



Newsletter

DECEMBER 2023

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Well, here we are December 2023!!! “What a year this has been for Rainbow Lake” is an understatement to say the least!!!

As we enter into 2024, we reflect on all we have endured over this past year, from the Long Lake Fire evacuation to the power outages due to the Basset Fire - that’s a lot in itself. But I reflect on a Community who rallied together to protect, to save, to ensure all was taken care of; that is the shining light... the light that will guide us through as a Community who cares and strengthens the forge that has been made.

We are a Community of strangers that become friends and friends that become family.

On behalf of myself and Town Council, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and happy holidays, wherever the festive season may take you!

Sincerely,

Mayor Michelle Farris

Message from new interim CAO Mark Kastiro

I am humbled and honoured to be taking on this new role as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town. I have been in Rainbow for the last eight years, of which I was lucky to have engaged with the Golf Club when I first got here in April of 2015. I then joined the Town in October of 2015, and was entrusted with running your Recreation department. We have accomplished quite a bit at Recreation in the past eight years. We were able to refurbish our ice plant, correct the drainage of our driveway from the spill off the roof in spring and during warmer winter days, replaced our ice resurfacers, consistently have our programs run, such as Summer Fun, the Winter Carnival, Volunteer Appreciation to mention but a few.

Before Rainbow Lake, I lived and worked in Japan. I lived in Japan for 14 years and moved there as a student at the start of the millennium. I graduated from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University with a degree in Business Administration, majoring in Management and Finance. I then got involved with local government working as a language teacher in the Japanese school system. I taught English as a second language in elementary and junior high school for eight years. It was an eye-opening experience and that is how I first got involved with my local community and governance. My role may have been limited to interacting with school staff and students, but this prepared me with dealing with the public, as a school is your first form of organized community that we are all introduced to when we all start out in life.

I have been lucky enough to have experienced living life on four different continents. Africa, as I was born in Uganda, Europe, Asia, and now North America. This has made me appreciate the diversity that the world has to offer, different ways of thinking and different management styles, which all prepares you to deal with an ever-changing world, and evolving ideas. One thing I have come to appreciate with all my travels to date, is that we are all the same when it comes to wants. We all want to be happy, while we make some contributions to the communities, we live in. This tells me that, we all want what is best for our communities and ourselves. I am coming in with three principles that are important to me, and I hope they will be of help to the organization. I am going to have an open-door policy, we get a lot done through positive engagement, transparency, and consistency. These three ideas are what I would like to build my foundation on whilst I try to better my community through sustained development and strong leadership.

When it comes to things that are important, besides family, the organization that I decide to be part of becomes an integral part of myself. Therefore, it is always going to be for the greater good of the organization for every decision, function and duty that is bestowed upon myself. I also believe in the collective as that is what builds us to have community like our own Town.

I have a few interests that I have picked up over the years. My passion is Football, also popularly known here as Soccer. Growing up, I dreamt of being a star player in my team that I have supported from childhood. I still have dreams of me scoring the winning goal in front of The Kop to lift a major championship. As I am forty-three, it is safe to say that won't be happening in this lifetime. I have supported Liverpool Football Club for as long as I can remember. The crowd noise from the stadium every weekend that fills my living room during fall, winter, and spring mornings, is a sound that brings instant joy to me, only if I could smell the turf, that would complete a perfect footballing experience. The chants from the stands, the scarfs, the red of might Liverpool, the song known all over the world "You Will Never Walk Alone", piercing through the chilly air, that feeling when your stars run out the tunnel, the anticipation, the goals, the shouts, the screams, the excitement, the near misses, the fouls, that is a little of piece of heaven, right there, I get to enjoy every weekend during the season. It's not called the beautiful game for nothing, it is the beautiful game! I am also an avid fan of the New Wave of British Heavy Metal; the sound is just unique and has captivated me ever since I first listened to it in my late teens. However, music wise, I listen to everything, as to me music is universal.

In my free time, you will find me helping where I can at the fire station, or in my den contemplating profound questions of our time, neutron stars and their place in the universe, consciousness, and what it means, why black holes exist and why their existence breaks down fundamental physics and maths, the simpler things in life.

In conclusion, Rainbow Lake has been home for me for the last eight years, Rainbow Lake is home, and I believe we have an important role to play in our region. Together we are stronger, together we can achieve anything we set out to do as a community. I know this because, I have seen it and I see it everyday. My door is open to all residents, thank you for your support and continued support, and I will always aim to do my best for the organization and our community.

Mark Kastiro.

December 18th, 2023.

Wildfire Season 2023

As Mayor Michelle Farris mentioned, the Town of Rainbow Lake has survived a wildfire season for the books this past summer!

Pictured below is a view of the Long Lake wildfire from the Town Office a little over an hour after smoke was initially spotted at the end of our runway on May 3, 2023.



With the hot and dry conditions that day, it took no time at all for the wildfire to spread. Not only did the fire move incredibly fast along the runway, but it also made a run across the grass towards the office and Flightfuels' fuel tank. Fortunately, Forestry had a helicopter stationed at the tanker base that was able to provide support to our Volunteer Fire Department to contain the grass fire and prevent it from spreading into our community.



Here is a photo of some of our Fire Department members taking a quick rest after battling the grass fire on the runway. From left to right: Lorne Lambert, Karen Simms, Melissa Stevens, Deputy-Chief Ron Stevens and Brendan Bedard.

This time of year is often a time for reflection and is the perfect opportunity to give thanks to all those that provided support to our community during the Long Lake wildfire and Bassett Complex incursions. Unlike many other communities that suffered losses due to wildfires this past season, we are so fortunate that our community didn't lose a single home. This wouldn't have been possible without the incredible efforts of our Volunteer Fire Department, Alberta Forestry and their partners, the Town of High Level Fire Department our mutual aid partners, the Dene Tha' First Nation who were first to arrive on day 1 with help, Cenovus Energy and the RCMP.

Thank you to all the local contractors who provided resources and equipment:

B. Mitchells & Associates LTD., T.T.'s Trucking, Warner Trucking, Silvertip, Bateman Petroleum, Strike, RKM Contracting, Billy & Boyz Trucking, D'Aoust Environmental Services, Graham Maintenance, Red Rabbit, Tri-Auto and Darren's Mechanical.

Thank you to RJ's @ The Crossroads, Eagle's Nest and the Rainbow Lake Esso for providing food and fuel and to the Noralta Motor Inn and Bre-Jon Enterprises for providing food and accommodations to the many men and women who risked their lives to save our town.

Thank you to the Town of High Level for standing up a reception center for our residents when we were evacuated. Thank you to Fox Haven Golf Course for donating camping stalls for our residents for two weeks free of charge. Thank you to Dale with Northstar Chrysler for donating campers to our people in need without hesitation. Thank you to Select Rentals for donating fencing for our four-legged residents to have a safe space to unwind and High N'Dry Cleaners for opening a tab for our residents to have access to laundry services. Thank you to all the hotels for working with us daily to find rooms for our people. There were many other businesses and families that provided food and support during this time—a kindness our people won't soon forget.

You all have our endless thanks and gratitude, for this holiday season and many more!

A Message From Victim Services

DECEMBER 2023



The Assumption Region Community Policing Society (ARCPS) is the governing body of our local victim services unit for Rainbow Lake and Chateh. This year, the ARCPS has seen many changes and will continue to see changes as there is a switch from individual units to a provincial model taking place. While many changes are on the horizon for the ARCPS, one thing that is not is our continuing efforts to enhance the wellbeing and community support for our residents.

This year, the ARCPS has been able to provide many community building and bonding opportunities through the Red Cross Grant. Through this grant, we have been able to showcase the diversity in our community by hosting an International Cooking Class, Newfie Cold Plate and a Bannock workshop that have been facilitated by our very own community members! We have also been able to host paint days, drum making and beading events thanks to local artists!

Thanks to the Red Cross Grant, the ARCPS was also able to supply community members with air purifiers to help with the air quality in people's homes due to the Long Lake and Basset wildfires.

With a New Year on the horizon, the ARCPS would like to thank everyone that has attended and/or facilitated in events, as well as liked, commented and shared on our social media page. Without the dedicated work of our board members, facilitators and attendees, these events would not be possible.

Wishing the residents of Rainbow Lake and Chateh a happy holiday filled with love, joy and warmth!

Thank you,

Montana
PROGRAM MANAGER



Food Hamper Program



Every year, the Rainbow Lake Community Church assists people and families in need with food for the holidays. This year, they have decided to collect gift cards and cash donations instead of pantry items so families are able to buy food and items they need and will use over the holidays.

If you are in need of some support this Christmas season, please contact Maureen Leptich to arrange for a hamper before December 15, 2023.

Maureen : 780-956-0335

How to help:

Email donations to **rlcomchurch@gmail.com**

Purchase a digital gift card from PC/Independent Food

Call 1-800-567-8371 or email bonita@cmlsales.com to purchase a Calahoo gift certificate. Please request it to be made out to Rainbow Lake Food Hampers

Stores you can shop at for gift cards:

Esso

RJ's Crossroad

TGP, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Marks, Pharmasave, IDA

Assorted gift cards available at the Esso and Post Office.

Donation boxes will be setup around town and at local events until December 15th. You may also contact Maureen to arrange where to drop off your donation.

Coping at Christmas

Christmas is meant to be a magical time of year, spent enjoying the season with those you cherish most. Unfortunately, what is meant to be a joyous time of year can be especially hard for those of us who have lost loved ones, are far away from our families, suffer from seasonal depression or are struggling to make ends meet financially.

It's okay if it's not the "most wonderful time of year"!

If you or a loved one needs help, please reach out!

MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE 1-877-303-2642

ALBERTA HELPLINE DIRECTORY 211

HEALTH LINK 811

ASPIRE PSYCHOLOGY 1-780-690-9607

ADDICTION HELPLINE 1-866-332-2322

GRANDE PRAIRIE OPIOID DEPENDENCY PROGRAM (AHS)

Phone: 780-833-4991 Fax: 780-833-4715



MOMS STOP THE HARM

Information pulled from momsstoptheharm.com

Healing Hearts with Moms Stop the Harm

Peer Support After a Loss from Substance Use Related Causes

“Healing Hearts is a free bereavement support group specific to those grieving the loss of a loved one due to overdose or substance-use related harms.

Healing Hearts support groups offer an open-format peer-led model of support. Healing Hearts does not offer therapeutic counselling. The group facilitators have lived experience and have personally lost a loved one to substance related harms.”

STOP ILLEGAL DRUGS REPORT DRUG ACTIVITY!

Drug Abuse



RCMP911
RCMP COMPLAINT LINE.....780-321-3753
CRIME STOPPERS.....1-800-222-TIPS(8477)

Dog Tags 2024

Dog tags for 2024 are available at the Town Office.

Tags can be purchased Monday-Friday between 7:40am-4:30pm. If you would like to pre-order your tag to secure the cheaper price, please contact Danielle at extension 103!

Neutered & Spayed Dogs License fee

\$20.00

(before January 31, 2024)

\$30.00

(after January 31, 2024)

Non-Neutered & Spayed Dogs License fee

\$40.00

(before January 31, 2024)

\$50.00

(after January 31, 2024)



Property Taxes

This is a friendly reminder that all 2023 Property Taxes must be paid by December 31, 2023 to avoid entering arrears with the Town of Rainbow Lake. Any Property Taxes left unpaid from before December 31, 2022 will be registered with the province in 2024. Any Property Taxes left unpaid from before December 31, 2021 will begin the process of tax sale proceedings.

If you aren't already part of our Property Tax Pre-Authorized Monthly Payment Plan, you might want to consider setting it up at the office. No penalties will be levied against your property for outstanding balances during the year (some restrictions do apply). To request further information on this payment plan, please contact the Town Office :)

Christmas Hours

The Town Office will be closed
Thursday, December 21st at 12pm
and will reopen Tuesday, January
2nd 2024 at 7:40am.

From all Town Staff and Council,
we would like to wish all our resi-
dents a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!!!

See you again in January,
2024!



Town Office (Administration)
Box 149, 65 Imperial Drive
Rainbow Lake, AB
T0H 2Y0
780-956-3934

Recreation Complex
Rec Plex
1 Atco Road
780-956-3778



Town Shop (Public Works)
58 Imperial Drive
780-956-3949

Fire Hall
58 Imperial Drive
780-956-3354