

OUT FRONT

The quarterly newsletter of the Behavioural Health Foundation

BHF experienced a milestone moment in June when Executive Director Jean Doucha left to begin a well-earned retirement.

It would take a highly skilled biographer to recount the full story of Jean's years at the Foundation. Illustrations would show her as a young woman with 1970's hair holding the reins of a pony in the back field, with her partner, children and eventually grandchildren joining in the house's Christmas celebrations, smiling as she congratulates members earning their one year pin, welcoming notable visitors and dignitaries. There would be plenty of funny anecdotes, moments of tension, frustration, uncertainty. There would be moments of grief and loss and many more of notable achievements. The cast of characters would be amazing - a grouchy old dog, several goats, a small flock of geese, newborn babies, volatile teens, wise elders, Cabinet ministers, lawyers and accountants, idealistic young staff and students, and people of all ages and backgrounds working to overcome addiction. For sure, the theme of the story would be Jean's dedication to the values of the organization, her commitment to excellence, and her ability to lead by example.



*What can you say to someone retiring after such an impressive career? The best thing to say may be the simplest – thank you. **Thank you Jean, for all you have done for so many people here. We wish you well always.***



2021 Sundance a significant event after a challenging year.

A year ago, out of concern for the health and safety of dancers and their home communities, BHF's Director of Indigenous Services, Elder and Sundance Chief Mike Calder made the decision to cancel the annual Northwind Lodge Sundance. As the 2021 Sundance approached, the decision was made to go ahead with this year's ceremony, with fewer dancers, physical distancing, and everyone asked to be fully vaccinated. July 14 was Tree Day, then 47 men and women entered the Sundance arbour. Despite the extreme heat, 27 dancers completed the ceremony, dancing and fasting until July 18. Five dancers were recognized for completing their four year commitment to Sundance.

At a time when Indigenous communities have been confronted with so many challenges – disproportionate impacts of covid-19, resistance to the truth of the historic assault on Indigenous culture and identity, the trauma of the deaths of children in residential schools – we are grateful to have access to teachings and ceremony as part of healing from addiction and co-occurring mental health issues.





Marla Somersall has joined BHF as Executive Director.

From rural Manitoba roots, Marla comes to BHF from a career with not for profit organizations, working in community development across Canada and internationally. She has had the opportunity to experience the resilience of people working in community to support one another to renew their collective strength. She brings this learning from organizations like Samaritan House in Brandon and Oxfam Quebec to the BHF community to join the work of this dedicated team as they continue a 50 year legacy of caring. Please stop by and introduce yourself when you get the chance. Welcome, Marla.

*BHF is celebrating – 50 YEARS!
BHF's Annual General Meeting takes place
September 10, 2021, formally
acknowledging the Foundation's 50 years of
service. Follow our Facebook page to see
how you can help us celebrate this
milestone.*



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thank you to **Direct Farm Manitoba** for once again providing food currency coupons to adults and families in our transition houses.

Thank you to **SEED Winnipeg/ Access to ID** for assisting our members in obtaining birth certificates.

Thank you to **Red River Co-op** for on-going food donations.

Thank you to **Bell Let's Talk Mental Health** and **Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living** for on-going support for our Indigenous Services.

Thank you to **Santa Lucia Pizza** for generously supporting our pandemic-stay-at-home pizza nights.

Thank you to **Protect MB Community Outreach** for a grant to help in our efforts to get our community fully vaccinated.

Thank you to **Billy Dubery** for providing the beautiful grounds for the Northwind Sundance.

**Thank you to all our neighbours, friends, funders and supporters.
We could not do it without you**

For donations or queries, Please contact us at 204-269-3430 or email at info@bhf.ca