

FALL 2019

LEGACY ACTION

30
YEARS | EDMONTON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

MARTIN GARBER-CONRAD

Leader of Legacy

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TIME TRAVEL

Streetcars to light rail

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WILD THINGS

When your mission
is rescue

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WILLS WEEK
2019



Edmonton Community Foundation is pleased to present free public seminars that provide professional information on wills and estates. Please join us at one of the sessions listed below.

Mon, Oct. 7 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Northgate Lions Senior Rec. Centre
7524 139 Avenue N.W.

Tues, Oct. 8 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Millennium Place
2000 Premier Way, Sherwood Park

Thurs, Oct. 10 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Northgate Lions Senior Rec. Centre
7524 139 Avenue N.W.

Mon, Oct. 7 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

South East Edmonton Seniors Assoc.
Activity Centre 9350 82 Street N.W.

Wed, Oct. 9 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Mill Woods Seniors & Multi-Cultural
Centre, Rm 231, 2610 Hewes Way N.W.

Fri, Oct. 11 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Central Lions Seniors Association
11113 113 Street N.W.

Mon, Oct. 7 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

The Red Willow, St. Albert Seniors
Association 7 Tache Street

Wed, Oct. 9 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Terwillegar Rec Centre,
Rm 6, 2051 Leger Road NW

Fri, Oct. 11 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Telus World of Science,
2nd Floor, 11211 142 Street N.W.

Tues, Oct. 8 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Hilton Garden Inn
17610 Stony Plain Road N.W.

Thurs, Oct. 10 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

McConachie Gardens
6503 170 Avenue N.W.

Seminars are FREE, but seating is limited.
First come, first served. Information may
change, confirm at: ecfoundation.org

MORE ONLINE AT ECFOUNDATION.ORG



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ODVOD PUBLISHING INC.
10221 123 St. NW
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5N 1N3
T 780.451.1379 F 780.482.5417
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Cover by Curtis Comeau

A MESSAGE FROM THE **BOARD CHAIR**



Zahra Somani
Board Chair

Our city has always had a deep current of entrepreneurial spirit running through it. For 30 years, Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) has been bringing people together to make things happen for Edmontonians.

This was perhaps clearest to me during my involvement with the Mayor's Task Force to Eliminate Poverty, an incredible initiative based on the ambitious vision to end poverty in a generation. I was so impressed by the role ECF played in that task force — and its commitment to diversity and inclusivity — that in 2017 I joined the board of directors.

Since then, I have been amazed by the impact this foundation has on our community, with scholarships for students, loans for emerging social enterprises, grants for local charities and so much more. None of this would be possible without the support and generosity of Edmonton families wanting to make a long-term, sustainable difference in our community.

In 2018, ECF distributed a total of \$24.7 million to charitable causes, placing it in the top five of the hundreds of foundations across the country. An organization can only be as effective as the people behind it and at ECF, we are fortunate to have a forward-thinking and compassionate team. The Foundation's expertise in Edmonton's charitable sector ensures the funding we provide is sustainable and impactful in perpetuity. Every member of our diverse board brings a unique perspective and skill set, helping set our vision and direction for the future.

On behalf of the board, I would like to congratulate CEO Martin Garber-Conrad for receiving an honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of Alberta this summer. You can read about his accomplished career as a community builder in the cover story of this issue of *Legacy in Action*.

To all of our donors, partners and team members, thank you. I am looking forward to working together.

– Zahra Somani

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BY IAN STEWART

TO THE RESCUE

WILDRescue's mission is saving orphaned, injured animals

Dale Gienow's mood is cheerful as he recounts this year's springtime rescue of two goslings in distress from a parking lot near South Edmonton Common.

"We found them by themselves, orphaned," says Gienow, director of business development for WILDNorth, who manages WILDRescue, a tactical wildlife rescue service that saves hundreds of injured and abandoned wild animals in Edmonton and northern Alberta. The only formalized injured wildlife rescue program in Western Canada, it takes in about 3,000 animals every year.

"Most animals (95 per cent) are (admitted) because of human activity," says Gienow. For example, they might fly into a building's window or be hit by a vehicle. For Gienow and his team, saving an animal is just the first step. The goal is always to eventually release them. In the case of the two goslings, the story has an immediate, and happy, ending.

"We were able to scoop them out and foster them with another goose family," he recalls happily.



In 2017, Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) provided a \$37,000 grant to WILDNorth to help staff its WILDRescue program and in 2018, ECF provided a \$68,000 grant to extend the program, including \$20,000 for an SUV.



WILDRescue was formed two years ago by what used to be the Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton. It has since been renamed as Northern Alberta Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, or simply WILDNorth. In 2017, Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) provided a \$37,000 grant to WILDNorth to help staff its WILDRescue program and in 2018, ECF provided a \$68,000 grant to extend the program, including \$20,000 for an SUV. The organization chose a 2016 Jeep Patriot and had it emblazoned with the WILDRescue logo.

On a typical summer day, Gienow's team will head out in the Jeep and rescue several animals. The most common animals rescued include squirrels, hares and songbirds, but the service — which responded to more than 800 calls last year — covers 250 species.

Many of the rescues will end up at WILDNorth's large Parkland County rehabilitation facility, which can hold up to 400 animals at any given time. Most are released back into the wild within a year.

Before they got their Jeep, rescue workers at WILDNorth would use their personal vehicles. Having a vehicle that fits all of their gear — which includes kayaks and various nets and cages — has been a game-changer for the team.

"It's crucial for the organization," Gienow says of the Jeep. "It's always available for calls. It's a reliable vehicle and carries all our gear."

And, with its eye-catching black-and-orange logo, the Jeep helps raise public awareness about the organization. "It's a travelling billboard," Gienow says.

Many of the rescues will end up at WILDRescue's Parkland County rehabilitation facility, which sees an intake of up to 400 animals a year. Most are released back into the wild within a year.



Gienow, who started working in this field in 1986, is regarded as Canada's foremost expert on wildlife rescue. He has developed and implemented similar programs in Ontario as well as acting as a resource for the Ontario government for animal rescue contracts.

The lanky, affable 49-year-old, who sports an earring made from a medieval coin he won in a jousting competition in Wisconsin, has also worked on feature-film sets as an animal trainer and has served as a scientific adviser for wildlife documentary films.

He now works with the leadership team that oversees WILDNorth's 11 full-time staff members, 240 volunteers and 40 interns.

That dedicated team never loses sight of its mission to raise awareness of how human activity is affecting wildlife. "Be cognizant that we're sharing this urban environment with our wild neighbours," Gienow says. "Always be careful to keep them in mind." ■



BRIGHT FUTURES TAKE ROOT IN THE PAST

BY: MARIANN ROBERTS

Alberta students have historically received lower marks in comparison to those in other provinces when it comes to understanding their province's history and its people's significant contributions to the history of our nation.

Alberta Lieutenant-Governor Lois Mitchell realized students needed support to become better connected with the province's past. So she and her husband, Douglas Mitchell, created the History & Heroes (H&H) Foundation. H&H has established an endowment fund to support programs that encourage Alberta's young people to advance their interest and understanding in this area.

With Edmonton Community Foundation managing the endowment, the H&H Foundation has raised approximately \$750,000 of its \$1-million goal.

In 2018, the foundation awarded \$15,000 in Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Historian Awards to 10 recipients in 10 post-secondary institutions. It has also awarded approximately \$8,000 to six high-school students through two programs highlighting the military in Alberta and Canadian history — the Spirit of Vimy contest in 2017 and the Spirit of Peace contest in 2018.

In both cases, students who had qualified by demonstrating an interest in history submitted creative interpretations of respective topics, vying for financial prizes.

"The student presentations were very moving," says Ralph Young, chair of the board of directors of the H&H Foundation. "There were incredibly thoughtful and compelling stories by young students



Douglas and Lois Mitchell

describing how young Alberta service men and women served our country during the two world wars based upon their research."

The H&H Foundation will award 17 Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Historian Awards in 2019, Young adds, each with a value of \$1,500.

"We hope these awards will help encourage students to value our Canadian history and its lessons," he says.

The H&H Foundation intends to grant Historian Awards totalling between \$25,000 and \$40,000 per year, with a goal of sustainably providing awards to generations of students to come. ■

1. ECF's donor advisors can help you answer many questions, such as:

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—
Learn more or start your fund now at ecfoundation.org.

HONOURING THE FAMILY BUSINESS

BY: MARIANN ROBERTS

Founded in 1977, the Financial Services Group celebrated 40 successful years in business in 2017.

With founders Gary and Myrna Kwasnecha moving into retirement, their son, Scott, decided to honour his parents' legacy with the help of Edmonton Community Foundation. Hence was born the Financial Services Group Community Trust Fund.

"I wanted to create a little bit of a legacy for the business, and for them, that would carry on," Scott explains.

Through the endowment fund, the Financial Services Group can ensure a contribution to the community that will surpass quarterly or annual donations and live for years to come.

The fund's first grant was to the BriarPatch Family Life Education Centre, a non-profit organization that delivers programming to families in Strathcona County.

After learning that a team member had a personal connection with BriarPatch's H.E.A.R.T.S. program, the Financial Services Group knew this was the perfect fit. H.E.A.R.T.S. Baby Loss Support Program supports anyone touched by the tragic loss of a baby during pregnancy or any time after birth.



Gary and Myrna Kwasnecha, Scott Kwasnecha

"It was a really easy decision for us to support that cause," Scott shares.

It is Gary's hope that the fund grows to more than a million dollars in his lifetime, so it can help as many people as possible.

Gary and Scott encourage anyone with a passion to consider starting a fund. "You don't need a lot of money; that's probably the biggest message," Scott states. "I do encourage everybody to look into Edmonton Community Foundation; there's so many unique causes that cover everything." ■

ONE 'AVERAGE' PERSON'S NOT-SO-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTION

BY: CAITLIN CRAWSHAW

Like most seniors, Diana Bacon is on a fixed income, but thanks to frugal living, she always has money left at the end of the month — money she's more than happy to give away. "If I have disposable income, why waste it? I prefer to give it somewhere it's needed," she says. "As long as I have a house to live in and food to eat, what am I going to spend money on?"

Bacon's largest charitable contribution is to the Bacon Family Fund, a donor-advised fund she created with Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) in 2000. At the time, having retired from teaching and managing the Edmonton Youth Orchestra (EYO), she was a volunteer with the Seniors' Association of Greater Edmonton and

served on boards of other organizations. All four of Bacon's children had played in the orchestra, a tradition continued by many of her grandchildren. She and her husband had always given to charity — even during their family's leanest years — but after learning about ECF, she opted for a more long-term approach to giving.

Half of the family fund supports the EYO, and each year, Bacon and her children choose a second charity to receive the other half of the money. Her children will one day take over the fund.

In addition to growing the fund each year, Bacon has named ECF a recipient of a life insurance policy and once gave the Foundation all of her shares in a publicly traded company. Over the years, she's gotten a kick out of seeing these contributions add up and help her community. "I'm a very average person," says Bacon. "If all of the average people gave a little bit, we'd give more than the rich people in the long run." ■

"I'M A VERY AVERAGE PERSON. IF ALL OF THE AVERAGE PEOPLE GAVE A LITTLE BIT, WE'D GIVE MORE THAN THE RICH PEOPLE IN THE LONG RUN." – DIANA BACON

Connecting OUR CITY

PATHS FOR PEOPLE FINDS THE MISSING LINKS

BY: MARIANN ROBERTS



EMPOWERING PARTNERSHIPS

To see recommendations and more information about the Missing Links case studies, go to pathsforpeople.org.

- In 2017, Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) provided a \$40,000 grant to support a partnership between the Tomorrow Foundation and Paths for People.
- In 2018, ECF provided an additional grant of \$80,000 to Paths for People.
- The grants have primarily supported staffing roles to help Paths for People move from a volunteer-run organization to an agency that now has an administrator and a CEO.
- This funding has helped enable the Missing Links project, says Hoyles, and the program's paved park street party that took place in August.

What if there was a way to better connect our city with a means of transportation that was easily accessible for all? In January of this year, Paths for People took a large step in better connecting Edmontonians through their Missing Links project. Paths for People is a non-profit organization that supports active transportation within the city of Edmonton.

The project aims to identify missing or broken links between our city's sidewalks, crosswalks and bike routes in hopes of filling them. The goal of the initiative is to

create easier, more-connected transportation routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

"It's truly about connection," says Sarah Hoyles, executive director of Paths for People. "If people can connect and move around the city with fewer barriers ... it speaks to the larger mission of Paths for People, which is about creating connection and people having choice with how they choose to move around the city."

More than 200 missing links were identified by Edmontonians through a submission form on the Paths for People website. These were then mapped and displayed on the website in a visual representation of the city's connectivity needs.

Of the 200 reported gaps, Paths for People selected five case studies. Traffic engineer and Paths for People's treasurer, Marcel Huculak, developed project outlines and

costs that would be needed to improve each of the selected case study locations.

Hoyles says Missing Links has

already had a positive influence, as shown in the City of Edmonton's Missing Sidewalk Connections Report in June.

"When the most recent report came forward, administration [with the City of Edmonton] actually took our research and integrated it into their report," explains Hoyles. "Some of the missing links were then prioritized in their feedback, and they

"IT'S TRULY ABOUT CONNECTION. IF PEOPLE CAN CONNECT AND MOVE AROUND THE CITY WITH FEWER BARRIERS ... IT SPEAKS TO THE LARGER MISSION OF PATHS FOR PEOPLE ..."

- Sarah Hoyles

recommended an additional \$10 million to fill the missing links."

City council will decide on funding between late fall and early winter. If funding is approved, the next step will be to implement a plan of action to begin creating a more well-connected city, says Hoyles.

Possible changes include inexpensive, straightforward improvements such as adding or adjusting sidewalks, crosswalks and biking infrastructure.

"[It's] low cost, high impact," says Hoyles. "People's lives can really be improved with just cheap(er) infrastructure changes." ■

MAKING THE OUTDOORS INCLUSIVE

FUND HELPS INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACCESS AND ENJOY NATURAL SPACES

BY LISA CATTERALL



DANIEL WEIN

For parents, there are few things more terrifying than an unexpected call or knock on the door from police or government officials. For Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) donors Ross and Eleanor Wein, the world stopped when, on Nov. 23, 1998, they received a call from the Canadian embassy in Ottawa. Their son, Daniel, had been involved in a near-fatal motorcycle accident in Bogotá, Colombia. The prognosis was poor.

"I was on the plane the next morning and got to see him that night," says Ross. "What I saw wasn't pretty. Danny was all full of tubes and wires. We didn't know what was going to happen."

Daniel, a budding young environmental biologist and recent university graduate, had embarked on a road trip with two good friends just two months before the accident. Travelling down the West Coast of the United States, through Mexico and into Central and South America, the young men had enjoyed the trip of a lifetime. But a collision with a flatbed truck brought a swift end to Daniel's ride.

For the Wein family, it was the beginning of a new journey, one fraught with hospital visits, sleepless nights and unexpected challenges. Daniel survived the accident, but injuries to his lower brain stem left him with one side paralyzed, unable to balance or speak clearly. This means Daniel will require near round-the-clock care for the rest of his life.

The next several months were long and arduous as Daniel moved from the hospital

to a brain injury rehabilitation program in Ponoka. As Daniel began to make progress through speech and physiotherapy treatments, Ross and Eleanor, along with their daughter Laurie, worked to encourage his recovery by bringing Daniel nature magazines and photos — reminders of what he loved. Eventually, the family would bring him on outings to Elk Island National Park or Beaverhill Lake, giving him the chance to enjoy nature once again. Ross and Eleanor became well-versed in determining whether a space would be fully accessible for their outings with Daniel. Unfortunately, they found many challenges when staying in traditional hotels or visiting natural parks. So they set out to create something new.

"We wanted to have a place where guys like Daniel, in wheelchairs and with other issues, could get out into nature because we knew what that meant to him," says Ross. "So in 2006 when I retired, I said, 'Well, we need something like that. And we need to make it so that people and their families can get out to it.'"

So in 2007, after many hard-fought years of recovery for Daniel, the Weins founded the Alberta Abilities Lodges Society, an organization dedicated to making outdoor experiences accessible to all Albertans. Their first priority with the society was to bridge the gap that limited so many Albertans — including Daniel — with physical and cognitive disabilities: a lack of transportation options to and from parks and natural areas.

Natural areas are not often served by transit networks, and for those who are >





unable to drive or who don't own a vehicle, they can be virtually impossible to access. To address this, the Weins established the Wein Family Disabilities Transportation Fund with ECF. The fund provides financial support for those living with a disability, allowing their families and their caregivers to enjoy respite in a natural setting. It is disbursed annually via the Alberta Abilities Lodges Society to those in financial need.

"We knew it was important to also support caregivers through this fund, because everyone can

benefit from being out in nature," says Eleanor, adding that an outdoor getaway can offer caregivers a welcome respite from their duties. "Ross and I don't travel much, ourselves. We've managed a couple of short trips, but if we want to travel, it's a huge challenge for us to find 24-hour help for Danny. When we come back, the caregivers are always exhausted, so we know how important it is to offer everyone the chance to get away for a break."

"WE KNEW IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ALSO SUPPORT CAREGIVERS THROUGH THIS FUND, BECAUSE EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT FROM BEING OUT IN NATURE."

- ELEANOR WEIN

"Families with disabled people generally aren't going to have much money because they're saving what they can for the future and they've got so many expenses right now. Everything from equipment to caregiving, it all costs money, so it can be hard to manage something like a weekend trip," says Ross. "Through this fund, we're trying to provide financial travel support in perpetuity for disabled people and their support groups."

Although the fund is now 12 years old, Ross and Eleanor are only getting started with their work.

The couple are well into their retirement, yet they show no signs of slowing down on their mission to make nature accessible to all Albertans.

"The best place and best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, right?" says Ross, "And the second-best is today. We took that approach with the endowment fund. We're always hoping to see it grow and to see our work with the society grow to help more families." ■

WARBURG PINCUS

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small steps on the road to big solutions

Martin Garber-Conrad was a newly minted college graduate when he hit the road for Edmonton from his hometown of Columbus, Ohio. It was 1971 — coincidentally, the same year city council passed the Edmonton Community Foundation Act — and he'd come for a job helping Lutheran churches administer youth programs.

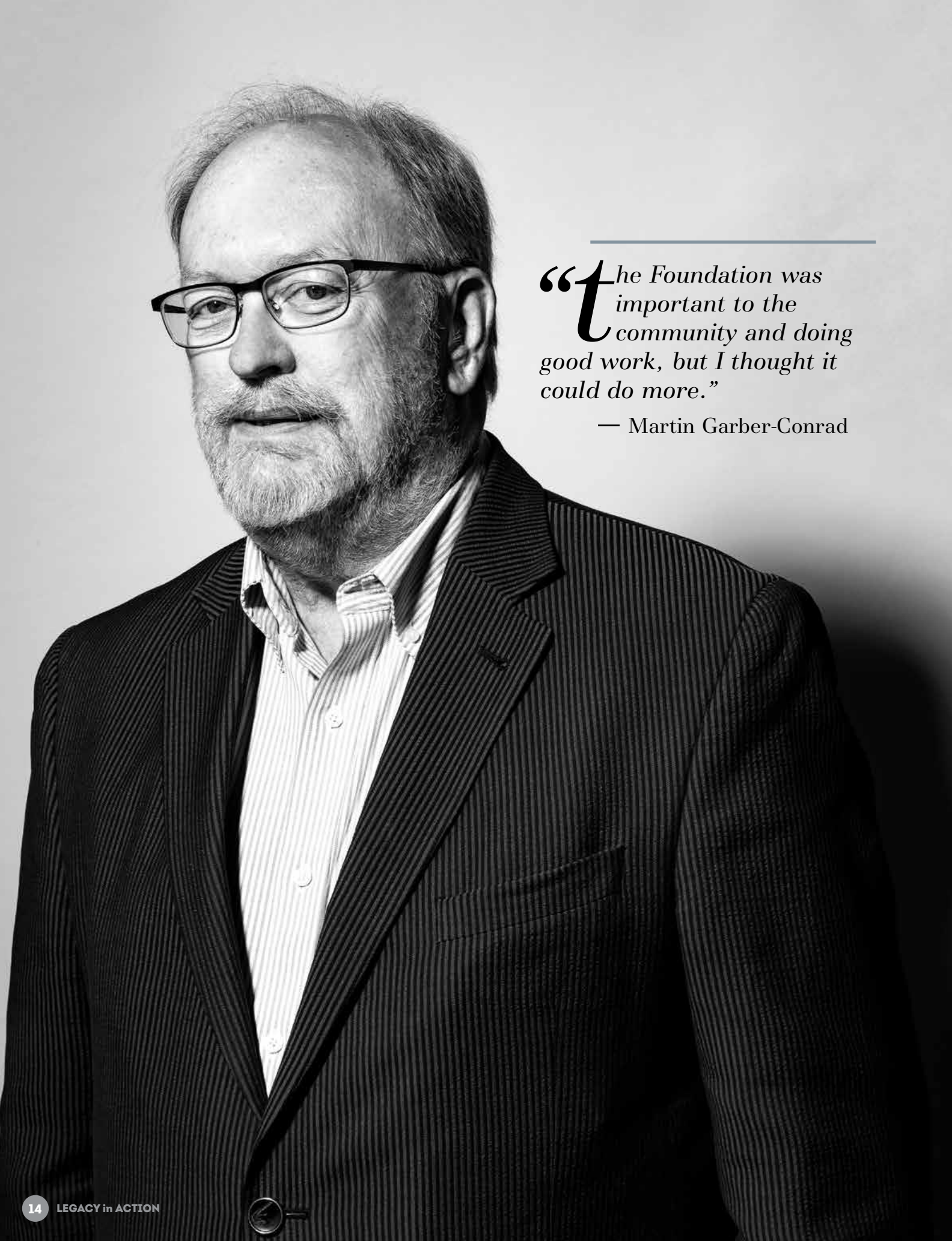
It was an interesting job for a recent grad and a young person of faith, but not the main reason he chose Edmonton. "My high-school buddy and I had always dreamed of driving up the Alaska Highway to Fairbanks," he says. "I thought, 'If I live in Edmonton, I'll be halfway there already!'" While that dream never did come to fruition, Garber-Conrad made the city his home and has since invested decades in improving the community, particularly for its most vulnerable citizens.



ECF's CEO works tirelessly for Edmonton's most vulnerable

BY CAITLIN CRAWSHAW
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CURTIS COMEAU

Garber-Conrad took a winding road to his career in the non-profit sector. A couple of years after arriving in Edmonton, he left to pursue graduate studies in theology (his first degree is in sociology) in Saskatchewan. Returning to Alberta, he ran his own parish near Leduc for three years before moving to the private sector. He was working for a training consulting firm when he spotted a job opening at E4C (Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation) that seemed a much better fit. "I thought this would be a good way to combine what I'd learned in the private sector with my church background," he says. While E4C didn't do religious work, many of the people involved had ties to church ministries — a world he understood well. >



“The Foundation was important to the community and doing good work, but I thought it could do more.”

— Martin Garber-Conrad

E4C was established in 1970 by four local churches to help inner-city people living in poverty. When Garber-Conrad became its second executive director in 1987, it offered just two services: a women's shelter and a one-person program educating students about the perils of shoplifting. Over the next 18 years, he grew E4C into a sizable non-profit with 200 employees, a budget of \$10 million, and several properties. Under Garber-Conrad's leadership, E4C redeveloped two historic buildings in the city's downtown — the Gibson Block (to house its Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre) and Alex Taylor School (for the organization's headquarters) — and built brand-new affordable housing units. E4C also launched Kids In the Hall Bistro, a program that employs at-risk youth in a restaurant setting and one of the first social enterprises in the city.

Working for E4C afforded Garber-Conrad the opportunity to tackle poverty and affordable housing — two of the causes closest to his heart — and to radically transform an organization. But after 18 years, it was time for a change. When the position of CEO came up at Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) in 2005, he put his hat in the ring. Garber-Conrad knew ECF through his work at E4C, which had received funding through the foundation during his tenure. He'd also served on the ECF board in the 1990s as a community member.

To his delight, he got the job. "The Foundation was important to the community and doing good work, but I thought it could do more," says Garber-Conrad. "And I thought the key to its success would be to do even bigger, more important things in the community instead of trying to give little grants to everyone."

To attain those goals, he wanted ECF to begin working more in partnership with other

funders. And under his leadership, the foundation has pooled resources with the City of Edmonton, United Way and other organizations to address various community needs.

The Edmonton and Area Land Trust was created in 2007 by the foundation, City of Edmonton and conservation groups to protect natural areas in the Edmonton area. Garber-Conrad also worked with the city to create the Social Enterprise Fund, which in 2008 began making small loans to organizations looking to build money-making enterprises focused on community good. "It's given us another tool in our toolbox — another way to help charities and nonprofits beyond what we can do with grants," says Garber-Conrad. The fund has provided nearly \$50 million in financing to 75 projects.

It's now been three decades since Garber-Conrad began his career in the non-profit realm and his dedication to community has earned him all sorts of accolades. In 2004, he was one of 100 leaders named Edmontonian of the Century for the city's centennial and in 2013, he received a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. This year, he received an honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of Alberta

For Garber-Conrad, these recognitions are flattering — and spotlight the important work of the foundation and non-profit sector — but they aren't what motivate him. His deep concern for the community and a desire to tackle social ills such as poverty, homelessness and child hunger are what keep him going.

"I'd retire happy if we got even one of those things fixed," he says. "If there were no homelessness or no more hungry children or no more poverty or no more women being abused. All of them are complex (problems), but they're not as hard as we make them." ■

*“I’d retire happy
if there were
no homelessness
or no more hungry
children or no more
poverty or no more
women being abused.”*

— Martin Garber-Conrad

TRACKS THROUGH TIME

EDMONTON RADIAL RAILWAY SOCIETY PRESERVES CITY'S STREETCAR HERITAGE

BY DAVID RYNING

On a bright summer Saturday, it is standing room only in the Edmonton Radial Railway Society's car No. 247 for the trip from downtown to Strathcona.

The conductor pulls up the wooden step, closes the door and signals the driver. As the green-and-white streetcar pulls away from the Jasper Plaza stop heading south, the initial 'bang-bang, thump-thump' rhythm smooths out into an even 'bump-bump' as it picks up speed.

Passengers take in the Legislature, the banks of the North Saskatchewan River then spectacular views of the lush valley. Near the front, a father and son are entranced by the single track stretching over the top of the High Level Bridge. The only ones not looking out the windows are a bride in a white gown — she gets to sit — and bridesmaids in floral dresses gathered around her, talking earnestly. They have something other than streetcars on their minds. The rest of the passengers are engrossed in the sights and sounds of an experience that recalls the Edmonton of a century ago.

EARLY DAYS

The Edmonton Radial Railway (ERR) began running in 1908, bringing the newly minted capital of Alberta into the age of public transit. The first cars travelled a 21-kilometre track, giving Edmontonians an alternative to walking or horse-powered transport. Regular service began on Nov. 9, when the ERR brought in \$150 on the strength of 3,000 rides at a nickel per trip. The initial route connected Alberta (118th) Avenue to Jasper Avenue and west to 121st Street. Within weeks, a second route crossed the river to Strathcona via the Low Level Bridge.

Critics weren't convinced that the ERR would be profitable or efficient, and route planning was contentious. The vagaries of the day's electrical systems could leave passengers stranded. Snow could also be a problem; eventually, a special sweeper car was purchased to clear the tracks after heavy snowfalls.

However, as the population of Edmonton continued to expand, the ERR grew with it. By 1911, ridership averaged 4,784 per day. Routes expanded to

meet increased demand, and areas such as City Park (now Borden Park), Highlands, the packing plant on Norton Street (now 66th Street) and Glenora all gained streetcar service.



Photo Credit: Tim Campbell, ERRS



Photo Credit: Tim Campbell, ERRS



Photo Credit: Tim Campbell, ERRS



"EDMONTON RADIAL RAILWAY SOCIETY DOESN'T JUST TELL PEOPLE ABOUT HISTORY; IT PROVIDES TRANSPORTATION AND A UNIQUE VENUE FOR EXPERIENCES LIKE WINE TASTINGS AND SMALL CONCERTS."

– CRAIG STUMPF-ALLEN

The heyday of Edmonton's streetcars was to be relatively short. Even though the ERR was transporting more than 13 million people per year by 1935, its days were numbered. Issues with track deterioration and an aging fleet of cars provided an opening for alternates. In 1939 the first trolley buses started operation and in the mid-1940s streetcars began to be phased out.

On Sept. 1, 1951, Edmonton's streetcars passed into history with a final trip across the High Level Bridge.

Today, that history is kept alive by the Edmonton Radial Railway Society (ERRS). Founded in 1980, the society is made up of volunteers — including those involved

in streetcar restoration and operations, museum guides and administration — and supported with funding from private donors and organizations including Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF).

According to Craig Stumpf-Allen, director of grants and community engagement, ECF supports the ERRS through two designated funds — which support the same charity or charities every year — one established by an individual donor and the other by the ERRS itself.

"This is a good way for an

organization to help build its own sustainability by creating a fund which can support their future activities," Stumpf-Allen says. "So many smaller specialty museums are struggling these days. I've always been impressed when organizations can take history and keep it relevant. (The) ERRS doesn't just tell people about history; it provides transportation and a unique venue for experiences like wine tastings and small concerts."

"The Edmonton Radial Railway Society represents a joyful side of philanthropy," adds Kathy Hawkesworth, director of donor services for ECF. "It represents tying us to our history. Donors' eyes have lit up when they have said, 'I'd like to include the Edmonton Radial Railway Society in my plans.'"

Along with restoring and operating streetcars on the High Level Bridge line and the Fort Edmonton Park line, the ERRS maintains archival holdings and operates the Strathcona Streetcar Barn and Museum, where visitors can get an up-close look at Edmonton's streetcar history.

On this Saturday, volunteers Ian Scott and Dennis Nowicki are in the Streetcar Barn and Museum, explaining features of car No. 33 to interested visitors: the grooved floors to disperse snowmelt, the Peter Smith heater to keep passengers comfortable in winter weather, and the importance of safety bars on the outside of the windows.

"The bars keep you from leaning out and losing your head," Scott says. He refers to a video that shows a streetcar meeting a Canadian Pacific train on the High Level Bridge, where they pass breathtakingly close to each other on parallel tracks.

"It's the kind of mistake you'd only make once," Nowicki affirms. >



A NEW ERA

Edmonton's dreams of public transit on rails didn't fade out permanently with the end of streetcars.

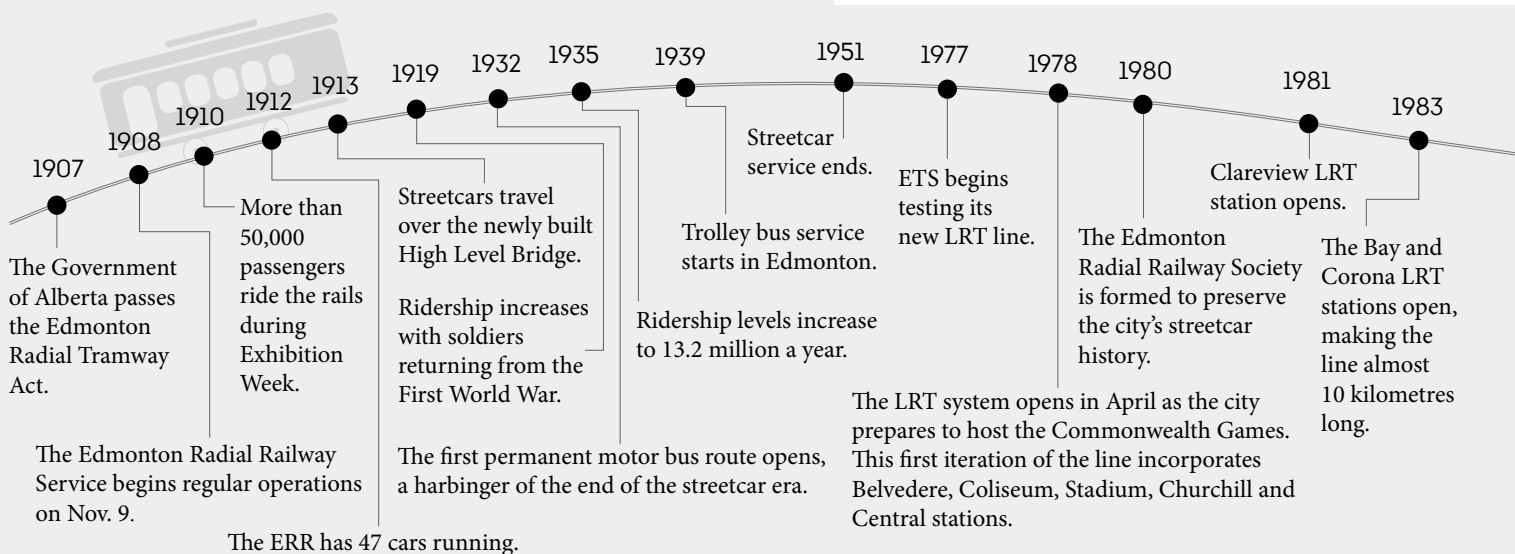
A new era of light rail transit (LRT) in Edmonton began in 1978, coinciding with the city hosting the Commonwealth Games. The initial line ran from Belvedere Station in the northeast to Coliseum, Stadium, Churchill and finally Central Station. It was a start, but by no means a comprehensive network.

Derided by some critics as a "train to nowhere," the LRT grew slowly over the next two decades. In 1981 the Clareview Station opened, followed in 1983 by the Bay and Corona stations. These were followed in turn by Grandin (1989) and University (1992).

But in the following two decades budget issues in all levels of government affected funding for transit. It wasn't until 2006 that the Health Sciences Station opened and LRT development moved forward again. In 2010, the Century Park Station opened in the south at 111th Street and 23rd Avenue. In 2015, the

Metro Line extending northwest to NAIT opened amid delays and disputes over signalling problems.

In 2019, construction continues on the Valley Line, an urban, low-floor LRT stretching south from downtown to Mill Woods and west to Lewis Farms.





The southeast portion of the Valley Line is due to open in late 2020 and expansion of the Metro Line is also in the works.

The development of transit in 2019 is often as fraught as it was in 1908, with its share of skeptics and believers. As ever, issues of funding, functionality and routes are contentious and the arguments are passionate.

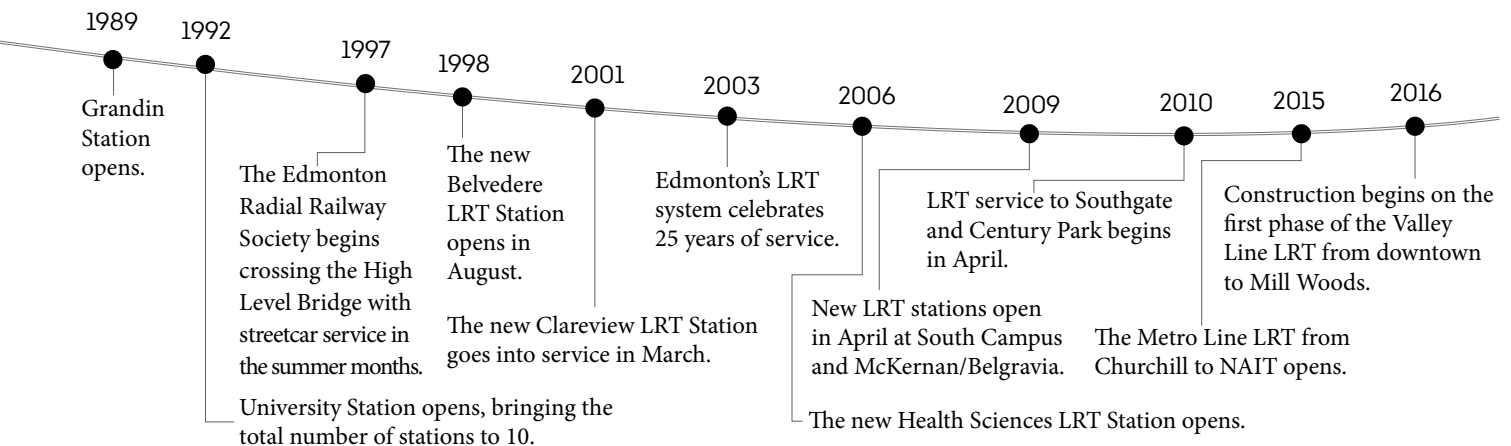
But aboard streetcar No. 247 for the return trip from Strathcona to downtown,

controversy is nowhere to be found. The conductor gives a lively history of Edmonton's earliest public transit and a running commentary on the trip. At the north side of the High Level Bridge, the car pauses so that, he announces with mock gravity, "the driver can work up his courage."

Below and west of No. 247 trundling along the top of the High Level Bridge, an LRT train emerges from the north

riverbank tunnel on its way to Grandin Station, the sun glinting off white metal as it travels from the university. The venerable streetcar and its sleek descendant pass each other at the midpoint of the valley, moving in opposite directions. For a moment the two draw level.

Then one continues on its leisurely excursion into the city's past, while the other rushes onward into its future. ■



BIKING WITHOUT BARRIERS

INVENTIVE PROGRAMS FREE SENIORS FROM ISOLATION

BY: MARIANN ROBERTS

Remember speeding your two-wheeler down the streets in your neighbourhood? The wind whipping through your hair, the sound of your friends laughing beside you and the feeling of pure joy rushing through your veins? For many of us, riding our bikes was — and still is — a large part of how we connect with our friends, family and community.

For many senior citizens, the freedom of cycling is only a memory and this can add to their feelings of social isolation.

With assistance from Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF), two programs are bringing the joy of cycling back to seniors.

BIKEAROUND

With the help of a \$24,000 grant from ECF, the Canterbury Foundation has welcomed the Swedish-engineered BikeAround program — the first of its kind in Western Canada — to its facility in Laurier Heights.

Using a stationary recumbent bicycle, a large dome immersive screen and Google Street View technology, BikeAround allows seniors to input an address of their choice and virtually cycle through that community — including places from their past. The street view is shot in present day, allowing riders to discover how their past communities have changed while reliving their fondest memories.

“[There’s] a lot of happiness,” says Canterbury recreation supervisor Mbalia Kamara. “People are coming out of their shells when they’re engaged in the program. They are coming in and talking, even those who are not even biking. Sometimes residents [are] just sitting and watching, [and] they’re

“I THINK THERE’S A SENSE OF FREEDOM WHEN YOU’RE RIDING, WHEN YOU FEEL THE WIND IN YOUR HAIR AGAIN.”

— MARGARET VARTY

really enjoying the stories of the person who is exploring.”

Kamara adds that she has seen emotional and social changes in those who have used the program, noting the biggest positive impact in residents with dementia.

“When they are on the bike and they are seeing their homes, they’re able to recollect some memories,” she adds.

Bruce Hogle, a 90-year-old resident at Canterbury Foundation, was one of the first residents to try the bike during the program’s media release in June.

“I felt really good,” said Hogle, hopping off the bike as his smile filled the room.





CYCLING WITHOUT AGE

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) is also working to improve the lives of seniors who are blind or partially sighted through its Cycling Without Age Trishaw Program.

“I think there’s a sense of freedom when you’re riding, when you feel the wind in your hair again,” says Margaret Varty, a philanthropy specialist with CNIB.

With the help of a \$24,000 grant from ECF, CNIB is using trishaws and the power of community to bring a sense of freedom back to blind or partially sighted seniors.

The trishaw is a three-wheeled bike with a cushioned seat up front for passengers and operational pedals and handlebars in back for a volunteer cyclist to manoeuvre and steer.

Sharing a ride on a trishaw encourages conversation, social interaction and intergenerational friendship between the volunteers and passengers, says Varty.

“There are many opportunities to chat while on the trishaw,” she explains. “Simply describing the environment creates discussion, and is encouraged to make passengers feel more comfortable.”

BikeAround

Who: Open to the public

Fee: None

Contact: Canterbury Manor, 8403 142nd St., Edmonton.

780-483-5361

Want to volunteer? Visit canterburyfoundation.com

and click “Volunteer”



Try It!

Cycling Without Age

Who: Open to the public

Fee: None

Contact: CNIB Edmonton, 11150 Jasper Ave., Edmonton.

780-488-4871 or visit cnib.ca

Want to volunteer? Call 780-488-4871



The ECF grant has allowed CNIB to create a stronger sense of community, says Varty, and it is her hope, and the hope of CNIB, to continue to grow the Trishaw Program and help as many people living with vision loss as possible.

“A program like the Edmonton chapter of Cycling Without Age allows us to ensure that seniors living with sight loss have the recreation opportunities they want and deserve,” adds Varty.

“After all, everyone deserves to feel the wind in their hair.” ■

GREEN SPACES in EDMONTON



VitalSigns.



Edmonton Vital Signs is an annual checkup conducted by Edmonton Community Foundation, in partnership with Edmonton Social Planning Council, to measure how the community is doing. Vital Topics are a quick but comprehensive look at issues that are timely and important to Edmonton.



What do you mean by *green*?

NATURAL AREA: spaces identified for the conservation, preservation and/or restoration of natural features, biodiversity, or ecological processes with a relatively low level of human maintenance.

GREEN SPACE: spaces featuring vegetation and other natural elements that range in size, public accessibility, and human management.

PARK: An actively maintained, publicly accessible green space that may contain natural and man-made materials.

DID YOU KNOW? The North Saskatchewan's muddy appearance, is due to the silts it transports. **Water quality testing indicates it is safe for a variety of recreational uses including swimming and tubing**, although users should be cautious in the spring and fall during heavy flow rates.



The Ribbon of Green

The North Saskatchewan River Valley, a loosely connected strip of land covering **18,000 acres**,

- is the largest urban park in Canada,
- has 160 kilometres of maintained pathways and 20 major parks,
- has been protected in some form since 1915 in response to the devastating flood when the North Saskatchewan River rose 42 feet.

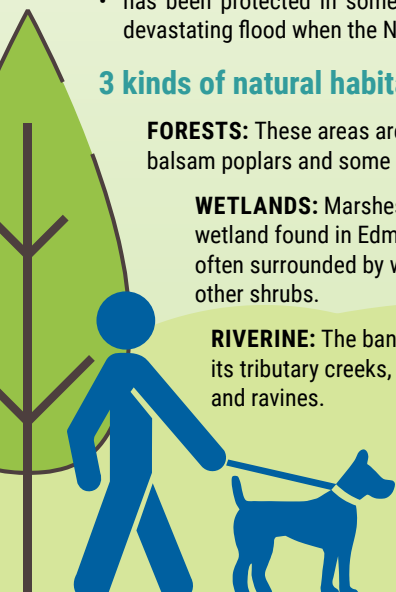
3 kinds of natural habitat exist in Edmonton

FORESTS: These areas are largely filled with aspen and balsam poplars and some evergreens.

WETLANDS: Marshes are the most common type of wetland found in Edmonton. Marshes are in depressions, often surrounded by water-based plants, willows and other shrubs.

RIVERINE: The banks of the North Saskatchewan River, its tributary creeks, and the slopes of both the river valley and ravines.

DID YOU KNOW? The historic **Holowach Tree is the oldest standing horse chestnut in Edmonton**. It was planted on April 30, 1910 by Ukrainian pioneer Sam Holowach. It can be found off Jasper Avenue between 105 and 106 Streets.



Edmonton Parks

Edmonton has **7 hectares of parkland/1,000 people**.

- Parks are **within 400 metres of anywhere in downtown Edmonton**, although connections are not always convenient, accessible, or pleasant.
- The Edmonton metro region has **17 off-leash dog parks and 5 boat docks** to launch non-motorized watercraft.
- (INIW) River Lot 1100 on Queen Elizabeth park road opened in 2018 and showcases permanent **art installations by six Indigenous artists** telling the story of this place.

No kidding...GOATS – Edmonton employs almost **200 goats to eat weeds in Rundle Park**. Edmontonians who want to see them at work can attend a "Meet and Bleat."



Green Space is good for us.

There is evidence that accessing urban green spaces can provide:

- psychological relaxation and stress reduction,
- improved social cohesion and psychological attachment to the home area,
- immune system benefits,
- enhanced physical activity,
- reduced exposures to noise, air pollution and excessive heat.

BIGGEST PARKS BY AREA (m²)

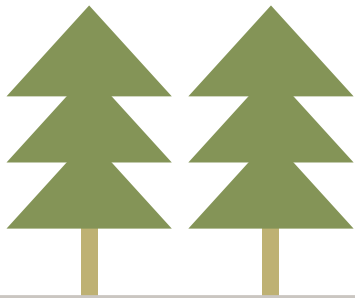
Whitemud Park
3,949,337

Terwillegar Park
1,736,951

Whitemud Ravine Nature Reserve
1,472,291

THE SMALLEST PARK

is called 'Stony Plain F', at a mere **15.4 m²** and located in Glenora.



Challenges for Parks

- **Inadequate funding** for park maintenance, programming, and repairs.
- **Increasing damage** from extreme weather.
- Parks used as **alternative housing** by people experiencing homelessness.
- **Growing demand for trails** and off-leash dog parks.
- **Demand for unstructured gathering spaces** and areas for unstructured play.
- **Accommodating an aging population.**

Edmonton's Park Use

In a 2017 perception survey of Edmontonians, in the past year:

82% used their **NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK**

64% used a **RIVER VALLEY PARK**

According to BREATHE part of Edmonton's Green Network Strategy (2016):

- 90% of Edmontonians said they used green spaces to **enjoy nature**,
- 86% believe **trees are the most important feature** of open spaces,
- 81% **used green spaces for wellness** and,
- 65% used them for **celebration**.



Wildlife/Habitat

Edmonton is host to almost 50 species of mammals, more than 150 species of birds, 5 species of amphibians, 2 species of reptiles and approximately 30 species of fish.

- **40 species** of wildlife are **at-risk** in Edmonton.
- WILDNorth admits almost **3,000 injured or orphaned** wild animals from the Edmonton region. **95% are displaced due to human activity and practices.**

In Greater Edmonton the most common injured or orphaned species are:

- mallard ducks
- white-tailed prairie hares
- black-billed magpies
- American robins
- red squirrels
- Canada geese



Ways you can Help Wildlife

- **Keep pets on a leash** or contained when outside.
- **Do not feed birds bread** or other unnatural food.
- **Keep garbage contained** and secure to avoid encouraging unwanted wildlife behaviour.
- **Cover windows to avoid a reflective surface**, to reduce bird window strikes.
- **Do not assume an animal is orphaned** until you have monitored it for some time and contacted a professional for advice.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Natural areas provide food for pollinators when crops are not yet flowering. Pollinators are essential to many types of foods we eat.



THE BUZZZZ ON BEES

Native bees in Alberta are pollen-collecting bees.

Alberta is home to more than **300 native species of bees** but most of these are solitary bees (non-aggressive).

The Honeybee is not native to Alberta.

The city of Edmonton has been trying to **increase natural areas since 1995 by leaving grassy areas uncut and monitoring for noxious weeds.**

ECF@WORK

Prince's Charities Canada (PCC) received \$37,000 for Beekeeping Clubs in partnership with Northlands.

Participants learn to care for beehives and harvest honey. Youth develop a connection to nature, experience a form of food production, and understand the importance of preserving our ecosystems.

Beyond the River Valley

Just east of Edmonton is Beaver Hills Biosphere which was named a UNESCO biosphere in 2016. The landscape contains wetlands, lakes and forests, and is home to a variety of animals. This area includes Elk Island National Park, several provincial parks, and protected areas that are situated within this ecologically-significant region.

Visitation to Elk Island National Park has nearly doubled in a decade, from 185,000 visitors in 2009 to **more than 360,000 visitors in 2018.**

ECF@WORK

Edmonton and Area Land Trust (EALT) received \$50,000/yr for 2017, 2018, and 2019 to help build the organization. EALT's mandate is to conserve natural areas in Edmonton and the surrounding region. **In 11 years they have secured 12 natural areas totalling 2,243 acres.**

WILD MYTHS:

MYTH: *Nestlings can not be returned to the nest once the scent of people is on them.*

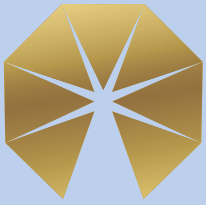
FACT: Parent birds will not reject nestlings as almost all birds have no sense of smell.

MYTH: *I should be afraid of coyotes.*

FACT: Coyotes are a natural part of our urban ecosystem and serious conflicts with people are **extremely rare**. Though they normally stay away from people, avoid habituating them to human food sources and keep small pets close. Should you encounter a coyote that seems a little too curious, face the animal, make yourself appear large, and be loud and aggressive by shouting and clapping. We can live in harmony with this important species.

MYTH: *If you find a baby hare, porcupine or deer fawn alone, you can assume it's orphaned.*

FACT: It is normal for mothers of these species to leave their young alone during the day and will return at night to nurse the young.



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