

## WELCOME TO 1985!

With the New Year comes a lot of changes: a new Public Health Act, a new Branch Executive, and a new set of editors for the Alberta Branch News. We've had a little trouble getting things organized for our first issue, so you will have to excuse our being late. We do wish to thank our predecessors, Trevor Hodge and Susan Harley, for the high standard of quality they have set - we hope we can maintain it.

We do not envision making any major changes in the format of the News. It will continue to carry information of Branch events, as well as deal with issues of concern to Environmental Health. But to be successful we need your support. The Alberta Branch News can be an excellent forum for expressing ideas and view points. It is a means of getting information to Members throughout the province. And as a Branch Member, it is available to you. We will accept Letters to the Editors, news of events of interest to Members, and articles of almost any length (although we do not want to compete with the EHR).

In the coming issues we hope to address a wide variety of topics that affect the field of Environmental Health and the Alberta Branch. We hope you will find the News interesting, informative, and topical.

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## ALBERTA BRANCH EXECUTIVE

The Fall Branch meeting was one of the most well attended in recent years. The meeting dealt with some very important issues: the election of a new Executive slate, Membership dues, an update on the Banff Conference, and a report on the International Health Exchange Program, as well as other matters.

Prior to introducing the new Executive, we would like to extend our thanks to the previous Executive for the fine work they did during their term. President Neil Williams, Secretary Alex MacKenzie, and the entire outgoing Executive worked long and hard on behalf of the

Alberta Branch and made many meaningful changes. We are confident that these changes will only strengthen the Branch. Again, thank you, and we hope you will continue to work on behalf of the Branch.

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#### THE ALBERTA BRANCH EXECUTIVE

President: Bill Chrapko

William George was a popular choice for president, and brings with him a wealth of experience and energy. He has been active in the Institute since joining 10 years ago, and has served as a Councillor on the National Executive.

Bill is a B.C.I.T. grad, and has worked a total of eight years with the Edmonton Local Board, as well as two years in Burnaby, B.C. He and his wife Helen have been married for over 15 years, and have a daughter, Wendy. He is quite active and enjoys golf and fishing. Bill is also president of the Ukranian Bilingual Association with the Edmonton School Board.

As Branch President, he views an increased Membership as a priority. He also feels the development of a workable form of the new public health regulations is the most pressing issue in the field.

Secretary Treasurer: Stephen Pope

Steve is a Ryerson grad, and hails from Ontario. He originally came west and worked in Sturgeon Health Unit for over four years, before moving to his present post with Calgary Health Services three years ago. Steve is single, and enjoys scuba diving and sailing, and is a fixture at most of the Branch's social functions. He has sat on several regulation committees, and was on the Planning Committee of the Banff Conference.

He hopes to be part of a progressive executive, and improve the Branch through developing ideas and attitudes. He is particularly concerned about the future and direction of Environmental Health in Alberta, and the impact of the new public health regulations.

Correspondence to the Branch should be directed to Steve:

Steve Pope  
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Station C  
320 - 17 Ave. S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta  
T2T 5T1

Southern Zone Councillor: Joe Rowlett

Joe is originally from Manitoba, and graduated from B.C.I.T. before joining Barons-Eureka-Warner Health Unit four years ago. He and his wife Nona have three small children and are enjoying their new house

in Taber. Joe has been a Member since graduation, and this is his first position with the Executive.

Joe is concerned about the Branch acting as a method of obtaining input from the field personnel. He hopes that he can help develop the Branch's activities and increase membership. He feels there is an increased need for Provincial support if Environmental Health is going to be able to advance in the near future.

Northern Zone Councillor: Brenda Young

Brenda is the only returning Councillor from the previous Executive. She graduated from B.C.I.T. and joined the Peace River Health Unit in 1983. Brenda enjoys a number of recreational activities, primarily racquet sports, and loves to travel.

Brenda is concerned about representation of the northern portion of the province in the Branch. She hopes to stimulate interest in the Members from the south to travel to that area. She views the problem of membership as a major issue for the coming years.

Edmonton Councillor: Brenda Cymmek

Brenda is a Ryerson grad, and another of the many imports from Saskatchewan. Prior to joining the Edmonton Local Board of Health as an inspector two years ago, she had worked in the DNS, based in La Ronge. Most will probably recognize Mrs. Cymmek by her maiden name, Dennis, but she was married at the end of January to Bernie Cymmek. Congrats.

Brenda hopes to develop an interest in the Branch in Edmonton, and involve line workers in the decision making process. She feels that the new regulations are the most pressing issue at this time.

Calgary Zone: Mike Riefman (Not Available)

Central Zone: No Councillor

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#### FALL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The matter of annual dues for the Alberta Branch was again dealt with at the Fall Meeting. A motion brought forward by Bill Chrapko and Ed Collom asked that the annual dues be reduced from \$100 to \$75. It was pointed out by members in favour of the motion that the Alberta Branch dues are the highest in the country, and that there had been a decrease in membership since the dues were increased. In response, those opposed to the motion indicated that the dues were not out of line, and that sufficient funds were necessary to perform the duties of the Branch in a professional manner.

After a lengthy debate, the motion was voted on and defeated. The annual dues for the Alberta Branch will remain at \$100.

Gary Butler, representing the Conference Planning Committee, presented an update on the Banff Conference. The Conference not only netted a small profit, it was an unqualified success. The vast majority of those in attendance felt that the educational program was the best they had encountered at a conference. The Planning Committee, and the various speakers, must be congratulated for a job well done.

Gary reported that the entire educational presentation had been taped for the possible development of a professional training program. He discussed the various options available to the Branch to complete such an endeavor, and to distribute the finished product as a professional training film. No final costs were available, but a motion was passed to look into the various factors of developing such a program from the material available.

The Branch has received a reply from Belize regarding the possibility of exchanging professional staff in the field of Environmental Health. A representative of the Belizian public health department indicated that this proposal might be an excellent opportunity for staff development. Although this does not imply that an exchange will take place, it does give an incentive to pursue the matter further.

There was some discussion regarding the possibility of success of such a program. To assist Members Trevor Hodge and Alex MacKenzie provided the meeting with a synopsis of the objectives and present status of the program at both the Branch and National levels.

As mentioned earlier, this was a very succesful meeting, with a good turnout of Members. A number of other matters were dealt with at the meeting, and if you are interested in the minutes, please contact your Zone Councillor or the Secretary Treasurer.

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#### THE LODGEPOLE INQUIRY REPORT

The report of the E.R.C.B. Inquiry into the Lodgepole sour gas well blowout is now available. The report is well documented and presents a detailed analysis of its findings, as well as a list of recommendations as a result of the sour gas blowout of Amoco 13-12 which blew out of control for 67 days in 1982, 20 km west of Lodgepole.

The report discusses in length what happened, what went wrong, and why it took so long to regain control of the well. Although somewhat technical at times, it does provide the reader with an excellent introduction to gas drilling procedures (sour gas drilling is common throughout the province, but few of us actually know anything about the procedures). The report also describes the effect of hydrogen sulfide emissions on the environment and the health of people in the Lodgepole area.

The report lists 39 recommendations that involve action by the gas industry, the E.R.C.B., and various governmental agencies. The recommendations are primarily aimed at reducing the number of blowouts that occur, and in reducing the effects of blowouts should they occur.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. David Suzuki, noted genetic researcher with the University of British Columbia and host of the C.B.C. program "The Nature of Things".

The Planning Committee has also arranged for a full social package. A wine and cheese reception will follow Dr. Suzuki's address, and a banquet and awards night will take place on Thursday evening. The Committee hopes that you will take an opportunity to tour the City of Fort McMurray, and has arranged for a tour of one of the Tar Sands plants. They have also planned for your recreational needs, and ask that you bring your gear and participate.

Fort McMurray is easily accessible by car, bus (Red Arrow and Greyhound), and plane (P.W.A. and Wapiti Air). A special transportation package can be coordinated for interested delegates. Contact the Planning Committee at least one month in advance for such arrangements. The Convention will be held in the Sheraton Northwoods Inn and reservations can be made by calling 791-7900. There are also a number of other hotels in close proximity.

The agenda looks extremely interesting. and Ron Popoff, ex-rugby player and former Alberta Branch Northern Zone Councillor, promises it will be the best yet. Plan to attend - you can obtain further information by contacting:

Ron Popoff  
Fort McMurray & District Health Unit  
42 Riedel St.  
Fort McMurray, Alberta  
T9H 3E1  
743-3232

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Enclosed in this issue is an application form for Membership in the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. We would like to invite all PHIs who are presently not Members to join the Institute, and remind all present Members that the 1985 dues are now payable.

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The Alberta Branch News is a publication of the Alberta Branch of the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. The Editors of the Alberta Branch News are:

Keith Lee      Phil Lundrie      Dan Richen

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Of particular interest to Institute Members are Sections 7 and 9 of the report. Section 7 probes into the effects of hydrogen sulfide on human health, describing symptoms reported by area residents. It also discusses the criteria used in establishing the variety of acceptable exposure limits for hydrogen sulfide used at Lodgepole, although it does not establish a standard limit. Of particular concern are the Panel's recommendations of the role Alberta Social Services and Community Health and the Provincial Board of Health in the future with respect to blowouts.

Section 9 deals with the organizational structure of blowout response teams (the Alberta Branch submitted an analysis of this structure to the Panel during the Inquiry), and the adequacy of the responses by Amoco, the E.R.C.B. and various government agencies. Although not overly critical, the report indicates that there were problems with determining who was responsible for various activities during the blowout, which aggravated the public's image of the situation.

We have not attempted to summarize the report, as such an undertaking would be too lengthy. However, we do believe that the report makes for very interesting reading and recommend it highly. If you are interested in obtaining a free copy, write:

E.R.C.B.  
Maps & Publications Desk  
640 Fifth S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta  
T2P 2G4  
phone: 297-8328

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A.P.H.A. '85

The Alberta Public Health Association will be holding it's 1985 Convention in Fort McMurray April 24 - 26, 1985 (Wednesday through Friday). The Convention Planning Committee has developed a program that will be of interest to anyone involved in public health, and particularly Environmental Health.

One of the major issues being addressed at the Conference is health legislation. The Wednesday afternoon session will be an update on the Public health Act and the pursuant regulations. Speakers on this topic include John O'Laney (Manager, Environmental health Services), Mrs. Muriel Abdurahman (Past President, Health Unit Association of Alberta), Dr. K.W. Hodgins (Medical Officer of Health, Sturgeon Health Unit), and Linda Duncan (Environmental Law Centre). The morning sessions will continue to deal with legislation, with Dr. G. Bonham (Medical Officer of Health, Calgary Health Services) and Bon Philip (Lawyer, Alberta Human Rights Commission) debating "Individual vs. Group Rights With Respect to Public Health", and His Honour, Judge Micheal Horrocks discussing conflicts between the new Public health Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Thursday afternoon session will deal with peace time disaster planning, with specific reference to the public health involvement.