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Black Lake Begins Harvest For First-Ever Community Garden



The gardeners for the Black Lake Community Garden: Jenelle Moise – Left and Anna Beavereye – Right

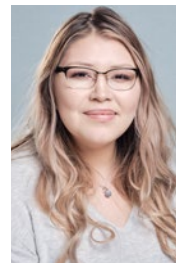
This June, Black Lake initiated a greenhouse to help grow produce for the community. It was the first time the community has undertaken a greenhouse, and it turned out to be a big project requiring equipment and training on seed ordering, hydroponics and structures, soil preparations and fertilization, transplanting, temperature control and more.

“We’ve been wanting to get this initiative going in our community for awhile,” says Terri-Lynn Beavereye, Executive Director of Black Lake Ventures. “Seeing all this fresh produce grown by our own community members in the North is very exciting!”

The project is paying off, and the gardeners are preparing to harvest a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, including strawberries, tomatoes, onions, potatoes, cabbages, and more. Once harvest is complete, the gardeners will make packages of fruits and vegetables for Elders, prenatal women, and members who need assistance.



Terri-Lynn Beavereye,
Executive Director of
Black Lake Ventures



April Robillard,
Executive Assistant at
Black Lake Ventures

“When we saw Fond du Lac’s success with running their community garden since 2015, we knew it could be done here too,” says Terri-Lynn. “Also, Tiffany Toutsaint, Manager of Fond du Lac Development, hosted our gardeners at their garden so they could see how they do it. It was amazing, and both our gardeners, Jenelle and Anna, came back very excited to do this for our community.”

It is difficult to get fresh produce to remote communities like Black Lake, and growing gardens is more difficult than in the south and transportation costs are expensive. The garden is specially designed to accommodate growing conditions in the far north, where the growing season is short and the soil is closer to sand. “So many people worked together to make this a success,” says Terri-Lynn. “I have to give kudos to April Robillard, the Executive Assistant at Black Lake Ventures, who really took the lead to organize things and get this going, and to our gardeners, Jenelle Moise and Anna Beavereye, for all their hard work that lead to a successful first crop. I’d also like to thank the community members and Chief and Council for their support of this important initiative – without it, we couldn’t make it happen. Thanks to all the organizations who provided sponsorship: Athabasca Community Trust through the impact benefit agreement, Can/Sask Job Grants, Athabasca Basin Development and Athabasca Health Authority.”

Athabasca Basin Development provided \$5,000 for the Black Lake community garden in 2020 and has been a supporter of Fond du Lac’s community garden since its inception. “We are happy to provide support to Athabasca communities for their community gardens,” says Geoff Gay, CEO of Athabasca Basin Development. “As part of our sponsorship program, we look for ways to help support community-lead initiatives like these that benefit many members of the community. Fond du Lac’s garden has been a big success for them and we’re pleased to see Black Lake’s first year has gone so well. A lot of work goes into starting and maintaining these gardens, so hats off to both communities for making it happen.”

Athabasca Basin Development is continuing to look for new opportunities for investments – both to strengthen its existing investments as well as outside of its existing industries. “There are lots of opportunities out there and we are continuing to seek solid investment opportunities. I would encourage business owners who are looking at succession planning to consider us as a potential fit and to contact us to discuss opportunities – there may be a fit either with Athabasca Basin Development or with one of our investments.”

Alumarine Boats Manufactured in Prince Albert



On many lakes in the North in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, the Yukon, Nunavut and Ontario, it's common to see Alumarine boats. Alumarine boats have built a reputation since manufacturing began over fifty years ago. "I think people like them because they're hand made," says Ron Bonneau, General Manager of Alumarine Boats. "There's a quality, reliability and durability about them that makes them 'north tough.' It's not uncommon to see 20-year-old Alumarine boats still in daily use. Any camp operator or fishing guide that I've talked to who has used them doesn't want to use anything else."

For many years, Alumarine boats were manufactured in Winnipeg, but about a year ago, Tru North purchased the company and moved the manufacturing facility to Prince Albert. The move brought 8 jobs to the community. "We were very excited when the opportunity came up for us to be involved," says Bonneau. "It was important to us to create opportunities for people here in our community, so we moved production to a 7,000 square foot facility north of Prince Albert in the Redwing area. It was also important for us to make absolutely zero changes to the boat design or production. The result is that my team here in Prince Albert has been able to deliver boats that are the exact same specs that people have relied on for over half a century."

"The result is that my team here in Prince Albert has been able to deliver boats that are the exact same specs that people have relied on for over half a century."

To build an Alumarine boat requires everything to be done by hand. There are no CNC milling machines or welding. It's all riveted and done through a production line with five different phases that each boat must go through to completion. "It takes us about a day and a half to build a boat," says Bonneau. "It took us a bit longer in the beginning when we were just learning the process and training everyone, but we've got a great team and a good system now. Today, we just finished our 254th boat."

The vast majority of boats that have been built were pre-ordered and the demand for Alumarine boats continues to grow. "Even through Covid, we were able to continue production without slowing down and without laying off any employees," says Bonneau. "And we're continuing to look for more dealers which would further increase production."

Alumarine boats are sold by dealers across the country, including Northern Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, and Northern Ontario. There are three dealers in Saskatchewan: Scott's in Stony Rapids, Jam Automotive and Powersports in Air Ronge, and Tru North in Prince Albert. Interested buyers can visit www.alumarineboats.ca for more information and a full listing of authorized dealers. "We're proud to be a part of the Prince Albert business community," says Bonneau. "If anyone is interested in a tour of our facility, we do tours by appointment – just give us a call anytime."

Alumarineboats.ca

Arctic Beverages Acquires Taz Enterprises



Pictured: Taz Enterprises

As of April 1, 2020, Arctic Beverages LP has purchased Taz Enterprises Ltd., a dairy distribution company located in St-Pierre-Jolys in southeastern Manitoba.

"We are very excited about this acquisition," says Sean Post, CEO of Arctic Beverages. "Taz Enterprises is an excellent dairy distribution company that fits in well with Arctic. This acquisition gives us the ability to expand our territory and service new clients, as well as add some nice new products to our existing product offering."

Taz Enterprises represents dairy lines such as Parmalat Dairy, ice cream from Unilever, Dairy Chef, and Chapmans, as well as the award-winning Bothwell

cheese. They also represent Arctic Glacier Ice. Taz Enterprise's territory runs from Interlake to the Ontario-Canada-US border.

Marcel Gauthier will stay on with the company during the transition for 6-9 months. "We began discussions about a succession plan when we were thinking about retirement," says Marcel Gauthier, President. "After speaking to Arctic Beverages, it became clear to us that Arctic was in an excellent position to take good care of the company we had worked hard to build, and even take it to the next level. We are confident that Taz Enterprises is in good hands."

Taz Enterprises currently employs six people, and there are no plans to change operations. "We will continue to operate the business as usual this year," says Post. "After that time, we will begin to look at integrating operations. The focus for all of us is and will continue to be taking care of customers and employees and we will do our best to keep any changes as seamless as possible."

arcticbev.com

Profile: Travis Boneleye Takes Drilling Career In New Direction



Travis Boneleye in his new role as a councillor at Black Lake

Working in an office is very different than what newly elected Black Lake councillor, Travis Boneleye, is used to. "I've been in drilling since 2002, starting with Boart Longyear and then working with Team Drilling," says Travis. "Being in an office is very different. I'm used to being active, working hard, waking up at 4am for work. I do kinda like working in an office, except I've been slim all my life and I'm starting to get a bigger stomach already!"

Travis started his career with drilling as a driller helper and a nipper, hauling equipment. He began working

"Politics is very different than drilling. But I really enjoy meeting all the people, working with Chief and Council, all the band members, businesses and everyone."

with Team Drilling in 2010 as a driller helper and worked his way up to a driller. "While I was with Team Drilling, I worked at Cigar Lake. I really enjoyed it there because they provided the training, and the people were great. Lots to learn and lots to do." Travis has lived in Black Lake all his life and prefers work that keeps him close to home with his wife and three sons, aged 13, 9 and 1. "I liked the 2 weeks in and 2 weeks out schedule at Cigar Lake – it was good for family life. When you work on sites that are far away, schedules like 3 and 3 and 4 and 2 – that's where you can see people go a little nutty."

But when the work dried up, Travis didn't hesitate to take his skills to a new company. "I go where the work is. After Team Drilling, I went to Driftwood Drilling. I was with them for a year. I was in BC, Smithers, and Yukon Minto mine. After that, I went to GeoTech drilling and did underground work at Hope Bay, Nunavut. I was there over a year and a half. I moved on from them due to lack of work."

In 2020, Travis decided to take his career in a new direction and entered politics. Travis was elected in June as a councillor and his portfolio includes North

of 60, Treaty 8 and Education. "This is my first time on council," says Travis, "and the first few weeks have been hard to get used to. Politics is very different than drilling. But I really enjoy meeting all the people, working with Chief and Council, all the band members, businesses and everyone. And I'm looking forward to spending a long time in politics."

Keeping active is important to Travis, and when he's not at the office or traveling for his new role, he's always doing something. "After work, I go home and see my family. I go out fishing, hunting and other than that, I do yard work, and I do some work building sheds, decks. I like to keep busy!"

While Travis has enjoyed his time as a driller, he doesn't recommend it as a career for everyone. "You have to like it outside, and it's hard labour, really hard," says Travis. "The drilling part is really hard work. Some people can't handle it. Some will pick it up easy, some won't. You see lots of different faces. If you want to be a driller, you have to push yourself harder. It's a really tough job. And don't do it if you're afraid of enclosed spaces. But I'd go back to work for Team Drilling in Cigar Lake underground or get a different mining job for Cameco. I would like to work for them again sometime."

For his own children, Travis will encourage them to choose their own career. "I hope they stay in school, get an office job, but they gotta choose for themselves. I like drilling and mining work but I like my new role, too. There's always something to do, people to meet, wherever you go."

Message from the CEO and Board Chair



Geoff Gay, CEO and Anne Robillard, Board Chair

Both of us have been involved in this company since the beginning, when it was formed in 2002 and even before that, for the two years when many people in the Athabasca worked together to figure out how this company should be structured and what it should do for the region. Lots has changed in the eighteen years since, and we've had many experiences and lessons learned since those early days. We thought we'd pretty much seen it all.

Until a worldwide pandemic began and arrived in Saskatchewan in spring of this year.

Absolutely everything has been impacted by this once-in-a-lifetime event. First, we'd like to recognize and commend the leaders and community members in the Athabasca communities. Because these communities are remote, and because there are often many people living in one home, the Athabasca communities face additional challenges in the face of this pandemic, and the communities were amazing in how quickly they got organized and how well they continue to work together. We pray for the continued safety of all the residents in the region.

Safety has always been a must for our investments. All our investments have done well adjusting to this new landscape and have changed operations as needed to ensure that everyone goes home safe at the end of the day. We'd like to recognize management and employees for their outstanding efforts in this area and their ongoing dedication to safety.

There has been a significant impact to every one of our investments due to Covid. Some of them maintained their volume of business, but most weren't so lucky, and many had to go into survival mode. Some of them had to shut down during a critical period in

As the economy was reopened, our investments have all appeared to be resilient, and as of the time of this writing, we believe all will survive.

their sales cycle, while others saw a drastic decrease in sales. As the economy was reopened, our investments have all shown to be resilient, and as of the time of this writing, we believe all will survive.

It's difficult to predict where things might end up this year, and if cases begin to rise again in Saskatchewan, predictions will change again. The good news is that, even during this time, we've been able to remain true to the original vision given to us by Athabasca leadership when we first started. We will continue to provide steady dividends to the communities. We will continue to donate to events and causes in the community. And we will continue to build value for the Athabasca which makes all of these benefits possible and helps build a resilient company that will be here for 50 years and beyond.

Giving Back

“Building a future through investment” is accomplished by building wealth for the Athabasca communities, donation, community distributions, building a reputation, and building capacity. The key to making all benefits possible is in building wealth for the communities – without this foundation, the other benefits would not be possible.

Due to Covid-19, a number of planned initiatives, such as the Athabasca Fly-in Career Fair and the Persephone Northern tour, had to be cancelled. Here are a few recent examples of ways Athabasca Basin Development and its investments give back:

Covid Response



Covid Response supplies at Points North before delivery to Fond du Lac

To assist the Athabasca communities with their Covid response, the following support was provided:

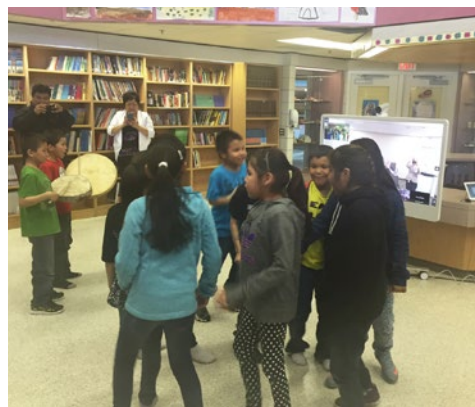
- ABD donated 6,000 Cloth masks, with at least one mask provided per community per member. Total value of \$22,250.
- PAGC Urban put together hampers to assist Elders, pregnant women, low income families, and people with disabilities in March. ABD and Points Athabasca each donated \$5,000 and QM Points donated \$10,000 for a total of \$20,000.
- ABD, Athabasca Basin Security, Team Drilling, Flyer Electric, Points Athabasca, QM Points donated a total of \$17,500 in supplies, with Points North and West Wind Aviation donating transport of these items.

Athabasca Student Scholarships

Ya'thi Néné Land and Resource Office has offered scholarships for Athabasca students since 2017. Applications are due on July 31 each year and to qualify, students must be enrolled as a full-time student and can be in any type of post-secondary program. \$60,000 in scholarships was awarded in 2020 to 23 recipients, with Cameco/Orano, Ya'thi Néné, and Athabasca Basin Development providing contributions. Scholarship

winners will be officially announced this fall at www.yathinene.com. “We are pleased to offer scholarships to post-secondary students from the Athabasca region,” says Garrett Schmidt, Executive Director for Ya'thi Néné Land and Resource Office. “This is the fourth year for scholarships and we are excited to award scholarships to so many bright and deserving young students from the Athabasca region.” Scholarship winners were determined by the Ya'thi Néné Scholarship Committee. Athabasca Basin Development is proud to support this initiative in the amount of \$10,000 in 2020 and has been a sponsor for the past three years.

Connected North



The Connected North program in Black Lake when it launched in April 2016

Connected North is a leading-edge program that delivers immersive and interactive education and healthcare services to remote Aboriginal and Inuit communities through high-definition two-way video communication and collaboration technology. Numerous partners, including Cisco Canada, Cameco, SaskTel. ABD has contributed \$15,000 each year and West Wind Aviation has contributed flights. Launched in Black Lake in 2016, Connected North has expanded to include Wollaston Lake school in March of 2017. During Covid, Connected North adjusted to allow any student access to their educational products to provide northern students with educational content while learning at home. ABD has continued its contributions to Connected North on an annual basis since the inception of the program.

Long Lake Insurance Caring and Sharing In Their Communities



The community rink in Strasbourg, SK

By Nancy Blake, Long Lake Insurance

During the spring windstorms around the province, Strasbourg suffered significant roof damage to their community rink.

Anyone who has lived in a small town on the prairies knows that the heart of the community is the rink. It's a place for families to gather, for kids to learn about teamwork,

and a place to make memories. This year we were able to help two of our communities repair damage that was threatening the continued operation of their rinks.

During the spring windstorms around the province, Strasbourg suffered significant roof damage to their community rink. The staff in Long Lake Insurance's office wanted to help. A donation and some volunteer man-hours were a perfect way to show support and help get the rink ready for the upcoming season.

When we received a bulletin from one of our market partners, Red River Mutual, we realized that assistance for our communities doesn't always require that we write a cheque or volunteer hours. Red River Mutual was sponsoring a 'Spruce Up Your Story' contest and we knew we wanted to get involved. Our team in Imperial immediately forwarded an application to the Town of Imperial. The staff did an amazing application and were recently awarded \$25,000 to go towards roof repairs on the Imperial Hockey Rink.

Small communities are the heart of our province. It's a lifestyle that is near and dear to our hearts. All of our staff have grown up in small Saskatchewan communities and because of that, we continue to care and share.

www.longlakeinsurance.ca

Points Athabasca begins construction on Hatchet/Wollaston Lake Road



While Covid temporarily grounded all of Points Athabasca's activities to a halt for awhile, one long-awaited project in the Athabasca region began construction this spring.

After decades of lobbying, construction on a road that was started in the Athabasca region in 2008 began again. The road will connect Hatchet Lake and Wollaston Lake to highway 905. Points Athabasca has been contracted to build the road.

"This has been on everyone's radar screen for many years, and the efforts of current and past leadership in the community, the PAGC, and Hatchet Lake Development towards bringing this project to fruition are to be commended," says John Scarfe, CEO of Points Athabasca. "As a locally owned company, we're really happy to be part of it and to work with the communities to employ local residents on this exciting initiative for the north."

The communities of Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation and Wollaston Lake are currently only accessible by air, ice road and ferry. The ice road is only driveable for a few months, and ferry also has a short season. Year-round access is only available by air.

Points Athabasca has a strong understanding of roads and transportation in the remote area. "We have been working with the communities and the mines in the area for over twenty years, and we've built strong relationships during that time," says Scarfe. "We have experience with building roads and the logistics of the area, which is important knowledge to have for the successful execution of this project. We also work primarily with local operators to maintain most of the ice roads from Stony Rapids all the way to Uranium City, and we maintain the all-season road from Points North to Stony Rapids. It's a total of over 400km of roads that we maintain annually in the area."

Employing local people is essential to the success of the project. "Building Capacity' and employing local people wherever possible is a key theme for our company," says Scarfe. "We spent a bit of time out there in the spring clearing trees, and we employed 3 local people during that time – two CAT operators and a trackhoe operator. We were on pause for a bit to allow for spring melt to occur, and we went back at it in August. Now we're



Bobby Shaoulle from Wollaston Lake clearing trees for the Hatchet/Wollaston Lake road.

running again and we have the same equipment running, plus a group of local people with chainsaws who are doing work to clear the trees. We expect to employ 6-10 local people for the remainder of the project."

Indigenous Services Canada is contributing \$6.5 million over a two-year period. The province is contributing \$250,000 and will maintain the road, which is

estimated to cost \$250,000 annually, but will provide considerable cost savings by reducing the need for a barge and ice road in addition to the benefits to the community of year-round access.

The new road will be 102km long. The funding will cover the costs for a portion of the first phase of the project, which will result in a snow road. Phase 2 would be a seasonal road that would be good for about ten months of the year. "We expect this current phase of the project to be complete in 14 months," says Scarfe. "Eventually, the hope is that an all-season road will be built."

Because the construction all takes place outdoors, and employs local people, this project was able to continue throughout Covid. "The safety of our employees, subcontractors and the community members is our top priority," says Scarfe. "Luckily it's been easy to maintain social distancing due to the nature of the work, and employing local people means we don't need to worry about camps at this time."

The project came at a good time for the company. "All our other projects were paused earlier this year to ensure everyone's safety during the early days of Covid," says Scarfe. "We unfortunately had to downsize a fair bit to adjust to that reality. But we are seeing other projects, such as Gunnar, coming back and there are signs that activities are slowly starting up again. It's impossible to tell what happens next, but so far we've been able to make accommodations and adjust as needed."

5Buds to Open New Location in Prince Albert



Prince Albert is getting a third cannabis store this fall.

In July, Prince Albert City Council approved the development permit for the city's third cannabis store. 5Buds Cannabis will be opening in the Cornerstone area, near the Save On Foods and next to the Dollar Tree.

The Prince Albert store will be 5Buds's fourth location in Saskatchewan, with existing stores in North Battleford, Warman, and Yorkton that have been operating since cannabis was legalized in October 2018.

"We are very excited to be entering the Prince Albert market," says Corey Tyacke, Retail General Manager of 5Buds. "As a locally owned company, we have worked hard to create a space where people can find a wide range of legal cannabis products, and where people can feel safe, comfortable and welcomed in a way that is unique to us here on the prairies. We think customers in Prince Albert will really enjoy what we have to offer."

5Buds Cannabis is 100% Saskatchewan owned by Synergy Five, which is owned by Athabasca Basin Development, Peter Ballantyne Group of Companies,

The 5Buds store in Warman

Des Nedhe Group of Companies, and Prince Albert First Nations Business Development, representing a total of 13 First Nations in Saskatchewan.

The store is expected to create 10-15 new positions for store leaders and retail sales team in Prince Albert. "Our staff takes great pride in the fact that we are local, that we hire local, and that our profits go back to First Nations communities in our province," says Tyacke. "We anticipate that we'll start advertising for positions this fall."

5Buds will still have to obtain a Cannabis Retail Permit from SLGA, so the Prince Albert store opening will have to wait for SLGA to lift the provincial cap in September.

"When cannabis first became legal and we opened our first three stores, we were always hoping to be able to open more someday," says Tyacke. "We were especially hoping for Prince Albert, so we're thrilled to finally be making this store opening a reality."

www.5buds.ca

About Athabasca Basin Development

Athabasca Basin Development is an investment company committed to building and investing in successful businesses. Investments include partial or complete ownership in construction, industrial security, electrical, diamond drilling, logistics, road maintenance, aviation and more. The company is owned by the seven communities in Northern Saskatchewan's Athabasca region.

Watch for our next newsletter Spring 2021.

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