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## Team Drilling Runs Diamond Driller Helper Training Course in the Athabasca



This fall, a Diamond Drill Helper Training Course was once again offered in Stony Rapids. Eleven out of the 12 participants graduated. Team Drilling ran a similar course in fall 2018 and had 10 graduates.

Pictured: Ten of the 11 participants from the Athabasca who graduated from the November 2019 driller helper training course.

"From an employer perspective, we consider this program to be a success," says Robert

The goal of the course was to prepare participants for potential upcoming jobs in the drilling industry.

Fleming, CEO of Team Drilling. "This is the second time we've run this training in two years, and the comprehensive program does a good job of preparing graduates for potential work in the drilling industry. We are hoping to conduct another similar training session in the future as the need arises."

The goal of the course was to prepare participants for potential upcoming jobs in the drilling industry. The course was a joint effort between Northlands College and Team Drilling. With Funding support from NCQ, Team Drilling provided the driller training, with the course covering topics such as WHMIS, drill rig set up, core recovery, tripping rods, safety topics, and many more. The training took place at the A&L facility in Stony Rapids, which offers an office area as well as plenty of shop and yard space to provide the hands-on training.

The trainees were from Fond du Lac, Wollaston, Hatchet Lake, Black Lake, Stony Rapids and Uranium City. Eleven participants passed the course, with each receiving a certificate of completion.

The drilling industry offers an excellent career with a unique lifestyle. "It's a lot of hard work," says Fleming. "And spending 3-4 months in the bush at a time, going somewhere new - it's not for everyone, but those of us in the drilling industry who love it, really love it."

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."

# Message from the CEO and Board Chair

## Upcoming Dates

- 50th Anniversary Hatchet Lake Community Carnival – March 2-7
- Black Lake Community Carnival – Feb 24 - 29
- Fond du Lac Community Carnival – March 16-21
- Stony Rapids Carnival – March 26-28
- QM Points Gunnar project recruitment drive – March 2-6
- Persephone Northern Tour – April 1, 2 and 3 in Wollaston, Fond du Lac, and Black Lake
- Athabasca Fly-in Career Fair – May 11-14
- Yá thi Néné Athabasca Scholarship applications due – July 31



Geoff Gay, CEO and Anne Robillard, Board Chair

This newsletter has existed in various formats for over a decade. Before that, the Athabasca Economic Development & Training Corporation (AEDTC) had its own newsletter, and we recently stumbled on a copy of the September 1999 edition. That edition talks about a for-profit company named Athabasca Basin Development that would be receiving the contract for maintenance on the road from Points North to Black Lake, Stony to Fond du Lac, and Fond du Lac to Uranium City in October of that year.

Both of us were here during those days. We remember that it took some time to iron everything out and get going, but that was how it all started. From there, we took on security contracts that later became Athabasca Basin Security. Athabasca Basin Development partnered with Graham

construction and formed Points Athabasca. We continued to reinvest profits and started purchasing companies. Points North was one of our first investments into an existing business. We did a start-up - Team Drilling was formed in 2008. And more. The key to all this activity and growth over the years was reinvesting profits – without this remarkable commitment from our shareholders and board members, we would not have been able to grow to where we are today.

The economy has slowed down significantly over the past few years, and while many industries were impacted at once, the biggest impact for us was the slowdown in the Uranium industry. However, when our company was originally formed, leadership had tasked us with building something for when the mining was done. We have continued to honour the original vision given to us by leadership, and in 2014, we began to diversify and invest outside of the mining industry. As a result, we were able to weather the ups and downs in the mining industry much better than we have in the past. And today we have investments in twelve companies with a wide range of services.

Our strategy of reinvesting profits is working well to build wealth for the Athabasca region so that they can receive dividends that can be relied on regardless of economic conditions. We are proud to say that we

**The key to all this activity and growth over the years was reinvesting profits – without this remarkable commitment from our shareholders and board members, we would not have been able to grow to where we are today.**

have maintained consistent dividends to the communities since our inception, and our company has grown significantly in value. But we are always striving for improvement and always looking for ways to build wealth for the region.

We have reason to believe that the economy is picking up again. We are actively seeking new opportunities to grow our basket of companies – both inside and outside the mining industry – so that we can continue to fulfill the vision given to us by leadership. And with the wind at our backs and a strong balance sheet, we are in an excellent position to acquire, grow and start up new companies.

This edition of the newsletter contains a mix of stories, from accomplishments of our investments, ways we give back to our communities, project updates and profiles of people. We look forward to the next twenty years of newsletters and more great stories to come.

## SCSA Recognizes Flyer Electric Employee Corey Johnson with Safety Award



Corey Johnson, Health and Safety Manager at Flyer Electric

**“Safety is everyone’s responsibility, and in our company, our core safety culture is demonstrated through coaching and leadership.”**

Each year the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) acknowledges individuals, companies, and committees throughout the province of Saskatchewan for their efforts towards SCSA’s vision to create the safest construction environment in Canada.

In November, the SCSA presented Corey Johnson, Health and Safety Manager/NCISO at Flyer Electric, with the Safety Practitioner Award.

“I am so proud of Corey for receiving this award,” says Terry Tessier, CEO of Flyer Electric. “In our company, safety is part of everything we do, and we strive always for excellence and continual improvement. This

culture of safety and our strong safety track record are largely achieved through Corey’s work in this area. I think this award really acknowledges that Corey is a true leader in the safety industry in Saskatchewan.”

The Safety Practitioner Award is presented to individuals in recognition of their dedication, outstanding contribution, and commitment to safety as well as their embodiment of the SCSA’s mission and vision to create a healthy and safe workplace.

“I am honoured to receive this award,” says Johnson. “Safety is everyone’s responsibility, and in our company, our core safety culture is demonstrated through coaching and leadership. My motivation each day is simple: I genuinely care for the wellbeing of the staff. To champion safety in the workplace is my career, but to have my fellow coworkers return to their loved ones is my passion. It is better to prepare and prevent than it is to repair and repent.”

# Giving Back

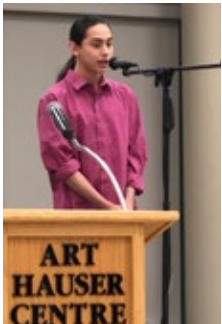
*“Building a future through investment” is accomplished by building wealth for the Athabasca communities, donations, community distributions, building a reputation and building capacity. The key to making all benefits possible is in building a wealth for the communities – without this foundation, the other benefits would not be possible. Here are a few recent examples of the ways Athabasca Basin Development and its investments give back:*

## 2019 Athabasca Student Dinner



Pictured: All 65 students from the Athabasca region who attended the Athabasca student dinner received a free ticket home plus 50% off for a travel companion from Transwest Air.

The annual Athabasca Student Dinner has been running for many years, but the trend in the last few years is a very exciting one to see. The number of students has been steadily increasing, and this year was another record year: 65 students registered, and over 250 guests attended.



Thomas Boyd speaks about his experiences as an Athabasca student studying in the south at the Athabasca Student Dinner on December 10, 2019.

The Athabasca Student Dinner is an event that recognizes the efforts and celebrates the achievements of Athabasca residents who are studying in the south. This year's event was held on December 10. Guest speaker Gabrielle Toutsaint from Fond du Lac spoke about her experiences as a student studying in the south and the challenges she faced. Grade 10 Youth speaker Thomas Boyd of Stony

Rapids rose to the challenge of speaking in front of a huge crowd, and he too spoke about his experiences of studying in the south.

Entertainment was provided by artists from the Athabasca region. Black Lake First Nation member Rebecca Strong from Stony Rapids/Prince Albert sang covers with her soulful voice. Dylan Gazandlare of Wollaston Lake showed off his amazing guitar skills. Veteran performer Leonard Adam of Fond du Lac finished off the evening.

The most exciting moment was when all students in attendance were invited to the stage. Patty Hughes from Transwest Air announced that each of the

students in attendance would receive a plane ticket home each, plus a half price ticket home for a companion. Their reaction was captured and can be seen on the Athabasca Basin Development Facebook page.

This event would not be possible without the assistance and contributions of all the sponsors. ABD and Points Athabasca organized the event and ABD covered the cost of the dinner and room rental. Prize contributors included Transwest Air, Athabasca Basin Security, Flyer Electric, Ya'thi Néné, Saskatchewan Research Council, QM Points, Arctic Beverages, Team Drilling, Graham Construction, ORANO, MWG Apparel, Tru-North Marine & Recreation, Points North, and Long Lake Insurance.

## Christmas in the North

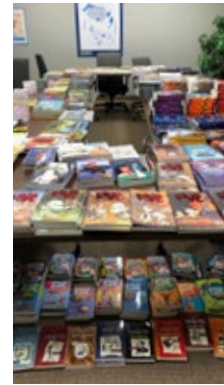


Every student from K-12 in the Athabasca region received a book, and kids from grades K-8 received a gift package containing toys and board games.

In December, ABD co-sponsored the eighth annual Christmas in the North event. On December 11, 12, and 16, Santa – along with representatives from the sponsoring companies – flew into the Athabasca communities of Stony Rapids, Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Hatchet Lake/Wollaston and delivered an assortment of gifts to the kids. Gifts for students in Uranium City were also sent to the community.

West Wind Aviation, Cameco, and ORANO were co-sponsors of the event with their contribution going towards a re-usable gift bag and toys and games, such as sporting equipment and board games. Prince Albert Grand Council provided water bottles for all the kids and also brought along Santa to help give out the gifts. Al's Place provided hotel and meal support for Santa and his helpers. West Wind provided round trips for the schools to give away to community members in a draw.

Athabasca Basin Development, Points Athabasca, Athabasca Basin Security, Team Drilling and Flyer Electric partnered to bring a book to Athabasca students. Every student from K-12 attending school in the Athabasca region received a book as part of their Christmas package. A wide range of books were provided, from popular graphic novels such as the Dog Man series by Dav Pilkey, to books by Indigenous



ABD, ABS, Points Athabasca, Team Drilling and Flyer Electric combined their contributions towards Christmas in the North to give a book to all 1277 students from k-12 in the Athabasca.

authors such as My Heart Fills With Happiness by Monique Gray Smith. The books have become an annual gift for the past couple of years, but this was the first year that students in high school were also able to receive a book.

This year, a gift was provided for every student in the Athabasca communities from K-12 for a total of 1277 students. The combined value of all the contributions to Christmas in the north is \$65,000. The event has been running for the past eight years.

## Athabasca Community Clean-up and BBQ Tour



The BBQ tour stopped in Uranium City on September 18, 2019. Most of the community members attended the event in the school gym.

In September, representatives from Points Athabasca, QM Points, SRC and ABD travelled to the Athabasca communities to meet with leadership, provide updates on the Gunnar project, and to serve up some end-of-summer burgers to community members and



Students in Fond du Lac at the community BBQ on September 19, 2019.

students. Students in many of the communities had spent the day outside cleaning up and picking up garbage. The tour stopped in Black Lake on September 17, Uranium City on September 18, Fond du Lac on September 19, and Wollaston Lake on September 20. The weather unfortunately did not cooperate for the BBQ in Wollaston Lake, so the burgers and hotdogs were donated to the school so

that they could host their own BBQ on a day that was not so rainy. Over 1000 hotdogs, 1000 hamburgers and 34 gallons of macaroni were served or donated to the community.

## Athabasca Basin Security helps bring Indigenous kids to Superhero Blades Game



On January 25, the Saskatoon Blades hosted the Edmonton Oil Kings. ABS was the night's sponsor, helping to cover some of the costs for over 50 kids to attend the game who may not have had the opportunity to attend. The kids were from a variety of locations - Princess Alexandra School and Caswell school in Saskatoon, as well as from Daystar First Nation and Muskowekwan First Nation from outside of Saskatoon.

The evening started off with some glow bowling at Eastview Bowl for the kids, followed by a meal at the bowling alley and then on to the hockey game. The kids each received a superhero mask and also the chance to be part of the high-five tunnel with the Blades as they skated on the ice. The Oil Kings ended up defeating the Blades 3-2, but the kids all had a fun and memorable experience.

## Gunnar Project Updates

On January 14-16, representatives from QM Points and the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) traveled to the Athabasca communities to provide updates to leadership. The January 14 meeting was in Stony Rapids, January 15 was in Fond du Lac, and January 16 was in Black Lake. Uranium City and Hatchet Lake were not toured as there was no leadership available, so updates were provided by alternative means. Some highlights from the update:

- 82% of equipment being used is locally owned.
- 65% of the labour is being done by locals.
- 49% of all services and materials needed for the project were spent in the Athabasca.
- There were 40 Athabasca residents employed: Fond du Lac – 10, Black Lake/Stony Rapids – 8, Hatchet Lake – 7, Uranium City – 4.
- 7 urban employees from the Athabasca who live in the south were also employed.
- There were 4 Athabasca Community Coordinators employed from June to November.
- Each Athabasca community will receive a bursary of \$25,000 towards community projects annually for the duration of the project.
- A scholarship fund is being developed with details to be announced in the near future. These scholarships are for \$3,500 x 3 for each of the First Nation Communities. There will also be one scholarship of \$3,500 for a recipient from the communities of Uranium City, Stony Rapids or Wollaston Lake.
- The Project will start in May and end in November this year.

- May 11-14, 2020 will see QM Points involved with the Athabasca Fly-in Career Symposium.
- During September 2020, QM Points will host Community Feasts and Project Updates.

"These are good numbers to start, and we are constantly striving for improvement," says Kyle Remus, Project Manager. "As part of our ongoing commitment building local capacity, we will continue to work with the Athabasca communities to increase local involvement even further as this project continues, with the ultimate goal of maximizing local involvement to the highest level possible."

A recruitment tour will take place in the Athabasca region the week of March 2. QM Points and SRC will be travelling to the Athabasca communities to accept resumes from Athabasca residents who are interested in working at the Gunnar project. Dates, times and locations will be found on community posters, on the QM Points Facebook page and on MBC radio.

QM Points is a partnership between QM Environmental – a leading national environmental services contractor – and Points Athabasca – a civil and construction contractor with majority Athabasca Basin ownership and over 20 years of successful operations in the Athabasca region. Last year, QM Points entered into an agreement with SRC to complete one of the final phases of the Gunnar mine remediation project. The site will be remediated to a level that will allow reestablishment of vegetation and traditional uses of the land. The former Gunnar mine was closed in 1964 with little decommissioning and is located approximately 25km south of Uranium City. QM Points began work on the Gunnar site in July 2019.

## Tru-North Hosts 2020 Spring Catch Indoor Boat Sale

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The 2020 Spring Catch Indoor Boat Sale will feature familiar brands, such as Kingfisher.

Tru-North's annual boat show is becoming a reliable sign of spring's arrival in Prince Albert.

"We are excited to be kicking off the season with a huge Spring Catch indoor boat sale," says Terry Skulmoski, General Manager at Tru-North Marine & Recreation. "We've been running an indoor shopping sales event for the past couple of years, and people really enjoy being

able to shop for boats indoors since the weather can sometimes still be unreliable this time of year. This year, we've got the greatest kickoff to the season with some of our best deals of the year!"

The boat show will feature familiar brands such as Smokercraft fishing boats, Sylvan pontoon boats, Kingfisher, as well as the time-tested, durable and popular Alumarine camp and fishing boat.

"We're very proud to feature Alumarine, which is manufactured right here in Prince Albert. We have a great lineup of products and some great deals to get 'lake season' off to a great start," says Skulmoski. "We'll be giving away some very exciting door prizes with no purchase required. Admission is free, so come check it out!"

The Tru-North Spring Catch Indoor Boat Sale will be held indoors at the PA Exhibition Center from March 27-April 4: 10am to 8pm, Monday to Saturday and 10am to 5 pm on Sunday.

## ABS to Provide Services for Nutrien's Cory Mine

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Shannon Manton, Manager, Procurement, Nutrien and Ron Hyggen, CEO of Athabasca Basin Security

Nutrien has signed an agreement with Athabasca Basin Security (ABS) to provide security services for its Cory Potash mine located 7 kilometers west of Saskatoon, SK. The contract provides the physical security and emergency medical support to the site with full time PCP/Security Officers (Primary Care Paramedic). Coverage began on February 1, 2020.

"Nutrien is pleased to have awarded this opportunity to ABS at our Cory mine site," says Shannon Manton, Manager, Procurement at Nutrien. "ABS has been providing Security/Medical First Responder at our Patience Lake site since 2013, and we've been very pleased with the very high level of service they provide. Also, working together with an Indigenous organization like ABS is in line with our approach to inclusion which seeks to make a broader economic contribution that

**"ABS has been providing security/Medical First Responder at our Patience Lake site since 2013, and we've been very pleased with the very high level of service they provide."**

helps to continue building the business capacities of local, Saskatchewan, First Nations and Métis businesses."

"We have had a great long-term relationship with Nutrien, and we look forward to working with them to provide employment, training and industrial security service at their Cory location starting this year and in the years to come," says Ron Hyggen, CEO of Athabasca Basin Security. "This is a big win for ABS and showcases the commitment of Nutrien to their long term contractors and the Indigenous community. We have always worked hard to prove that we can deliver services at the highest level. Nutrien is one of the world's largest companies and as such, taking on a major property such as Cory, shows that we are in line with the values that Nutrien believes in. The Cory site utilizes integrated medical services with security personnel at the primary care paramedic level. We added this service a number of years ago and this has proven to be a valuable investment."

Saskatoon-based ABS is 100% owned by Athabasca Basin Development, an investment company that is owned by the seven communities in Northern Saskatchewan's Athabasca Basin area. In addition to having Indigenous ownership, ABS has partnerships with 14 First Nations across Western Canada for the training and employment of band members in order to ensure that local jobs are filled by local people. The company provides the Canadian mining industry's top companies with a wide range of Industrial security and medical services.

## 5Buds enters new phase in Cannabis industry with edibles



On October 17, 2019, exactly one year after the first wave of legalization brought flower and other products, edibles, extracts and topicals officially became legal in Canada. 5Buds Cannabis began getting some of the new products just before Christmas.

“We were very excited to get the new wave of cannabis products in our stores just in time for the holidays,” says Corey Tyacke, Retail General Manager for 5Buds. “We have definitely seen an increase in sales since the new products came in. I think a lot of people have really been waiting for these products since cannabis first became legal. We’re only just beginning with this phase. I can’t wait to see what products become available in the coming months!”

Edibles are different than cannabis flower. The effects of smoking cannabis can be felt very quickly, whereas edibles take up to two hours before the high is felt. “We definitely recommend that customers start with

The 5Buds store in Warman opened in November 2018.

a small amount and go very slowly,” says Tyacke. “If you don’t notice anything right away – that’s normal.”

Customers can find edibles in the form of chocolate bars, mints, and gummies at 5Buds, while other products like vapes and drinks are expected to come out later this year.

5Buds is owned by Synergy Five Investments, a limited partnership with four partners: ABD, Des Nedhe Development, Peter Ballantyne Group of Companies, and Prince Albert Business Development. Shareholders of these companies include 13 different First Nations in Saskatchewan. 5Buds has stores in Warman, North Battleford, and Yorkton; there is also an online store that can deliver to anywhere in Saskatchewan at [www.5buds.ca](http://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  
Fall 2020.**

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