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Goodbyes And Gratitude- We Honour Our AVENS Leaders

As I sit down to write this week's newsletter, I can't help but feel a mix of emotions after our Board Executive Committee meeting last Friday, August 28th, 2026. It's a bittersweet moment as we prepare to say goodbye to some of our organization's shining stars.

"It has been a privilege to serve AVENS over the past four years and to contribute to an organization that plays such an important role in our community. I wish the AVENS Team and the NEW Board continued success as they continue their hard work and innovation."

Colleen Wellborn, AVENS Board Chair

First off, let's raise a virtual glass to our powerhouse chair, **Colleen Wellborn**! Colleen has been a beacon of wisdom and calm since she joined our board during the construction of the Aven Pavilion. Her extensive background in housing was just what AVENS needed to elevate

our housing portfolio to new heights. With her soft-spoken yet seasoned approach, she's provided the reassuring presence that has kept us grounded in times of uncertainty. Colleen, your leadership has been nothing short of inspiring, and it's hard to imagine AVENS without you.



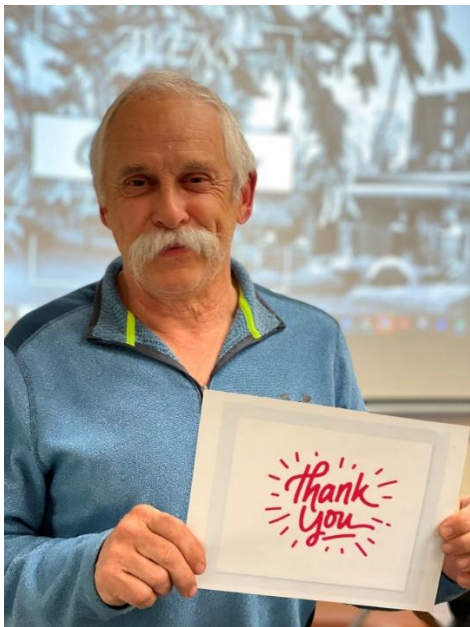
Colleen Wellborn, AVENS Board Chair. AVENS Board Member 2022 - current

Joining Colleen in this board term exodus are two other remarkable leaders: **Ron Allen** and **Debbie DeLancey**. Ron has been a steadfast supporter and a long-term member of our board, always ready with sage advice and a helping hand. And then there's Debbie, our policy guru and former Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services. Her insights have shaped our understanding of health policies and have been invaluable to our mission.

While we're thrilled to welcome new faces and fresh ideas on our Board, it's tough to say goodbye to such talented individuals. Each one has served as Chair during their tenure, and I've leaned heavily on their expertise over the years. It's hard not to feel a little emotional about their departure.



Debbie DeLancey, Board Member 2018 – current. She is always the most challenging person to photograph. This shot taken during our Aven Pavilion construction is one of my favourites



Ron Allen, Board Member 2010-current. Yes you read that right, for over 16 years Ron has been the longest serving Board Member in AVENS history. It's our turn to say "thank you"!

As we move forward, I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to Colleen, Ron, and Debbie for their incredible

contributions to AVENS and the lives of our seniors. You've each made a lasting impact, and we will miss you dearly

So, while we might be saying goodbye to some of our best, we're excited for the future and the new adventures that await both AVENS and our departing friends. Thank you for everything!

From Soup To Smiles- A Visit With DHSS DM Alan Doody

On Friday, August 21, 2026, we welcomed GNWT Department of Health and Social Services, Deputy Minister Alan Doody back to AVENS.

After our brief encounter in January (See **From the CEO's Desk** Issue #253 January 12, 2026), where we discussed the future of healthcare in the Northwest Territories, this meeting promised to be different—a relaxed "show and tell" that would give Alan a real taste of our vibrant AVENS community campus.

As I greeted Alan at the door, little did he know he was about to embark on quite an adventure. We started our journey at the **Baker Centre**, where the aroma of hamburgers radiated through the air, as they were preparing for Lunch with the Bunch. Alan's eyes lit up as he stepped into **Aven Manor**, where residents were engaged in lively conversations. It was very cool to see him take a moment to chat with everyone, introducing himself with a genuine warmth that instantly put people at ease.

Next, we ventured over to the **Green House**, then the **Barb Bromley Admin** area, then the **Cottages**, then down a hidden staircase, where I could see Alan's mind whirring with questions

about our operations. “What’s the story behind the tunnel?” he asked, as we approached the entrance of our legendary **CEO’s Bat Cave**—the name some use for our connecting tunnel to the Pavilion. I couldn’t help but chuckle as I explained its purpose, “No Alan, I’m no superhero”.

As we arrived at the **Pavilion**, Alan’s eyes widened. “This place is amazing!” he shared, taking in our state-of-the-art kitchen and laundry facilities. We strolled through the building viewing our wellness operations, foot care, yoga, pub, theater, sewing room, and then he paused to peek into the fitness room. Then he returned a moment later, concerned about a tenant on one of the pieces of equipment, “She’s fine” he said, reminding me of his keen situational awareness of client safety.

Then coming to end of our tour: our dining room. I offered Alan a bowl of our famous homemade tomato bisque soup—just \$3! “You can’t beat that price!” I reminded him, “And we eat what our long-term care residents eat”. As we sat down, I believe he enjoyed every spoonful. “This is delicious! Who knew I’d find gourmet soup in a long-term care facility?” he laughed, and I couldn’t help but feel proud of our commitment to quality.

Throughout the tour, Alan was inquisitive, asking thoughtful questions about our services and the challenges we face. His engagement wasn’t just limited to the staff; he took the time to stop and introduce himself to residents, chatting with them as if he were an old friend. It was clear that his down-to-earth approach is a hallmark of his leadership style, one that clearly demonstrates genuine connections with those in his path.

As our tour came to an end, I reflected on how fortunate AVENS is to have someone like Alan as a partner. His visit reinforced our shared commitment to enhancing long-term care in the Northwest Territories, and I left the day feeling optimistic and more focused about our future.



(L to R) AVENS Chief People Officer, Lindsey Dwojak, AVENS Clinical Coordinators, Jessica Ewing & Dina Van Delft, DHSS DM Alan Doody, and AVENS Chief Nursing Officer, Frances Marshall, sharing laughs in our Barb Bromly Administration

Teamwork, BBQ, Goodbye Summer

As summer wraps up and we get ready for fall, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on our end-of-summer BBQ we held on August 28th in our MPR courtyard. What a great time!

First off, **thank you** to our senior officers, management team, their staff, and even some board members that attended. Your support made this event happen, and it was awesome to see everyone come together. From the burgers, hot dogs, to assorted salads, we enjoyed some good food and even better company!

We also want to give a big thank you to our summer students. You did a fantastic job keeping our campus looking great this summer. We’ll miss your energy and smiles! Good luck with your studies and whatever comes next; know that you’ve made a difference here.



(L to R) Behind the grills Frances Marshall, Chief Nursing Officer and Lindsey Dwojak, Chief People Officer

residents or just enjoying a BBQ, it's the little things that count.



(Background) AVENS Board Members, Lani Cooke and Lynda Koe and inset, some parting cup cakes to celebrate the end of summer

Thanks again for making our BBQ a fun event. Here's to more good times ahead in 2026!



(L to R) Ryder Wicks and Thomas Galvez last day on the job as our summer students. Good luck boys and thank you!

As we move into fall, let's keep the spirit of teamwork alive. Whether we're caring for our

Community Corner

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

You're invited to our upcoming Annual General Meeting to receive updates, ask questions, and interact with the team.

Meeting Details

- 24 September, 2026
- Start 7:00pm
- Pavilion Dining Room
- ea@avensseniors.com
- www.avensseniors.com

