

Winter 2015

Stettler County Connection



**THE FIRST
COUNCIL
1955**

pg 1

INVASIVE ALERT

Common Buckthorn

pg 10

Utility
Invoice

**New
Look**

pg 16



COUNTY CELEBRATES 60 YEARS

Sixty years ago in 1955, Lois St. Laurent was the Prime Minister of Canada, Ernest Manning was the Premier of Alberta, the first television broadcast of the opening of parliament occurred, fiber optics were developed (England), and the County of Stettler No. 6 was incorporated.

Front Cover

You will notice on our front cover, a photo from the archives. The first Council of the County of Stettler No. 6.

Back Row:

- Lloyd Williams (Secretary-Treasurer)
- J.A. Tucker
- J.W. Haner
- A.E. Potter
- George Smith (Assistant Secretary-Treasurer)

Front Row:

- E. Stauffer
- F.A. Gerlach
- W. Johnston
- T.M. Robinson (Reeve)
- L.V. Lohr
- W.D. Crawford

Our 60th Anniversary is a time for us to reflect on all that we have accomplished and plan for what is yet to come. It is also a time to celebrate the growth of our County. Above all, it is a time to acknowledge the hundreds of Councillors and public servants who have worked together to bring Stettler County to where it is today.

Please watch for our Anniversary Celebration event announcement and join us to commemorate in the spring of 2015.



07



19



26

03 REEVE'S RAMBLINGS
A look back, a look ahead.

05 SAFETY
Please share.

06 COUNTY LAND PURCHASE
Next steps.

08 WARD FOCUS-STETTLER
Ernie Gendre, Ward 5

10 INVASIVE ALERT
Common Buckthorn

12 FRESH WATER?
No problem.

14 DEVELOPING FORWARD
2015 Planning & Development Projects

16 NEW LOOK-SAME SERVICE
A change of financial software.

18 STETTLER AMBULANCE
New initiatives in 2015.

19 AMBULANCE RATES
How much will your ride cost?

20 PAWC PROGRAM
Eradicating absinthine wormwood.

24 RURAL ROAD STUDY
Where will this take us?

26 CLUBROOT FORUM
Farming canola? You're invited.

27 LUCKY LIGHTNING STRIKE

COUNTY CONNECTION

INTRO

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is to not stop questioning.

Albert Einstein

It seemed appropriate at the time of writing, in this new year, with the County's celebration of their 60th Anniversary and at the beginning of so many new projects, to reflect on the past, be present today all whilst busy making plans for tomorrow.

So much of our time at the County is spent making plans for tomorrow. And as I look at the front cover of this magazine I wish I could look at today through their eyes and know if they were able to see their plans through. Were they pleased with the outcomes? How did they measure their success?

Another year has come and gone so quickly. So many projects, so many goals. Some realized, some put off, some still in progress. To me, everything with a beginning and an end seems quite easy to understand. It is that which is perpetual which I find hard to stay on top of. But as Albert Einstein so precisely said it, the important thing is to not stop questioning.

While I am not an advocate of the 'New Years Resolution', it would be safe to say I may continue to try to question and measure a little more this year, always trying to keep in mind our hopes and plans for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Niki Thorsteinsson



Stettler County Connection

Winter 2015

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2014 Ice Bucket Challenge

REEVE'S RAMBLINGS

The year 2014, as we look back on it from an agricultural perspective was another good year. Although yields were not as high as last year's bumper crop, for the most part they were a strong average and grades and protein content were excellent. Combined with record breaking cattle prices and feed prices it has been a successful year.

The County of Stettler has also had a very busy and successful year. Shirley McClellan Regional Water Services Commission lines have been completed to Donalda and Big Valley, along with several rural water sites. The Erskine Water Reservoir is on target to be completed in the next few months which will bring a safe and secure water supply for the future use of the area and will certainly add increased fire protection to the west part of the County including the Buffalo Lake area. The Red Willow truckfill station is completed and will be appreciated by the local farmers for a clean and closer supply of water and as mentioned before, increased fire protection.

Public Works projects have ranged from new road construction, rebuilding and repairing problem areas, stripping gravel pits, road graveling, roadside mowing and brushing. The Public Works Department has also responded to hundreds, perhaps thousands of ratepayers requests including grading, laneway snowplowing, pothole repair, brushing and a multitude of other requests.

Since the Government of Alberta has stopped funding for bridges we have had to replace or repair several bridges in the Donalda, Gadsby, Endiang and Big Valley areas. We have contracted some of our gravel supply and placement and have secured gravel in our County and adjacent counties as well, to the point that we have a 15 to 20 year inventory.

In 2015 we have some paving, road building and of course many miles of gravel planned. The Agricultural

Services Board (ASB) completed the last third of the roadside weed and brush control three year program with good results. The Absinthe Wormwood program (PAWC-Priority Area Weed Control) has had favorable results but will definitely be an ongoing program. The ASB will continue to monitor the presence of clubroot in the County and will work with producers and seed companies to mitigate the impact of this disease through best farming practices.

Planning and Development had an increase in subdivision and development permits in 2014 and is looking forward to new projects and completing ongoing projects in 2015.

The Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee which is supported in collaboration by the Town of Stettler and the County of Stettler has successfully recruited Dr. Marvin Bailey who will be coming to Stettler this spring. Dr. Bailey and his fiancée visited Stettler and area last fall and they as well as we are looking forward to their arrival. Beginning in early 2015 (March or April) Council is proposing to do a series of Town Hall meetings at various communities in the County to address ratepayer concerns and get input from residents on ongoing and proposed projects. We will also be at the 2015 Stettler Trade Show again this year. These Town Hall meetings will allow us to further our commitment to our residents through a different format. I would encourage everyone to attend a meeting in their area.

2015 is an Anniversary year for the County. We are celebrating our 60th year, as we were incorporated in 1955. I would like to wish each and everyone a prosperous and Happy New Year and I look forward to another successful year with the County of Stettler.

4



PLOW SAFETY

Kids love to play outside. It is an excellent form of recreation, exercise and fun. At the County, our graders are often working in less than ideal conditions - in the dark, in the snow. Please take a minute to talk to your children, grandchildren and guests about snowplow safety.

Our drivers would like children to stay far back from their equipment. If they are out playing in the snow, make sure they are wearing bright visible clothing, and that you are keeping an eye out for our equipment. Discourage them from making tunnels and dens in the snow drifts along the driveway as our drivers always worry someone is hiding inside when they come by to make a pass with fresh snow. Please help us keep Stettler County safe this winter.

TRANSFER SITE SAFETY

You may have noticed if you frequent the Stettler Transfer Site, how neat and tidy things are looking out there. There is new signage, plus the Eco Centre is in full use collecting and sorting so many recyclables out of what otherwise becomes garbage.

Thank you for playing a role in maintaining order at all of our Transfer Sites. It makes a difference for our staff, and most certainly for our environment. The extra few moments you take at home to sort your recycling from your garbage saves Transfer staff many hours of sorting it out later.

Pictured above is a safety rail recently installed where you back up to the household garbage bins at the Stettler Transfer Site. Please take care. More improvements are planned by the Stettler Waste Management Authority.

You can check out their new Strategic Plan and goals at www.StettlerCounty.ca.



RSPF FUNDING

On December 10, 2014 the County of Stettler Council met and approved the Recreation Special Project Funding (RSPF) for the 2014/2015 year. A total of seven projects received shares of the \$50,000.00 available from the Recreation Special Project Reserve.

The Recreation Board brought forward recommendations to Council based on the criteria outlined in the application forms.

Projects receiving funding are as follows:

1.	Big Valley School: School Council - Big Valley School Playground Enhancement	\$16,000.00
2.	Big Valley Ag Society - Floor Replacement in Arena	\$13,887.00
3.	Byemoor Community Club - Painting of Community Hall	\$6,925.00
4.	Pilot Knob Social Centre - Refurbish of Exterior/Window Replacement	\$3,000.00
5.	The Linda Society - Septic Tank Replacement	\$2,470.00
6.	Stettler & District Ag Society - Tube Heater Replacement in Arena	\$4,218.00
7.	Erskine Curling Club - Tables and Chair Replacement	\$3,500.00

The Recreational Special Project Funding initiative began in 2006 and since its inception this fund has made it possible for many community groups in the County of Stettler to improve, enhance and prolong the life of their recreational facilities. Dave Fox, President of the Pilot Knob Social Centre had this to say, "What great news. With the help of the County Recreation Special Project Funding, the Pilot Knob Society is working to restore our one-room school house and revitalize a sense of community spirit."

6



COUNTY LAND PURCHASE Q & A

The County has purchased land. What are the next steps?

The subdivision of the 80 acre parcel of land purchased in 2014 is complete. The County followed the Planning and Development and the Municipal Planning Commission's approval process, just like any other parcel of land changing hands. Up next is rezoning, from the Agricultural District to the Public Service District.

Will we build?

Administration has begun the investigation of building options, costs and timelines. As mentioned in the previous County Connection, Council will decide based on estimates, interest rates and budget whether to proceed with a County Complex that would house all County operations, or to divide this project into stages beginning with a Public Works shop based largely on the cost-benefit vs. needs analysis currently in progress. In our 2015 Budget document, \$600,000 was allocated for further investigation and repair of deficiencies in the Public Works shop, or to put towards a new building. Council has chosen to move forward with building, rather than put money into a 44 year old building.

What will we build?

The County completed a Needs Assessment Survey in 2012. This addressed current spacial needs and future projections. Departments are currently reviewing this Needs Assessment Survey and updating it based on more current knowledge of today's business and spacial needs. While it is impossible to see into the future, we will try to predict how 20-30 years from now these needs may change and how we will be able to adapt and ensure we build the most efficiently today, accommodating the future as well. The vision of Council is for a modest, functional design

commensurate with the values of the County community.

How will we build it?

Our next step is to choose the best way of moving forward. There are two methods under review: Design-Build or Bid-Build. At this stage, we believe Design-Build Procurement will be the more beneficial method and we are pursuing proposals from qualified Design-Build firms as a first step in identifying a relationship to move forward with. However all options will be thoroughly investigated and all current and future needs quantifiably assessed.

How much will it cost?

There are many variables that will contribute to the overall project cost, including staged construction options, anticipated costs today vs. anticipated future costs, inflation and interest. Once a design has been chosen and detailed cost estimates established we will be able to provide estimated project costs.

Will ratepayers have input?

Absolutely. The County of Stettler has a strong commitment and a measurable track record of being transparent and open with our ratepayers.

We just held our 2015 Draft Budget open house on January 7, inviting input from all of our ratepayers. We also recently visited the hamlet of Erskine in December for a Public Meeting to hear concerns and questions from ratepayers in the area.

As we move forward with this project, the public will be notified and have the opportunity to attend several public forums to provide input and join in the discussion. As always, we encourage everyone to participate. We value your feedback.



RE-THINKING BURNING BARRELS

Burning garbage is often the solution of choice in rural areas. But is it really wise to be doing that?

Burning plastic, rubber or other man-made materials creates dioxin and other dangerous toxins in the air, soil & groundwater. This endangers you, your children, your neighbours, your pets, and all animals. The resulting ash is also toxic and can easily get into the ground and your well water. Dioxin and other chemicals are totally invisible, and their health effects are not immediate. It is easy to be unaware of the problems. But once you are aware, it doesn't make sense to continue. It may be hard to accept the simple act of burning your garbage endangers you and your family. But the longer you continue, the more poisons accumulate in your body.

As well, burning garbage instead of recycling eligible items removes those items forever and forces the use of valuable non-renewable resources to replace them.

According to Alberta Environment, what is "permitted" burning by law?

Permitted Burning

- brush and trees

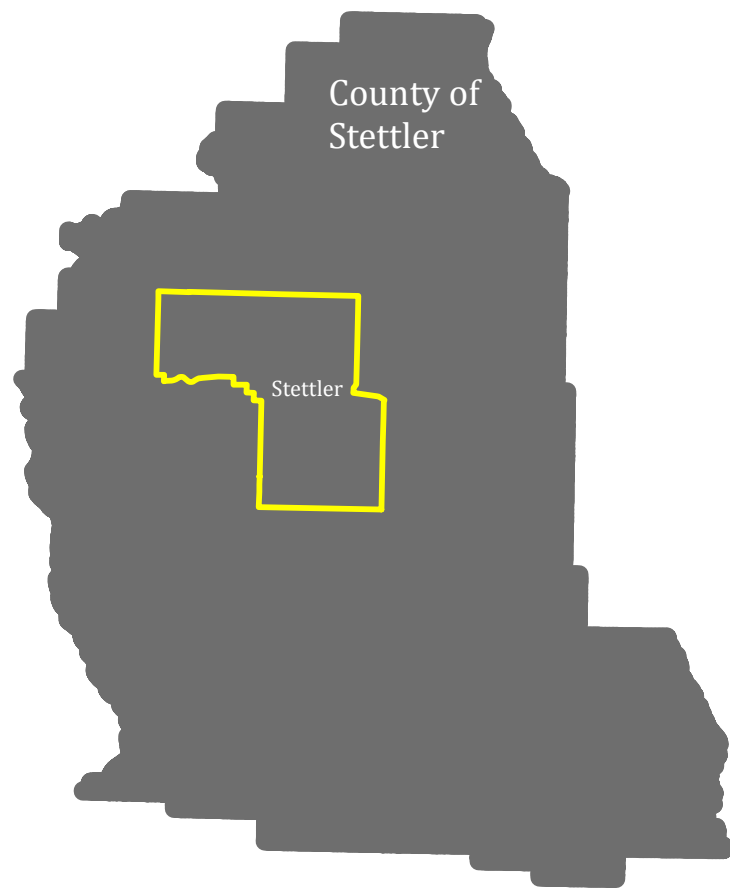
- wood not containing wood preservatives
- stubble

Prohibited Burning in Alberta:

- all plastics, including baler twine
- wood containing wood preservatives
- all rubber, including tires and rubber-coated wire
- pesticide or chemical containers
- construction site waste
- any other waste that causes dense smoke, offensive odours or releases toxic substances

Don't Burn it! Recycle it!

- plastic
- tires
- paper and cardboard
- paint/paint containers
- beverage containers
- batteries
- metal
- fluorescent bulbs
- used oil
- inkjets/laser toners



WARD FOCUS

My name is Ernie Gendre and I am serving Ward 5, Stettler, as a County Councillor.

I would have to label my first year serving on County Council, as a learning experience. I have taken a lot of pleasure in investigating all the components of County operations, from the very simple to the complex.

My background includes owning and operating a business alongside my wife Nancy. My first observation in my new role on Council, and perhaps a lesson for someone used to having total control over, responsibility for, and accountability of something, is that as a Councillor my role would be much different.

First, I would need to watch and listen. Secondly, contribute from my past experiences in the earth moving, oilfield, sewer and water services to suggest the more effective way

without intimidation. And finally, negotiations are often somewhat of a bartering system in which we hope to reach a common ground, one that works best for the County and the people.

I feel as a County we are always in transition. Forty years ago, we were focused on road building. This emphasis then diminished when we came to the point where our roads were satisfactory. Today, while there is only so much funding available, we still have the challenge of trying to accommodate the needs, not just the wants, of our citizens. We have to remember as a County there is always room for improvement, and realize that we never finish or stop. We are never totally satisfied.

My mandate as a County Councillor is very much 'for the community'. Whatever I can do, maintain, or foster that helps others and our community is what I want to contribute



towards. My job is to help govern and justify how, when and where money is spent.

Sixty years ago when we became a County, the world was different, as were our priorities and expectations. I think in celebration of our 60th Anniversary event we should all take a moment to look back at that time when we first became a County, and try to learn some lessons.

Things were simpler. We looked after one another. We looked out for our neighbor. We went out of our way to help one another in an effort to all have a decent life. Today we are all much busier. It is not as easy because we are caught up with doing and maintaining our own lives. But if we can take a lesson from the past and recreate it, I think it would be that we can all help and support one another and still maintain a decent life. This is what creates community.

I do have to say I haven't received many calls or complaints from Ward 5 Stettler constituents in my first year on Council. I am not sure if that means everyone is totally satisfied and that we are doing our job, but either way I would offer that I am always available for a conversation. I welcome calls and visits from my constituents and would love to hear from them.

Sincerely,

Ernie Gendre
County of Stettler - Ward 5, Stettler

egendre@stettlercounty.ca
587.282.1644



INVASIVE ALERT COMMON BUCKTHORN

This past fall, a new weed was identified in the County of Stettler. Common Buckthorn has been positively identified near Buffalo Lake. It was brought to our attention in late October, and control work on what was found will be done in early 2015. Because this is such an invasive species, we are planning on inspecting more lands around Buffalo Lake to ensure it does not spread. This is a very unique issue to County of Stettler, let alone Alberta. There are only two known locations of infestation in Alberta, one in Edmonton along the river, and ours near Buffalo Lake. The next closest infestation to us (that we know about) is in Ontario.

Common Buckthorn is a deciduous shrub or small tree, introduced from Europe in the early 1800's as an ornamental hedge plant. In Canada Common Buckthorn was valued for its compact structure and ease of propagation and hardiness, and was widely planted for shelterbelts and ornamental purposes. By the 1920's it was discovered that Common Buckthorn was an alternate host for an oat crop rust.

This shrub is dioecious (each produces only male or female flowers) therefore fruiting trees are always female. Reproduction is primarily by seed – cut stems will re-sprout but roots do not have rhizomes. The extent of the root system seems to vary with site characteristics. Common Buckthorn begins flowering late spring/early summer and flowers can appear with leaf-out. Fruits turn from green to red and to black when ripe by late

summer/early fall. The fruits tend to remain on the plant through most of the winter.

Common Buckthorn forms dense, even-aged stands which crowd and shade out native understory plants. Most of the fruits fall directly below the parent plant, creating a dense understory of buckthorn seedlings.

Common Buckthorn barks, leaves, and fruits have a strong laxative effect when consumed. Other effects include nausea, stomach cramps, diarrhea, and irritation of the lining of bowels to the point of bleeding.

Habitat:

Common Buckthorn grows in well drained sand or clay soils, or poorly drained calcareous or alkaline soils. It has a wide range of environmental tolerances (temperature, moisture, substrate, shade) but grows best on fertile, sunny, moist, and disturbed sites. It is hardy to -40 degrees Celsius.

Identification:

Stems: Grow 1-4 m tall in shrub form with many stems and branches. In tree form a single main stem with ascending branches growing to 5-8 m tall. Many branches are tipped with a thorn 0.5-2.2 cm long. Young bark is smooth with lighter-colored lenticels and older bark is grey scaly. Branches have prominent leaf scars and terminal buds are hairy in winter.



Leaves: Are simple, elliptic, dull green, and smooth on both surfaces with minutely toothed edges. Leaf size is 1.5-7 cm long and 0.9-7 cm wide. Leaves occur near branch tips, are usually opposite but sometimes alternate, and often remain green until falling in late autumn.

Flowers: Are small, inconspicuous, and occur in small clusters. Two to eight staminate flowers are clustered in leaf axils, and pistillate flowers occur in clusters of 2 to 15. Fruits can be single or in clusters, borne in leaf axils or at the end of spur branches. Fruits are 5-10 mm in diameter bearing 1-4 seeds. Seeds are 4-5 mm long.

Prevention:

Common Buckthorn seeds germinate best in disturbed sites. Germination and seedling survival is poor under thick litter layers. Therefore underplanting disturbed wooded area with native woody species is potentially effective to prevent primary invasion or re-invasion of buckthorns. Seed dispersal is aided by rodent caches and birds consuming the fruits. Common Buckthorn fruits have a laxative effect which facilitates dispersal.

Control:

Grazing: Consumption of Common Buckthorn by cattle in sufficient quantity causes poisoning, and reduces milk quantity and quality. Sheep grazing as control has been experimented with. Invasive plants should never be considered as forage.

Mechanical: Prescribed burning will top kill stems and destroy the seeds but will require repetition. Common Buckthorn can also be difficult to ignite. In wetland areas, raising the water table can effectively kill the shrub. Small plants can be hand pulled when the soil is moist. Larger plants will require some digging to get the root out. Soil disturbance will aid germination of buried seed so these areas will require future control efforts.

Chemical: Triclopyr is registered for use on buckthorn. Always check product labels to ensure the herbicide is registered for use on the target plant in Canada by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency. Always read and follow label directions. Consult your local Agricultural Fieldman or Certified Pesticide Dispenser for more information.

Biological: As of 2008 two potential agents were being tested.

Sources:

Zouhar, Kris. 2011. *Rhamnus cathartica*, *R. davurica*. In: Fire Effects Information System, [Online]. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Fire Sciences Laboratory (Producer). Available: <http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/> [2012, March 13].

Rhamnus cathartica. Global Invasive Species Database, Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG) of the IUCN Species Survival Commission. www.issg.org

Common Buckthorn. Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources. www.dnr.wi.gov/invasives/fact/buckthorn_com.htm



FRESH WATER? NO PROBLEM.

RED WILLOW

The new Red Willow Truck Fill is NOW OPEN. Located just a minute north of the hamlet on Highway 850. It is conveniently outfitted with a Cam Lock Fill, Overhead Fill, or Pail Fill option. The most convenient method to access water is to get a Personal Identification Number (PIN) from the County. Come by the County Administration

building Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. to set up a Truck Fill PIN. You can use the truck fill at your convenience and the County will bill you for consumption. The truck fill also accepts coins.



ERSKINE

Construction at the new Erskine Water Reservoir is almost complete. Crews are putting finishing touches on the water works. Exterior finishing and landscaping will be completed in the spring. The Erskine Truck Fill is also outfitted with Cam Lock Fill, Overhead Fill, or Pail Fill option, and in addition there will be an RV Dumping Station.

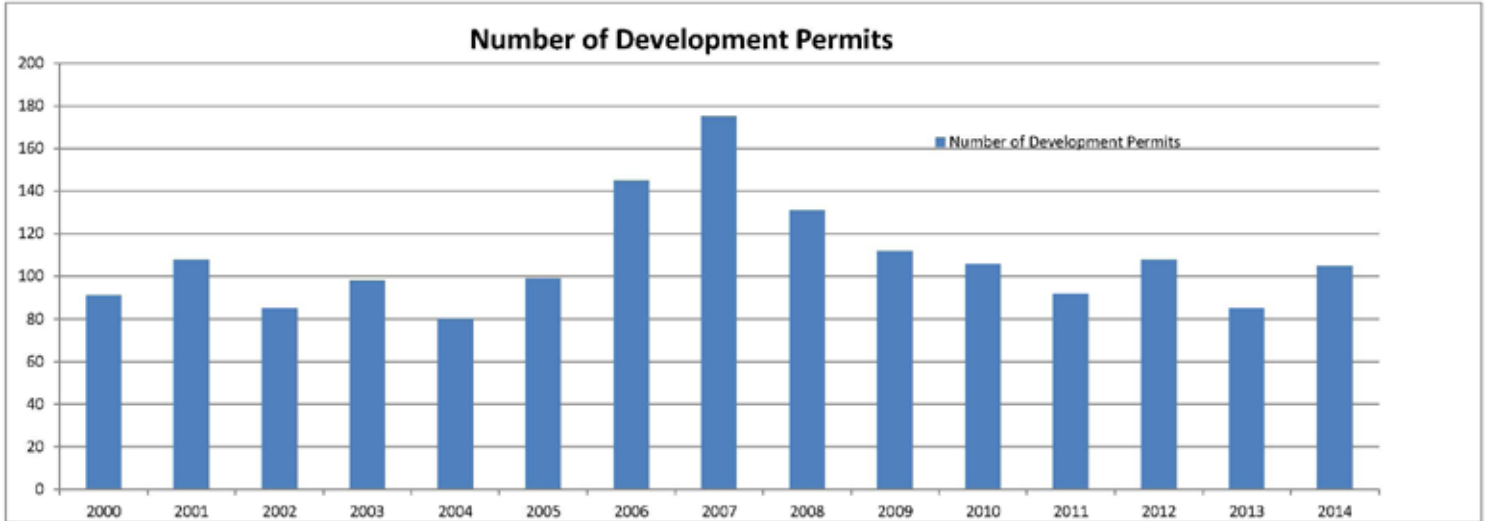
The County is developing lots for sale within the hamlet of Erskine, and future plans include tying this new development into the new water supply.

For more information, or to sign up for a Truck Fill PIN, please drop in to the County Administration Building at 6602 - 44 Avenue Stettler, or call 403.742.4441.

14

Development Permits

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Average
No. of DP	91	108	85	98	80	99	145	175	131	112	106	92	108	85	105	108
Value	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,261,600	\$48,995,330	\$84,040,130	\$40,905,570	\$9,327,700	\$46,079,330	\$14,226,615	\$12,123,000	\$13,501,000	\$14,167,809



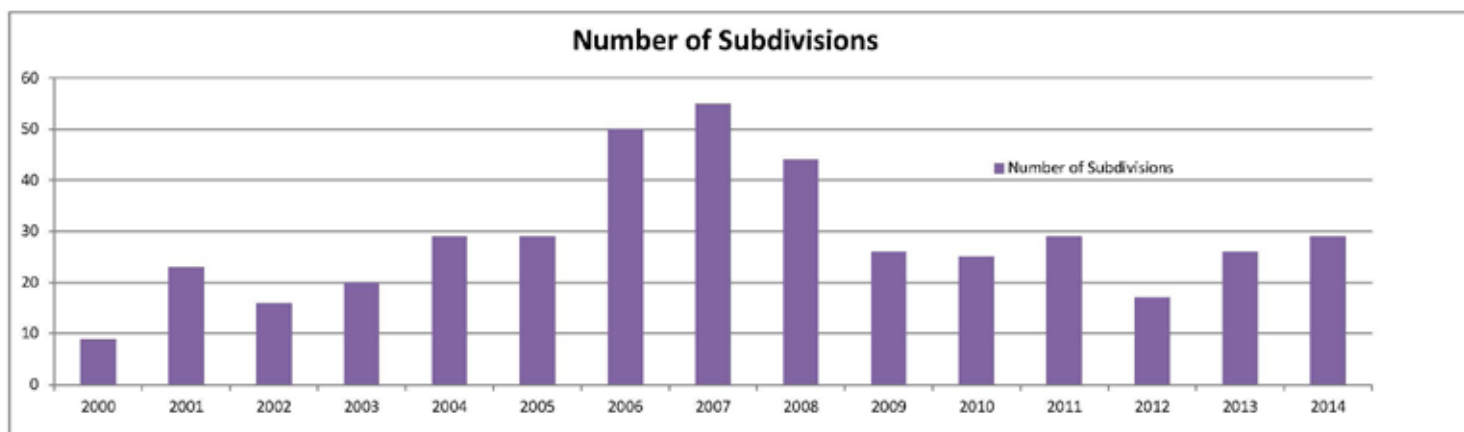
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The following projects are budgeted to be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department in 2015:

- In conjunction with the Engineering department, a regional stormwater drainage masterplan for the Red Willow Creek basin, jointly with the Town of Stettler, to determine stormwater run-off rates and stormwater detention requirements within the Intermunicipal Development Plan area. This project will be undertaken by a consultant and managed by the Director of Engineering.
- A joint servicing study with the Town of Stettler to determine water supply and sanitary sewer servicing standards within the Intermunicipal Development Plan area. This project will be undertaken by a consultant. In 2015/2016 the results of this study will provide input to an in-house review of the Stettler Intermunicipal Development Plan that was adopted in 2009. These projects will culminate in the preparation of a new Southeast Stettler Major Area Structure Plan in 2017.
- Construction of a public walkway along the east side of Highway 835 in Erskine. This project was first identified in the Erskine Concept Plan which was adopted in 2012 and was approved by Council for the 2014/2015 budget. Land acquisition has been completed and consultation with the affected landowners will continue into spring.
- The first phase of residential lot development on County-owned land in the east part of the Hamlet of Erskine. This project is part of the implementation of the Erskine Concept Plan which was adopted in 2012 and was approved by Council for the 2015 budget.
- The Rural Addressing Bylaw was amended in 2014 to provide for urban style house numbering in multi-lot subdivisions and hamlets. In 2015 this project will involve community consultation to determine street names where no official street names exist. New house numbers will be allocated and all residents will be notified of their new addresses.

Subdivisions

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Average
No. of SUB	9	23	16	20	29	29	50	55	44	26	25	29	17	26	29	28



LOOKING FORWARD

- Major review of the Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan that was adopted in 2010 and minor review of the Buffalo Lake South Shore Intermunicipal Development Plan that was adopted in 2013.
- The following in-house projects will be started in 2015 as follow-up studies from the Buffalo Lake South Shore Intermunicipal Development Plan that was adopted in 2013, and will require intermunicipal cooperation with the Summer Villages of Rochon Sands and White Sands:
 - Complete the correction of significant encroachments onto municipal reserve at the Old Bolin and Rochon Sands subdivisions, through the sale of reserve land. Existing license agreements will expire in 2015. This project was incorporated as a policy in the Buffalo Lake South Shore Intermunicipal Development Plan in 2013 and involves close consultation with the affected landowners. The revenue from land sales must be deposited into a municipal reserve fund that is set aside specifically for the improvement of reserves and recreation facilities at Buffalo Lake.
 - Prepare a shoreline management plan, working closely with lakeshore communities and Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development. Community-specific consultations will start in 2015. Ultimately the project will address matters such as the improvement of public lake access points and the regulation of seasonal docks/boat lifts/piers.

If you have an interest in any of these projects, please do not hesitate to contact the Planning and Development Department at 403.742.4441.



FINANCE-NEW LOOK SAME SERVICES

Over the past couple of years the Finance Department at the County has been investigating different options with Enterprise Resource Planning software (ERP). In short, ERP is Financial Software. After much research and discussion a decision was made in 2014 to change our ERP software to Diamond Municipal Software.

How will new software impact me?

As with any software change things will appear different (new look) and the processes will change. Our biggest change that will impact ratepayers will be in the Utilities department. If you pay utilities to the County of Stettler, you will now see a new bill with different information on it. We are still working out the kinks but basically you will have a current monthly charge as well as it will pull the opening balance, less any current payments, giving you your utility balance.

Another form that will have significant changes on it in 2015 will be your tax notice. The format is currently in progress, and will be developed to look as close as possible to what we currently produce for tax notices.

Many of you currently make your payments online for your utilities, accounts receivable and taxes. Presently,

these payments are all made under one payee in your bank. Over the next couple of months we will be working diligently to get this changed. By making this change, it will allow for us to download your payment information directly into our system. Because we are in the beginning stages of this changeover we don't want to overwhelm you, our ratepayers, with what you can expect. We will be updating and informing you with how payments should be made as we progress with this new system.

As these changes occur, we will work with you in regards to what account number, customer number, roll number or owner number you should use for your payments. You can expect to see a mail out with your utility bill and in your tax notice explaining these upcoming changes. We will also post information on the County website at www.StettlerCounty.ca.

As with any change there will be some hiccups and some frustrations, however we look forward to working with you to make the changeover as streamlined and easy as possible. We thank you in advance for your patience.

SAMPLE



County of Stettler

Box 1270
6602 44 Ave
Stettler, AB T0C 2L0
Canada

Phone: 403-742-4441

UTILITY INVOICE

Statement Date: January 9, 2015

Billing Period: December 1, 2014 - December 31, 2014

Your account number: 581552.00

For service at: 489786;2;16

DOE, JOHN & JANE
PO BOX 123
STETTLER, AB T0C 2L1

Meter Reading and Usage Details this bill

Meter: 18778945612

Reading on 12/23/2014 Actual 357,003

Previous reading on 11/26/2014 Actual 348,431

Amount of water you used 8.572 M3

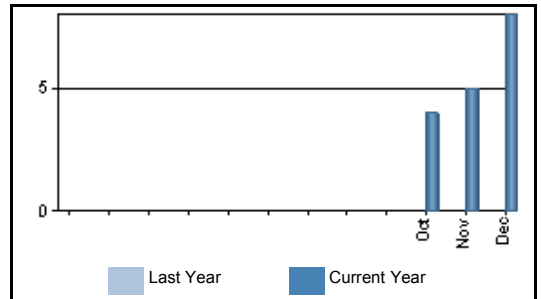
Payment and Adjustment Details

Payment on 12/31/2014 -\$187.00

Amount Owing

Amount of your last bill	\$117.00
Adjustments processed	\$0.00
Late fees added	\$0.00
Payments we processed <i>Thank you</i>	-\$187.00
New Charges	\$309.48
Water Consumption Fee	\$195.18
Fixed Monthly Water Charge	\$20.00
Sewer Disposal Fee	\$79.30
Monthly Fixed Sewer Charge	\$15.00
Total Payment now due	\$239.48

Your Historic Usage



Additional Billing Highlights

Number of days in the period: 31

Your average daily utility cost: \$9.98

Payment Return Slip

Please complete and return this slip with your payment. Make your payment payable to Stettler County No 6. For other payment options, please contact us.

Your Account Number	Total payment due
19978415.00	\$239.48



Payment enclosed
\$

DOE, JOHN & JANE
PO BOX 123
STETTLER, AB T0C 2L1

County of Stettler
Box 1270
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Stettler, AB T0C 2L0
Canada



L to R: Carrie Jordan, Rochelle Carpentier, Gordon Stevenson, Crystal Lawrence-Piggott and Chris O'Hara

NEW YEAR, NEW INITIATIVES SAME GREAT SERVICE

The Stettler District Ambulance Association is working towards achieving accreditation standards from Accreditation Canada in 2014-2015. Alberta Health Services have made this a requirement of all emergency medical services in the province of Alberta to attain accepted standards of quality and safety.

The Stettler District Ambulance Association's mission statement is to provide a patient focused emergency medical service of quality and safety. This ties into our main strategic goal which is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable. The Stettler District Ambulance Association is striving to reach quality improvement initiatives, raising community awareness about issues and demonstrating performance in key areas.

As part of the initiatives, the Board has elected to recognize every January as Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Month. All employees will be involved in education and training in January to promote awareness about prevention and response of workplace violence, harassment and bullying.

The ambulances in Stettler have responded in the last year to 1529 calls. Emergency calls response totaling 593, Non-emergency calls totaling 350, Inter-facility transfers totaling 563 and Other (fire stand-by's and flexes to other communities) totaling 23. Our statistics indicate the service was busiest in the month of January, the busiest hours of the day were between 10 and noon for inter-facility transfers, however busiest from 7-10 a.m. for emergencies. Friday's were the busiest days for inter-facility transfers, but Saturdays were busiest for emergency calls.

The year 2015 will be an exciting and new phase of emergency medical services for Stettler. Our new ambulance will arrive in January. We will be transitioning into the provincial dispatch system as of March 31, 2015. All ambulance have had mobile data terminals installed allowing a more efficient deployment and dispatching of ambulances based on current location and resources. In September we will join the province-wide electronic patient care reporting system. Many more changes are coming in the new year in regards to quality and safety system changes and additions.

A Client Satisfaction Survey has been added to the ambulance section on the County of Stettler No. 6 website. We encourage feedback from clients and family members in regards to letting us know about the quality of service you received from our Paramedics and EMT-A's. Random face-to-face client satisfaction surveys will also be conducted by interviewing clients and/or family members about their experience with the ambulance service. We hope to launch our own website in February 2015.

The Stettler District Ambulance Association will be working expeditiously over the next few years to attain its goal of Qmentum from Accreditation Canada. We welcome any feedback or interest from the community in achieving this goal.

Pictured above: Our practitioners regularly participate in community events and fundraisers. They recently just participated in the Annual Emergency Services Charity Check Stop.



AMBULANCE RATES

How much does a ride in an ambulance cost?

A new rate was introduced in January 2015 through Alberta Health Services for private billings. If you are transported anywhere, it is now a flat rate fee of \$385.00. If you are not transported (i.e. a lift assist or other) the flat rate will be \$250.00.

When 911 is called when does an ambulance get dispatched?

When 911 is called ambulances are usually dispatched within a couple of minutes.

How many ambulances get dispatched?

The type of call and number of clients determines how many ambulances get dispatched. For instance a cardiac arrest client is dispatched two ambulances due to the call designation and seriousness of the call which requires additional practitioners and resources. We usually provide two ambulance responses for motor vehicle collisions based on the nature and the severity of the call, the number of clients and the area of the call.

Alberta Health Services operates a borderless system for ambulance dispatch and response. We have had the following services work in our area: Forestburg, Bashaw, Red Deer, Ponoka, Drumheller, Castor, Coronation, Consort, Sylvan Lake, Lacombe.

What is the average dispatch time?

Dispatch time is usually only a couple minutes. However our contracted chute time with AHS is 7 minutes. Chute time is the time from which crews are notified of the call to the time they are leaving the station enroute to the call.

Who gets the bill?

Inter-facility transfers – transferring a client from one hospital to another is paid by Alberta Health Services (AHS).

We bill Blue Cross and AISH directly. All clients are billed directly and forward their bill to their insurance company if they have additional ambulance coverage. Check with your insurance company to see if you are covered for a ride in an ambulance and how much you are covered for. If you have questions, please contact the County of Stettler at 403.742.4441.



Example of the control area buffer, minimum compliance in 2014

ELIMINATING ABSINTHE

In 2011, Absinthe Wormwood was elevated to Noxious Weed status in the County of Stettler. Since then, Agricultural Services Board (ASB) has adopted a 'Triple E' approach to eradicate this invasive species.

Triple E Approach:

2012	EDUCATE
2013	ENCOURAGE
2014-2019	ENFORCE

EDUCATE: Through five workshops held throughout the County, three articles in the County Connection magazine, one in the Stettler Independent, plus on the County website and through the County Booth at the Stettler trade show for the past two years, our staff and Agricultural Services Board members educated landowners on what was required and how we were going to deal with Absinthe Wormwood in the County of Stettler.

ENCOURAGE: In 2013 staff from the County of Stettler encouraged landowners to control the Absinthe Wormwood on their properties. Control was not

enforced at that time.

ENFORCE: Staff from the County, with direction from the ASB, have created an action plan and began implementing it May 1, 2014, to help landowners reduce the Absinthe Wormwood population, and over time eradicate its existence within the County of Stettler. The ASB and staff have derived the Priority Area Weed Control (PAWC) plan. This plan was adopted at our ASB meeting April 2, 2014. If your land was been identified within the PAWC program then you would have received a letter from the ASB in 2014.

ASB staff conducted a blanket inspection of all land within the PAWC program area. Every quarter section in Townships 35-17, 36-21, 38-17, 41-18 and Rochon Sands Estates at Buffalo Lake were inspected in 2014 for Absinthe Wormwood. Every quarter section found with Absinthe Wormwood within the Control Area, received a Weed Notice from the Agricultural Services Board. The Weed Notice enforced mandatory Control of the acres infested with Absinthe. Control means the landowner or occupant must: inhibit

HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF ABSINTHE WORMWOOD



Example of the extension of another 120 foot perimeter control area buffer, minimum compliance for 2015.

the growth or spread, or destroy the noxious weed. Destroy means to kill all growing parts, or to render reproductive mechanisms non-viable.

After inspections were carried out and notices given ASB checked for compliance. Compliance was defined as 'Control' of the acres infested with Absinthe Wormwood.

The compliance area at a minimum in 2014 started at the fenceline and included the first 120 feet of property. This worked out to 29 acres per quarter section. Controlling the first 120 feet created 240 feet of buffer between quarter sections and ensured Absinthe Wormwood was not passed from field to field. By doing this we ensured the acres of Absinthe Wormwood would diminish and not spread within our Control Area.

If all that is controlled by the landowner is the regulated 120 foot perimeter area (29 acres) on each quarter section each year, it will take a period of six years to gain control of each whole quarter. So now, in 2015 we will add another 120 foot buffer inside each quarter section

until eventually, the entire quarter section will have been controlled. Our hope is that landowners will control more than we are asking in any given year, reducing the time it will take to eradicate Absinthe Wormwood in the PAWC program.

In 2015 instead of only controlling the outer 120 feet of the quarter we will be asking for control on the outer 240 feet of the quarter, this way we increase our buffer zone. If you received a letter last spring, you have land within the PAWC program. You will receive a Weed Notice in 2015 that will enforce mandatory Control of the outer 240 feet of the perimeter of your quarter.

Absinthe Wormwood is invasive and taints milk if cattle eat the weed. Calves will not drink tainted milk. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Quinton Beaumont at the County of Stettler, 403-742-4441.

Above on the left is our 2014 map, showing 120 feet of control required last season. In 2015 we will be asking for Control of 240 feet, as per the map directly above.



2015 SITE INSPECTION SCHEDULE

Many County residents have at some point or another discovered that they needed a development permit in order to expand their homes, or add a garage, or even to begin a new business. And as is so often the case, people want to get going on this project as soon as possible. While there are many circumstances in which the issuance of a development permit is almost automatic (e.g. building a first residence on a residential property) there is still one very important step that the County must perform before issuing a development permit.

We need to inspect the site to be certain that there will not be a future issue or potential issue with the proposed development. We need to evaluate the roads leading to the land, the approaches, the slope of the land, and that it does not infringe on any wetlands, as well as any other concerns that we might have in regards to a specific application. In order to be as efficient as possible, the County's Planning and Development Department has "Site Inspection" days twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. To ensure that your application gets a site inspection as soon as possible after you submit it, and is not delayed too much pending the site inspection, it would be prudent to submit your application by the Friday previous to these scheduled site inspection dates.

The upcoming Site Inspection dates for the remainder of 2015 are:

February 10 and 24
 March 10 and 24
 April 7 and 21
 May 12 and 26
 June 9 and 23
 July 7 and 21
 August 11 and 25
 September 8 and 22
 October 13 and 27
 November 10 and 24
 December 8

We encourage you to contact either Cara McKenzie, Jacinta Donovan or Johan van der Bank at 403-742-4441 with any questions or concerns you may have. We will be happy to answer your questions and provide whatever assistance we can with your development permit or subdivision.



ZERO TOLERANCE

Please contact our Planning and Development Department when you start planning your development in order to ensure you obtain the required development permit and other approvals in good time. Anyone who intends to undertake a non-agricultural development in the County of Stettler No. 6 is required to first obtain a development permit from the County. This could also help you avoid any unforeseen expenses that you may incur if your idea for your development does not comply with the County's policies and bylaws (e.g. yard setbacks, road upgrades, etc.), so that you can make the necessary adjustments before you start digging or laying down concrete.

The County does not want to penalize anyone. Rather, we want to work with ratepayers to ensure the proper development approvals are issued in order to comply with municipal, provincial and federal regulations. The County's Fee Bylaw states a penalty of \$1,000 for residential developments and \$2,000 for commercial developments that are started without the benefit of a development permit.

The County of Stettler No. 6 has adopted a zero tolerance approach to persons who start construction without the benefit of a development permit. All relevant penalties required pursuant to the County's Fee Schedule and other actions under the Municipal Government Act (MGA) for such a contravention will be strictly imposed on anyone who fails to obtain a development permit prior to construction start. This information has been made widely available and no exceptions will be made.

SETBACKS

Remember, you do not need a development permit from the County for any agricultural operation as long as any structures such as hay sheds, granaries, livestock shelters and barns meet the 125 feet setback from the centerline of the County road.

Shelterbelts must be set back 75 feet from the centerline of the road. If you wish to vary from these setbacks for any agricultural operation, you would require a development permit. You may need a license/permit from the Natural Resources Conservation Board if your agricultural operation includes a confined feeding operation (please call the NRCB at 1-340-5241). If development is proposed along a provincial highway a Roadside Development Permit issued by Alberta Transportation is required. Please contact Alberta Transportation at 403-854-5550 or visit their website at <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca>. For more information regarding development please contact the County's Planning & Development Department at 403-742-4441.



RURAL ROAD STUDY

The Rural Road Study Update has been recently completed. It was commissioned in 2012 and intended as a “freshening up” of the previous study completed in January of 2001.

The Road Study Update is a transportation network planning tool that focuses on roads of strategic importance to the County. A review of the complete roadway network was undertaken and roads were separated into the following categories:

- Local Roads
 - Roads which provide access to residences and fields – generally including hamlet and subdivision roads along with low traffic grid roads;
 - Local roads were not analyzed as part of this study.
- Strategic Roads
 - Collector roads which provide

connectivity between major roads and local roads;

- Arterial roads which provide primary connectivity between highways and communities within the County;
- Resource roads which provide access for resource development such as forestry, gravel, oil & gas as well as inter-municipal links for transportation of goods and services.

The initial categorization of the network roads generally consisted of a review of traffic volumes, percentage of truck traffic, connectivity, and commodity utilization. Once the strategic roads were identified, a detailed analysis was completed including visual field inspections to rate road segments on the following:

surface type
traffic counts



proximity to parallel highway
 continuity
 industry and commodity mix
 local significance
 trip distance
 right of way width
 road surface width
 surface drainage
 ditch drainage
 structural condition
 vertical alignment
 horizontal alignment
 grade height
 side slope
 percentage grade
 roadside hazards (eg. brush)
 safety
 signage
 approaches

Each item above was given a rating and the strategic roads were organized based on how they rated, including some statistical weighting

to qualify variations in demographics and importance of the individual criterion.

The primary consideration of the analysis was to identify if a particular road segment was constructed to a standard appropriate for the classification. This information was used to prioritize roads that require construction (not necessarily maintenance) to be consistent with the appropriate standard.

The study output has provided the County with a suggested 5 and 10 year capital upgrade plan for the strategic road network based solely on the distribution of ratings. Administration will use this recommended program and the overall study to present annual capital upgrade programs to Council for approval as funding is made available.

It is expected this plan will be reviewed and potentially updated every five years to ensure it is consistent with the changing needs of the County.

26



CLUBROOT FORUM

You're invited to our :

CLUBROOT FORUM
County of Stettler No. 6
6602 - 44 Avenue
February 24, 2015
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
RSVP to 403-742-4441

Stettler County

AGENDA

Clubroot survey
What does the County currently do for surveys?
What will we be doing in the future?
Protocol
Future Goals

Battle River Research Group

Clubroot resistant varieties and yields
How do the new varieties compare to conventional yield wise, and cost?
(input and profit)

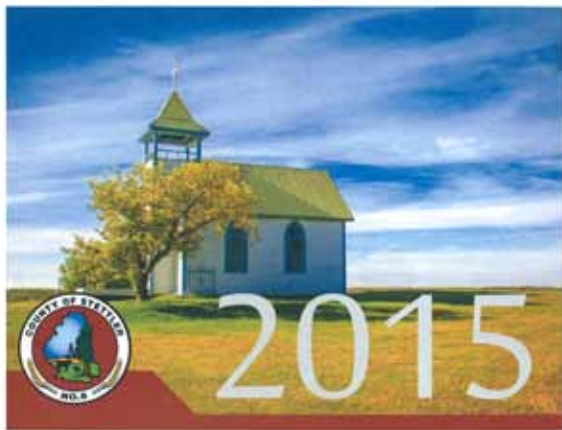
Keith Gabert, Canola Council

Clubroot update
What is coming in the future?
What is 5X? Should we be concerned?

Please plan to join us for this informative session and have an opportunity to exchange ideas and provide feedback on clubroot in the County of Stettler.



27



LUCKY LIGHTNING STRIKE CAPTURES **TOP PRIZE**

The 2014 County Photo Contest invited entrants to submit up to five photos each, taken within the borders of Stettler County. This is the third year of holding the Photo Contest, and it is becoming more and more popular each year. By the October 31 deadline, over 240 submissions had been received making it a difficult task for the panel of three judges to choose just 12 photographs to be used in our 2015 calendar.

Theresa Tanner who had two photos chosen for the calendar this year was the winner of the grand prize, an iPad mini, for her photo of a lightning strike in a canola field, which is featured in July in our 2015 calendar.

Our 2015 Photo Contest winners are:

Jo Ann Comeau Mitio, Heather Loewen, Judy Buchwitz, Theresa Tanner, Lorna Davies, Elaine Partsch, Patricia Ziegler, Rebecca Bauman, Karen Jones, Winnie Bissett and Sandy Clark.

These amateur photographers have done an amazing job at capturing the essence of Stettler County. We hope they keep snapping amazing shots of our County for 2015. You are welcome to pick up a copy of the 2015 County calendar at our office.



The County of Stettler is a proud sponsor of the Stettler Public Library.

STETTLER PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Stettler Public Library is celebrating 2015 by looking at some brand new innovations and programs. Why not spend some time in your gorgeous new library and find out about them?

If you're thinking about saving some money in the new year, a Stettler Public Library membership is just \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. This means you can access the 21,000 items available locally as well as books, DVDs, and other items from over 300 libraries across Alberta. You don't even have to come into town--from home you can download Canadian Living, National Geographic or over 100 other magazines on your tablet, read the latest Debbie Macomber book on your eReader, stream Franklin the Turtle episodes on your iPad, or reserve and renew items on your account.

In 2014 we added Minecraft to the library computers, began accepting debit and credit cards, started to offer plastic library cards, and launched new technology programming with Snap Circuits and Makey Makeys. Later on in 2015, we'll be opening a creation space with a 3D printer, a video camera and tripod, Little Bits (a library of electronic modules that snap together with magnets), and more. If you have an idea or suggestion for an activity or equipment that you'd like to use let us know!

Programming over the coming months includes a Peeps Diorama contest during the month of March. Show us your fantastic, outrageous, incredible "masterpeeps" made out of these marshmallow chicks and rabbits! We'll keep them on display at the library. Also in March in conjunction with Stettler Adult Learning we'll be hosting a living library where you can speak informally with "people on loan" who come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. It's a great way to get to know more people in the community.

In April, keep an eye out for Bubbles and Bling, our festive spring celebration for adults at the library, our giant book sale, and for Edmonton romance author M.J. Summers (Breaking Love, Break in Two, Breaking Clear). You can check out her first two books now at the SPL. We'll also be looking for staff for our summer reading program. If you are a high school or university student interested in technology, education, drama, and working with children please consider applying for a great summer job!

In May Free Comic Book Day is a single day when we give out comics for free at the library. We'll also run special comic-themed programming. Stay tuned to library events on our website spl.prl.ab.ca and on our Facebook page [facebook.com/StettlerPublicLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/StettlerPublicLibrary).

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Family Day Events - Erskine

Monday, February 16, 2015

- Erskine Curling Club is hosting a Family Day Funspiel on Monday, February 16. Fun curling, games and prizes for everyone! Cost is \$40/team. Call the rink to enter at (403) 742-5073.
- Erskine Rec Board is hosting a Family Skating party on Friday, February 13 at the Erskine Skating Rink starting at 7:00 p.m. Skating, music, campfire, hot dogs and hot chocolate for everyone.
- Erskine Ladies Bonspiel : February 23 - March 1
- Erskine Mens Bonspiel : March 8 - March 15

Did you Know?

The County of Stettler No. 6 has 'New Resident Packages' available for people moving into our County. Come pick one up to welcome your new neighbors.

The packages are full of valuable information to help newcomers navigate our County and the local trading area.



February 1 - Tax Penalty

There will be an 8% tax penalty applied to all outstanding County of Stettler No. 6 taxes on February 1, 2015.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

County of Stettler No. 6 Community Service Awards
Friday, February 27, 2015 @ Westwoods Agrelot
Cocktails at 6:00 p.m.
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
Award Presentations to follow. Tickets are \$15 each available at
County office, Westwoods Recreation & Agricultural Society.

Blood Donor Clinics
Stettler Community Hall
February 16 from 3:30-7:30 p.m.
March 30 from 3:30-7:30 p.m.



Stettler Ag Society 403-742-6288
Ranch Roping Competition February 15, 2015

Stettler Trade Show

Come visit our booth at the Stettler Trade Show April 10, 11, 12, 2015. For more information about this exciting event, contact Stettler Board of Trade at 403-742-3181.

Big Valley is proud to be hosting:

'The Hockey Alberta Investors Group
Peewee D Provincial Tournament'

March 19-22, 2015

Volunteers needed and spectators welcome!
Contact: Rhonda/Rob Maginn (403) 579-2228

Family Day - Sponsored by Parent Link

The Parent Link Centre will be hosting Family Day activities at the Stettler Rec Centre from Noon-3 p.m. on Monday, February 16. There will also be a workshop in the morning open to parents; caregivers and professionals.

Family Day Activities from Noon- 3 p.m. include:

Jeff's Play Event
Swimming
Skating
Puppet Show
Crafts
Dance

For more information contact Lisa Goodkey at the Evergreen Parent Link Centre Stettler 403.742.3600.



Public Mail Agreement #41398593
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
County of Stettler No. 6
Box 1270
Stettler, AB T0C 2L0