticket Sellers

Lena Allan • Calgary
Deb & Alicia Tschabold • Central Alberta

“Experience is the name everyone gives to his mistakes”.
– Oscar Wilde

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all those who have supported our work and who share our commitment towards the promotion of independence and quality of life for those affected by epilepsy. To the many “unsung heroes” who have contributed, but don’t wish their names published – our heartfelt thanks to you as well. You know who you are!

Donors are only listed in the print version of the Epigram.

We recognize our donors in our quarterly newsletter and our members and donors in our Annual Report. These documents are shared with members, funders, program participants, and others in the community who are interested in our work.

In accordance with Privacy Legislation: **if you do not wish to have your name published**, please call us at 230-2764 or indicate your wishes in the form below and send it to us by fax or mail to the Epilepsy Association of Calgary, 4112 – 4 Street NW, Calgary AB T2K 1A2.

I do not wish to have my name published in the Annual Report or Epigram Newsletter.

Name (Please Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

NEWSLETTER DISCLAIMER

Material contained in this newsletter concerning epilepsy, research, treatment, and patient experiences is solely for information purposes. Each individual's experiences of epilepsy are different. Please consult your physician for medical advice. Articles published in the Epigram newsletter do not necessarily represent the official policies or endorsements of the Association and its members.

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Email: epilepsy.calgary@telus.net
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MEMBER/DONOR FORM

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____
Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

- Annual Membership.....\$20.00
(January to December 2006)
- Life Membership..... \$200.00
- Donation amount.....\$ _____
Total.....\$ _____

Payment method:

- Cheque Money Order
- Credit card Visa MasterCard
- Credit card number _____ Expiry Date _____
- Cardholder signature _____

Pre-Authorized Credit Card Payment Program for Donations Only:

- Yes, I prefer to make a monthly donation that will help support the programs and services of the association year-round.
- \$ _____ per month, beginning on the 15th day of each month until otherwise notified.

A tax-deductible receipt will be issued for charitable registration number 11890 0778 RR001.

A WORD ABOUT PRIVACY

The Epilepsy Association of Calgary respects your privacy. As such, we do not share, sell, rent, or trade our membership lists, donor lists, volunteer lists, or participant lists with any outside organizations. Personal information provided in the context of program participation is never shared without your written consent, unless there is a legal or ethical obligation to do so. Information you provide us is used to deliver services, keep you informed about agency activities and opportunities, fund-raising initiatives and events, volunteer opportunities.

If you no longer wish to receive some or all of the information we provide, you can contact us by telephone, fax, or e-mail, and we will remove your name from any or all of contact lists in accordance with your wishes.

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Epilepsy Association of Calgary
4112 - 4 Street NW
Calgary, Alberta T2K 1A2
Email: epilepsy.calgary@telus.net



To ensure your Epigram Newsletter always reaches you, please contact us with address changes as soon as possible.