



I wanted to provide a glossy, flashy newsletter but the time just ran out.....

So I'll offer up this text version to keep everyone in the loop.

It's December 21st and like a lot of Oldies I have some Christmas music playing in the background.

It is pretty exciting to be finishing the 2024 calendar with 35 Men's Sheds in Alberta!!!

The Provincial Insurance program is in place and 9 Sheds were in a position to join now. The rate we settled on was \$260 per Shed. Alberta Men's Shed Association, (AMSA) was able to make this happen because of a donation from the Grande Prairie Rotary Club. Thanks go to Richard Nasedkin, leader of the GP Men's Shed for brokering the donation of \$5000 towards our insurance pool. Other Sheds will join the AMSA program when their insurance is up for renewal. Many Sheds are currently covered by a sponsor organization. In 2025/26 AMSA will do an assessment of sponsor insurance policies to see they are adequate. Wayne Warner of the Cold Lake Shed did all the leg work with the Cooperator's folks to take the giant leap on behalf of Sheds.

In late October (24-26) Men's Sheds Canada came to Edmonton to attend the Canadian Gerontology Conference as an exhibitor and the sponsor of a pre-conference Research Symposium on Men's Health and Wellbeing/ Men's Sheds. AMSA prepared a Men's Sheds display featuring some of the Shed Stories we collected and also featured stories on four researchers who have done a great deal of work on Men's Sheds.

AMSA and MSC (Men's Shed Canada) sat in on an Open House at the SouthEast Yeg Shed in Edmonton. About thirty Sheddors had a chance to hear updates from both AMSA and MSC, the next morning MSC heard a presentation from AMSA on the accomplishments and directions for the future as well as updates from the Regional Directors on your Shed activities from across the province. MSC was extremely complimentary on the progress Alberta has made as an organization and as individual Sheds. Special note was made of the gang in Innisfail and the support they have provided to evolving Sheds in their Region.

Later that day AMSA hosted a luncheon for MSC and about 60 individuals who have supported Men's Sheds in Edmonton and across the entire province. We heard from MSC, AMSA, Lorna Dancey (Shed Stories) and Jan Femmena, President of the BC Men's Sheds Association. Jan shared his Shed Story (attached) which got a standing ovation and many tears.

We bid adieu to MSC and AMSA went into a planning session on October 26th.

The Alberta Men's Shed Association was incorporated in May 2023. A lot has been accomplished. (see attached)

Three things that Alberta did that stand out were:

1. Creating partnerships with Family, Community Support Services; Healthy Aging Core Alberta and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. These partnerships increased our reach across all parts of Alberta and brought us into communities we would never have been able to access. The number of voices "talking Shed" has spiked beyond our dreams.

FCSS has supported the creation of 26% of the Sheds in Alberta. Healthy Aging CORE Alberta invited men's Sheds to 11 of their Regional Gatherings where Shedders got to talk about Men's Sheds to over 500 participants. EFCL helped spread the Men's Shed message to their 160+ Community Leagues in Edmonton.

2. At the June AGM a motion was passed to put a Regional structure in place for the AMSA. Now all regions of the province have a voice on the Board. At the 2025 AGM individual Sheds will elect their Regional Director to sit on the Board.

3. Alberta picked up on an initiative from the UK Men's Sheds Association and piloted a series of Shed Stories (stories about guys in Sheds) with the support of Helpage Canada we contracted Lorna Dancey <https://www.lornadancey.com/> to tell some of our stories.

We still face a lot of challenges before hitting our long term goal of 120 Men's Sheds in Alberta; finding meeting and work space for all Sheds, maximizing use of the space, increasing the number of Shed Guys, sharing project ideas, supporting shed leaders, building an effective Board, finding sponsors and learning to raise money for Shed activities and finding ways to keep everyone in the loop.

Shed Development doesn't happen overnight and the "long game" approach has to be accepted. Having a "long game plan" isn't easy, especially when you are my age.

We are not short of ideas for 2025 that we will test out; but they have to meet the needs of Sheds and the guys in those Sheds. We want you to be healthy and happy. Lots of things will spin out of being healthy, happy and having fun.

I know Shed Leaders understand the work that goes into keeping your Shed flying. Creating an invisible structure is a challenge. We hope we can do more to support you with that in 2025.

Alberta takes great pride in collaborating with Men's Sheds Canada to develop Sheds in Canada. We will be working with MSC on a number of initiatives we have in common.

Alberta lost a devoted Shedder Brian Christianson this Fall. Brian was a member/leader of Edmonton's Downtown Shed. He kept the Shed active through COVID by adopting ZOOM.....he took his Shed "virtual" and ran 100 sessions with speakers on health, history, zoology, energy, homelessness, crime and coal mining to mention a few. He reached out across the world to shedders in Wales and had a month of joint discussions. Brian was instrumental in getting the AMSA established. He loved to be out in the community "talking Shed" with anyone and everyone. He is already being missed at our gathering. He always told us to tell the stories....

I will do another update at New Years to thank some people who helped us reach 35.

Best Wishes to you and your families for a wonderful Christmas and Holiday season.

Think Shed - Talk Shed

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Punch".