

WINTER 2019

LEGACY ACTION

30
YEARS | EDMONTON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



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CONNECTIONS
IN EDMONTON'S
RIVER VALLEY**

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FIRST IN YOUR
HEART AND ON
YOUR DIAL**

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**BUILDING COMMUNITY AT
JOHN AND SOPHIE'S HOUSE**

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FUN(D) FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

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Cover by Paul Swanson

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Martin Garber-Conrad
Martin Garber-Conrad
CEO

There's no denying that winter has finally arrived: The wind is unforgiving, the sun sets before dinner and many of us end our days with a shovel in hand.

Thankfully, there are also holiday lights and freshly fallen snow to brighten up city streets after dark, and all kinds of seasonal activities for Edmontonians to look forward to.

There's also no denying that 2019 is quickly coming to a close and, with it, Edmonton Community Foundation's 30th-anniversary year. For the Foundation and our friends in the community, this has been a year of both celebration and reflection. We've remembered how the organization has evolved over the last three decades *and* imagined how it might facilitate community building in future.

In our last issue of the year, we continue to recall the past and think of the future, with a focus on the architecture that has defined our community. In the pages to follow, you'll find an article on the history of Hilltop House — on the north bank of the river, a two-and-a-half-storey mansion that was built in 1913 and has housed the Foundation since 2005. Read about the Leduc Heritage Grain Elevator, the last grain elevator left in Leduc and now a museum that tells the story of how these humble structures defined the area landscape and helped shape the province.

Find out about deep-rooted Edmonton organizations that have looked to ECF to

help make architectural changes — such as the 2012 relocation of Canada's first public broadcaster, the CKUA Radio Network, which went on air for the first time in 1927. For decades, the station operated out of drafty and flood-prone digs in the Alberta Block until a loan from ECF's Social Enterprise Fund allowed it to renovate the 1903-built Alberta Hotel. You'll also read about the Chinese Garden in Louise McKinney Park, which has received funding from ECF several times since its construction in the early 2000s, most recently for the addition of a nine-dragon wall earlier this year.

In this issue, you'll also find out how ECF is helping organizations build for the future. There's a school club in which students as young as 13 learn how to use synthetic biology to find creative solutions to real-world problems. And we catch up with the 25-year-old Stollery Charitable Foundation (SCF), established by well-known local philanthropists Bob and Shirley Stollery, who were also founders of ECF.

As always, we hope our readers enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed creating it. May this holiday season bring you plenty of joy and opportunities to reflect on all you've built and hope to build in the year ahead.

– Martin Garber-Conrad

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BUDDING SCIENTISTS GET HANDS-ON WITH SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY

AN ECF-SUPPORTED STUDENT CLUB GRAPPLES WITH REAL-WORLD ISSUES

BY CAITLIN CRAWSHAW IMAGES SUPPLIED

Every Thursday, a group of curious students between Grades 7 and 12 gathers in a science lab at Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy in Canmore. Under the guidance of science teachers Jessica Puurunen and Ryan Washburn, they learn the fundamentals of synthetic biology and begin applying them to actual problems.

“We’re trying to get them to learn by doing,” says Puurunen. While conventional science classes give kids the chance to do laboratory exercises, they tend to be demonstrations of concepts rather than actual experiments, she explains. In SynBio Club — supported in part by an endowment fund created by a family through Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) — the students pick a problem to tackle (last year, it was plastic waste in oceans) and work together to apply their knowledge to developing possible solutions.



Students in the SynBio Club

The main tool in the students’ toolbox is synthetic biology, a relatively new field that alters components within cells to create new biological systems. Examples include bacteria that digest oil for the purpose of environmental remediation, rice cells that create Vitamin A to address vitamin deficiencies in

impoverished communities, and yeast cells that act as miniature production facilities for an antimalarial drug. “It’s really looking at biology as a technology — living cells as a technology,” says Puurunen.

“I FIND THAT WITH A LITTLE SUPPORT AND MENTORSHIP, KIDS CAN REALLY FIGURE IT OUT. THEY REALLY CAN WRAP THEIR MINDS AROUND SOME COMPLEX THINGS AND LEARN TO APPLY IT.”

- JESSICA PUURUNEN

It sounds complex because it is. Even so, she notes, the many students who participated in the club since its inception five years ago managed to get a handle on it. “I find that with a little support and mentorship, kids can really figure it out. They really can wrap their minds around some complex things and learn to apply it,” she says.

Last year’s group brought their project to Boston for the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) competition, which originated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where international student teams compete every year. The group set out to create bacteria that bind to PET plastic (the kind used in water bottles) to make it easier for recycling facilities to differentiate it from other forms of waste.

In the end, despite the students’ best efforts, the technology they developed didn’t work consistently. Even so, the team brought home the Chairman’s Award for academic integrity for a side project that created

specialized scientific tools to make lab work more accessible to students with disabilities.

This year’s project may turn out to be just as ambitious. The team is interested in prosthetics — specifically, the idea of living systems

interacting with robotics (as is the case with cochlear implants, for instance). Puurunen explains that students are at the beginning of their investigation and have yet to determine the precise problem they aim to solve. “What can happen is that once you get into it, you often pivot your idea — sometimes multiple times,” she says.

The students are eager to dig in. One of the youngest team members, Nami — a Grade 8 student — has been excited to get involved since reading about the club in a local newspaper last year. “Synthetic biology just seems like magic to me,” she says. “You can make slight changes to the DNA of a cell and it can do so many things.”

“OUR GOAL IS TO EXPOSE THEM TO AS MANY NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND OPTIONS AS POSSIBLE SO THEY KNOW WHAT’S OUT THERE AND WHAT THEY COULD DO.”

- JESSICA PUURUNEN



Students in the SynBio Club

Her teammate Anya is a Grade 11 student who joined the club two years ago, following in the footsteps of her older sister. She plans to have a career in biology and SynBio Club offers her an opportunity to deepen her understanding.

opportunity to pave your own path and do the things you want to do because you know you want to do them.”

It's too soon to know if this year's cohort will compete at iGEM in Boston, but Puurunen points out that students will attend different

“When you're in a classroom, a lot of the things you learn can seem very distant and complex, and not always relevant. You'll learn pipetting or something, and how to use it, but not why you're learning it,” she says. “Whereas with this, you really have the

learning opportunities at Alberta universities throughout the year. The group also travels to Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge for mentorship from university scientists.

None of this would be possible without the funding SynBio receives from ECF. “It's huge for us because, as you can imagine, we don't have a huge budget and we're talking about specialized microbiology equipment that isn't standard fare for a science department,” she says. Travel costs for the rural club can also be expensive.

Puurunen notes that funding challenges partially explain why clubs like hers are rare in Alberta, which is a shame as the experiences they offer can be invaluable. On top of enhancing their scientific knowledge and understanding of global issues, SynBio Club helps students consider their paths after high school. “Our goal is to expose them to as many new technologies and options as possible so they know what's out there and what they could do,” she says. ■



Students in the SynBio Club

An enduring legacy

The Stollery Charitable Foundation celebrates 25 years

Jeff Bryson is proud of the impact his grandparents, Bob and Shirley Stollery, have had on thousands of lives through their legacy, the Stollery Charitable Foundation (SCF).

“They never expected recognition. There’s a million ways to spend your money and they chose such a selfless way to do it,” says Bryson, executive director of the Foundation.

SCF is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Since the Stollerys created the Foundation in 1994, it has awarded more than \$37.5 million in grant funds to charities and organizations in Kamloops and Edmonton.

“They never expected recognition. There’s a million ways to spend your money and they chose such a selfless way to do it.”

- Jeff Bryson

“They wanted to establish a family foundation to engage their family members in volunteerism and philanthropy ... and keep them connected to the community,” Bryson says.

The private family foundation was an ideal way to do that, by ensuring a perpetual contribution to the charitable sector.

One way that’s done is through a partnership with Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF).

The Stollery Charitable Foundation has committed more than \$880,000 to ECF’s Stollery Small Grants Fund since 2005. Those funds allow for a quicker response to smaller and more urgent needs that can’t wait for the Foundation’s semi-annual granting meetings.

The relationship between ECF and SCF is mutually beneficial, Bryson says, and is helpful for the respective charities with which they work.

“Sometimes we can encourage [charities] to leverage support from both foundations,” says Bryson, who shares office space with ECF in downtown Edmonton. “We collaborate closely, share information freely and support each other when we need.”

In addition to wanting to give back in Edmonton, the Stollerys knew that to engage their extended family in philanthropy, it was important to also support their communities.

That’s why the late Bob and Shirley focused the Foundation’s efforts on both Edmonton and Kamloops — where Bryson and his brother used to live, and their parents still do.

While Bryson does the majority of his work from Edmonton, his parents connect with many of the organizations in Kamloops on behalf of SCF.

“They go visit agencies and see programs operating ... and that helps keep us aware of

what the needs are,” Bryson says. “It allows us to have a more meaningful impact than if our philanthropy was spread more broadly across Canada.”

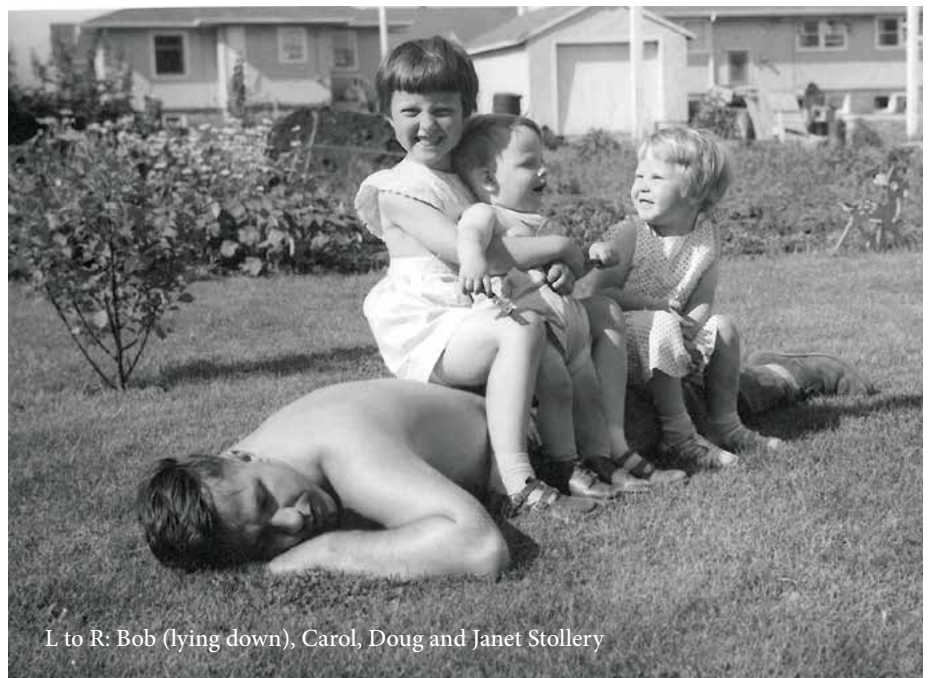
“It came down to finding ways to support vulnerable populations in the community.”

- Jeff Bryson

When the Stollerys started the Foundation, they wanted their funds to support social services, health and education initiatives in their communities. As it evolved, they also made local human rights initiatives a focus.

“It came down to finding ways to support vulnerable populations in the community,” says Bryson.

Over the years, SCF has supported



L to R: Bob (lying down), Carol, Doug and Janet Stollery



Shirley and Bob Stollery



L to R: Shirley, Carol, Doug and Janet Stollery.

Edmonton's Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts, which predominantly serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who may not be able to access traditional arts programming.

"It was a cause that really spoke to my grandparents," Bryson says.

In addition to \$105,000 in startup funding, SCF has invested \$35,000 in operational funding and \$250,000 in capital funding to create a new permanent space on 118 Avenue for the organization and its programs.

In Kamloops, SCF has awarded \$447,000 to Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way since 2012.

The University of Alberta's Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, Bissell Centre's Community Bridge Program, ASK Wellness Society and the Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society are just a few of the other organizations SCF has supported.

Bryson estimates the Foundation receives between 100 and 120 grant applications per year and awards funding to about 60 of them, between regular and small-grant commitments.

As they look toward the next 25 years, Bryson says the board is focusing on being intentional about family engagement so there is a plan in place for the future of the Foundation.

"As family members move away and get established elsewhere, [the Foundation] continues to bring us back together," Bryson says.

"It also keeps our eyes and ears and minds open to the needs of the community — because sometimes they're not in plain view." ■

1994: Foundation established by Bob and Shirley Stollery; their children Carol Sharun, Janet Bryson and Doug Stollery join them as foundation officers

1995: First grant of \$100,000 over four years (\$25,000 per year) to Capital Care Foundation

1997: First grant in Kamloops; \$60,000 over two years (first year \$25,000, second year \$35,000) to the Auxiliary To The Overlander Extended Care Hospital

2000: \$1 million granted

2003: Bill Sharun, Spencer Bryson and Scott Graham, spouses of the second-generation family members, become advisors to the board of directors

2004: Carol Sharun, Janet Bryson and Doug Stollery become directors

2005: \$5 million granted

2007: Third-generation family members Kate Zalaski, Jeff Bryson, Jon Sharun and Chad Bryson become advisors to the board of directors

2008: \$10 million granted; Bill Sharun, Spencer Bryson and Scott Graham become directors

2013: Kate Zalaski, Jeff Bryson, Jon Sharun and Chad Bryson become directors

2014: \$20 million granted

2019: 25th anniversary; \$37.44 million awarded to 578 projects and programs to date

B R I D G I N G T W O W O R L D S

EDMONTON'S
CHINESE GARDEN
CONNECTS EAST
AND WEST



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The best place to stand at the Chinese Garden in Louise McKinney Park, says the garden's society president Wing Choy, is in the middle of the bridge. There, the river valley is in full view, as are all the Chinese architectural elements — the entrance gate, a monument to Chinese pioneers, a hexagonal pavilion, rock ponds and 12 zodiac statues surrounding the rock bridge — that make up a garden that's been in the works since the early 2000s.

It's also the best spot in the park from a feng shui perspective, says Choy, who has been involved with the society since 2005, when the first phase of the garden was being constructed. "It's like a throne of an emperor," he says. "He's sitting and overseeing the beautiful valley. It is good energy."

The bridge could also be seen as a metaphorical connection between the East and the West, Choy says, which is one of the garden's goals. "We want to showcase our culture to the West," says Choy, who came to Edmonton from Hong Kong in 1970 to study engineering at the University of Alberta. "I'm trying to bridge the gap to show what the culture is all about. That's why there is free admission."





The City of Edmonton gave the land to the Edmonton Chinese Garden Society in 2000, and the society has since raised money to construct a garden Choy is confident will bring joy to generations of Edmontonians.

Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF), along with many other donors, has helped. In 2003, ECF donated \$15,000 for the first structures, more than \$39,000 in 2014 for repairs due to vandalism and \$80,000 for a nine-dragon wall in 2019.

Results of the fundraising and construction efforts reflect the collaborative relationship the society wanted to foster between Canada and China. Local architect Francis Ng designed many of the structures and Canadian engineering consultant, ISL Engineering, oversaw the project. Meanwhile, in 2002, the City of Harbin — Edmonton's sister city in China — helped with the conceptual design and the State Department of China donated two lion statues to guard the front entrance of the garden.

The newest element, which will be installed in 2020, is the 60-foot-wide wall with nine intricate dragons — symbolizing the power of Chinese emperors — carved into it, expanding up 22 feet with the material and construction done in China. It's an impressive piece of detailed craftsmanship and while some Western cities have them, says Choy, none has one this size.

"I'M TRYING TO BRIDGE THE GAP TO SHOW WHAT THE CULTURE IS ALL ABOUT. THAT'S WHY THERE IS FREE ADMISSION."

—WING CHOY



Other pieces in the garden are just as ornate. Designed in the style of the Tang dynasty, the gazebo has a dragon painted on the ceiling and carvings in its walls. Its shape represents a grounded core, with healing energy expanding out in six directions to all parts of the world. Four dragons pursue a flaming pearl — representing luck, wealth and prosperity — on a monument dedicated to Chinese pioneers. The entrance gate lacks a physical door, to show that everyone is welcome in the garden.

Choy's grandfather was one of the pioneers the flaming-pearl monument seeks to commemorate. He came from China to work on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and later faced discrimination working 16-hour days in a restaurant. "[Chinese workers] always got the low-paying jobs and really couldn't get out of it. That's hard labour and really tough. But they didn't complain much; just made a living and sent it home because there were hardships in China, as well," says Choy.

Now, Choy wants to ensure Chinese culture is accurately represented and understood, as he knows what happens when it isn't. The garden is a part of not only showcasing some of the unique aspects of the culture, but also creating strong connections between individuals in Canada and China.

"The garden will be there forever," says Choy. And he hopes the connections it forges will be just as strong and lasting. ■

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

BY THERESE KEHLER
PHOTOGRAPHY SUPPLIED

CKUA TURNED TO THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FUND FOR ITS BIG MOVE

The CKUA Radio Network is a storied, beloved non-profit organization. These are wonderful attributes until, as its chief executive officer learned in 2011, you need to borrow money.

Since going on the air in 1927, CKUA has been a trailblazer: Canada's first public broadcaster, the first FM station in Alberta, first in the nation to stream online and the only station in Alberta to broadcast its over-the-air signal throughout the province. Moreover, it's funded by a legion of loyal listeners who don't bat an eye at donating dollars for a service they can get for free.

The problem? Well, the banks called it "social risk."

When then-station CEO Ken Regan first heard that phrase, he was trying to piece together a financial plan to get CKUA out of its drafty, flood-prone, possibly haunted digs in the Alberta Block on Jasper Avenue. The destination was the Alberta Hotel, a project eight blocks east that had even more history than CKUA. The 1903 hotel, where Sir Wilfrid Laurier stayed on the eve of Alberta becoming a province, had been carefully dismantled in 1984 and was being painstakingly rebuilt as the historic façade of an entirely modern structure.

**"SOCIAL RISK?
WHAT IS SOCIAL RISK?"**

– KEN REGAN

ckua
radionetwork
9804 JASPER AVENUE

The undertaking was huge. CKUA would buy the building for \$12 million from architect Gene Dub, then complete more than \$5 million in interior construction to suit its needs as a contemporary broadcast enterprise.

But the opportunity was sheer magic — a magnificent historical building with purpose-built studios, a state-of-the-art performance space and an

need a loan, so Regan spent months meeting with bank managers at a half-dozen financial institutions. They were effusive about their love of the arts and admiration of CKUA, he recalls. Not so helpful, however, when it came to the business at-hand.

“I finally said, ‘You keep saying wonderful things but, you know, I need the money.’”

recalls Regan, who retired in 2017. “That’s when they coined a phrase for me that I hadn’t heard before ... They said, ‘We just can’t take on the social risk.’ And I said, ‘Social risk? Social risk? What is social risk?’ And they said, ‘Well, what happens if we ever had to foreclose?’”

In Regan’s laugh, you can still hear a touch of disbelief.

“I said, ‘What you’re telling me is that CKUA is so loved,’” he pauses, “‘and so well-appreciated by the community,’” another pause, “‘that you can’t afford to give us the money?’” They shrugged their shoulders and said, ‘Yeah, that’s right.’

“And that’s when I realized how difficult it is for people who do great work in the not-for-profit realm. Because your success becomes a liability.”

RISK AND REWARD

Edmonton was one of the first communities in Canada to recognize that non-profit, socially motivated organizations couldn’t get a break from traditional lenders.

In 2008, the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) created the Social Enterprise Fund (SEF), offering loans to organizations with a mission to make an impact — “like *Dragons’ Den*, but for good,” states the cheeky description on its website.

“Non-profits don’t use the same language as for-profits. But make no mistake, they are running businesses,” says Jane Bisbee, the Fund’s executive director. “The only thing missing is payments to shareholders.”

In contrast to traditional lenders, SEF is only available to organizations with a “public benefit mission.” In fact, explaining their mission is the first hurdle an organization >

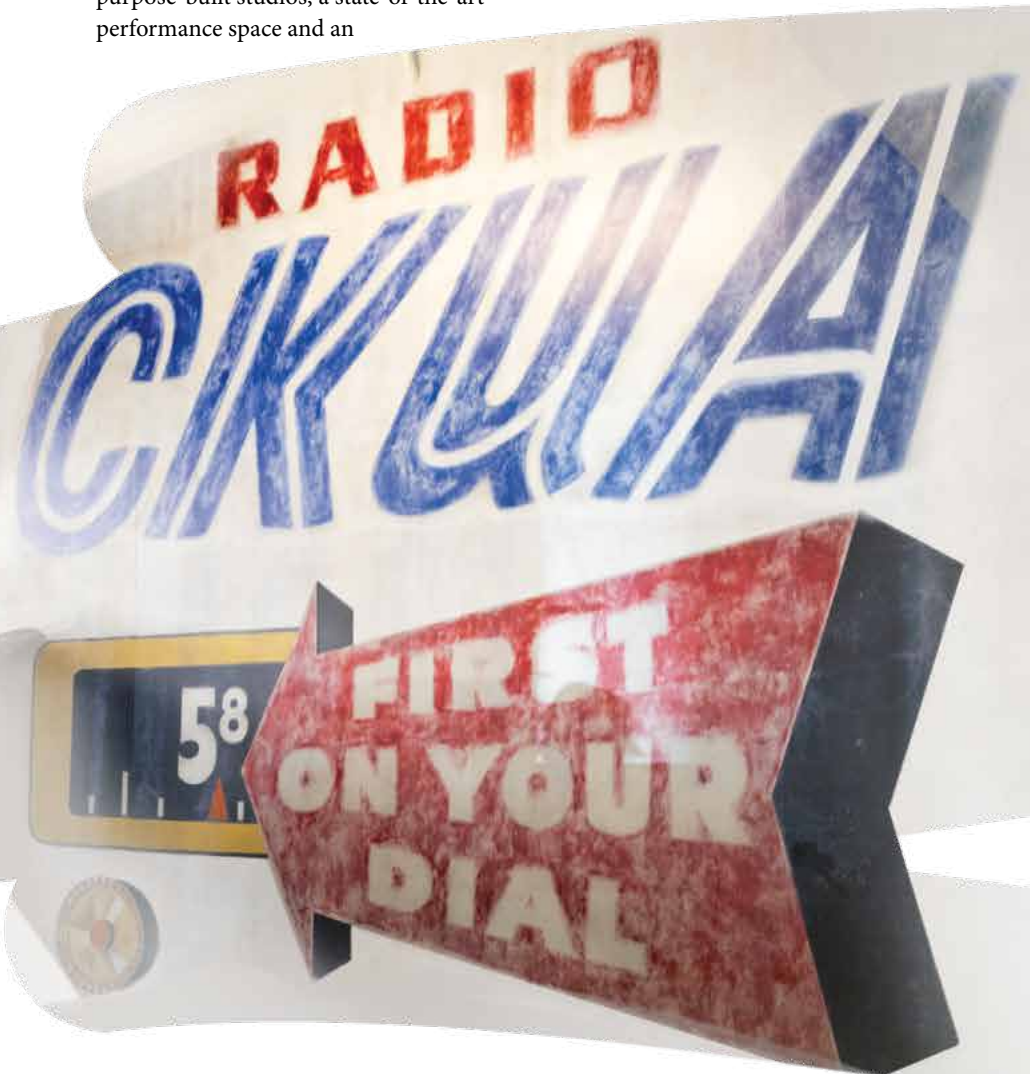
archive-quality library to protect CKUA’s astounding collection of recorded music.

“It was all playing out exactly as we had hoped,” Regan says. “All we needed to do was raise \$20 million.”

And he was optimistic. CKUA would sell the Alberta Block, have a million or so in the bank and high hopes for \$15 million or more in government assistance. With its track record for raising money from listeners, it also set a \$5-million goal for a capital fund drive. But it would also

“NON-PROFITS DON’T USE THE SAME LANGUAGE AS FOR-PROFITS. BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE, THEY ARE RUNNING BUSINESSES.”

– JANE BISBEE



“THE FACT THAT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FUND EXISTED WAS TREMENDOUSLY FORTUNATE FOR US.”

– KEN REGAN

must clear, says Bisbee. After that, it’s just a regular loan with payback terms and interest — ranging from one to three per cent over prime — but without penalties for early repayment.

In 2011, the Fund got a big boost when ECF started investing 10 per cent of its capital for mission-related investments, answering a call-to-action made the year before by the Canadian Task Force on Social Enterprise.

It was right around this time that Regan and Bisbee started talking; him with a financial problem and her with money to lend.

HOW TO (FUND) RAISE A NEW RADIO STATION

In 1997, CKUA went off the air for five weeks, a victim of politics, finances and an attempt at privatization. Those were dark days with a silver lining. The ensuing “Touch the Transmitter” campaign demonstrated how deeply Albertans cared about the radio station and became the foundation of its twice-yearly donor drives, which now raise more than \$3 million per year for operations.

In 2001, the radio station got its first grant of many from ECF — \$10,000 to support its computerized pledge room. Not long after, a small but steady new source of revenue arrived in the form of ECF endowment funds. The predictable nature of annual endowments is important to CKUA, which is, as its current CEO Marc Carnes says, “always in a very vulnerable position with its customer-funding model.”

And in 2011, as Regan was puzzling over the financial plan, the station once again got a lift from ECF when the SEF agreed to lend

CKUA \$1.5 million for its construction work on the new building.

“We were the first money in,” says Bisbee.

The rest was quick to follow. By the end of 2011, the city had committed to a \$5-million grant, matched in October 2012 by the province. By then, Regan had found his way to ATB CEO Dave Mowat, for conversations that quickly turned into a loan of almost \$6 million.

In the end, the SEF money became all-important bridge financing that helped CKUA pay the bills as the grant money — which was spread out over numerous years — trickled in. “The fact that the Social Enterprise Fund existed was tremendously fortunate for us,” Regan says.

“IT ALLOWS US TO BRING PEOPLE INTO THE MAGIC A LITTLE BIT MORE AND HAVE A BETTER APPRECIATION OF THE POWER THAT MUSIC AND THE ARTS HAVE IN OUR LIVES.”

– MARC CARNES





**“WE’RE NOT
THE SAME
LITTLE
GO-GETTER
THAT WE
ONCE WERE.
WE’RE
DEFINITELY
MATURING
IN THIS
ORGANIZATION.
AND THIS
BUILDING IS
PART OF THAT.”**

– MARC CARNES

BUILDING THE FUTURE

Carnes never worked in the old building, but he doesn’t need to have lived the comparison to realize the value of the new one. He says any radio station’s long-term sustainability is based on the success of its on-air experience and its digital presence. For CKUA, finding a home in the Alberta Hotel has added a third pillar: Human connection.

“It allows us to bring people into the magic a little bit more and have a better appreciation of the power that music and the arts have in our lives,” Carnes says.

The lobby is home to ATB’s Arts & Culture branch, a clubhouse/arts venue/financial institution for creative and cultural workers. Meanwhile, anyone can book a building tour to peek into the studios and explore the legendary library with its 140 years’ worth of sound recordings.

The CKUA performance space, with its soaring wall of windows, headquarters the donor drives, but it’s also rented for community functions and special events.

Regan says this ability to engage with the general public just didn’t exist in the old building. “We occasionally tried to do something where we would invite the community,” he says, “and it was always cramped and dirty and dusty.”

The move has also shaken up CKUA’s business operation, as the owner of the building, it is now landlord to four organizations: Revel Bistro & Bar, the Pembina Institute, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Serious Labs, a tech company that does virtual reality training for heavy equipment operators.

“We’re not a grassroots organization anymore. We have almost a \$20-million asset that we own, we’re 70 people on the payroll, we have two studios in the province,” Carnes says.

“We’re not the same little go-getter that we once were. We’re definitely maturing in this organization. And this building is part of that.” ■

PRESERVING OUR PAST

MUSEUM KEEPS HISTORIC GRAIN ELEVATOR ALIVE IN LEDUC

BY WAYNE ARTHURSON | ILLUSTRATION BY WEI WONG

There was a time when buildings like the crib-style grain elevator in Leduc were the defining structures of small-town Alberta. Sentinels in the vast prairie landscape, they dwarfed all other important buildings of the time — the town hall, courthouse, local hotel and saloon. They were as ubiquitous as the patches of wild rose along the highways. Though there is only one grain elevator left in Leduc, now a museum known as the Leduc Heritage Grain Elevator, one mustn't forget how it and other grain elevators shaped Alberta.

Throughout the 20th Century, grain elevators played a major role in the province's economic development. As railroads began to criss-cross the landscape, grain elevators sprouted up every eight to 15 kilometres. At that distance, farmers could handle the return trip in a day using their horse-pulled wagons. Some of these grain elevators were located in established towns, but in many cases, towns sprung up around them.

Grain elevators were active commercial hubs. Crops were trucked in (or, in the early days, brought in by horse-drawn wagons) and tested for variables such as quality, weight and moisture content. A price would be quoted based on these factors as well as what the grain and futures markets dictated.

Farmers would then drop their grain into a pit, where a long, continuously looping belt with large cups called a leg would scoop it up and elevate it — hence the name “grain elevator” — to the selected bin.

Farmers took their payment and injected

it into the local economy, shopping for groceries, clothing, furniture and whatever else their families might need. But grain elevators didn't just boost the economy. “Elevators were also social hubs where they drank coffee, played crib, solved world problems,” says Kerry Atkinson, museum coordinator for Alberta Legacy Development Society. “If you wanted to know what your neighbours three miles down the road were doing, you came here.”

Constructed in 1978 in the typical crib-style, with a gable roof and matching gable-roofed cupola, the Leduc elevator was one of the last built in the province.

“ELEVATORS WERE ALSO SOCIAL HUBS
WHERE THEY DRANK COFFEE, PLAYED CRIB,
SOLVED WORLD PROBLEMS.”

— KERRY ATKINSON

Crib-style construction featured outside walls made of interlocking pieces of wood, usually two-by-twos. This style allowed for quick construction while providing stable yet flexible walls.

No matter how sturdy these structures were, however, they couldn't stand up to the rush of progress all around them. In the 1990s, the deregulation of Canada's railways led to the closure of secondary railways across the province. At the same time, grain companies were consolidating operations in larger, more centralized terminals — simple concrete silos with little architectural

appeal — on the outskirts of towns. This combination of factors effectively put an end to the glory days of the grain elevator. Because grain companies didn't want to pay taxes on the unused buildings, and many became the target of arsonists and vandals, thousands were demolished.

In Leduc in 2000, it looked as if their last remaining grain elevator would meet the same fate, until the Alberta Legacy Development Society took action. “After umpteen bake sales, book sales, garage sales, letter-writing, they were able to purchase the land from CP Rail and the building from Agricore,” recalls Atkinson. Agricore sold the building to the society for a dollar.

Once they owned the building, the society knew they would need help to maintain and develop it as a museum and interpretive centre. They established a fund at Edmonton Community Foundation. “The fund is an investment for us and the interest that comes from that

helps sustain us in our day-to-day operations as well as our future plans,” says Atkinson. Those plans include the expansion of an educational program so students can learn about the importance of grain elevators to Alberta's history. The society also wants to augment the museum with updated displays, including parking an old grain truck inside the elevator.

The Leduc Grain Elevator Interpretive Centre is open for tours, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is no fee to participate in a tour, but there is a donation box available. ■



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KING OF THE HILL

HILLTOP HOUSE:
A GRACIOUS ECHO OF CITY'S PAST

BY DAVID RYNING

Hilltop House, from its vantage point on the north bank of the North Saskatchewan River valley, has overlooked the growing city of Edmonton for more than a century.

The view from the two-and-a-half-storey mansion, located at 9910 103 Street, is nothing short of spectacular. On a fall day, a tranquil ocean of gold leaves stretches out below, as peaceful as if the busy city was just a rumour. The house sits above the valley that was a meeting place for Indigenous people for many generations, long before the arrival of Europeans. Today other, more recent, meeting places in that valley — the Muttart Conservatory and Gallagher Park spring to mind — are common ground for Edmontonians from all walks of life.

It seems fitting that Hilltop House, throughout its history, has also been a meeting place, entwined with the development of the surrounding community.

The house was built in 1913, for Sophie and John C. McDougall. John C. McDougall was the son of John A. McDougall, the former Edmonton mayor, MLA and well-known business owner. John C. worked for his father's business, McDougall and Secord, as an administrator and accountant. Sophie was active in clubs and organizations, and the couple were enthusiastic entertainers, bringing together the who's who of Edmonton.

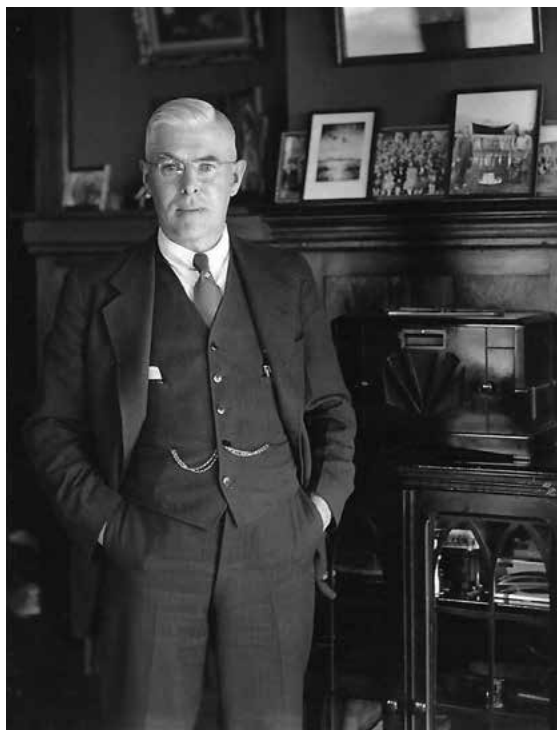
The McDougalls lived in the house until 1953. In subsequent years it served as a drug treatment facility, a women's shelter and provincial government offices. Since 2005, it has been the home of Edmonton Community

Foundation (ECF). It stands today as a glimpse of the city's past.

"I think [built heritage] is really important for our city," says Tim O'Grady, president of the Edmonton and District Historical Society. "It's one of the things that makes our city unique and really important in place-making. It helps build community. Hilltop House is a good example of that."

Although it is an important connection with the city's past, Hilltop House is largely hidden from the daily stream of traffic to and from downtown. Access is from Slatter Way, rather than 103 Street, and it can be a bit tricky to find.

"Most people drive past it every day and have never really seen it," says O'Grady. "You can kind of see it, but to get to it you have to go through this back way, and it's just this



John C. McDougall



Sophie McDougall

cool little hidden gem.”

Stepping into Hilltop House is a bit like stepping back in time. Current owner ECF has retained as much of the character from the house’s early years as possible. A trip through the building echoes 1915 Edmonton and the issues of the day: the First World War, the women’s suffrage movement and the huge flood.

“I’m an Edmonton history nerd and I love to show off the house, and put it in context so that people know



Jack, Sophie and John C. McDougall

“IT’S ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MAKES OUR CITY UNIQUE AND REALLY IMPORTANT IN PLACE-MAKING. IT HELPS BUILD COMMUNITY. HILLTOP HOUSE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THAT.”

— **TIM O’GRADY**

what they’re looking at,” says Elizabeth Bonkink, a communications advisor for ECF.

“It’s not just, ‘Oh, this is a lovely old place,’ right? This is the time of Pink Teas and women trying to get the vote — Sophie was a member of the Women’s Canadian Club of Edmonton. It was a unique time.

They were on the cusp of something ... they were always waiting for the next thing, and I don’t think that sort of feeling about Edmonton has ever changed.”

Designed by architect David Hardie — who also designed the Hecla Block and Armstrong Block — the house is a four-square plan that was common for the period. It is an elegant building, clad in brick. A large verandah supplies a jaw-dropping view of the river valley.



Eleanor McDougall

The interior retains much of the feel of the original family home. A visitor will see the original dining room set, which was a recent gift from the McDougall family. They will also see the bold millwork and high ceilings found in the grand houses of the day, the magnificent front stairs and the mysterious-looking back stairs leading up to the bedrooms for family and staff. There is also the dumbwaiter, a scene of mischief for kids playing hide-and-seek.

“IT’S NOT JUST, ‘OH, THIS IS A LOVELY OLD PLACE,’ RIGHT? THIS IS THE TIME OF PINK TEAS AND WOMEN TRYING TO GET THE VOTE — SOPHIE WAS A MEMBER OF THE WOMEN’S CANADIAN CLUB OF EDMONTON. IT WAS A UNIQUE TIME.”

— **ELIZABETH BONKINK**

The McDougalls had one staff member at the house, a cook/housekeeper named Martha, who occasionally butted heads with her employer. “John C. was an avid photographer,” Bonkink said. “He was part of an adventurers club and he liked photography, so he had a studio — basically a place to develop his photos in the basement. He and Martha used to get into it because she’d be trying to do laundry while he was in the darkroom.” >

The couple, along with children Jack and Eleanor, lived a busy life in Hilltop House. John C. was known as a bit of a daredevil who enjoyed activities as diverse as mountaineering and flying with legendary Edmonton pilot Wop May. Closer to home, he hosted “Keg of the Month Club” gatherings and was famous for making maple fudge. Both he and Sophie were well-known for their hospitality.

Edmonton’s story as its most prominent gentry. There is satisfaction in knowing that when they needed it most, they may have found comfort and hope at Hilltop House.

Between 1990 and 2003, the house was provincial office space, housing at different times the Premier’s Council in Support of Alberta Families and the Office of the Children’s Advocate. The house was left

“It’s such a cool example of adaptive reuse,” O’Grady says. “Good for them to keep [the heritage character] and deal with it so sympathetically and so appropriately. I think that speaks a lot to the organization and their values.”

In 2015, the original structure was complemented by an addition designed by Manasc Isaac Architects. It is in essence a second building, with a feeling of light and space. Anyone walking into the ECF offices today can see the addition gives a sense of new meeting old.

In 2019, ECF held an Open Doors event, welcoming approximately 75 people for a tour of the house and its history, researched by Bonkink and former historian laureate Shirley Lowe. The event even included staff members playing the McDougalls, inviting visitors for tea. It was a chance for guests to get a taste of 1915 Edmonton, to reflect on what has changed and what has remained constant.

Today, Hilltop House stands above the North Saskatchewan River as a symbol of Edmonton itself — a meeting place of people and ideas, woven into the fabric of the community. ■

“IT’S SUCH A COOL EXAMPLE OF ADAPTIVE REUSE. GOOD FOR THEM TO KEEP [THE HERITAGE CHARACTER] AND DEAL WITH IT SO SYMPATHETICALLY AND SO APPROPRIATELY. I THINK THAT SPEAKS A LOT TO THE ORGANIZATION AND THEIR VALUES.”

— JIM O’GRADY

John C. McDougall died in 1952 from a heart attack and Sophie left the house the following year, living until 1968.

Between 1953 and 1987 the house continued to function as an important meeting place, used as a drug treatment centre and a shelter for women who were victims of domestic violence. Although we can’t know the names of all the people who came to Hilltop House for help during this time, they are as much a part of

vacant in 2003 until its purchase by ECF in 2005.

Under ECF’s ownership, Hilltop House has continued to play its role enhancing the city. The Foundation acts as a bridge between donors and charities, supporting a vibrant culture of community-building. And as ECF has grown, so too has Hilltop House, although it retains its architectural connection to the city’s past.

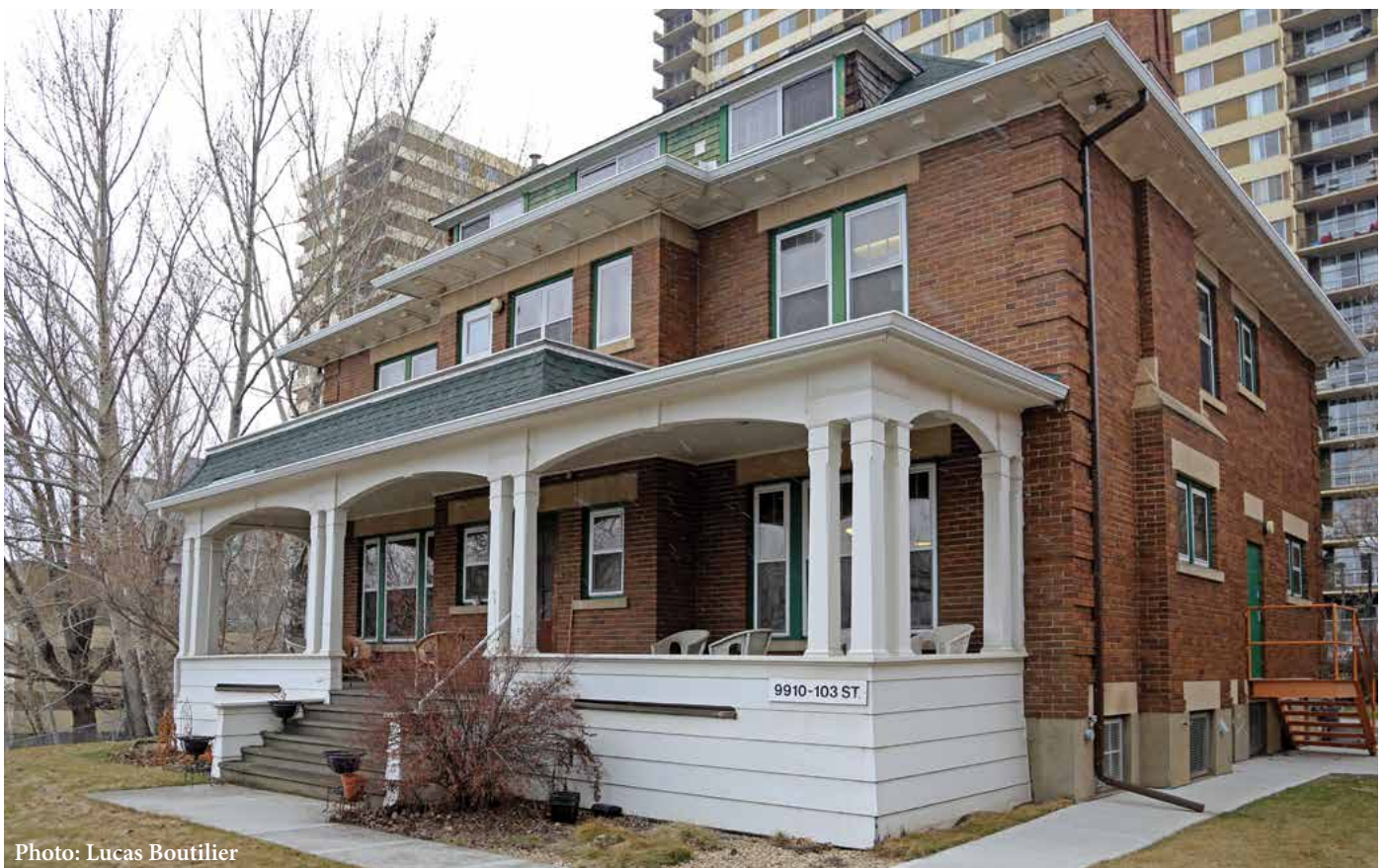


Photo: Lucas Boutilier

FUN(D) FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Connecting generations by supporting the community

By Mariann Roberts



Nick, Jeff, Alyssa and Traci DiBattista

Jeff and Traci DiBattista believe in equal access to education, offering a helping hand to others and bettering their community. To put their beliefs into action and to honour Jeff's parents, David and Carolyn, they established the DiBattista Family Fund at Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) in 2015.

"My father was retiring after nearly 30 years as a professor of psychology at Brock University in St. Catharines (Ont.)," says Jeff. "We wanted to set up a scholarship in his honour to help students and to say thank you to my mother for the support and love she provided to all of us over the years."

Carolyn passed away in 2016, shortly after the scholarship program had been announced.

The fund honours David and Carolyn's legacy with an annual scholarship at Brock University. The scholarship awards \$2,000 to a fourth-year honours student who has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement in the Psychology department.

Honouring Jeff's parents is not the only factor that makes this fund a true family endeavour. It is also an opportunity for Jeff and Traci to share the spirit of generosity with their daughter, Alyssa, and son, Nick.

"In 2015, our Christmas gift to Alyssa

and Nick was the ability to make decisions each year about where the proceeds from the fund will go," explains Jeff. "Every year, in perpetuity, each of them gets to think about and choose the cause they care about and want to support, and each directs \$1,000 from the fund to charities of their choice."

Having the whole family involved is one of the most exciting aspects of the fund, says Jeff.

"It really is the DiBattista Family Fund," says Traci. "We want to make sure that our

kids continue to be involved so that they learn a spirit of lifelong giving. And, someday,

when Jeff and I are no longer able to make decisions about the fund, they can take that over and have a lot of experience with making these decisions and really keep it going. It will be a multigenerational effort." ■

"We want to make sure that our kids continue to be involved so that they learn a spirit of lifelong giving."

– Traci DiBattista

How the DiBattistas chose to donate their funds in 2019:

Alyssa

- \$250 Child and Adolescent Mental Health (Edmonton)
- \$250 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (Toronto)
- \$500 Environmental Defence Canada Inc.

Nick

- \$250 Child and Adolescent Mental Health (Edmonton)
- \$250 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (Toronto)
- \$500 Doctors Without Borders

Traci and Jeff

- YMCA of Edmonton community support programs



David and Carolyn DiBattista

SPORT & RECREATION 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.

DEFINITIONS

Active Living: Integrating regular exercise and physical activity into one's routine and valuing the physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs that these pursuits fulfill.

Active Recreation: Activities that require physical exertion and provide participants with relaxation, enjoyment, or benefit for their physical health and wellbeing.

Sport: Activities involving physical exertion and skill in which individuals compete against each other or measured standards for enjoyment and entertainment.

IN A 2019 LEGER SURVEY

77% of Edmontonians feel that there are adequate opportunities for sports or recreation in Edmonton. This has been on a steady decline from 83% since 2014.

Because it's GOOD FOR YOU!

Being active for at least **150 minutes per week** can help reduce the risk of:

- Premature death
- Heart disease
- Stroke

- High blood pressure
- Certain types of cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Obesity

And can lead to improved:

- Fitness
- Strength
- Mental health morale and self-esteem
- Quality of life

Recreation Sector

- Gyms and fitness centres account for **65% of total health and fitness industry** revenue.
- **97% of gyms** opening in 2014 (581) were low cost (under \$40 per month).
- **\$1,951 was the average household spending** on Recreation Services in 2013. This is a 23% increase from 2010.

Economics of Sport & Recreation

Edmonton Sport Council estimates the economic significance of amateur sport and recreation in Edmonton at more than **\$663 million** in 2018 based on household expenditures in 2000 but estimated for today's population and dollar value.

According to a 2016 City of Edmonton White Paper on User Fees only **50% of the funds** to operate municipal recreation centres come from user fees. The other half is subsidized by the City.

Outdoor community ice rinks cost **\$7,000-9,000 per year** and require an average of **485 hours** per year to maintain.

Edmonton's municipal recreation centres saw **9.4 million** visits in 2018.

- 1 in 10 of those visits were funded by the Leisure Access Pass (LAP) issued for free or at a discount to low income Edmontonians. 57,079 were given last year.

More than half (**54%**) of Canadian families are financially strained from their kids' extracurricular activities.

One in four (**27%**) has gone into debt as a result.

What's in it for the City?

According to a White Paper on user fees from the City of Edmonton, high-quality recreation services:

- enhance the quality of life and social connectedness of Edmontonians,
- provide public health benefits,
- attract and retain talent to Edmonton,
- contribute to the health and wellness of Edmontonians.

Edmontonians' participation in active living (**91%**) is lower than Calgary (**96%**), and Lethbridge (**94%**).

In Canada, the healthcare costs of obesity was estimated to be **more than \$6 billion** in 2015. It has overtaken tobacco as the leading cause of premature, preventable deaths in Alberta.

- First Nations and visible minority children are particularly vulnerable, suffering from obesity at a rate 2 to 3 times higher than the national average.

No shortage of facilities

There are numerous places to find sport and recreation programs.

The City of Edmonton maintains:

- 18** recreation & leisure centres
- 20** ice arenas
- 3** golf courses
- 9** cultural centres
- 455** playgrounds
- 6,128** hectares of parkland

Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues supports 160 community leagues that maintain:

- 150** playgrounds
- 56** spray parks
- 131** outdoor ice rinks
- 14** community gardens

The YMCA of Northern Alberta has 4 health, fitness, and aquatic centres in Edmonton. And many more that are not listed.



Participation

49% of Edmontonians participate in an active recreation or organized sport.

Main reasons for participation:

80% FUN & ENJOYMENT **78%** HEALTH & WELLBEING

According to the Live Active survey among those who are active the top activities are:

29% Walking, running, jogging, hiking **43%** Aerobics **21%** Swimming

Lack of Participation

51% of Edmontonians did not participate in organized sport or active recreation in the past year.

Among those not participating, the main reasons are:

32% time and distance **16%** health or ability
26% prefer to spend time on other activities **10%** cost of activity

Participation in sport and recreation tends to increase as income increases.



Let's get physical

- Only 64% of Albertans get enough physical activity to achieve health benefits.
- The average Albertan spends 9.5 hours per day during the week in sedentary activities. 37% of Albertans are sedentary more than 10 hours per day.
- Albertans 65+ are three times less likely to be physically active than those 18 to 24 years.

DID YOU KNOW?

Edmonton Sport Council hosts an activity search at Edmontonsport.com where you can search by activity, age, and city sector. It even identifies activities for persons with disabilities.

Removing the BARRIERS

NEWCOMERS – The two biggest barriers to sport and recreation for newcomers are **time and money**.

WOMEN & GIRLS – In 2018, Canada's federal government announced \$30 million over three years to support data, research, and innovative practices to promote women's and girls' participation in sport. An additional **\$9.5 million per year** for five years was allocated to Indigenous sport.

Financial Assistance

According the Live Active Survey **46% of Edmontonians were unaware** of the following recreation programs designed to remove barriers to participation in Edmonton:

- Leisure Access Pass
- Sport Central
- Seniors Recreation programs
- YEG Youth Drop-In program
- KidSport



Sport Central, KidSport Edmonton, and Canadian Tire Jumpstart provide support to low-income children and youth in Edmonton.

- Since 1991 Sport Central has helped more than 150,000 kids play their favourite sport and continues to help more than 9,000 kids yearly.
- In 2018, the Edmonton branch of Canadian Tire's Jumpstart program helped more than 80 thousand kids participate in sport and dispersed **\$1.2 million** through individual, community development, accessibility and parasport grants.
- KidSport Edmonton helped 2,983 kids play organized sports and distributed \$354,994 in 2018. 37% less than the funding distributed the previous year.

ECF@WORK

Goodwill Industries of Alberta received \$29,300 for You Can Ride 2 Program. This will purchase the tools and equipment needed to establish a bicycle mechanic workshop in Goodwill's warehouse space.

Para Sport Challenges

Nearly **five million Canadians** live with some form of disability.

- Adaptive equipment is expensive, available from limited manufacturers and often custom-made.
- Virtually no second-hand markets.
- Trying a sport is prohibitively expensive, especially for children who may outgrow equipment.
- Transportation, and facility accessibility compound the issues around sport and recreation.

The Paralympic Sport Association has been providing adaptive recreation and sport programs in Alberta since 1965.



All right you've convinced me.

Physical Activity Recommendations

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Under 1 Year

A variety of physical activity including interactive floor play. For those not mobile, 30 minutes of tummy time throughout the day.

1-2 Years

180 minutes of physical activities including energetic play spread throughout the day.

3-4 Years

180 minutes of a variety of physical activities spread throughout the day, 60 minutes is energetic play – more is better.

5-17 Years

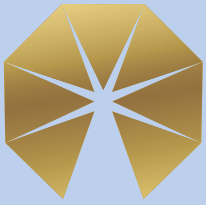
60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous aerobic activities, and muscle and bone strengthening activities should each be included at least 3 days per week.

ADULTS AGED 18-64

150 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity per week in bouts of 10 minutes or more.

ADULTS AGED 65+

Adults 65+ with poor mobility should perform physical activities that enhance their balance and prevent falls. Staying active is the key to maintaining good health. Those 65+ should maintain their active living to the extent they can as they age.



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