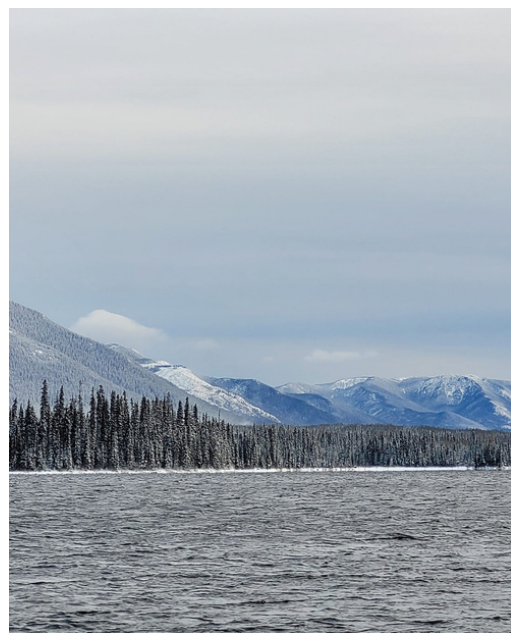
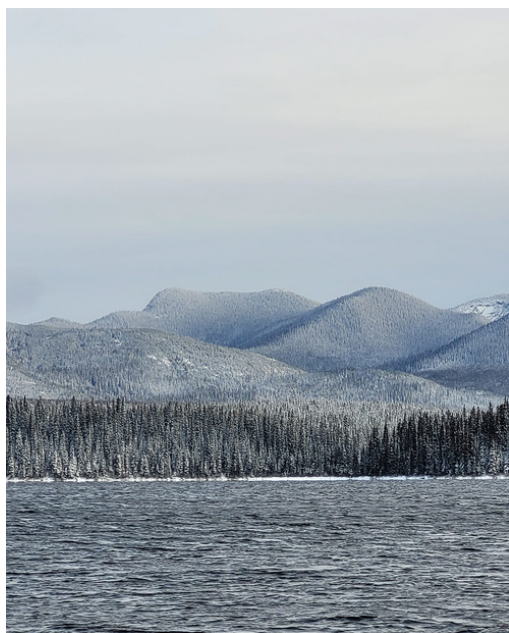


# Family and Children's Newsletter



## *Pitonee Lake*

NEWSLETTER WRITTEN AND CREATED BY ELLEN WOOKEY

Pitonee Lake is located in Omineca Region, British Columbia, Canada. A beautiful lake surrounded by mountains and forests. The Pitonee Lake Recreation Site offers 2 small camping areas located along the shoreline. There is room for 4 parties between the 2 sites. Both sites offer camping, lake access and boat launches. Each site provides the basic amenities of pit toilets, tables and fire rings.

In the summer many people enjoy going out to Pitonee Lake to fish the many species of fish: Lake Trout, Rainbow Trout, White Fish and Burbot. You can often see and hear the echoes of sledding parties enjoy the day during the winter.

What makes Pitonee Lake lovely is that during the Spring, Summer and Autumn months the lake is accessible by 2 wheel drive vehicles, making it an ideal getaway down the backroads.

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# New Years Around the World

**Gregorian New Year:** In many countries, New Year's celebrations begin on the evening of December 31—New Year's Eve—and continue into the early hours of January 1. While making resolutions for new beginnings is customary, revelers often enjoy meals, snacks and a midnight kiss that is thought to bestow good luck for the coming year.

**Lunar New Year:** The exact day of the Lunar New Year changes each year — the months of the year are marked by moon cycles, so New Year is celebrated on the date of the first new moon of the Lunar calendar. This is a time to catch up with friends and family, with many people travelling to do so over this period. Fireworks are lit to ward away evil spirits, houses are decluttered to mark the beginning of spring and the future of a New Year, and a platter of sweets is put out for house visitors.

**Nowruz:** Commencing on the spring equinox to celebrate the rebirth of nature, Nowruz marks the first month of the Iranian solar calendar, falling roughly around 21 March each year. Also known as Iranian or Persian New Year, it's widely celebrated in countries across Central Asia. Poetry is recited, bonfires are leapt over and folk music is performed to mark the overcoming of sorrow and darkness, while houses are cleaned to pave a way for the future.


**Songkran:** Songkran is celebrated across Thailand, with customs varying depending on the region of the country. It's one of the most important events in the Buddhist calendar, with water being at its center — Songkran is considered to be spiritually purifying and to wash away bad luck from the previous year.

**Muharram:** Muharram marks the first month of the Islamic calendar, with the beginning of the year being celebrated on the 10th day of the month (Day of Ashura). The traditions and rituals vary for the two major sects of Islam, Shia and Sunni, though the main emphasis for most is remembrance, self-reflection and expressing gratitude.

**Enkutatash:** Enkutatash translates to being celebrated on 11 September on the Gregorian calendar. Meaning 'gift of jewels', it's thought that the celebration dates back some 3,000 years to a story of the Queen of Sheba returning home after a trip. Enkutatash celebrations last around a week and are mostly family centered, with people travelling home to mark the New Year together over meals and beer.

**Diwali:** A Hindu lunar celebration, Diwali is a five-day Festival of Lights centered around starting afresh. The dates change yearly depending on the Hindu calendar. It's a time for visiting neighbours and family in the lead up, with Diwali being celebrated by praying to Lakshmi, sitting down for a meal and ending with fireworks.

**Rosh Hashanah:** In the Hebrew lunar month of Tishrei, Rosh Hashanah is celebrated on the first and second day as Jewish New Year. Meaning 'head of year', this is a period of reflection, to atone for any wrongdoing throughout the year and to forgive others. A shofar is blown before and during Rosh Hashanah, plus at the end of the period, serving as a call to inspire soul-searching and growth for the year ahead.



*I hope you realize  
that every day is a  
fresh start for you.  
That every sunrise is  
a new chapter in  
your life waiting to  
be written.*

**BY JUANSEN DIZON**



# Seasonal Affective Disorder

Don't brush off that yearly feeling as simply a case of the "winter blues" or a seasonal funk that you have to tough out on your own. Seasonal depression, also called seasonal affective disorder (SAD), is a type of depression. It's triggered by the change of seasons and most commonly begins in late fall or early winter and goes away during the sunnier days of spring and summer. Symptoms include feelings of sadness, anxiety, trouble concentrating, lack of energy, loss of interest in usual activities, oversleeping and weight gain. Some ways to combat SAD's are:

- **Light therapy:** Bright light therapy, using a special lamp, can help treat SAD.
- **See friends:** Stay involved with your social circle and regular activities. They can provide support during the winter months.
- **Exercise:** Try to get 30 minutes of exercise at least three times a week. Exercise relieves stress and anxiety, which can play a role in your SAD symptoms.
- **Spending time outdoors:** Getting more sunlight can help improve your symptoms. Try to get out during the day. Also, increase the amount of sunlight that enters your home or office.
- **Vitamin D:** A vitamin D supplement may help improve your symptoms.

*Families are the  
compass that guides  
us. They are the  
inspiration to reach  
great heights, and our  
comfort when we  
occasionally falter.*

**BY BRAD HENRY**



## PG Winter Activities

Want to get out this winter? Listed below are some places you can do some winter activities:

### [Downhill Skiing/ Snowboarding](#)

Hart Highlands Winter Club, Purden Ski Village, Powder King Mountain Resort, Little Mac Ski Hill, Troll Ski Resort

### [Nordic Skiing](#)

Caledonia Nordic Ski Club, Tabor cross country ski trail

### [Heli-Skiing](#)

Bearpaw Heli-Skiing

### [Indoor/ Outdoor Skating Rinks](#)

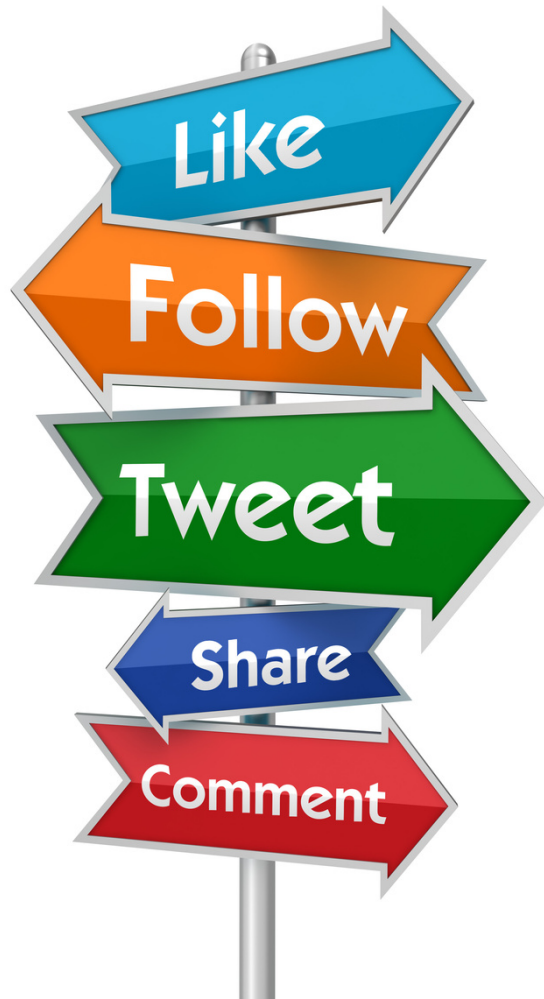
Outdoor Ice Oval, Elksentre Arena, Southridge Rink, Prince George Coliseum, Ridgeview Rink

### [Winter Hiking](#)

Teapot Mountain Recreation Site, Fort George Canyon, Sugarbowl-Grizzly Den, Ancient Forest, Forests for the World, Raven Lake

### [Snowshoeing](#)

Pidherny Recreation Site, Forests for the World, Moore's Meadow Nature Park, Caledonia Nordic Ski Club, Goodsir Nature Park, Eskers Provincial Park, Tabor Mountain Recreation Trails, Huble Homestead



*Live in the moment  
and make happy  
memories, because  
those memories are  
what you will carry  
with you when there  
is nothing else.*

**BY THE PAFL FAMILY**

## *Disabilities and Social Media*

Parenting plays an important role in many adult lives. Parenting a child with multiple profound disabilities results in a distinct parenting experience. With that comes more and more social media accounts being created by parents helping to change the way people think about disabilities and helping parents understand that they are not alone. Listed below are some social media accounts worth checking out:

[Logan and Fam \(@love\\_logan07 - TikTok\)](#)

13-year-old Logan has Sanfilippo Syndrome, and his mom shares their life on TikTok in hopes that more awareness will bring a cure.

[Jordyn and Jackie \(@summershirtproject - Facebook/TikTok\)](#)

What started as a summer project to help their daughter Jordyn, who has autism, develop job skills has turned into a fun, family adventure aiming to create a positive, more inclusive world that provides opportunities for everyone.

[James, Tommy and Jude \(@storiesaboutautism - Instagram\)](#)

James is dad to two boys, Tommy and Jude, who both have autism. He shares stories of their everyday life - the highs, the lows and everything in between. He talks about his boys' sensory sensitivity, learning to communicate, going to school, and the rollercoaster of emotions he feels as a dad. James also interviews others with autism to help them share their stories which are also well worth a listen!

[Raising Autumn \(@raisingautumn - Youtube/Instagram\)](#)

A Down Syndrome & Autism advocate family Vlog. This family is here to share awareness and promote acceptance for individuals with developmental & intellectual disabilities. Their family survived a house fire in 2011 and together we have been on a journey of healing.

[Our Landing Crew \(@ourlandingcrew8 - Youtube/Instagram\)](#)

They have 6 kids, 4 are living with autism and they are just doing the BEST they can so we show you our real life through Autism Education, Autism Vlogs, and everyday life of a LARGE special needs family.

[Hannah and Becky \(@cheethamswithdreams - TikTok/Instagram/Facebook\)](#)

Hannah and Becky! Two sisters raising awareness about disability, LGBTQ+, and mental health. Proving that you can achieve your dreams. Spreading positivity, awareness and a whole lotta love.

[John's Crazy Socks \(@Johnscrazysocks - TikTok\)](#)

John's Crazy Socks is a father-son venture inspired by co-founder John Lee Cronin, a young man with Down syndrome. John's affinity for crazy socks paired with his love of making people smile made our mission clear: we want to spread happiness. They want to show what is possible when you give someone a chance. Every day, we demonstrate what people with intellectual disabilities can do.

Know of any other social media accounts you feel has been a great source of comfort and learning, e-mail Ellen Wookey at [ellen.wookey@aimhi.ca](mailto:ellen.wookey@aimhi.ca) to add them to our list. You are not alone and who knows, maybe someone else's tip and tricks can inspire others to try it in their own lives.

# Meet Marisa



Hello, my name is Marisa. I have had the honour to support children and their families for nearly five years at AiMHi. To be gifted an opportunity to participate in their learning and growth with their strengths has been an absolute blessing I hold dearly beside my heart. I thank you for sharing with me a moment of your life's journey.

# Upcoming Family and Children's Groups

## Sensory Bin and Vision Board Night

January 4th: 6:30pm - 7:30pm  
with Marisa and Ellen @ AiMHi

**RSVP to [marisa.shamroukheaimhi.ca](mailto:marisa.shamroukheaimhi.ca)**

## Introduction to PECs

February 17th: 7:00pm - 8:00pm  
with Maureen and Fiona @ AiMHi

**RSVP to [maureen.hoffeaimhi.ca](mailto:maureen.hoffeaimhi.ca)**

## PWD Pt. 2

(Persons with Disability Funding)

January 18th: 6:30pm - 7:30pm  
with Ellen and Marisa @ AiMHi

**RSVP to [ellen.wookeyeaimhi.ca](mailto:ellen.wookeyeaimhi.ca)**

## Monthly Tea Meet

Every Second Thursday of the Month:  
4:00pm - 5:00pm

with Ellen and Maureen @ AiMHi

**RSVP to [maureen.hoffeaimhi.ca](mailto:maureen.hoffeaimhi.ca)**

## Vision Boards

When you start talking about goals, one method that comes up in some conversations is vision boards. You might be wondering: What are vision boards? A vision board is a visual representation of what we want to achieve. Vision boarding involves collecting images or objects that speak to the future you want to create and arranging them on a board for a tangible and aesthetically pleasing reminder of where you're heading. Vision boards help us gain self-awareness and self-reflect on what is important to us. Imagining a positive future is a helpful way to increase positive emotions and optimism. And positive emotions often create opportunities and increase the chances of success.

Do a status check & review: Sit down with a journal and reflect on the past year.

- **Set goals and prioritize:** Sit down with paper and pen and think about your goals for the coming year.
- **Find images and words for the vision board:** Now it's time to search for and cut out images and words that embody your goals and/or just speak to you.
- **Create a Basic Structure for the Vision Board:** This step is optional
- **Assemble the Vision Board:** Now it's time to arrange your images and words on your poster board.
- **Glue Everything Together:** Once you're satisfied with the arrangement, begin to glue everything down.
- **Embellish!:** This is another optional step but is a creative way to finish up your vision board.
- **Display Your Board:** Once your vision board is complete, hang it on the wall where you will see it regularly.
- **Use Your Vision Board as a Road Map:** Making the vision board is just the beginning! Now it's time to use it as a guide and road map into your new future.

Want to create a vision board? Join us on January 4th, 2023  
to create your New Year Vision Board.