Thank you to our volunteers!

Dear Members,

IT’S HARD TO believe that 10 years have passed since two organizations – The Anaphylaxis Network of Canada and The Anaphylaxis Foundation of Canada – came together to form Anaphylaxis Canada. So much has happened since 2001 to improve the quality of life for a growing number of Canadians at risk of anaphylaxis. We have come a long way. We now have improved safety measures in schools to protect allergic students, greater public awareness, and new government legislation that will require food manufacturers to make ingredient labels easier for food-allergic consumers to understand. We could not have done this without the support and dedication of our many volunteers.

On behalf of Anaphylaxis Canada, thank you to our volunteers across the country!

As Anaphylaxis Canada continues to grow as an organization, we hope that more volunteers will join us in our efforts to educate and raise public awareness about life-threatening allergies.

Please contact Tammy White, Office Manager, twhite@anaphylaxis.ca if you are interested in volunteer opportunities. Together, we can do so much more.

Laurie Harada
Executive Director

Our 4th Annual community conference will be held in Toronto on Saturday, May 7, 2011, at the Ontario Science Centre. The conference will focus on managing the psycho-social aspects of living with food allergies. Presentations by some of Canada’s top allergy professionals and policy makers will provide attendees with useful tools and resources, and updates on the latest food allergy research. Speakers include:

- Dr. Charles Frankish - Anaphylaxis Management: Myths & Misconceptions
- Dr. Peter Vadas - Update on Food Allergy Research
- Dr. Michael Pistiner - Teens and Risk Taking Behaviour
- Dr. Samuel Godefroy - Health Canada Update on Food Allergen Labelling Regulations
- Laurie Harada, Executive Director, Anaphylaxis Canada

Delegates will have an opportunity to participate in one of three interactive breakout sessions:

- Dr. David Hummel and Laura Bantock – Newly Diagnosed session for parents
- Annette Brennan and Alex Tracy – School Management Strategies
- Dr. Tracy Pitt and Nancy Ross - Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management

The Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) will host a half-day afternoon session for teens with food allergies, addressing the issues they face and the risk management strategies available to them.

Products and services from local and national vendors will be on display in the exhibit area. For more information and to register for the conference, visit www.anaphylaxis.ca and click on “Spring Conference 2011”.
ON FEBRUARY 14, 2011, the federal government announced the passing of the much anticipated amendments to the food allergen labelling regulations. After decades of advocating for clear and accurate labelling, Anaphylaxis Canada was pleased to see the Health Minister fulfill her government’s commitment to passing these regulations and helping millions of Canadians living with food allergy and celiac disease.

The new regulations will come into effect on August 4, 2012, which gives the food and beverage industry 18 months to adhere to the new rules. Here are some of the highlights:

- The top food allergens have been identified as peanuts, tree nuts (e.g. walnuts, pecans, etc.), egg, milk, sesame seeds, soybeans, wheat, crustaceans, fish, shellfish and mustard seeds (new addition)
- Manufacturers of pre-packaged foods and standard wines and vinegars will have to identify:
  - the top food allergens and added sulphites in plain simple language (e.g. albumin means “egg”) in the ingredient list or in a “Contains” statement immediately following the ingredient list
  - the sources of hydrolyzed plant proteins, starch and modified starch and lethicin must be identified in their common name (e.g. soy)
  - allergens which are derivatives hidden in mixtures, flavourings, spices, additives and enhancers, or as an ingredient of an ingredient (such as milk in margarine)

Note: precautionary labelling (i.e. “May contain” statements) and free-from claims (i.e. “Peanut free” statements) are not covered under the new regulations.

Unfortunately, the regulations provided a special exemption to the brewery industry, which means they will not have to follow the same rules as all other food and beverage manufacturers. Both Anaphylaxis Canada and Health Canada are advising allergic consumers to contact beer manufacturers directly to inquire about the ingredients in unlabelled beer products.

Anaphylaxis Canada continues to advocate for clear and fair labelling rules for the brewery industry. A formal statement regarding this issue and related materials can be viewed on our website at www.anaphylaxis.ca under “Hot Topics”.

We would like to thank you, our members, for your ongoing support in helping us voice our concerns to the federal government about the importance of clear labelling. We also want to thank the Members of Parliament who have been vocal in their support of this issue, Health Canada staff for their professionalism, other industry groups that consulted in good faith and were prepared to abide by the new regulations, and our community partners for their efforts in this campaign. By working together, we made our voices heard and helped create positive changes for people living with food allergies and celiac disease in Canada.

For more information on the new regulations, visit Health Canada’s website at http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca (under Food Allergen Labelling).

ANAPHYLAXIS CANADA IS pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for the second annual Sabrina Shannon Memorial Award. Two awards of $1,000 each will be granted: one for a student entering the first year of post-secondary education, the other for a student who is already enrolled in a post-secondary program. Applications will be evaluated on a 500 word essay which describes the students’ efforts to raise awareness about severe allergies and anaphylaxis in their schools or communities.

The award is dedicated to the life of Sabrina Shannon, an inspirational teenager who tragically suffered a fatal anaphylactic reaction in 2003. Her parents, Mike Shannon and Sara Shannon, have kept Sabrina’s spirit alive by advocating for safer school environments. Sabrina’s Law, landmark legislation passed in Ontario in 2005, has continued to influence school board policies in Canada.

The application form can be downloaded from Anaphylaxis Canada’s youth website – www.whyriskit.ca. The deadline for applications is June 22, 2011.
What’s in your Beer?

As the weather turned cold this winter, Anaphylaxis Canada’s campaign to lobby the federal government to pass Health Canada’s food labelling regulations started heating up. After being assured by the Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq that the regulations would pass in early 2011, concerns were raised when a last minute lobbying effort from the Canadian beer industry appeared to jeopardize the regulatory process.

In response to the influential lobby, Anaphylaxis Canada garnered support from the allergy community and spoke out in the media about the importance of clear and accurate labelling on all food and beverage products, including beer. However, the beer industry continued to push for an exemption to the regulations arguing that “everybody already knows what’s in their beer.”

To counter this argument, the “What’s in your Beer?” campaign was established to educate consumers about the risks of unlabelled beer for allergic individuals. The campaign was launched in February on the website www.whatsinyourbeer.ca and on Facebook. The site featured an interactive quiz which highlighted key facts that many Canadians were not aware of, such as:

- Over 40 different ingredients can be used in Canadian beer without being labelled
- Caramel, which can contain milk and gluten, can be used as an ingredient in Canadian beer
- Gluten is an ingredient that is not always used in beer

The public awareness campaign also featured an online petition and letter to the Prime Minister, calling on the government to pass the proposed food labelling regulations with no exemptions.

Anaphylaxis Canada was very pleased to see the food labelling regulations pass on February 16, 2011, however we were disappointed that the beer industry was granted a special exemption. We encourage all Canadians to learn more about what is in their beer products by visiting www.whatsinyourbeer.ca.

Anaphylaxis Initiatives in Alberta

To date, approximately 150 health and safety specialists, public health nurses, educators and others have completed Anaphylaxis Canada’s program for individuals interested in delivering anaphylaxis training and education to Alberta schools. The program has been offered in Calgary, Edmonton, and Red Deer; and the most recent session held in Grande Prairie was led by Laura Bantock, Director, Western Region.

Laura was also invited by the organizers of the Mighty Peace Teachers’ Convention to present two anaphylaxis information sessions at their annual convention in Grande Prairie, an event which typically draws more than 1,000 educators.

We appreciate the opportunities to increase anaphylaxis awareness and to further expand the network of people who can provide training in Alberta schools. We thank Alberta Education for their ongoing support to provide safe and caring school communities.
Updated Anaphylaxis Guidelines

AN UPDATED VERSION of the national guidelines for the management and treatment of anaphylaxis has been released by the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, in collaboration with the Canadian Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Foundation; Anaphylaxis Canada; the Allergy Asthma Information Association; and the Quebec Food Allergy Association.

The key change to Anaphylaxis in Schools & Other Settings, 2nd Edition Revised is the replacement of the ‘original’ EpiPen® instruction sheet by the ‘new’ EpiPen® instructions. The guidelines are available for $15 through our product catalogue at www.anaphylaxis.ca

WE ARE PLEASED to announce that the Ontario Ministry of Education recently updated their Anaphylaxis Resource Kit for educators and school staff. The kits, which have been distributed to all publicly-funded schools and public health units in Ontario in April 2011 include the following:

- EpiPen® and Twinject® auto-injector materials including training devices, DVDs, and brochures
- MedicAlert® “Be Prepared” information sheet

Anaphylaxis Canada worked together with the Ontario Ministry of Education on this initiative to provide anaphylaxis-related educational materials. We would like to thank the Ministry for its ongoing dedication to helping keep allergic children safe in our schools.

Run, Walk and Stroll for Anaphylaxis

Join us on Saturday August 20th, 2011 at Percy Perry Stadium in Coquitlam, British Columbia. This is our first 3K family friendly event and all are welcome to attend.

Post-run activities and entertainment include impressionist Ben Simcoe, Zox of the Forest children’s entertainer, a performance by the Paul Filek Band and much more!

For more information email bcanaphylaxisrun@gmail.com
Guide to Dining Out With Food Allergies

THE SPRING ISSUE of Allergic Living magazine tackles one of the biggest challenges: dining out safely with food allergies.

While some families and individuals shun restaurants as off limits, the magazine finds that level of deprivation shouldn’t be necessary.

Sloane Miller, who coaches food-allergic individuals and consults with the restaurant industry, writes Allergic Living’s savvy “Guide to Smart Dining”. She maps out a four-stage strategy involving precautions to take before you select a place to dine and how to know if you’re picking a restaurant that “gets” allergy issues.

Miller really shines when it comes to the allergic diner’s tone, demeanour and attitude with the selected restaurant. She inspires polite assertiveness, writing: “you have special needs; it is OK to expect some extra attention.” Miller will give you the tools and even the script to begin dining out safely – perhaps even often.

Also in the Spring issue: inside a promising peanut vaccine; Laurie Harada on the saga of the new food allergy regulations; allergy-safe Spring recipes; product reviews and more.

Coming up in the Summer issue: The Kids are Alright, but Are You? What parents can do to manage the fear and the workload of our highly planned allergic lives.

By Gwen Smith, Editor Allergic Living magazine.

Subscribe to Allergic Living online at www.allergicliving.com/subscribe2. The magazine is also available at Chapters and Indigo newsstands. Anaphylaxis Canada supports the work of Allergic Living, but the magazine is independently published. Direct inquiries to info@allergicliving.com or 1-888-771-7747.