

MACA Newsletter

May - June 2004

Municipal Statutes Finally Rolled Out

Community governments and MACA staff have worked for more than seven years to see the final version of the new Municipal Statutes Replacement Act, and the work became reality when the Fourteenth Legislative Assembly passed the revised legislation in its final sitting in 2003. The new legislation, which does not include the *Settlement Act*, provides changes to the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, *Hamlets Act* and the *Charter Communities Act*, and took effect April 1, 2004.

A committee of MACA staff co-chaired by Mike Kalnay and Jack Poitras put together a comprehensive package that summarizes and explains the new legislation to the public. The committee included a representative of Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT) and also included critical input on the accompanying regulations by the Department of Justice. While the new revised legislation provides community governments with far more authority and autonomy in how they deliver services to their communities, they are accountable for how they manage new borrowing and spending authorities.

The new legislation reduces Ministerial authorities and approval requirements in several sections: one example



Congratulations to Team MACA for raising \$10,256.22 for the NWT Cancer Society's Relay for Life - the most raised by any team - and to Robin Sproule who was the top individual fund raiser with \$2,600 in pledges. Well done, everyone!

is in the way councils pass by-laws. Another new section enables councils to borrow funds for certain municipal purposes but within certain regulatory guidelines so they still remain accountable to their voters and the legislation. In order to borrow, communities must provide an investment plan, approved by the Minister, and in order to pay down debt they must have a Minister approved debt-reduction plan. The legislation also provides councils with new authority to take on the administration of public utilities and invest in certain regulated economic development activities. All these new activities require voter approval.

MACA invited community Senior Administrative Officers to a meeting in Yellowknife on March 16-17, 2004 and reviewed the new legislation in preparation for the April 1st rollout deadline. While in Yellowknife, the SAOs were guests of the 15th Legislative Assembly and participated in a luncheon with Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Emergency Planning - Is It Necessary?

A thought provoking question - but only when we are faced with certain imminent danger! The question we have to ask ourselves as ordinary citizens is: "Are we prepared for an emergency?"

This question really hit home to staff at Municipal and Community Affairs during the near disastrous incident in Fort McPherson this past winter. The loss of the

community's power generation plant in a fire left residents without power for several days. Power was restored quickly but it was revealed, during a subsequent review, that the community's Emergency Response Plan was not current. This is not meant as a critique of the community but should serve as a wake-up call to all of us!

Senior MACA officials became very concerned that other communities may not be fully prepared for dangerous situations. We are constantly warned by knowledgeable



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MACA employees were active this winter - as always! Sharon Firth is shown at right with Commissioner Glenna Hansen and our ULU winning NWT dog mushers. Steve Moss, below, and his teammates scored a once-in-a-lifetime 8-ender at the Canadian Firefighters Curling Championships!



Kudos to the following MACA employees for their accomplishments!

✦ **Tony Grandjambe** has been elected a certified member of the Aboriginal Finance Officer Association.

✦ **Barry Harley** won the "A" Event in the Norman Wells Canadian North Curling Bonspiel.

🏅 **Colin McPherson** coaches speed skating in Norman Wells.

🏐 Team "MACATTACK" from the Sahtu, with partners from ECE, won the Corporate Challenge Volleyball tournament.

🏆 Sport, Recreation and Youth thanks **Sherry Wiseman** for all of her hard work. She's a key team member, and active in the MACA Social Committee.

🏏 **Grace Lau-a** was named the YK Women's Broomball League Rookie of the Year. Grace was also the top female scorer in the mixed league.

🏐 Thanks to **Marilyn Napier** for a job well done on the Fort Resolution Co-management Agreement, says Jack Poitras.

✦ **Sheila Bassi Kellet** was invited by the U.S. Ambassador to take part in the prestigious International Visitors Program. Sheila participated in a three-week, five-state tour that started in Washington D.C. and dealt with resource development impact issues.

✦ **Penny Johnson** has proven to be an excellent sports resource in the community of Yellowknife. Her cheerfulness and fair-play attitude have meant good things for the youth she has affected through Kids Sport and the Arctic Winter Games.

✦ **Michael Kalnay** has spent 14 years entertaining, supporting and organizing young people in the North. His involvement with Scouts Canada has helped youth build their confidence, and improve survival and sportsmanship skills.

Emergency Planning

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and experienced GNWT and federal civil disaster agencies that every community will eventually be hit with some form of disaster or emergency situation. In the NWT, wildland fires that threaten communities, aircraft crashes and floods all come to mind. Several communities in the Sahtu Region have gone through harrowing and dangerous fires in the past few years that threatened the safety and property of their citizens. Hay River was threatened by flooding in 2003.

MACA and, in some cases, RWED take a very active role in regional and community disaster prevention planning, and have an interdepartmental memo of understanding (MOU) to work on community assessments for fire prevention planning. MACA and RWED work with community councils to ensure there is a plan to mitigate integrated wildland and community fires. Citizens can assist by fire protecting their property and community councils can ensure that their community response plan is updated and ready. MACA will assist communities to ensure the very best protection to their citizens.

It is our hope that each and every citizen in the NWT will take responsibility to ensure their families and property are protected in case of potential and life-threatening situations.

Contact us at:

MACA Newsletter
Municipal and Community Affairs
Government of the Northwest Territories
Suite 600, 5201 - 50th Avenue
Yellowknife NT X1A 3S9

E-mail: Laura_Gareau@gov.nt.ca

For more information:

Contact your Regional Superintendent to learn more about MACA's programs and services.

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