

Connections Newsletter

April 2018

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT:

Did you know that spring has sprung? You wouldn't know this by looking out the window at all of the snow but yes spring is officially here. And with spring comes spring cleaning and parting with items that we no longer use. With the SMHC Lawn Sale coming up in June you may want to consider setting up a table to sell your treasures. There are also many places that will come right to your unit to collect your items for a variety of charities. If none of that interests you well there is now a construction bin on site behind B50. This new bin will remain on site and can be used by SMHC members to dispose of large items such as furniture, mattresses, wood scraps. Keeping too many treasures in your unit can lead to health and safety issues such as fire hazards, tripping hazards and health code violations. If you need help reach out to a family member, friend, neighbour or the office for suggestions to help declutter your home.

Building Condition Assessment

The Board of Directors continues to work with Robin from IRC to determine priorities and proposed/draft plans with regards to our buildings. Robin has singled out the roofs/soffits/eaves troughs as priority building envelope issues that need to be addressed. His inspection revealed many roof-wall abutments where water is working its way behind the flashing. The Board is concerned with our underground pipes and will be asking Robin to include it in his plan. We will keep you posted as more specifics are determined. Our next Special Board Meeting to discuss next steps is Saturday April 14th, 2018.

Continued Issues with Water Damage in Bathrooms and Elsewhere In Units

Water is extremely damaging to even the most impervious seeming surface. Look west to our Rockies, water carved those!

- Please wipe up spilled water immediately.
- Don't let steam from a kettle or other appliances have direct access to cupboard doors or undersides.
- Remove food particles from kitchen sink and put in compost.
- Do not pour grease or oily products down the sink drain.
- Do not throw diapers, wipes, female products down the toilet as our sanitary system cannot handle it.
- Clean hair from drains as this will eventually clog your sink and bathtub drains.

We want to remind members that if damage is caused by member use or misuse, any repairs including parts and labor, may be the member's responsibility to pay for damages.

National Volunteer Week

April 15th to 21st is National Volunteer Week. Thank you to all of our volunteers that continue to give of their time and expertise to keep SMHC the wonderful co-op we all know it to be. Your support and dedication is invaluable.

Youth Volunteer Program

We are very proud to have implemented the Youth Volunteer Recognition Program. Thank you to the Entertainment and Social Events Committee, Roberta and the Board of Directors for kick starting this initiative. Our youth in SMHC have been helping out in so many ways over the years and their helpful hands have always been appreciated. Now we have a mechanism in place to be able to officially recognize our youth, our future leaders.

Volunteer Appreciation Event

Thank you so much to the Entertainment and Social Events Committee for putting on such a fun event. The Family Feud game was a lot of fun and got many people involved. Once again the prizes were plentiful and were well received. Thank you as well to all of our amazing SMHC volunteers. Everyone from the people that deliver the newsletters, to the people that help set up and take down at all of our members meetings and at all of our special events, to the people that sit on committees and to the Board of Directors. These are all volunteer positions. Without all of our volunteers our Co-op would not be the success that it is. And to Janine Bell, our Volunteer Coordinator, thank you so much for doing such an outstanding job. We love your mantra: "There is nothing like putting a smile on someone else's face, which puts a smile on your own face."

Question Box from Member's Meeting Reply

"Will everyone eventually get wooden front decks?"

- No. Deteriorated steps are replaced based on the Maintenance Responsibility Guidelines found in the Maintenance Procedures section of the SMHC Member's Handbook."

Your SMHC Board of Directors

*****Committees Update*****

Thank you so much to the members that have joined committees in March and to those that continue to serve on committees. Your willingness to participate and have your voice heard is invaluable.

We welcome members of **all ages** to join our committees but what we really seem to be lacking in the make-up of our committees is **our youth**. You are our future. We rely on you to bring your suggestions on the direction you would like to see Sarcee Meadows grow.

Do we have any tradespeople in our Co-op? It's hard to believe we only have three members on our Property Maintenance Committee. If you are an engineer, carpenter, electrician etc., we would love to have you join us. Your expertise, experience and knowledge is a much needed asset to the committee.

We are still looking for additional members for the following committees. No experience is needed for these committees. Just your desire to learn and to help make SMHC a great place to call home. We have indicated below the current number of members on each of the committees asking for additional members.

*****Property Maintenance (3 members) – one new member joined in March**

*****Grievance and Resolution (3 members)**

*****Finance (4 members) – one new member joined in March**

Environment (5 members)

Personnel (5 members)

Membership (6 members)

Newsletter (6 members)

Education and Involvement (6 members)

Entertainment & Social Events (needs additional general event volunteers)

Your choice to join any of these committees may be a reflection of your professional or volunteer experience, but it may also just be about your passion for the work of that particular committee. If you are interested in joining any of these committees please contact **Janine** in the office for more information janine@sarceemeadows.coop

(An application form for the Finance, Grievance and Resolution, Membership, Personnel, or Property Maintenance Committees is attached to the back of this newsletter.)

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:

(It's Miller Time!)

B50

This report has been missing from the newsletter for the last couple of months, but B50 was still busy with numerous committee meetings, work orders completed, Board meetings held and birthdays/anniversaries celebrated. The year-end audit was completed and scheduled to be presented at the January 31, 2018 Member's Meeting, but due to our auditor being ill it has been postponed to the Member's meeting on April 10, 2018.

In addition to the regular work orders, cupboards being installed, floors done, bathrooms repaired/replaced, and locks replaced/repared; there are unit inspections being done. These unit inspections are for inventory purposes to update maintenance data base. We want to be sure that our replacement records are correct and Members are receiving their replacements to their cupboards, bathrooms, light fixtures etc. when they should be.

The initial building condition assessment planning meeting was held at the end of March. Another meeting is set for April 14th to continue to work out details. When all the details are worked out and completed, information will be shared with the Membership.

Finances

There was a financial statements error on page 4 in the March Newsletter. The bottom left corner shows a Net Deficit for nine months. This should be 3 months November to January. This same line also shows \$59,414.16 as a deficit, it should be a \$59,414.16 surplus.

Question from January Meeting - Radon Testing

Question: "Have we ever had our buildings tested for Radon? Is it something we should consider?"

Answer: No, we haven't had our buildings tested for Radon. This will be discussed during the building condition assessment meeting for inclusion in the budget. We will be looking for approval to test some key units in the complex at first to determine if there is a need for more in depth testing.

What is Radon?

Radon is a radioactive gas found naturally in the environment. It is produced by the decay of uranium found in soil, rock or water. Radon is invisible, odourless and tasteless and emits ionizing radiation. As a gas, radon can move freely through the soil enabling it to escape to the atmosphere or seep into buildings. When radon escapes from the bedrock into the outdoor air, it is diluted to such low concentrations that it poses a negligible threat to health. However, if a building is built over bedrock or soil that contains uranium, radon gas can be released into the building through cracks in foundation walls and floors, or gaps around pipes and cables.

When radon is confined to enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces, it can accumulate to high levels. Radon levels are generally highest in basements and crawl spaces because these areas are nearest to the source and are usually poorly ventilated. In the open air, the amount of radon gas is very small and does not pose a health risk.

- Taken from the Government of Canada website:
(<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/environmental-workplace-health/radiation/radon/what-radon.html>)

What are the Health Effects of Radon?

Radon gas breaks down or decays to form radioactive elements that can be inhaled into the lungs. In the lungs, decay continues, creating radioactive particles that release small bursts of energy. This energy is absorbed by nearby lung tissue, damaging the lung cells. When cells are damaged, they have the potential to result in cancer when they reproduce. Exposure to high levels of radon in indoor air results in an increased risk of developing lung cancer. The risk of cancer depends on the level of radon and how long a person is exposed to those levels.

Exposure to radon and tobacco use together can significantly increase your risk of lung cancer. For example, if you are a lifelong smoker your risk of getting lung cancer is 1 in 10. If you add long term exposure to a high level of radon, your risk becomes 1 in 3. On the other hand, if you are a non-smoker, your lifetime lung cancer risk at the same high radon level is 1 in 20.

What are the Radon Levels in Canada?

Radon is found across Canada, because it occurs naturally in soil. Concentrations differ greatly, but are usually higher in areas where there is a higher amount of uranium in underlying rock and soil. Some amount of radon is found in almost every home, but concentration levels will vary from one house to another, even if they are similar and next door to each other. It is expected that only a small percentage of homes will have radon levels above the guideline but the ONLY way to be sure of the radon level in your home is to TEST.

- Taken from the Government of Canada website:
(<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/environmental-workplace-health/reports-publications/radiation/radon-your-home-health-canada-2009.html>)

General

Although we are not getting many “April showers” we are hoping for much milder weather in the near future. I hope you all had a wonderful Easter weekend. April is Autism Awareness Month and National Volunteer week is April 15 – 21. I would like to thank all of SMHC volunteers, we couldn’t do it without you.

Thank you,

Roberta Miller
General Manager



ONE OF THE
GREATEST GIFTS
YOU CAN GIVE IS
YOUR TIME

#VOLUNTEER

FROM B50:

Be very careful and be aware of what may fall from the roofs when you are coming and going. Please look up!! There is a lot of snow and ice built up on some of the roofs which has the potential to fall off in very large chunks.

If you have any extra ice buckets hanging around the guys in the maintenance shop will gladly take them off your hands. They always come in handy for plumbing work orders and many other jobs. Ice cream buckets can be dropped off at the office or the maintenance shop.



Please be sure to check your furnace filters at least once a month and replace as needed. Do not go more than three months without changing your filter. **Members are reminded that furnace filters are available for free at the office.** The filters we provide at no charge are the proper size and efficiency rating for our specific model of furnace. Use of replacement filters with higher filtration ratings may restrict air flow to the furnace which in turn can cause reduced unit efficiency, as well as premature blower motor failure. If for any reason you choose to purchase your own filters outside of SMHC it is very important that they are the correct size and MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) Rating. The proper size is **16x25x1** and **MERV 6** is the recommended rating for our furnaces. **DO NOT** go higher than MERV 6. (We reported last year that up to MERV 8 is acceptable but we are finding that MERV 8 is too restrictive to the air flow.)

*"Volunteers are not paid
-- not because they are
worthless, but because
they are priceless."*

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Our big 50th Anniversary is fast approaching, and we want to hear from you! Please email any pictures or stories from the past 50 years and you may be featured in our special anniversary edition. Emails can be sent to: janine@sarceemeadows.coop.



Come spring or come snow! Watch for another exciting spring themed contest in the May Connections newsletter.

Are you a young and ambitious over 18 year's old member of our Coop? Would you like to profile youth issues in the Newsletter? What a great opportunity to try journalism on a smaller scale! The Newsletter Committee invites you to join us. You are welcome to come to our meetings and observe. No need for commitments until you are ready. The Newsletter Committee meets at 7:00 pm on the first Monday of the month at B 50. Meetings are no longer than one hour. We don't meet over the summer. Other members are also welcome to join us.

ENTERTAINMENT & SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE:



Our annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Saturday March 31st, 2018. We woke up to temperatures of -23 with the wind-chill and with snow and ice covering both the small and large parks. Thank you to Shirley who earlier in the week came up with our plan B! With the weather not cooperating, the show would still go on but in the B50 office instead. Saturday morning the Entertainment & Social Events Committee got busy decorating the office inside and outside with Easter decorations. Special thanks to Tristan Miller for donning an Easter Bunny costume and helping to welcome all of the kids. He also posed with each of the kids so they could have a photo to commemorate this special event. But the fun didn't end there. Due to the poor weather we didn't get near the number of kids we normally get so we ended up with a whole lot of chocolate goodness left over. Mrs. P. suggested we pack up the leftover candy and bring it to the senior's home across the street. Tristan, aka the Easter Bunny, had the seniors laughing and smiling as he handed out chocolate and hugs, sang and danced, and made all of the seniors feel extra special. This is what Sarcee Meadows stands for and what makes our Co-op one of the best out there. We go above and beyond at every chance we get. Thank you to all of the volunteers that came out that day as well as to our Easter Bunny Tristan for putting smiles on the faces of many.

Our next official event is our annual Lawn Sale which will be held on Saturday June 2nd, 2018 from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Hopefully the snow will be gone by then! Watch for all the details in a flyer next month. We are also continuing to discuss our plans for the Stampede Breakfast and our 50th Anniversary BBQ. We are still open to any feedback, ideas, or suggestions you may have. You can provide your feedback by contacting the office, emailing janine@sarceemeadows.coop, or by visiting our committee meetings.

We are always looking for general event volunteers, and we will need them this year more than ever! Hey kids! Do you need to do volunteer hours for school or leadership programs? We happily encourage youth volunteers for any of our events (other than the Adult Social) and we will gladly sign your forms to prove you volunteered. Please contact Janine at the office if anyone in your household is willing to lend a hand at any of these events.



CO-OP SENIORS INTERESTS COMMITTEE:

The Co-op Senior's Interests Committee recently held their March meeting. It was nice to see everyone back after Christmas and the harsh winter we have been experiencing. We welcomed Isabell Reznik as the new Board Liaison to this committee. We discussed a few items that would be of interest to seniors in Sarcee Meadows in the next coming months. Watch the Connections Newsletter for any events that might be happening in the near future. We welcome any one who would like to join our committee, so come and join us and bring your ideas of items that would be of interest to seniors. Call the Office for the date of our next meeting.



Just a reminder to all seniors that because of the kind of winter and spring we have been experiencing there are a lot of areas that have icy patches on sidewalks, including in your yards. Please report these to the Office to get some help with them. Also there is ice melt available at the Office for your use, but please bring your own pail.

There is a Sarcee Member's Meeting coming up on April 10, 2018 at Grace Lutheran Church. Please be sure to attend. "Happy Spring" everyone!!

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE:

Greetings to all Sarcee Meadows residents! The days are certainly flying by! Here it is April already and we still have lots of snow on the ground. Spring should be just around the corner, right? Well, snow or no snow committees still have to get the job done. This committee recently held their March meeting and as usual we discussed a lot of things. An hour goes by very fast when you have lots to talk about! One of our ideas is to host a Plant Exchange Table at the Lawn Sale coming up in June. We will be working out further details on this at our meeting in May.



Another thing we discussed was that we sure would like to see some new members come and join us and bring some new ideas. Environment issues are not going to go away. In fact it is becoming more and more of an issue worldwide. The committee tries to do their best with educating Sarcee Meadows residents but we can always use some new input. Think about coming out to our next meeting on May 9, 2018 at 7:00pm.

We hope those residents who were lucky enough to win an Environment Committee Door Prize at the meetings are enjoying their "environmentally friendly" products. Just think, by using these products you are doing your best to make a small mark on saving our planet.

EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE:



Hey there everybody. The Education and Involvement Committee has been revived with some additional members joining in on the fun. In order for this committee to be a success we need help from you our members. Tell us what you want to be educated about / learn more about.

Examples –

- How to prepare yourself to apply for the Board i.e. by sitting in on a Board Meeting, taking a SACHA course etc.
- How can I as a youth get involved in the Sarcee Meadows Community volunteer structure

At the April Members Meeting we will have a one question form for you to fill out as shown below. No need to put your name or unit on if you don't want to. We will have a box at the April Members meeting for you to deposit your form after the meeting. **If you miss out on that opportunity you can simply drop a quick note off to the office to the attention of the Education and Involvement committee with your suggestions for education items.**

We will respond to your suggested topics in upcoming issues of the Connections Newsletter so that we can all learn and grow together.

The Education and Involvement Committee wants to hear from you.

Do you have a topic that you want to learn more about? We are here to help you get the answers. Simply complete this sentence and return this form to the office to the attention of the Education and Involvement committee.

I want to learn more about _____

Volunteer of the Year

We would like to personally congratulate all five of the members that were nominated as Volunteer of the Year. It's people like you that truly make a difference in our community. You are all an example of what it means to live Co-operatively and to give of your time so generously. We had five members that were nominated for Volunteer of the Year and are so deserving of this recognition. Listed below are the nominees along with a few words from some of their nominations:



Dean Putman – “...for 12 years of service on the Board of Directors, eleven of those years as Chairperson. He has shown leadership and tenacity of purpose in his position. He has given of his time while he and his wife raised a young family. He exemplifies the spirit of what it is to be a volunteer.” You can find Dean at many of our events offering a helping hand.

Jenn Jenkinson – “...She has always been a hard working member willing to dedicate much of her time to Sarcee Meadows. Even before her current time on the Board she joined the Entertainment & Social Events Committee and has been a very valuable member right from the start! She has one year left in her second full term on the Board and during these last six years she has always stepped up to serve on numerous other committees as well as serving as Treasurer, Vice-Chairperson, and now as Chairperson. Aside from the time she dedicates to Sarcee Meadows she is also a very active volunteer in the greater community and beyond. She has worked as a volunteer with many music festivals and she has spent the last two Christmas Eves as an “elf” working with the Magic of Christmas. On top of all that Jenn is also actively involved with the Tierra Blanca Project which is helping to build schools in Mexico.”

Megan Justason – “Megan volunteers a lot in our Committees as well as in Rutland Park.” Megan has been an instrumental member in both the Rutland Park Community Association social committee and the SMHC social committee.

Slawa Gruszczynska - “Slawa is all about community. By choice, she is tasked with bringing people together. A very busy woman, she always seems to find time to lend a hand. There are no strangers in her world, just people to become acquainted with. When you see her coming, get ready for a big smile, encouraging words, and an offer of assistance if needed. Sarcee Meadows is lucky to have her in our midst.”

Val Smith – “...because of all of her hard work in the kitchen at our Members Meetings. She always shows up early at the office to help get everything over to the church. She is very considerate of the little details such as putting water at the Board table and bringing water and cookies out to the scrutineers during elections. She knows what people's favorite cookies are and will save them one if she can. She always makes sure that people can get a final refill of coffee before cleaning the pot at the end of the night. She also helps to clean up the registration desks when the meetings start and will take note of late comers as well. I don't know how we would get through these meetings without her help! She is also always willing to step in **where** needed at other events without being asked. Val is a true gem of a volunteer!”

Congratulations to Slawa Gruszczynska on being selected as our 2018 Volunteer of the Year.

*Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy.
You vote in elections once a year, but when you
volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of
community you want to live in.
~ Marjorie Moore*

RUTLAND PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION:

Garden Beds Available in Community Garden

The Rutland Park Community Garden has garden beds available for rent. A sunny location. Pesticide-free. Gardening tools (if needed) and water supplied. Perfect if you don't have enough space or sun in your own yard.

Garden plots are \$20 per year and are available to members of the Rutland Park Community Association. As members of Sarcee Meadows, you are all members of RPCA so there is no additional fee to join.

E-mail gardens@rutlandparkcommunity.com to find out how to reserve a garden plot.

Act soon, there are a limited number of garden plots available.

GLAMORGAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION:



CO-OP EDUCATION:

What is a Housing Co-operative?

A Housing Co-operative is a complex of affordable housing for any person(s) wanting a safe environment for themselves or their family.



What community need does the Housing Co-operative address?

Sarcee Meadows provides safe affordable housing for mixed income families, seniors, people with disabilities, and youth.

Who are the members of the Sarcee Meadows Housing Co-operative? How do they participate in the co-operative?

Members are any person who lives at Sarcee Meadows Housing Co-operative, are 18 years or older and are on the Unit Shares. Out of 380 units there are currently 574 members ranging in age from 18 to 96 years of age. All members participate in the co-op by attending the AGM and general membership meetings. Also, members are encouraged to join at least one committee, or to volunteer in other ways. The most important form of participation from each member is to pay their housing charge on time each and every month because this ensures that the business of Sarcee Meadows is viable and secure for future generations.

What makes Sarcee Meadows Housing Co-operative different from non-co-operative housing complexes in terms of how people interact and relate with each other?

At Sarcee Meadows, each member is a member-owner so they have a say in how Sarcee Meadows Housing is run as a business. At other non-profits, tenants are not members, therefore their say in how things are run is limited. The members of Sarcee Meadows make informed decisions from information supplied to them by the Board of Directors and staff. The decisions that the membership make ensures that Sarcee Meadows as a business will succeed and be viable for future generations. This brings the community closer. It feels like when Sarcee Meadows succeeds the membership succeeds.

How long do people often stay as a resident? What are the benefits of living in a housing co-operative? What are the challenges?

Some members stay for a very long time as we still have 32 original members that moved into Sarcee Meadows from October of 1971, when we first opened our doors, and October of 1974, when we reached 100% capacity. We also have some members who only stay for a few years. Some of the benefits of living here include: a community within a community, everyone knows most of their neighbors, a sense of belonging to something that in time makes most of us better people, a great place to raise kids, and a great place for seniors; seniors are a wealth of knowledge, and from them some newer members learn. The challenge of being a member of Sarcee Meadows is that everyone has an opinion and wants their voice heard, some get frustrated but for the most part we all have one common goal and that is to ensure Sarcee Meadows is around for many more years.

What is the most interesting part of living in a co-operative?

One of the most interesting parts of living in co-operative housing is that no matter what age you are, or how much money you make, without the dedication and strength of all of the members, Sarcee Meadows would be struggling in all aspects of being a housing co-op. A strong membership gives you a strong organization. We all as members have a right and an obligation to get involved in our Co-op.

Sometimes people get involved just by helping their neighbor by cutting their grass or joining a committee or running for the Board of Directors. This gives everyone a sense of belonging to something bigger than oneself. Every meeting is a learning session, and one always learns new ways on how to help your own Co-op.

April is Autism Awareness Month

One Family's Experience

When my husband and I were told that our youngest son was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), it took a lot to process. We had known he was having difficulties since he was very young, but I am not sure either of us expected the path he would take us down and how much we would learn.



We started researching on what this meant and came up with some answers like the one below from Autism Calgary:

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

- Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder which is behaviourally described, affecting children and adults.
- 1/68 children are affected by autism in the US. Numbers in Canada are uncertain.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is characterized by observed challenges in socialization, speech and communication (including non-verbal communication) and repetitive/restrictive behaviours.
- Aside from the formal description of what autism is, sensory challenges are almost always present. A person can be under or over sensitive to one or all senses: smell, touch, vision, taste or hearing.
- There is mounting medical evidence that many other bodily systems are also affected by autism. E.g.: gastric issues, motor challenges.
- ASD changes the way the brain processes information and can affect all aspects of a person's development.
- Each individual is unique – no one person with ASD responds or behaves exactly like another with the same diagnosis.
- It is called a 'spectrum' because some people are mildly affected by symptoms, while others are more severely affected.
- Autism typically appears during the first 3 years of life.
- Autism is a life-long condition. However, it is not a degenerative condition.
- With therapy and support, many people experience less symptoms and gain many skills and abilities as they develop and grow, like anyone else.
- Some people with ASD have high IQ while others have cognitive delays.
- Autism can give a person a very unique way of experiencing the world, there are advantages and benefits as well as challenges to being 'on the spectrum'.

- Taken from Autism Calgary (<https://autismcalgary.com/what-is-asd/>)

This explanation although accurate doesn't seem to encompass everything and still left some things unanswered. Then a professional we were seeing at the time framed ASD as more like an umbrella that covers everything under it. One person on the spectrum may be verbal, another may not. One person may have a certain learning disability, another may have a different one.

Under our son's umbrella we can include: allergies, anxiety, depression, ADHD, a learning disability, problems with fine motor skills, sensory issues and a few subtle things that go along with all these labels. One of the most difficult things for me to deal with though is how he is treated in the world.

He has been punched for showing concern for a fellow student. Spent hours in a hallway and been humiliated in front of classmates for behaviour that calmed him when he was overwhelmed. Has had seizures because he was so stressed his body just shut down. He has grown distrustful, will be a chameleon to fit in. After all this he will still put himself out there, and I am so proud of him for doing that.

Yes he is on the spectrum and he has a lot of difficulties, he may act inappropriately, be overwhelming, or shut someone out that he loves; but he is also amazingly funny, smart, gives the absolute best hugs, one of the most caring people I know, and very capable. He can do so much, but most people don't have enough patience or feel they have enough time to let him shine.

Expressing and advocating for himself is a difficulty, but when we decided to put this article in the newsletter I asked Tris to write a few words himself. His words reflect his current focus on trying to improve his communication skills:

Tristan's Wisdom Words

Autism is for me a constant challenge. One that I have learned to live with over the years, but still gives me troubles. For me these troubles mean that sometimes words can be difficult. There are times when if I am not giving 100% attention to speaking the words disappear from me and all I have left is noises. It's at these times when I begin to feel like a child again, unaware of the world around me and confused about simple things. I think the hardest part for me is that I am aware of it when it happens but I can't stop myself. Autism is exhausting.

As Tris transitions from teenager to adult one of the more depressing statistics that my husband and I have found recently is the following:

Myth: People with high functioning autistic spectrum disorders are able to get jobs and be self-supporting

Fact: Ninety percent of these individuals are unemployed in adulthood, whereas, 36 percent of people with mental retardation have part-time or full-time jobs. It takes longer for people with Asperger's Syndrome and high-functioning Autism or PDD-NOS to master job tasks, but supervisors often don't allow additional time to spend with them. They tend to think the employee is lazy, is too slow and not motivated to perform, rather than realizing their difficulties are due to their disability. Job coaching programs can provide specialists who help in the initial training. ...

- Taken from Autism Calgary (<https://autismcalgary.com/what-is-asd/>)

I find this disappointing not only because it means continued struggles and hard work for my own son, but because it shows we miss the positives that come with being on the spectrum. These positives show that those on the spectrum can provide great value to society and can include:

- having the ability to focus intently and for long periods of time on problems they have interest in
- often have an advanced learning ability in subjects they enjoy
- usually are intelligent, gifted, honest, and hard workers when given a task they show interest in
- may use a higher level vocabulary than others
- have a different world view, think outside the box
- excel in identifying patterns and memory recall
- may excel in math and physics
- very detailed with solutions to problems

As with all people that have difficulties, those on the Autism Spectrum approach the world with a unique view. When you take time to listen to their experiences, or really hear what they say, allowing them to share who they are, you might be surprised at what you learn.

Submitted by – Roberta Miller



Connections to All Things – (Third in a series by Kim Spence)

From early childhood and throughout our lives, first nations are taught about relationships and how they interact with each other.

It is more than a coincidence that nature and the human experience can be divided into four parts. There is a special relationship between the number, nature, and our lives where it is captured. The number four is a sacred number.

We have an obligation to ourselves:

- Develop a strong body
- Develop a clear mind
- Develop a pure spirit
- Develop a devotion to the welfare of our people



Can you name the below?

- What are the four life stages?
- What are the four stages in a day?
- What are the four seasons?

The medicine wheel is the circle of life which we must all travel. Movement around the wheel helps us learn the lessons life has to teach us. Celebrating and preparing for seasonal changes attunes us with the energy of the Medicine Wheel. We are in harmony and relationship to each other, ready to meet life's challenges with wisdom and strength.

First nations observed the great mystery in nature and adapted our lifestyle to its cycles. The Great Spirit was seen in the changing seasons, in the day that followed night, in the rising and setting sun, in the different phases of the moon and in the movement of the stars.

Information known to a specific group of people is there to be shared. It is a question a way, keep in mind some cultures have protocols, but always be respectful when inquiring. What is in your culture?

If there are any topics, specific question you have, you may contact me at: ravenclaw245@hotmail.com

Importance of Engagement

In the past year I have had to learn about aging, cognitive impairments and difficulties in communicating. It was not by choice, but by caring for a loved one, my father has been diagnosed with dementia, and early onset Alzheimer's.

As he aged, as a family we noticed that he would withdraw from activities, we did not know the consequences of him saying no.

One important factor I learned about aging, is remaining engaged. Engagement can occur by socializing, puzzles, remaining active. Being a couch potato and watching TV is considered not being engaged.

There are several day programs throughout Calgary for adults (seniors and young adults), who would benefit from a social, leisure and health promotions program, as well as their families.

- Wellness Programs
- Dementia Programs
- Young Adult Support Programs

Some services offered: socialization and peer support, recreational activities, events, and outings, physical exercise, cognitive stimulation and many more.

A couple of day programs:

- Adult Day Program at Carewest Colonel Belcher 403-944-7852
- Dementia Day Program at Carewest Signal Pointe 403-240-7966
- Younger Adult Day Program at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning 403-230-6999

By staying engaged it reduces the risk of mental health issues, lowers your doctor's visits and the immune system and nutrition levels improve.

Stay vibrant and active, aging does not mean that your life needs to slow down to a crawl.



YOUR PAGE

Welcome to "Your Page", a place for you to share with your neighbours and your community. This page can include your Personal Milestones such as Births, Birthdays, Weddings, Anniversaries, and Personal Accomplishments. It is also a great way to send out Thank You Messages, notes of praise on a job well done, announcements or any other tidbits that you'd like to share! Submissions can be emailed to janine@sarceemeadows.coop or dropped off at the office to the attention of the Newsletter Committee.

"This is an appreciation to ALL who have ever worked on our Newsletter. I can't wait to read my newsletter! In the last issue – how to save money on funerals, how to get rid of bed bugs, where to go for free income taxes, financial report, and committee reports. Getting all this information together, compiling and printing it, is I hope a happy situation. I am sure there are many happy readers, myself included. Plus thank you to those who deliver them. Many thanks for interesting and helpful news right at my door!"

Carol Cameron (K657)



"LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE THE OPINION OF THE AUTHOR[S] AND DO NOT REFLECT THE OPINIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OR THE MEMBERS OF SARCEE MEADOWS HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE NOT EDITED BY THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE PRIOR TO PRINTING."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

There seems to be an epidemic running rampant in Sarcee Meadows these days and I'm not referring to the latest flu bug to hit Calgary. This epidemic has the potential to do irreparable harm to our wonderful community; it is gossipitis.

I'm sure many of you remember that old childhood game of telegram, where one child says something to the youngster next to him and so on around the circle and by the time its passed through 10 mouths and 20 pairs of ears it bears no resemblance to the original statement. That is a lot of what is at the root of many of the misunderstandings and the accompanying anger and frustration for all members and staff.

The gossip game needs to be stopped and I'm not preaching by any means as I know how easy it is to talk over the fence or at coffee with a friend about things that may be troubling you. But to speculate on issues and to assume that you know the whole story behind things that have occurred is to court disaster. If you have an issue or concern with something that is going on at the Co-op then go to the person or group that is able to address this concern for you, don't gossip, speculate and play the telegram game till what was just a little molehill that could easily be rectified has become a mountain that we have to struggle to climb. If you don't know who you should address your concern to then ask, send an email or note to the office they will direct your concern into the correct hands to be professionally addressed.

Don't fall prey to others' predilection for gossip and rumour spreading, gently shut them down saying "Could we please change the topic I'm not comfortable talking about this" or other words that discourage further speculation and chatter.

I realize that this is difficult to do, believe me it's a struggle sometimes for me to not perk up my ears and wonder what Joe Blow is saying Jane Doe did or did not do, but make no mistake folks this schoolyard behaviour of gossipitis could bring us down more surely than a collapse of our buildings.

From a Concerned Member

Letter to the Editor:

Let me start out by saying what a really great job the Newsletter Committee does in getting out each edition of The Connections Newsletter. My household enjoys the news and views each month.

This past month as I was reading through the newsletter I was bewildered and astonished that the Entertainment and Social Events Committee chose to chastise our coops most valuable resource, out volunteers. Attendance at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was not what the committee expected. But I don't think the volunteers should be faulted for that. There are a number of reasons why the numbers are down such as the Board's decision to have an application system in place for a large number of our committees. This inevitably results in fewer volunteers, which means lower attendance. Also, the committee could have done a few things to add to the number of invitations that went out by ensuring that all event volunteers and all volunteers that just joined committees got invitations. I personally know of event volunteers and new volunteers that did not receive invitations to the dinner. A personal call to all volunteers, not just some, from office staff could have added to the attendance as well.

As far as the catering costs that were noted, a few cost saving measures by the committee could have helped. Having planned much bigger dinners, I know how difficult it is to figure this out. So I have a few suggestions such as: use a caterer that does not charge for a minimum number of plates, not adding plates to the final number, in fact taking away a few plates from the final number as all caterers provide more than enough food especially for a buffet service, and finally finding a more economical caterer. Having volunteers just show up or "crash" the event may have actually kept the catering over run from being higher than it was.

I feel that anyone that gives freely of his or her time and talents no matter how long or how much time should be recognized and celebrated not made to feel bad for not going to an event. Maybe it's time to look at whether this event is still relevant or if some other way to recognizing our volunteers. Perhaps a volunteer pole asking the volunteers how they want to be recognized could be done.

Just a few of my thoughts. Thank you for your time.

Mary Emro (G472)

RESPONSE TO LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

The Entertainment & Social Events Committee had an opportunity to review the concerns and suggestions that were provided by Mary Emro in her Letter to the Editor and we appreciate also being given an opportunity to respond in kind.

To begin we would like to explain that our intention was certainly not to chastise anyone. It was merely an educational item to remind people coming to any event that there is a cost associated with it. We were simply asking that we all be more aware of the costs involved when we RSVP and then don't attend. It is money out of the budget that could have been used elsewhere. This particular concern from the committee is based on the fact that the number of people who actually attended the dinner was significantly lower than the number of people who said they would be attending. By the time we needed to communicate our final numbers to the caterer, we had confirmed that 85 people would be attending. However, come the evening of the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, only 68 people were in attendance, for a difference of 17 people. This difference resulted in us paying for quite a bit more food than necessary.

While we do appreciate Mary's suggestions on who should be invited to the dinner, the invitations to the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner are sent in accordance with the "Attendance at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner" Operations Policy which has been in place since November of 1999. This policy states: ***"Invitations to the annual volunteer appreciation dinner will be issued as follows:***

- ***must be a member of a committee***
- ***active on that committee before December 31st of the previous year and attended the majority [51%] of the meetings***
- ***staff and emergency personnel to be invited***
- ***volunteers with special tasks have a special invitation***
- ***courtesy invitation to newly elected directors"***

Based on this policy, this year the Entertainment & Social Events Committee sent out a total of 117 invitations to volunteers who served on committees in 2017 and fulfilled the obligation of attending 51% of the committee meetings. Invites were also sent all of the block leaders and block reps who deliver our newsletters, to volunteers who assist at meetings and other events hosted by SMHC, to the staff, and to the Board of Directors. Interestingly enough this number, 117, is only down by 6 from the 123 invites that were sent out last year. Here are few more fun number facts related to this event:

- 117 invites, each with a guest, is a potential for 234 people attending the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.
- The legal capacity for Glamorgan Hall is actually only 180. Clearly we understand that not everyone will attend, but this also shows why it could be important to RSVP early in case we ever reach capacity.
- Out of those 117 invites, only 60 volunteers responded, 57 volunteers were not heard from at all.
 - o We had 52 volunteers respond that they would attend, some with a guest and some without, for a total of 85 people.
 - o We also had 8 volunteers who had the courtesy to regretfully decline the invitation.

We, as a Committee, do count on the office staff to do a number of things for us in the planning and orchestrating of these big events. However we also feel it would be very unfair of us, and likely an abuse of SHMC time and resources, to expect the staff to take time out of their schedules to contact every one of the volunteers who were invited, or even the half that had not responded by the deadline. The staff did reach out to one member on our behalf when it was noted that our selected menu matched certain dietary restrictions that we were aware of. We are already making changes in this regard in that for future Volunteer Appreciation Dinners we plan to include our selected menu along with the invitations.

We'd like to thank Mary as well for her suggestions on how to save costs on the catering services. However we'd like to note that the caterer we chose does not charge for a minimum number of plates. They are aware that SMHC is a non-profit organization and that we are working with a limited budget, therefore they are very willing to work with us to come up with a menu and a price that fits within our budget. They gave us several discounts

such as not charging us for their labour and discounting their standard price per plate. In fact they were very accommodating in that although our numbers, 85, were well below the 100 – 110 that they had originally quoted for, they **did not** change the price per plate as they could have, and kept the original discount per plate in place as well. We did not add to the number of plates ordered – we had RSVPs for 85 so we ordered for 85. It would be a very slippery slope though to start subtracting from the number of plates required just to save costs. The Entertainment & Social Events Committee is always open to suggestions and will gladly accept any recommendations that anyone may have for a “more economical caterer”. With the continued rising costs of goods and services in general, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to find a caterer that provides professional service and good quality food for a low economical price. As for the idea that anyone “crashed” the event, well that was certainly not in issue this year, especially with all the “no-shows”. It was simply mentioned because of situations where unexpected extra guests have caused a strain on the amount of food at past events.

We fully agree that those who give freely of their time and talents to serve SMHC should be recognized and celebrated; that is the whole point and purpose of holding the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner every year. The members of the Entertainment & Social Events Committee are also volunteers who give freely of their time and talents to plan the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, along with all the other entertainment events throughout the year. We work very hard to come up with a variety of ideas to make all our events the biggest, most entertaining events that they can be, while still operating within the budget which the SMHC members have approved for these events. Discussions for this year’s Volunteer Appreciation Dinner began as early as October 2017. We also wanted to be sure we left room in the Volunteer Appreciation budget to provide gift cards to 19 youth volunteers who helped out at the Summer BBQ and Culture Event last year. After six months of working to find new and unique forms of entertainment, a delicious and affordable caterer, and still provide a good number of door prizes, the Entertainment & Social Events Committee was understandably very excited for this year’s dinner and for the opportunity to celebrate the contributions of all our fellow SMHC volunteers. You can also understand our disappointment then when out of 117 fantastic and hardworking SMHC volunteers, whose dedication to SMHC were being recognized and celebrated, only 52 of them wanted to attend and even less than that were able to make it that evening.

Perhaps Mary could be right in that it may be time to re-evaluate whether the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner is still relevant. There could be many reasons that our volunteers are not interested in attending a dinner, however there are still many that do enjoy it. Maybe there are other new and interesting ideas out there on how all our amazing volunteers, the youth volunteers included, can be recognized and celebrated. It’s possible that it was the choice of entertainment or maybe the theme that deterred some people from coming this year, or not knowing ahead of time what the menu was going to be. On the other hand, the members of the Entertainment & Social Events Committee are still receiving many compliments from those that did attend the dinner this year. We are hearing that lots of people had a great time, the Game Show was a lot of fun, the food was delicious, and they loved having the opportunity to visit with their friends and neighbours from all over the coop!

As the Entertainment & Social Events Committee looks ahead to next year we will be taking all of this feedback, both positive and negative, into consideration. We will continue to research other ideas and opportunities on how we can continue to improve on the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner or how we can appreciate our volunteers in other ways. An opinion poll or survey might be a great idea to get feedback directly from the volunteers that are deserving of our appreciation; we will discuss this idea further as well. In the meantime, we are always open to receiving feedback on any of our events, in any way, at any time, whether it be by contacting us through the office, visiting one of our meetings, or even through a letter to the editor. We meet at B50 at 7:00 pm, usually on the first Thursday of every month. We look forward to continuing to serve the members of SMHC by providing the best and most exciting entertainment events that we can, and continuing to foster the community spirit that is an integral part of cooperative living.

Thank you,

The SMHC Entertainment & Social Events Committee

Disclaimer: Any ads placed in this newsletter are not to be considered as an endorsement by Sarcee Meadows Housing Co-operative Ltd. but are for information only.

Classifieds

FOR SALE:

Yamaha stereo, receiver, 2 towers, CD player, and a Sony turn table.

\$550.00 as a unit

Please call 403-249-8755

Window Cleaning:

Exclusive Window Cleaning offer for Sarcee Meadows Members!

Exterior window cleaning – all main level windows – just \$15.00

Contact: Bill Davidson, Unit D251, 403-875-4096



Healing Intentions:



Psychic/Medium

Card Readings

Book a party

Call Shelly: 403-660-2045

Energy/Crystal healings

Other Services available

Knitted Dish Cloths For Sale:

Assorted colours and patterns. \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00.

Call Tricia: 403-242-0048



House Cleaning:



I have over 15 years' experience and I'm available for all your cleaning needs; organizing your home or helping with small tasks on a weekly, biweekly or monthly basis. \$25.00 per hour includes all products needed for cleaning.

Contact: Monika 403-920-0920 or email: cleanandshine28@gmail.com

Straightline Painting:

Residential painter, competitive prices, 30 years' experience. Used by SMHC

Call Peter: 403-998-5179



Lawn Mowers wanted:

Do you want to get rid of your old lawn mower? Fred Sheppard is looking for used lawn mowers to repair and sell.

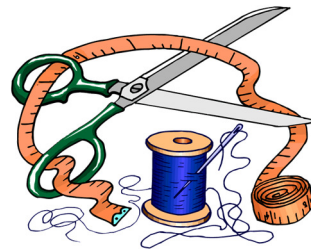
Please call Fred at 403-686-4302.

Moments Fashion Solutions

- Need Alterations?
- Italian Leather Products
- Baby Boots

Contact Marzena - 403-397-3779

www.momentsfashion.com



FEBRUARY 2, 2018

Tax clinic now booking appointments

Admin / Announcements /

You are invited to our
FREE
Tax Clinic



We will do your Income Tax For free!

Kerby Centre income tax volunteers are available to help fill in tax returns for seniors 55+

Starting March 1st to April 26th, 2018

The income limit for this service is:

\$30,000 per year for single or

\$45,000 per year for a couple (combined income)

By appointment only

You don't have to be a Kerby member!

We will begin booking from **February 1st, 2018.**

To schedule an appointment please call the Information Office at **403- 705- 3246**

Our Address: **Kerby Centre 1133-7 Avenue SW, Calgary T2P 1B2**

Ladies & Girls only Swimming Session

Organized By

ICNA Sisters Calgary

Golden opportunity for ladies & girls to learn swimming from female instructors with no men around. Covers are on all of the windows looking into pool area. Confirm your spot by contacting Farha Fatima (Contact information given below).



Steam-room, Hot tub, Aqua size



Plenty of FREE Parking

Where: Killarney Aquatic & Recreation Center

1919 – 29th Street SW, Calgary

When: Every Saturday

(First session starts on February 24th, 2018)

Who: Open to ladies & girls of all ages

Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Rate: \$8 - swim only

\$12 - with instructor, - Pay in advance

Contact: Farha Fatima

Phone: 403-969-9648

Email: farha1_khan@yahoo.com



ICNA Sisters Canada
Islamic Circle of North America

2018 Recycling Schedule

RECYCLING PICKUP DATES: Recycling will be done **EVERY WEEK**, by sections, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday unless there is a holiday. Any dates in bold are changed from the regular day.

A11 to C176	Tuesday	January 2, 9, 16, 23 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27, March 6, 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17, 24, May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, June 5, 12, 19, 26, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, August 7, 14, 21, 28, September 4, 12, 18, 25, October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, November 6, 13, 20, 27, December 4, 11, 18
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C181 to E358	Wednesday	January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, February 7, 14, 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13, 20, 27, July 4, 11, 18, 27, August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, September 5, 12, 19, 26, October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, November 7, 14, 21, 28, December 5, 12, 19
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E361 to H556	Thursday	January 4, 11, 18, 25, February 1, 8, 15, 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28, July 5, 12, 19, 26, August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, September 6, 13, 20, 27, October 4, 11, 18, 25, November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, December 6, 13, 20, 27
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H561 to L745	Friday	January 5, 12, 19, 26 February 2, 9, 16, 23, March 2, 9, 16, 23, April 2, 6, 13, 20, 27, May 4, 11, 18, 25, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, July 6, 13, 20, 27, August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, September 7, 14, 21, 28, October 5, 12, 19, 26, November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, December 7, 14, 21, 28
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Pick-up April 2 instead of March 30



VOLUNTEERS
DO NOT
NECESSARILY
HAVE THE TIME;
THEY HAVE
THE HEART

ELIZABETH ANDREW

#volunteer2014

CALENDAR:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 8	9 Honours & Awards @ 7:00	10 Members Meeting @ 7:00 @ Grace Lutheran	11 Membership @ 7:00	12 Property Enhancement @ 7:00	13	14
15	16 Finance @ 7:00	17 Education & Involvement @ 6:30	18 Personnel @ 7:00	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Board Meeting @ 6:45	26	27	28
29	30	May 1	2 Property Maintenance @ 7:00	3 Entertainment & Social Events @ 7:00	4	5
6	7 Newsletter @ 7:00	8	9 Environment @ 7:00	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Shop and Office closed for Victoria Day	22	23	24 New Member Workshop @ 7:00	25	26
27	28	29	30 Board Meeting @ 6:45	31		

**RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS
NOMINATION FORM**

Do you know someone, an adult, teen or child, who has done a "Random Act of Kindness" for you or someone else? If so, please take the time to acknowledge them and what they have done. Complete this form and submit it to the office to the attention of the Education and Involvement Committee.

At the end of the year a "Random Act of Kindness" winner will be chosen from the entries that are received throughout the year. The winner will be acknowledged at the Annual General Meeting in January.

Let's recognize those special people who extended themselves and make our lives better by simply being kind!



NAME OF THE NOMINEE: _____

NOMINEE'S UNIT #: _____

ACT OF KINDNESS: _____

YOUR NAME AND UNIT #: _____

[Use extra paper if required]

COMMITTEE CONTACTS: 2018 – 2019:

C.S.I. (Co-op Seniors Interests)

Chair: Lucille Ranchuk

Board Liaison: Isabell Reznik

Education and Involvement

Chair: Judy Silzer

Board Liaison: Helen Serrurier

Elections

Chair: Marie Forester

Entertainment and Social Events

Chair: Sandy Christensen

Board Liaison: Jenn Jenkinson

Environment

Chair: Russ Chandler

Board Liaison: John Preston

Finance

Chair:

Board Liaison: John Preston

Grievance & Resolution

Chair: Georgia Gardiner

Honours and Awards

Chair: Audrey Templeton

Board Liaison: Joanne Mick

Membership

Chair: Sandy Christensen

Board Liaison: Isabel Ciok

Newsletter

Chair: Kim Spence

Board Liaison: Isabell Reznik

Personnel

Chair: Pat Fenlon

Board Liaison: Kelly Edwards

Property Maintenance

Chair:

Board Liaison: Mike Cooper

Property Enhancement (includes Parking and Security)

Chair: Wayne McAdam

Board Liaison: Dean Putman

Committees can be contacted by calling the office at 403-246-2746 Ext. 102 or emailing

janine@sarceemeadows.coop

After Hours Emergency Maintenance:

In the event of an emergency maintenance situation after hours please call the Emergency Maintenance Cell Phone at:

403-813-2783



SARCEE MEADOWS HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD.

COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM

This form is to be used by any member wishing to apply for the **Finance, Grievance and Resolution, Membership, Personnel, or Property Maintenance Committees**. Please return completed forms to the main office, to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator.

NAME:

UNIT #:

COMMITTEE NAME:

What knowledge, professional experiences, or life experiences can you offer to this Committee to assist in making decisions that are in the best interests for the future of Sarcee Meadows Housing Cooperative Ltd?

[illegible]

What is your reason for wanting to join this committee?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.