

The Ripple

January/February 2018

South Region
Self-Advocacy Network

The results are in: SRSAN elections



During the SRSAN meeting in Brooks on November 9, members voted in an election to fill positions on the SRSAN executive. The elections happen every year so different people can take turns being the leaders of SRSAN. It's important to give different people a chance so they can learn about SRSAN, get out of their comfort zone, and try something new to see if they like it!

There were three "Director" positions available, and one position as the "SAIPA/SRSAN Board Member".

Directors participate in executive meetings to make decisions, sit on SRSAN committees and report back to the executive, help create leadership lessons for SRSAN meetings, and more!

The new directors for SRSAN are:

Scott Nickel: "I am excited that I won. It is a good feeling. I am looking forward to helping set up the meetings before they happen and cleaning up after they are over."

John Steer: "I felt proud and happy about winning. I am excited about the chance to work with new people and share my ideas. I would also like to get the word out about SRSAN!"

Melody Scout: "I was excited to win! It's nice to be on the board again. I wanted to be involved in SRSAN for the chance to be in a different role and help out in another way. As the SRSAN chairperson, I was planning the agenda and running the SRSAN meetings. Now, I have the chance to share my ideas on the committee. I am excited to be a part of the action!"

The SAIPA/SRSAN board member shares information back and forth between SAIPA and SRSAN.

The new board member is:

Kelly Tower: "I have been on the SRSAN executive before and wanted to try it out again. I'm excited to help make change, and share all the great things SRSAN is doing!"

Congratulations to all the winners!

Interview with an advocate

Some of us here at The Ripple see our fellow self-advocate, Little Feather out in the community, so we decided to interview him. We learned many things that we didn't know about him and his aboriginal culture. Here is our interview.

Where did you get the name “Little Feather”?

Little Feather is an aboriginal name I got from my grandfather; I got the name when I was five. The name comes from the old days when they used to write with feathers. These were called quills.

We know you do a lot of dancing. What kind of dancing do you do? Where did you learn this?

I've been dancing since I was little. Ever since I started walking, I've been dancing. I've been around music my whole life. I do two types of dance: traditional aboriginal dancing and hip hop. My first aboriginal dance was a grass dance. It is called a grass dance because when aboriginal people would set up camps, kids would stomp on the grass to flatten it to make it easier to set up.

Another interesting aboriginal dance is the jingle dance. This is a healing dance to help those who are sick feel better.

Participating in these aboriginal dances means I made a commitment to live a healthy lifestyle by not drinking, smoking or doing drugs.

I got into hip hop after seeing Michael Jackson do the moonwalk! I think he was one of the greatest dancers!

You rap, too! How did you learn this and what do you rap about?



Interview with an advocate (continued)

As a person with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, my mind never shuts down. I had so many emotions that my mom bought me a book to write my feelings down. I started writing poems and I realized it sounded good to music. I've put a lot of writing to music. I write about things I witness or am a part of. I wrote my first song, "Look To The Light" about being a kid growing up on the reserve and different things that I saw.

Why is it important for you to be an aboriginal self-advocate?

For me, it's a big thing because I want to be a self-advocate for my people. There are a lot of issues with teen pregnancy. My mother was very young when she had me and she didn't really know how to take care of me. Growing up in foster homes as a kid, I wasn't respected and got put down a lot. I want to be an aboriginal self-advocate to raise awareness about these issues and to be a positive role model for the community. I try to focus on the positive when I write my raps and poetry. I want to represent the good things for future generations and my own family.

Put love in your heart: the story of Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is celebrated every year on February 14. The day gets its name from a famous saint, named Valentine. It's believed that he was a priest from Rome in the third century AD (AD means after death). Emperor Claudius the second had banned marriage because he thought married men were bad soldiers. Valentine felt this was unfair, so he broke the rules and arranged marriages in secret. When Claudius found out, Valentine was thrown in jail and sentenced to death. There, he fell in love with the jailer's daughter. When he was taken to be killed on February 14, he sent her a love letter signed "from your Valentine". It is believed that after he died, the Romans started celebrating love in a special festival as early as the year 496. This festival happened in early February. As part of the celebrations, boys drew girls' names from a box. They would be boyfriend and girlfriend during the festival and sometimes they would get married. Later, the church wanted to turn this festival into a Christian celebration and decided to use it to remember Saint Valentine, too.



The information for this article was found on:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/16945378>



How are you celebrating the start of 2018? If you are like us here at The Ripple, we like to welcome the new year with family and friends! Here are our tips for planning a New Year's Eve party that everyone will enjoy!

- **Invite the people you want to come by sending out invitations:** you can send them in the mail, invite people over the phone or contact them on Facebook, if you have an account. Your invitation should let people know what time the party starts and ends. Make sure it doesn't end until after midnight!
- **Decide what kind of food you are going to serve:** make sure you have lots, and make sure to get it ready well before your guests arrive.
- **Get lots of different drinks like water, juice, pop and punch:** if you are going to serve alcohol, make sure people are over 18. You will also need to make sure they have a safe way to get home. It is very important not to drink and drive!
- **Plan fun games to play with guests:** you can even give out prizes to the winners. It will give you something to do until the ball drops!
- **Play music that is fast and upbeat so your guests can dance:** make sure that the music stays at a reasonable volume so you don't upset the neighbours!

It is also very important to stay safe while celebrating. Read our interview with Constable Steven Baker from the Lethbridge Regional Police Service on page 5 to find out how!

New Year's Eve: being smart and staying safe

The Ripple had a great conversation about New Year's Eve safety with Constable Steven Baker, the community liaison officer for the Lethbridge Regional Police Service. We got lots of good information! Here is the interview.

What is your job as the community liaison officer?

My main job is to engage the community in crime prevention, safety, and answer any questions, concerns or problems that are not criminal, such as problems with neighbours.

Why is safety on New Year's Eve important?

I would suggest that safety is important all year, but especially on New Year's Eve. On New Year's Eve, you have lots of people coming together to have fun. Alcohol, staying up late and being part of a big group can lead people to make poor decisions.

How can people stay safe on New Year's Eve?

The first thing is to be with a group of people who are good people that you trust to look out for you. The second thing is to control yourself. Have fun, but use moderation. Don't drink too much. If you are going to drink, set a limit and be responsible.

Why is it important to drink responsibly?

It is important to drink responsibly because it is good for your health; too much alcohol will make you sick. It's also important because alcohol is addictive. If you are not responsible, you could find yourself being controlled by it. When you are under the influence of alcohol, it can affect the ability to



Being smart and staying safe (continued)

make good decisions.

If you're going to a party, how can you stay safe?

If you are going to a party, make sure you know who's party it is and who is going to be there. That is why being with a group of friends you trust is important. If something doesn't feel right, it is important to trust your gut and leave. It is important to be brave enough to leave. If you are going to stay, always hold on to your drinks to avoid anything happening to them. If you've left the drink alone for any period of time, throw it out and get a new one.

How do the police make sure people are safe on New Year 's Eve?

As a police organization, we have everyone working that night. We bring in extra people. We also do prevention: on New Year's Eve, we visit as many parties and bars as we can to let people know we are here to help and to remind them to make good choices.

Do you do check stops on New Year 's Eve? And, how do you test for alcohol?

Yes. All of December and half way through January is our official check stop season. We stop a lot of vehicles. We use an alcohol screening device that people blow into that will test the alcohol in their breath and then that tells us how much alcohol is in their blood. Every New Year's Eve, we charge at least five people with impaired driving who lose their licence.

Are there ways for people to get a designated driver?

Yes. Every holiday season we have a volunteer program called Operation Red Nose, where volunteers will drive you home in your car. Operation Red Nose was an idea that three people had, and they approached Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to help. Last year, I was at two check stops at two different locations and we had 3,000 people come through from Operation Red Nose!

As a police officer, what have you noticed on New Year 's Eve?

On New Year's Eve in Lethbridge, there are a lot of people out. Most people are good and want to stay safe. They use Operation Red Nose, have a group of friends and drink responsibly. There is only a small group

Being smart and staying safe (continued)

of people who put themselves and others at risk.

Do you ever have to check for weapons?

We do. Every time we arrest people, we have to check for weapons, so officers stay safe.



Solidance
Inclusive Recreation Society

**Winter 2018
Community Dance Classes
Start January 17th**

**16 years +
Wednesdays 6:45 pm – 8:15 pm
Casa Dance Studio**

Registration Fee: \$50.00 for 10 classes
Or Drop-In \$5.00

For further information please call:
Daytime: Lillian @ 403-329-3911
Evening/Weekend: Rene @403-849-1034

Register through U of L Recreation Services
On-Line: www.uleth.ca/sportrec
By Phone: 403-329-2706

In Person: On Campus @1st Choice Savings Centre for Sport & Wellness

Come join us! Learn to dance in a variety of creative styles in an safe and supportive environment. All abilities welcome, no experience necessary. Experience the benefits of inclusive recreation in our community!



How to be a good sport

Being a good sport means that you are kind, respectful and decent towards other people you are playing or working with in any sport, whether on the field or on the ice.

This is important so everyone enjoys themselves. Here's how you can do this:

Control your temper. Don't trash talk or yell at the referee or players on the other team: in the heat of a game, it can be easy to lose your cool. Don't let your anger affect your behaviour. Sports are supposed to be fun! Don't forget that just because things aren't going your way.

Be a good winner or loser: if you win, it's normal to be happy and proud. But, you shouldn't brag too much or make the other team feel bad. If you lose, accept it and congratulate the other team. Remember that it is just a game and you can try to win next time. Whatever happens, always shake hands with your rivals after the game to show respect.

There is no "I" in team: all the players on the team need to work together to be successful. Whether you win or lose is not because of one person; it is up to everyone on the team to do their best and support each other through the good and bad times.

The Ripple Newsletter raises awareness about self-advocacy, inclusion and community. Self-advocates share their ideas on these topics and articles are written with staff support.

If you have a story idea to share, contact Christina Scott, editor, at

403-320-1515 or via email at christina.scott@saipa.info.