



# NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2025



## **INTRODUCTION:** Hello everyone!

My name is Carolyn Kohlsmith (Garth's wife) and I am a COP member in Westlock, AB.

I am pleased to bring you some Citizens On Patrol news highlights from around the province in this newsletter! Anytime your group has something noteworthy going on, don't forget to snap some pictures and then forward them to me with a bit of a write up to go with it. You just email it to [newsletter@acopa.ca](mailto:newsletter@acopa.ca) right after your event and I will just file it for the next newsletter. With this being the first one in quite a while, we have quite a few pages of events from this past year from several groups. "Thank you" all for sending them in! Hoping to hear from many of you in the coming months!

## **"SEASON'S GREETINGS" from the President ...**

Hard to believe it is the holiday season already. Not sure how it's already been a few months since we gathered at our Training and AGM in Redwater. "Thank you" again to the Redwater Citizens On Patrol Association for your work on the event and for hosting us all this year.

Next year we look forward to travelling to Westlock and hope you can join us.

Since we all gathered in Redwater, we have had more communities reach out to enquire about joining ACOPA to help make their communities a safer space. Please know that the reason for our growth is the work you are all doing in your communities.

"Thank you" as well to the Alberta RCMP for your continued support as we grow – we would not be where we are today without your partnership and support.

I wish you all peace, joy and a safe holiday season as you gather with family and friends.

Kimberly Hurst

President – Alberta Citizens On Patrol Association



# 2025 AGM AND WORKSHOP



## ACOPA Appointed and Elected EXECUTIVE BOARD

Sept. 2025 to Sept. 2026

Pictured from left to right: (not in picture – Carolyn Kohlsmith ... Newsletter)

Leonard Bohachyk	... I.D. Cards	Garth Kohlsmith	... Insurance
Greg Mathias	... Director 2	Henry Salomons	... Webmaster
Teresa Cunningham	... Vice President	Faye Chin	... Director 3
Beth Endresen	... Secretary/Treasurer	Trudy Smith	... Director 6
Kimberly Hurst	... President	Cam Wolfe	... Director 4
Flo Robinson	... Director 5		

\*This year's event was hosted in Redwater on the weekend of September 12 to 14 and the Redwater Citizens On Patrol group did a fantastic job! The food was great as was the entertainment on the Friday evening! Many members also enjoyed the informative bus trip on Saturday afternoon to see the oil refineries in the Heartland. Training seminars with the ACOPA official trainer, Bob Gollan, were well attended and informative presentations from K Division and a Redwater RCMP Constable regarding body cams, drones, spike belts, online safety and scams were great.

## **REDWATER COP**

***\*Thanks to Sophie Smith – Secretary for forwarding all these photos!***

The Redwater group arranged for having a designated photographer, so we have some awesome pictures covering our AGM weekend to share with you.



**Were you there??? Can you see some familiar faces in the crowd???**

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**FRIDAY** ... As always, after enjoying a tasty supper, we had the traditional **Flag Ceremony** with a member from all the participating groups carrying in their own COP group or Town flag. Also, as usual, the group were led into the hall to the tune of the bag pipes!

**\*It was great that Redwater Constable Rhyker Lamabe lead off with the Canada flag!**





## **REDWATER (continued)**

The smiling faces of our members  
working at the registration table.



**Bob Gollan – our “Trainer”**

Some of our Redwater COP  
member volunteers ( >>> )  
just resting after the  
*Ukrainian supper on Friday night.*



<<< How adorable were these youngsters ???  
the *Waskatenau Pryveet Ukrainian Dancers*

**\*The Redwater Citizens On Patrol took great  
pleasure in hosting the 2025 AGM and  
Workshop at our Pembina Cultural Centre.**

**Groups from 22 communities throughout  
Alberta attended as well as several guest  
speakers. “*Thank You*” to all!**



## **REDWATER (continued)**

### **SATURDAY ...**



After more delegates arrived to enjoy a full breakfast, the day began with guest speakers – the first was Redwater Constable Rhyen Lamabe providing an excellent demonstration of the use of a body camera, spike belt and the use of a 40mm weapon used for criminal and crowd suppression.

Following, were two RCMP speakers on Online Safety and Fraud /Scam Prevention and Auto Theft.



Acopa Outstanding Liaison Awards were presented to Cst. Jason Wall from Redwater (pictured above) as well as Cst. Kristen Appleton – from Strathcona County and Cst. Daniel Schwartz – from Wetaskiwin.

Afternoon ... our AGM was held followed by most folks going on an Industrial Bus Tour to see several area refineries, the Redwater Olefinic Fractionator and a Hydrogen Peroxide Facility. All very interesting!! The day wrapped up with a lovely banquet and more time for ACOPA members from across the province to socialize a bit more and exchange ideas.

**SUNDAY ...** coffee, fresh cinnamon buns and an **ADVANCED TRAINING SEMINAR** with Trainer Bob Dollan. A great finish to an informative, educational weekend! *See you in WESTLOCK for the 2026 -AGM and WORKSHOP !*



## **PONOKA COP**

***\*Thank you to Marlene Gartner for sending this ....***

Fun was had by all who came out for the Ponoka Christmas Parade on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>

Our COP group decorated up a truck, driven by member Dave Piel, and Kelly Bell, handing out candy, was the cutest elf!



Pictured here are  
Marlene and Kelly

<<<<<<<<



Pre-Christmas is a busy time and only a few days later, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, saw our members out again assisting with the “Charity Check Stop” along with local paramedics and fire dept. members.



1. Dave Piel says ***“Thanks”*** for the donation!
  2. Dave with the Fire Dept. guys .. Brennan, Jeff, Nate and Rory
  3. Dave with paramedics and Fire Dept. volunteers ... Laurie, Nicole, Jack, Linda, Matt, Stan and Andrew
- \*\*Thanks for their permission to use their names.***

# **PENHOLD COP**

***\* Submitted by Teresa Cunningham ... thanks!***

Again this year, our Penhold COP group partnered with the RCMP, Town of Penhold CPO (Peace Officer), Innisfail COP and the local Penhold Crossing High School to speak to students about the dangers of Distracted/Impaired driving through their **Experiential Cart Program**.



This time 54 Grade 9 students had the opportunity, while under guidance from volunteers and members, to wear BAL goggles when trying to navigate a close course in the gymnasium to conduct field sobriety tests. Others, took on the task of texting while driving to showcase how quickly accidents can happen when not focusing on the road!

Special Thanks to: Cst. Craig Nelson  
Peace Officer - Juliana Pereira  
Volunteer - Patricia McKeller  
COP member - Mike Klitch





## SEXSMITH COP

\* Thanks Beth Endresen for this article.

Going back to FAMILY DAY - February 17<sup>th</sup> 2025 ...

Our COP volunteers hosted a ***“first time event”*** – a Pancake Breakfast which was very well attended! Approximately 120 people came out to enjoy our efforts. We had door prizes and plenty of pancakes and sausages to make everyone happy! Official “greeters” at the door handed out brochures and member application forms as well.



President Bruce Black - Gerry Cheriton  
Vice-President Len Pelletier



***“Happy Flippers!”*** were Dennis Stredulinsky  
and Clinton Froehlick - both COP members.



***“How am I doing???”***

NNNNNNNNNN



## **SEXSMITH COP (continued)**



***Some “junior laborers” pitched in to help!!***

***Twins – Lux and Mia Froehlick were mixing batter under the watchful eyes of Bruce Black – Sheldon Shura and Kathy Black in the background.***



***“Lining up” to “chow down ” !!!  
Member Len Pelletier bringing in more food.***

## **HEARTLAND COP**

***\*Submitted by Trudy Smith ... Director 6 - "Thanks!"***



A little advertising in the local Christmas Parade is always a great way to raise recognition and awareness in your community!

**Having a good relationship with your local RCMP detachment is very important to any COP group. The Fort Saskatchewan detachment hosted an “Open House Event” on December 5<sup>th</sup> and both Doug and Laura Eastman from our COP group attended and got a tour of the detachment as well as a couple of leads for new members.**

At the Open House, kids got to paint up a cruiser with erasable markers which later was driven in the parade!

*Such a fun Idea!*



**Staff Sgt. Scott Lande had fun and was all smiles and enjoying the event with the help of several of his constables (alias “Elves”)!**



# **WESTLOCK COP**

**Submitted by Carolyn Kohlsmith**

2025 has been a very busy year for our group and our membership has grown considerably! We have found that by taking advantage of the *ACOPA Grant Program* to purchase and then give away a variety of promotional items at the different community events we took part in, so many more folks in our area now know about our COP group and the benefits of having our volunteers assist the RCMP. \*\* FREE give-away items tend to make folks remember you!

***“Thank You” ACOPA !!!***

- Our local detachment, partnered with the Town, to initiate monthly **“Coffee with a Cop”** sessions
- Our Westlock County set up several **“Open House”** events in small surrounding hamlets
- Our group volunteers attended most of these events, always giving out info about our group!



<< March was  
National  
Reading Month.  
We supplied  
**1000 free**  
**bookmarks** to  
our local library!



**\$9500 dollars**  
worth of  
happy smiles of  
thanks from  
Garth Kohlsmith &  
Michelle Hartman

**Wow!!!**

We were chosen to receive a HUGE donation from a local women’s group, then we added the \$2000 profit from our spring Bingo Event, and purchased **384 FREE Solar Motion Lights** to supply to town and county residents!



**Just for FUN in July!!!**

We hosted our first-ever **CAR SHOW!** Got rained out the first time so had to cancel but the sun shone for us for a few hours on July 19<sup>th</sup>. We had 32 entries, over 150 people come out between 10 and 1pm but then it rained ... boo hoo!! Our group had a hot dog BBQ as well.

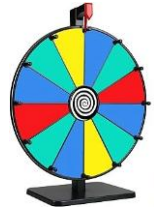
## **WESTLOCK COP (continued)**

August and leading into fall, our group were very busy! The Westlock Ag Society Fall Fair saw us hosting our **Annual BBQ** at the RCMP detachment and feeding 229 people hot dogs and/or burgers. We were fortunate to have a local business sponsor the total cost of all the food so it made our fundraising results even better!



<< Pictured are Diane and Keith and Chad on the grill and Shirley and Stella at the service table.

Our **“PRIZE WHEEL”** was a real hit giving folks a chance to win one of the many promotional items purchased thru the ACOPA Grant Program!



~~~~~  
Pictured below .....

Bright and early the next morning after the BBQ, more of our members were waiting with a decorated truck for the Fair Parade to begin.  
Left to right: Heidi, Pauline, Val, Shari, Debbie and Duane our driver.



2000 pieces of candy to give away and we ran out!!!





## **WESTLOCK COP (continued)**



We had a delegation of **16 members attend the AGM !**

Many of them were new members who really did enjoy the experience! The table from the left: Duane, Heidi, Shirley, John F., Stella, John B. and Brenda.

Our Town of Westlock organized a **“TRY IT” Night** at the end of August for different clubs and groups to set up information tables so of course we had representation there. Members Gary and Stella shared their smiles and of course .....

more of our ACOPA logo promotional items!!! >>>



We participated in the **“Trunk & Treat”** event on Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> after our group made up 300 candy bags at our monthly meeting.

??? Who are these gouls (I mean girls)!

**“No Snacking!!!”** Pictured L to R are: Rolly - Stella - Val -Debbie - Heidi - Bernice - Ian - Lois - Joanne





## **WESTLOCK COP (continued)**

This little girl >>>  
was so happy  
that her grandpa  
had the lucky ticket  
for our  
**"Kids Car Raffle"** at our  
Bingo Event on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>  
(the prize was donated)



Our 3<sup>rd</sup> successful **BINGO EVENT** was on  
Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> with a crowd of 100 people.  
Lots of volunteer hours put in on this  
one as we again had a bit of an **Auction**  
going on with it.

As our group becomes more well known  
for doing "good things" in the  
community, we are finding it easier to  
get sponsors for all the prizes!



**\*\* Everyone in attendance received free 2026 desk calendars and lip balms  
all with our ACOPA logo on them.**

Here we are – almost at the end of the year and still busy with taking part in more  
community activities. Our town's Christmas Lite-Up event was on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> and once  
again our volunteer group, along with financial help from our local Servus Credit  
Union, hosted the **"FREE HOT DOGS and HOT CHOCOLATE"** after the Santa Parade.



Diane – Chad – Garth – Judy – John – Shirley – Dan – Val - Nichole- Stella- Heidi – Duane

**\*They were all smiles BEFORE serving the 400 people who came by!!!**

In the spirit of giving, our group has **Sponsored a "Family of 4" for Christmas** as well as  
shopping for 10 seniors for the lodge **"Seniors Wish List" Program.**



## DID YOU KNOW ??? .....

***“We Welcome”*** our new ACOPA Liaison – Sgt. Steven Thackeray.

He joined the RCMP in 2006 in British Columbia and has spent the majority of his service as a General Duty police officer in communities across BC and Alberta. Sgt.

Thackeray has served the communities of Chilliwack, Boston Bar, Sayward, Houston, Burns Lake and Fox Creek in the capacities of a General Investigator, Operations NCO and as a Detachment Commander. Having experienced over a decade of his service in small, rural communities, he understands the importance of the relationships between the RCMP, community members and local community groups. In 2021, Sgt. Thackeray transferred to Alberta RCMP headquarters in Edmonton, to take on the role and the NCO in charge of the Alberta RCMP Recruiting Unit and has worked in the Alberta RCMP's Community Safety & Wellbeing Branch ever since.

Sgt. Thackeray, his wife and two sons reside in Beaumont and are an avid hockey family. Steve and his family regularly attend Edmonton Oilers games and he has volunteered for years with the local minor hockey association, coaching both of his sons.



***2025 ACOPA Appreciation Awards*** were presented to Ron Pettigrew – Devon Theresa Rogers & Johnny Scalzo from Strathcona County as nominated by their group's presidents. *\*Any group can nominate any of their members for this award.* ACOPA President – Kimberly nominated ALL the members of the board who each received the paper certificate as well as a special tumbler as shown.



One new group joined last year with 4 other groups awaiting approval from Alberta Registries! ***“WELCOME” to the Peace River Citizens On Patrol group!***  
We are growing!!

**IN THE NEW YEAR ....** be listening when you tune in to your local **STINGRAY Radio Station!** One of our Westlock COP members is a Stingray employee and he has secured a Radio Marketing Grant for ACOPA. Stingray Radio has 22 local stations across the province and we will get 15 – 30 second ads per week!

**What great exposure for all our dedicated volunteer groups!**

**The 2026 AGM and Workshop is in Westlock ... Oct. 23 to 25 “SEE YOU HERE!”**



## THINK CHRISTMAS !!

BELOW ARE THE FIRST LETTERS TO WELL KNOWN CHRISTMAS SONGS. WRITE OUT THE COMPLETE SONG TITLE.

EXAMPLE : HTHAS HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING

1. OCAYF \_\_\_\_\_
2. GKW \_\_\_\_\_
3. OHN \_\_\_\_\_
4. ICUAMC \_\_\_\_\_
5. ACIB \_\_\_\_\_
6. WTK \_\_\_\_\_
7. OCT \_\_\_\_\_
8. DTH \_\_\_\_\_
9. JTTW \_\_\_\_\_
10. HTHAS \_\_\_\_\_
11. ISMKSC \_\_\_\_\_
12. IDOAWC \_\_\_\_\_
13. JB \_\_\_\_\_
14. FTS \_\_\_\_\_
15. RTRNRD \_\_\_\_\_
16. AIAM \_\_\_\_\_
17. WCIT \_\_\_\_\_
18. IBHFC \_\_\_\_\_
19. FN \_\_\_\_\_
20. AWHHOH \_\_\_\_\_
21. SCICTT \_\_\_\_\_
22. WW \_\_\_\_\_
23. HCSC \_\_\_\_\_
24. OLTOB \_\_\_\_\_
25. LDB \_\_\_\_\_
26. RATCT \_\_\_\_\_
27. WWYAMC \_\_\_\_\_

HOPE THIS HELPS GET YOU INTO  
THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS !! ENJOY !