

Government kept us in the dark: APA

GILLIAN SLADE
gslade@medicinehatnews.com
Twitter: MHNGillianSlade

The Alberta Pharmacists' Association says it was not consulted on the government's generic drug price slashing decision and, it suggests, the workability of the idea will be revealed when it goes into effect May 1.

"Alberta Health and the Alberta Pharmacists' Association met six times between October 2012 and March 2013 and during that time there was no mention of the generic price change," said Byron Bergh, president of the APA, in a telephone interview with the *News* on Monday. "When they announced this on March 7 that's what really put the distrust in government for pharmacists."

Generic drug companies have been told by the government that from May 1 they can only charge 18 per cent of the cost of the brand-name product, instead of the former 35 per cent. For example, the generic equivalent of a \$100 brand-name drug will cost \$18, down from the former \$35.

"Alberta Health is speaking with drug manufacturers currently on this issue," said Bergh. Bergh says if the decision

had been introduced in stages there would have been some room for adjustment.

Pharmacists arranged a day of protest on April 11, which saw many close their dispensary's for several hours.

Minister of Health Fred

Horne then announced measures to soften the blow but Bergh says it did not even come close.

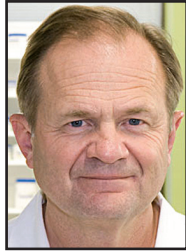
"It did not soften the blow at all. Some of these things were just re-announcements — they were not new initiatives," said Bergh.

"The additional \$1 dispensing fee per prescription, for one year, will not cost the government \$24 million. Only \$12 million is government costs, the rest will be covered by private medical insurance companies."

The APS is about to enter negotiations for a new contract.

"We'd like to have more recognition as the voice for pharmacists and hold an honest dialogue," said Bergh. "After May 1 we will know better how we will move forward. We first want to determine an agreement in principle so we understand the terms of the negotiations."

The basic dispensing fee that cannot be exceeded, \$10.22, has not changed in 20 years.



Byron Bergh



NEWS PHOTO
CHARLES
LEFEBVRE

Dominique Liboiron, who canoed to New Orleans last year to honour his uncle who died of heart disease, will be sharing stories of his journey tonight at the Medicine Hat Public Library.

After 5,000 km canoe trip, Hatter home to talk about trip to honour late uncle

ALEX MCCUAIG
amccuaig@medicinehatnews.com
Twitter:MHNMCCuaig

After a grueling 5,000 kilometre canoe trek from Canada to New Orleans, Dominique Liboiron is back in the city to share his experiences from his odyssey tonight at the Library.

Liboiron cast off from Eastend, Sask. in June 2012 in an effort to promote heart health as a way to remember his 42-year-old uncle Mitch Hamon, who died of a heart attack in November 2010.

His goal: to canoe to New Orleans navigating the Frenchman, Milk and Missouri rivers and joining the mighty Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico to spread the ashes of his much-loved relative.

Following an eight-month journey, he accomplished that goal, spreading awareness of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle to sustain the relationships which mean so much to so many.

"It was such a huge range of emotions," said Liboiron of the trip.

The final kilometres of the trip coming into New Orleans saw the extremes of that range played out with the Coast Guard on patrol during the Super Bowl and stopping him just a few miles from the end of the journey.

"The current was so strong it was pushing me to the end," he said of drifting while tied up to

the Coast Guard vessel.

"I didn't want to paddle over 3,000 miles and end up floating up to the shore with the Coast Guard next to me."

But with US national broadcaster CBS filming the final days of his journey for a pre-Super Bowl feature, the issue was soon rectified with the seamen radioing ahead for a paddle-wheeler to play him into the final leg with a steam organ tune.

"When I got there, I was taken aback because there were so many people cheering and waving."

From there, Liboiron participated in a Mardi Gras procession in which he carried his uncle's ashes that also, coincidentally, ended at the site of his journey's end.

But there were a few obstacles that had to be overcome on the way to that point.

"The biggest challenge was the wind...there is nowhere to hide from it," said Liboiron.

On a good day on the Mississippi, paddling 45 miles in a day wasn't unheard of but on the wind-swept plains of Montana and the Dakotas during the long summer days, six miles was sometimes the best mileage one could expect, he said.

"The wind was so difficult."

For the most part though, the five major portages necessary to complete the trip couldn't have gone smoother, "because either I

could hire fishermen to help me or campers or people in the area would just help me for free," said Liboiron.

But it was the everyday generosity of people which struck Liboiron.

"The people were phenomenal, they were so nice — lots of them I'm still in contact with and I consider friends. Especially the people in Louisiana," he said.

"A lot of people thought it was a suitable tribute to my uncle. Some people thought it was crazy, some dangerous, some people wanted to help and would really go out of the way to help."

But at the root of his odyssey remains the tribute to his late uncle with Liboiron bringing his journey home tonight starting at 7 p.m. at the Medicine Hat Library Theatre.

"I'll talk about my trip and share pictures and stories and from my trip," he said.

"I'll also talk about themes important to me; setting goals, achieving goals, overcoming fear, coping with loss, mourning and also creating positive thought."

"My goal isn't to talk about a canoe trip but to give them tools to improve their life because I feel that is something my uncle did for me. Me doing this is continuing his legacy."

Liboiron is making himself available for other such talks.

For more information, visit canoetoneworleans.com.

Stampede begins search for its 2013 Queen and Princess

Medicine Hat News

Calling all aspiring royalty. The Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede is looking for a new Queen and Princess.

Applications for the Stampede Queen and Princess contest for the 2013 season opened up on April 15, and the Queen committee is looking for up to eight young women to potentially represent the Exhibition and Stampede for the upcoming year.

"We're looking for someone ages 18-24 who is outgoing, has great public-speaking and horsemanship skills and is look-

ing for an opportunity to be an ambassador for the city and the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede," said Donna Kirchner, chair of the Stampede's Queen Committee.

The Stampede Queen and Princess are regularly seen volunteering in the community at various events and are the most visible faces of the Exhibition and Stampede during the year.

Kirchner says one person has already applied for the contest.

Anyone interested in entering the contest can download an application from mhstampede.com. The deadline to apply is June 1.

Authors at the library

Medicine Hat News

Alberta authors Carolyn Fisher and Joan Galat will be at the Medicine Hat Public Library this week for a presentation about their passion for writing, storytelling, illustration and art.

Fisher's illustration has been commissioned by hundreds of magazines and newspapers from "Businessweek" to Disney Adventures magazine. Her original art has been exhibited in Florida, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Alberta. Her book "Two Old Potatoes and Me" was featured on "Reading Rainbow."

Galat has been writing since she was nine years old and was first published at 12. She's the author of eight books for children and two books for adults.

For more on the authors visit www.carolynfisher.com and www.joangalat.com.

The free presentation begins at 7 p.m.

For more on the program call the library at 403-502-8526.



Correction Notice

RE: IGA Flyers in effect
April 19th - 25th, 2013

The **Old Dutch Arriba Tortilla Chips**, or Selected Varieties, 260 g - 310 g, were incorrectly advertised. The price should have been **2/\$6.98 or \$3.69 each.**

IGA apologizes for any inconvenience caused to our valued customers.

FUTURE SHOP - CORRECTION NOTICE

RETRACTION FOR THE FUTURE SHOP
APRIL 19 CORPORATE FLYER

On the April 19 flyer, page 19, this product: Canon 60D 18.0MP DSLR Camera (WebCode: 10154253) was advertised with an incorrect trade-in discount value. Please be advised that the applicable trade-in discount for the camera is \$100, NOT \$150 as previously advertised. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.

THANKS FOR BEING GREEN!
Bring your bottles to
Shamrock BOTTLE DEPOT
172 Altawana Drive NE (Bottom of Crescent Heights Hill)
403-527-1441
\$50 or more in bottle returns earns
FREE CRAZY BREAD or \$100 or more earns
FREE CHEESE PIZZA from Little Caesars
Offer expires May 31, 2013
Extra 10% donation on bottle drives all year long.

Mario's Restaurant
Corner of 5th & 9th Downtown
403.529.2600
Administration Professional Week
Lunch Features
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
• Seafood Lasagna
• 4 Cheese Tortellini with Chicken Spinach Salad
• 8 oz New York Served with Linguini and Asparagus Spears in Cream Sauce
All of the above are served with a feature dessert
\$15.95

Setting your sights abroad?

If you're an Alberta business owner, the Government of Alberta wants to meet with you to discuss how you can grow your business by accessing new international export markets for your product or service.

- Learn about key markets, opportunities and trade development services
- Get advice on who to contact locally and internationally
- Network with the Chamber of Commerce, industry associations and other stakeholders
- Hear about Alberta's International Strategy and International Office network

Led by Cal Dallas, Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations, in partnership with the Medicine Hat & District Chamber of Commerce, this province-wide information session promotes international market access and diversification. You are invited to join.

WHEN: Tuesday, April 30, 8 AM to 9:30 AM

WHERE: Medicine Hat Lodge,
1051 Ross Glen Dr. SE

RSVP: info@medicinehatchamber.com
or register online at www.medicinehatchamber.com

