

ALBERTA NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRES ASSOCIATION
PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2009

The past year has seen many changes at the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (ANFCA). My focus with the Executive was diverted from governing the organization to staffing its one employee, the Executive Director. We have seen three Executive Directors pass through our organization in the past two years; two in the past year have been hired. Each Director has added a different strength to the ANFCA. These changes have tested the Board, Executive and certainly the staff.

Joanne Mason McDougall's determination and success to increase programming and our profile in the community brought many ideas for programs to the Centre. Our second Director that year, Alvaro Loyola, successfully completed many tasks Joanne had started and many programs were initiated. Alvaro aligned the programs with the staff and resources the Centre had to work with and began managing them. This created a sense of order with the staff, Board and Executive. Alvaro moved on and Nelson Mayer is now at the helm. So far, Nelson is creating a sense of team and stability. Nelson is dealing with the issues of the day and ensuring our member Centres are sending in their reports on time to ensure timely funding requirements are met, etc. One of the strengths Nelson brings to the ANFCA is his knowledge of the Friendship Centre Movement on a national scale. This will in turn create a national focus for the Executive and the Board in general as we move toward the National AGM to be held in Hinton.

My focus over the past two years has been working with the Executive to ensure seamless transitions. We have concentrated on our governance role, always working

with the staff at arms length. Often it is easy for Boards to take over the management of operations when there are transitions. I think it is a testament to our Executive who has believed in the staff in place, trusting they would make the right administrative choices. I think that a measure of our success is staff retention and commitment. We have been very successful retaining staff over this difficult time, but we also have a committed team of staff who believe in the Friendship Centre Movement.

I believe the ANFCA has a great opportunity to make it on to the national scene with the National AGM being held in Hinton in 2010. It is imperative that we have 60+ voting delegates there so we can make that happen. At the AGM in Niagara Falls it was evident that we need to have a place at the national table. Let us ensure that this happens. With Nelson's experience I am sure we will be well prepared to do that.

I began my affiliation with the Friendship movement in Grande Prairie as a Program Manager in 1986. I was hooked from that point and have had connections with Friendship Centres in the 23 years since.

I have done a lot of thinking about my future at the Executive level. I have said that I was going to run for another term as your President. I do not think I can do that now. I think that perhaps I have done all that I can right now. Being the President over the past few years has been an honor and privilege. I can honestly say that I have learned a great deal from the people who I have had the privilege to serve and know that I will be back when I can dedicate more time to the Executive.

In the mean time I still have two years left on my time with the Canadian Native Friendship Centre, so you will see me around from time to time.

Yours in friendship,

Mark Calliou