

FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK

ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2016 - SEPTEMBER 2017



**CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF BRINGING
FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK AND
THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!**





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Our vision is a sustainable Fish Creek Provincial Park that improves the quality of life for present and future generations.

Our mission is to engage the community through education and awareness to conserve a truly unique naturalized urban park.

Cover photo courtesy of Phil Smith



MESSAGE TO RESIGNING BOARD CHAIR, TOM JACKMAN

Bob Morrin, Chair of the Board of Directors, Friends of Fish Creek

On October 11, 2017 Tom Jackman announced that he will be stepping down as Chair and Director of the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society (the Friends) after 13 years on the board, following the Annual General Meeting in January 2018. Tom became Director of the Friends in March 2005 when the Society was in a state of turmoil. The Friends were sailing in stormy waters and their future was in question. Fortunately, Tom did not abandon ship but instead grabbed the tiller and not only steered us towards calmer waters, but also set a course to avoid similar stormy seas.

In 2005, the Friends had approximately 100 members, with a budget of around \$50,000. Within 2 months of joining the board, Tom became the Chair and helped to re-build the Board of Directors. Tom and then board member, Bonnie Castle-Dixon, identified the need for an Executive Director to run the day to day operations. Bonnie took on that role and through their collaboration and hard work, a solid foundation was laid for the Friends to move forward. Tom's vision for the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society was one where the board was in the background, providing governance and guidance to the Executive Director. Tom provided the leadership for the Friends, guiding us through three changes in Executive Directors over the years. Each of the Executive Directors brought skills and experience to the Friends that supported our growth and developed the organization's maturity to continue to grow our programs and membership. As Tom leaves the Friends in 2018, we have over 730 members and an operating budget of over \$300,000.

I would like to thank Tom for his many hours in working behind the scenes to allow Nic and all the Friends' staff to develop, oversee, and facilitate the many programs offered by the Friends with the help of many volunteers, members and partners. In recognition of Tom's work and dedication to the Friends over the last 13 years, I am pleased to announce that Tom will be presented with a Lifetime Membership to the Society at the AGM in January. On behalf of the Friends members and staff, I would like to offer a sincere Thank You to Tom Jackman for everything he has done for the Friends of Fish Creek!



The Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society

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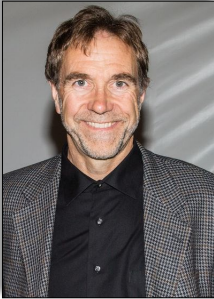
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BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

Tom Jackman, Chair of the Board of Directors, Friends of Fish Creek



2017 marked 25 years for the Friends and this year was packed with events, special projects and a record number of programs.

The new native grassland undertaking has had its challenges with so many stakeholders and very high expectations, however it is underway and we are

optimistic that it will be fully established in the near future. The conservation initiative we now refer to as *ReWilding Through Restoration* started from a core group of members discussing the demise of the native poplar trees and proposing corrective action. This new initiative requires a commitment to restore the Park's habitat to a native state that will be a continuous effort for years to come, and will improve the natural experience for all park users.

The staff has done an exemplary job coordinating programs and events with a positive 'can-do' attitude. Their focus on productivity is showing results with substantial use of technology to streamline program delivery and improve communications.

The board of directors had a productive year ensuring operations were executed at a high level with appropriate diligence and accountability. The board thanks Richard Link for his service over the years, particularly as the liaison with the Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance and his work initiating the Skills Park. We also welcomed Kari Horn, Robert Bell, Lori Mainland and Wayne Meikle to the board, all of whom bring additional skills and experience to the

seasoned board team. Our continuing board members oversaw financial matters as well as legal considerations including a renewal of our Cooperating Agreement with Alberta Parks.

I wrote my first Friends' annual report as Chairman of the board back in 2004 when we were a lot smaller and our main annual event was the spring cleanup. I am proud of the growth in our organization's scope and influence over the past 13 years, so it is with mixed feelings that I have decided to resign from the board to focus on solar energy activities.

The board has put forward a full slate of Directors and Officers with Bob Morrin agreeing to step into the Chairperson role. Bob has worked with me and the rest of the board for many years and I have full confidence in his ability to lead the Friends and continue our success.

Thank you to all Friends of Fish Creek board members, volunteers, staff, donors, partners and supporters for doing your part for the long term sustainability of Fish Creek Provincial Park and I wish you all the best going forward.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Nic Blanchet, Friends of Fish Creek Executive Director



Autumn Colour, Fish Creek Provincial Park by Jim Pescott. Right, 25th anniversary brick pathway.

This year we are honored to celebrate both a milestone in our story and a considerable achievement. Our 25th anniversary year has been one of both looking back and looking forward whilst enjoying another amazing year working with our volunteers and supporters.

In spring we were fortunate to be visited by a lady who grew up with her five sisters in the Ranch Foreman's house. She gave us a tour of the Cookhouse explaining what it used to be like and what was where, regaling us with tales of collecting milk from the creamery in the basement to make butter, and helping out in the kitchen with her sisters. Founding member Wayne Meikle has explained how the Friends came about and the

history of the early years, and we have enjoyed spirited brainstorming discussions with Don Carruthers Den Hoed (East Kananaskis Area Manager) about the future of the park and the role in that future for the Friends.

Our 25th anniversary projects led to many updates and improvement around the Cookhouse, having a signature image painted for us by local artist and supporter Jim Pescott, an in-depth survey of members and park users to help guide our plans for the future and the installation of phase one of the dedication brick pathway.

2017 saw another increase in both the number of programs we delivered and the number of program participants, as well as an increase in membership; this is part of an ongoing trend that we will be further developing in 2018. We were happy to welcome Katie back to her position early in November after her maternity leave, Katie will remain in a part time role. As part of our capacity building efforts Shana will remain in her role full time and we are actively raising funds for a summer term position to assist with the busy summer season.

I am happy to report that we have had another great year and look forward to launching into 2018, are grateful to have the same great team of staff members, and would like to thank our supporters and volunteers for making all we do possible.



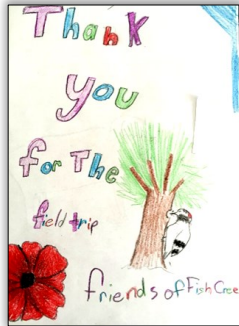
TD LEARNING NATURALLY

Shalane Friesen, East Kananaskis Formal Education Coordinator

Imagine that your classroom is a towering white spruce forest and that your lesson for the day is to observe the dynamic interactions between the diversity of life that surrounds you. Instead of reading about wetlands in a textbook, you are immersed in the aquatic ecosystem by capturing the crawling caddisfly larvae and marveling at the dragonfly nymphs scuttling in the pond water. Why listen to a lecture about the senses when you can trek outside for hands-on learning to awaken your inner scientist – feeling, smelling, hearing and seeing the wonders of nature? This is the *TD Learning Naturally* program, a flagship program of the Friends' ongoing initiative to engage and inspire responsible park users for future generations.

The *Learning Naturally* program originated in 1998 to serve students who would otherwise not have access to environmental education opportunities. The program supports elementary schools located in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, often with high ESL and New Canadians populations. It provides full day field education experiences that help students and teachers meet curriculum outcomes and connect to Alberta's natural and cultural heritage in an authentic learning landscape. The staff guided history tours encourage respect for the local Blackfoot communities and evoke an emotional link to the people that traditionally used the land. Through continued in-kind support from Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and contributions from TD bank, the Friends deliver this program at no cost to parents or schools.

Under the meticulous coordination of Claire Petursson, the *TD Learning Naturally* program was



at full programming capacity in September, October and November of 2016. During this time, 36 field trip dates were facilitated with 40 busses bringing 1271 students into the park for field excursions. In December 2016, Claire went on maternity leave and began her exciting journey as a new mother. In the spring of 2017, AEP education staff covered 3 additional programming dates that allowed 182 students to delve into the natural

world. To meet the demands for the fall programming season, an interim programmer was hired. Jenna LeBlanc used her zestful enthusiasm and theatrical flair to deliver 10 programs in October and November.

The impact of the *TD Learning Naturally* program goes far beyond the metrics of participation numbers and statistics. According to their teachers, students demonstrate deeper understanding of the curriculum topics after their field trip to Fish Creek. As one participating teacher wisely noted, “the content comes alive when the tasks are practical and in the field.” Students and teachers are supported after the field trip with post-activities that cultivate stewardship and foster conservation actions to be continued at home, at school and in natural spaces. The program's vision is to inspire a new generation of informed, engaged and aware park users who support the Friends' mission of conservation and nature appreciation.

Do you wish to give the gift of learning? Your generous donation will help offset the fees required to bring disadvantaged students to the park. You will receive a valuable tax receipt for your donation. To donate visit www.friendsoffishcreek.org/td-learning-naturally-program

25TH ANNIVERSARY PROJECTS

2017 marked the 25th anniversary of the Friends. Our organization has evolved significantly over the past 25 years, formed by a small group of caring and concerned volunteers in 1992 and run completely by volunteers for years, we have grown to become a successful organization with four staff positions, over 700 members and hundreds of volunteers who get involved each year. Recognizing this accomplishment - and with an eye on the next 25 years - we created five exciting projects, six including the 25th Anniversary Brick Pathway, to help celebrate how far we have come and help us plan for the future. Here is a quick look at our 25th Anniversary Projects.

Limited Edition Print

Local pointillism artist and long-time supporter, Jim Pescott, created the masterpiece *Autumn Colour*, *Fish Creek Provincial Park* to help



commemorate our anniversary. This original artwork captures the beauty of Fish Creek in Jim's unique style and has become our signature image. Twenty-five limited edition prints were made to recognize this milestone and as a way of generating funds to support our future programming.

Cookhouse Improvement Project

Volunteers and staff worked together on a few much needed improvements to our office building. Thanks to a generous donation of materials and labour from AEP we now have a beautiful

information kiosk in front of the Cookhouse that will help us in our overall public outreach efforts, and beautiful and diverse native plant gardens that will help us to educate the public about the importance of these plants in the park landscape. Other improvements included repairs and repainting of the front steps and screen door, and a custom built storage cabinet for program supplies and equipment. Cookhouse renovations will continue into the winter thanks to continued financial support from AEP and tireless volunteer efforts.



Commemorative Signage

The out of date information signs in front of the Cookhouse were removed, and replaced with new signs designed to reflect the history of the Fish Creek watershed and a more accurate reflection on the Friends. The first sign has been installed, with the second to be installed in the spring.



Cont'd on next page

Pictured here top to bottom, custom built cabinet designed by Gwen Draude and built by Bruce Mitchell, Jim Pescott signing *Autumn Colour* at the Cookhouse, new Friends of Fish Creek sign.

ReWilding Through Restoration

Friends' riparian restoration projects will now fall under the *ReWilding* brand. Working with volunteers and AEP, we believe this new brand will help make the concept of restoration more accessible and easily understood, as we work together to enhance the overall health of the Fish Creek watershed. Donations made to *ReWilding Through Restoration* will support our ongoing restoration work, and donors will receive a certificate (*pictured here*) acknowledging their financial contribution in support of our efforts.

Community Research Project

This project was designed to assess the perceptions, values and needs of park users so as to inform our future programming and remain relevant and responsive to the changing needs in society. With the help from Friends' volunteers and a partnership with Data for Good, we launched a



successful on-line survey, which received 351 responses, and completed 6 personal interviews. This survey will help us to learn more about how people feel about what we do, the park, and where we need to go in the future.

25th Anniversary Brick Pathway Project

Planning the 25th

Anniversary brick pathway began in 2016 and we began dedicating bricks at the beginning of 2017. Phase 1 was completed when just over 90 bricks were installed in front of the Friends office at the Cookhouse at the end of October. This fundraising endeavor received significant interest and support from the community, and we are planning to install phase 2 of the brick pathway in spring 2018.

Our 25th anniversary projects would not have been possible without the collective efforts of our volunteers who, in total, spent 286 hours bringing them to light. Thank you to Rob Hummel, Jeremy Bakken, Jennell Rempel and Don Carruthers Den Hoed - the AEP staff who provided support and direction to us - and to all of our volunteers who made these projects possible; Drew McKibben, Wayne Meikle, Jim Pescott, Debbie.lee Miszaniec, Dann Soloman, Bruce Mitchell, David Arnott, Bob Bakker, Neil Puffer, Larry Newel, Ron Deshayes, Gwen Draude, Rose and Karen Ratcliffe, John Bradley, Lori Mainland, Len Zybutz and Deb Wood-Zybutz, Reka Vasarhelyi, Robert Bell, Michelle Mueller, David Shackleton and Murray Thompson (Data for Good) and the Venturers Society.

Volunteers working on the native plant garden as part of the Cookhouse Improvement Project.



PARK WATCH

Between May 1 and October 31 each year, visitors may encounter our *Park Watch* Stewards walking or biking throughout the park.

Park Watch Stewards act as our ambassadors, help the public when they can, and make observations to be communicated to the Friends and AEP to ensure that important issues are

addressed. AEP and Friends' staff can only be in so many places at once, and with a park landscape of this size – along with its urban setting and the issues that this invites – having a regular volunteer presence is an integral component to keeping the park a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.

These volunteers provide an invaluable service in many ways, from helping to keep the park clean through picking up litter or reporting overflowing garbage bins, to reporting graffiti, facility damage and potentially dangerous situations to the park's Conservation Officers (COs.) Each volunteer commits to two 2-hour shifts during the six-month program, however many do more, particularly the Supply Coordinators who ensure that each equipment location in the park is fully stocked and that shift reports and photos make their way back to the Friends each week. Our Steward volunteers take this ambassador role seriously, continuing to send in reports over the winter during their regular visits to the park. Often we hear from them that park users have thanked them for the service they provide and their contribution to the park, even commenting that they feel safer knowing the Stewards are working in the park.



This season, 42 *Park Watch* Stewards collectively contributed 662 hours of volunteer time to this essential program; this can effectively be seen as over 100 extra hours each month where someone is actively keeping an eye on the park and how it's being used. Issues this season mainly focused on facility damage, dangerous trees

(following our windstorms in September,)

beaver activity and ongoing problems with garbage.

Thank you to all of our hard-working Stewards who took the time to be part of *Park Watch* this year.

Two special thanks are also in order:

- Thank you to the Ratliffe Family and Jean Channon-Simpson and Stewart Simpson who accepted the additional and integral commitment of Supply Coordinators.
- Thank you to Carl Johnson, who was successful in acquiring Tim Horton's coupons used as giveaways to responsible pet owners, in addition to coordinating a donation from Murielle and Chester Nagy (former Stewards) that allowed us to design and purchase "pocket ashtrays" to encourage safe and responsible cigarette butt disposal.

We look forward to working closely next year with AEP and our dedicated volunteers as we continue to work towards greater efficiencies in this program and ways to ensure we respond to the changing issues of our park.

Pictured above, *Park Watch* Steward Kathy Cottrell with a fallen tree.

PARK CLEAN-UPS

Each year, the Friends respond to inquiries from concerned citizens, corporate and community groups interested in lending a hand and helping to keep the Park clean. As part of our *Park Clean-Up* program, we loan all of the supplies necessary for these groups to take on self-directed clean-ups between May and August. This year, 188 people spent 318 hours, with litter-pickers and garbage bags in hand over the course of nine clean-ups, with the goal of giving back to their community through this important act of stewardship.

Our *Park Watch* Stewards also reported collecting 100 “kitchen catcher” sized bags of garbage on their shifts, highlighting that garbage is a significant issue throughout the year, particularly at the Day Use Area picnic sites. Friends’ volunteers also worked tirelessly with Julia Millen, AEP Flood Recovery Volunteer and Partner Coordinator, to learn a new flood debris mapping app and begin cleaning up areas heavily impacted by the 2013 flood, contributing a further 199 volunteer hours related to park stewardship.

We also know that there are many people who pick up litter on their visits to the park, without any recognition, and these people play an important role in keeping the park clean. It is truly a collective effort, and we express our thanks to everyone who picked up litter in the park this year, including our *Park Watch* Stewards, Sundance Cubs, SunWest Christian Fellowship Church, 192nd Cub Scouts, Prospect Human Services, 207 St. Patrick Scouts, as well as a local church and home school group. We are also grateful to Intact Insurance and Johnson Controls for bringing their staff to participate in park clean-ups and for providing financial support that will help us with our overall education and stewardship work in the park.

TREE-WRAPPING



The *Tree-Wrapping* program continues to develop as we work towards protecting the park’s aging poplars from beavers. *Tree-Wrapping* is part of the *Watershed Stewardship* program because it relates to protecting the park’s waterways and riparian areas. October was a busy month for this program as 15 volunteers came out on October 12, 19 and 23 to wrap 65 trees and un-wrap 35, collectively, in the Mallard Point and Boat Launch areas. AEP also developed a new app used to record beaver damage in the park and take inventory on which trees were wrapped and when. Some of our volunteers enthusiastically learned to use the program and employed it on May 29, July 31, August 31 and September 19. We would like to thank Kumiko Kamiike, Programs Assistant, and Julia Millen, Flood Recovery Volunteer and Partner Coordinator, for training Tree App volunteers. Moving forward, this app will become instrumental in managing the *Tree-Wrapping* program here in

the park, protecting trees, and living with beavers.


Left, *Park Watch* Steward cleaning up picnic site.
Top, Tree App volunteers in July.



INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive plants are a subject of concern to many park users. While the park landscape is by no means pristine, giving in to invasive plants will continue to impact the park negatively as they outcompete our important native plants. The Friends' *Weed Whackers* program continues to address this problem by targeting localized areas of invasives in the hopes that we can prevent their spread throughout the park; while certain species have spread much beyond our ability to address with volunteers, our *detect early and respond quickly* approach has successfully contained some localized species.

With the support of the Land Stewardship Centre and the Alberta Conservation Association we engaged 87 volunteers in 13 weed pull outings resulting in 140 bags and 944 kg of

A man wearing a blue baseball cap and a dark t-shirt with a graphic is standing in a grassy field. He is holding a large, dark, root-like plant material in his gloved hand. In the background, there are trees and a clear sky.

invasive plant material being removed from the park this year. We tackled a new patch of black henbane at the Bow Valley Ranch (pictured here on June 6) and continued to address common

burdock (near Bridge 7,) yellow clematis (Bebo Grove,) dame's rocket (near Bridge 1,) spotted knapweed (Lafarge Meadows) and common tansy (Bridge 14.) We also engaged volunteers over three sessions dedicated to pulling mustard, Canada thistle and a variety of other opportunistic weeds at our new Heritage Grassland site at the Bow Valley Ranch in our attempts to help the native grasses establish and thrive.



Weed Whackers volunteers removing Canada thistle at the Heritage Grassland on August 10.

We are grateful for groups from the Calgary Drop-In and Rehabilitation Centre, RBC and Prospect Human Services for their support of this program, all of our *Weed Whacker* volunteers, as well as our seasoned *Park Watch* Stewards who regularly send in reports of invasive plants they find during their shifts in the park. Our efforts are also supported by the Venturers Society and AEP who provide staff and other logistical support to this program throughout the season.

Volunteers removing common burdock at Votier's Flats on August 4.



FISH CREEK SPEAKER SERIES



Close to 550 community members came out to enjoy the diverse *Fish Creek Speaker Series* presentations at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre. These presentations are organized in partnership by the Friends and AEP. Below are the 2016-17 dates and topics.

Oct. 27 - Exploring the Native Grassland Elements of Fish Creek Provincial Park - Ian Macdonald, Professional Biologist and Botanist

Nov. 24 - Alberta Parks: White Goat and Siffleur Wilderness Areas of the Central Rockies – Graham Thursfield Visitor Services Coordinator, Rocky Mountain House

Jan. 26 - Growing Up in Alberta's Eastern Parks – Alison Cole, Visitor Experience Coordinator, AEP, Parkland Area (*pictured here, photo courtesy of Calgary Pro Photo*)

Feb. 23 - Beaches, Birds, and the Boreal Forest: Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park – Ceiridwen Robbins, Visitor Services Coordinator, AEP, Slave Lake District

March 23 - Uncharted: A Photographic Wildflower and Book evening with Graeme and Lois Connell

Apr. 20 - Discover Calgary's Best Walks with author Lori Beattie

May 18 - Beavers: Nature's Engineers, Troublesome Rodents, Iconic Canadian Symbol and So Much More – Kathryn Hull, Cows and Fish; Shalane Friesen, Formal and Environmental Educator Fish Creek Provincial Park; and Ryan Hannusch, Conservation Officer

June 22 - Art in the Park: Art Exhibit, Meet and Greet and Special Presentations with Local Artists Jim Pescott, Yasmin Irani and Gerry Mulhall

Sep. 27 - Planned Giving for Healthy Families: Leaving a Legacy, Planning Your Estate, and Charitable Giving – Aaron Bickman, Trust and Estate Practitioner in the Wills & Estates group of McLeod Law

Special thanks to all the presenters and to the following volunteers for helping these events run smoothly: David Arnott, Joe and Toni Cavar, Doreen Fulton, Kumiko Kamiike, Jason Kang, Olivia Laing, Larry and Helen Newel, Christine O'Grady, Jennifer Solem, Mairenn Welsh, Syl Zacher.

CAPTURE NATURE - PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

The 3rd annual *Capture Nature* Photography contest ran from April 1 – July 31 and we are truly thankful to everyone who participated. 33 professional, amateur adult and youth photographers submitted over 150 photos in the categories of wildlife, macro, landscape and black and white. Thank you to volunteer judges and administrators Bob Bakker, Robert Bell, Jean Channon-Simpson, Bill Quayle, Stuart Simpson, and Phillip Taylor-Smith, and special thanks to MEC and Vistek for providing prizes. Pictured here: Sheila Watson, Adult Macro winner.



RIPARIAN STEWARDSHIP



A riparian area represents the transition between water and land that is characterized by an abundance of water-loving vegetation. Not only are these areas extremely high in biodiversity, they also play an important role during high-water or flood events by significantly slowing the velocity of water and decreasing the soil erosion into the waterway.

In an urban park setting, however, the services they provide to the ecosystem can be negatively impacted by people as they create their own trails near and along the water that become compacted over time, thus preventing the riparian zone from functioning as it should. The Friends began our *Riparian Stewardship Program* in 2014 in an effort to address the low level of riparian health along the eastern-most stretch of Fish Creek. Each year we implement restoration fieldwork intended to bring a healthy balance back to this beloved watershed.

Our *Riparian Stewardship Program* continues to evolve as we integrate the lessons learned each year, work closely with community partners who share common goals and endeavor to respond to new opportunities that present themselves. This program has several components, each of which has its own separate outcomes.

Community Tool Shed

Each year we continue to add to our tool library that we loan to partner organizations doing similar restoration work in the Bow River watershed. This season, we were able to loan 182 pieces of equipment to support eight additional restoration projects implemented by AEP, Trout Unlimited Bow River Chapter, Trout Unlimited Canada, Cows and Fish, and the Elbow River Watershed Partnership.

Volunteer Support to Partner Organizations

In addition to loaning out tools and equipment to our partners, we also communicate information about their restoration projects to our volunteers, thereby increasing opportunities they have to be involved in watershed stewardship and supporting the efforts of our partners. On three occasions, Friends' volunteers joined in on restoration projects along the Bow River overseen by AEP and Trout Unlimited Canada, contributing an additional 177 hours of volunteer time to these projects.

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Top, riparian restoration area near Bridge 11 in Fish Creek. Left, volunteer watering willows at restoration site.



RIPARIAN STEWARDSHIP CONT'D

Restoration Site Maintenance

The significant and sustained high temperatures over the summer necessitated regular watering of previous years' plantings to ensure they survived. Fourteen volunteers contributed 32 hours of watering, in addition to monitoring the sites to ensure that fences were maintained through the season.

Restoration Fieldwork

Working closely with AEP, 18 volunteers worked tirelessly to implement all tasks necessary to prepare our restoration sites, spread native plant seed and plant 42 native shrubs (dogwood and wild rose) and 100 mature native balsam and narrowleaf poplar trees. All poplars were wrapped with stucco wire to protect them from beaver activity. While some work was done to enhance our previous restoration sites at Hull's Wood and Bridge 11, the majority of the fieldwork was dedicated to adding two adjacent protected sites. We were successful in increasing the extent of restored area by almost 50% by adding an additional 180 metres of protected area. We are also thrilled to have worked closely with the Venturers Society as they opened part of their native plant nursery to us in support of these projects and have agreed to monitor and care for an ongoing stock of native shrubs and poplars to ensure we always have these plants available.

We are grateful to AEP Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program, the Land Stewardship Centre and the Alberta Conservation Association for their continued financial support of this important work and to AEP, Cows and Fish and the Venturers Society for partnering with us for the fourth year in a row. We look forward to growing this important work in the Fish Creek watershed in the years to come.

TRAIL CARE

The long running *Trail Care* program is designed to maintain and improve the 14 km single track trail network between Macleod Trail and 37th St, and to address new and existing trail issues. The Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance (CMBA) and AEP are essential partners for managing this program. 2017 saw a shift in both park leadership, with Duane Fizer, Kananaskis Trails and Wayfinding Team Lead, coming on to guide the program, and leadership at the CMBA. David Mills, Executive Director CMBA, is acting as Fish Creek representative now that Nicole Gaskell has moved on after many years of hard work and improvements to the single track trail system. The Friends continue to work with AEP and the CMBA to develop strategies for trail work and improvements in the future.

Both the singletrack network in the west and the Skills Park near Bankside provide enjoyable and safe areas for cyclists, while protecting and helping to re-vegetate human-impacted park areas. Thank you to the 5 volunteers who came out on August 29 to maintain approximately 80 m of trail near Shannon Terrace. Special thanks to Joe Gerritsen for providing trail updates and repairing signs, and to Peter Spear and his team for removing fallen trees along the trail.



Restoration volunteers on October 4, 2017.

WELLNESS PROGRAMS

The 2017 Wellness season was our most successful to date. Reasons for this include the weather was much more agreeable than the previous summer, we built on existing partnerships, expanded programs, and introduced new programs, which were well-received.

Fifteen participants enjoyed learning the basics of painting during *Painting Week* from August 11 – 17. Local artists Jim Pescott, Gerard Mulhall and Yasmin Irani instructed one-day courses.

Close to 110 participants came out on Wednesday nights between June and September for the popular *Yoga* program. Naomi Parker of Elemental Wellness, and Gwen Draude of Birds of a Feather, led these *Yoga* sessions for the 5th season (*pictured below, the June 20 Wellness Season kick-off.*)

Diane Smith, Spring Forest Certified Instructor, once again led *Spring Forest Qi-Gong* on Tuesday nights and 50 community members enjoyed these outings from June until August.

The full moon meditations led by Gwen and Naomi were also very popular with 27 people joining in to feel the full moon energy in August and September.



Making the most of the cold weather, our team of wellness instructors led new indoor *Yo-Qi* sessions - a combination of *Yoga* and *Qi-Gong*. 31 participants enjoyed *Yo-Qi* from January – May at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre. On the sunny afternoon of February 11, the outdoor Snow-Qi program helped 13 people get in touch with nature at Shannon Terrace (*pictured above.*)

Ronna Schneberger led a *Forest Bathing* excursion on September 12 and we were very pleased that 24 people came out to experience this form of meditation in nature.

New for 2017, the *Good Grief - Nature Walking Through Grief and Loss* program was developed with AEP and Sonya Jakubec from Mount Royal University, and it ran for 8 weeks between May and June. Twenty-five participants registered to unite for a walk in the park to manage grief and help the healing process. This new program was also a featured story on CTV news.

Thank you to all Wellness guides and instructors for leading these sessions, and a huge thanks to the following volunteers who helped these outings run smoothly: Anna Aubrecht, Toni Constable, Gail Goldsmith, Kumiko Kamiike, Linda Haines, Megan Hume, Sarah Piwowarczyk, Slavica Pribilovic, Linda Rae, Gabrielle Roberge, Theresa Romansky, Liza Schach, Doreen Smale.





WALKING TOURS

In addition to our Minibus tours, we offered eleven walking tours in 2017, some to the general public, and several to private groups looking for an educational park experience. These included a *Jane's Walk* in May, a walk for Historic Calgary Week, two private tours of the Glennfield area and two *Ghosts of Fish Creek* walking tours of the Bow Valley Ranch on October 24 and 26 (*pictured here, Toni Constable and Doreen Fulton volunteering on October 24.*)

We also completed the development of two new educational tours:

- Leave It To Beaver - a beaver education tour researched and developed by volunteer Marshall Vokey and East Kananaskis Formal Education Coordinator Shalane Friesen
- ReWilding Through Restoration - researched and developed by Drew McKibben, focusing on our riparian restoration projects along Fish Creek and the Friends' work to engage the public in active stewardship work to support a healthy watershed.

Through our ongoing partnership with United Active Living (UAL,) we also arranged for several of our volunteers to present to UAL residents on a variety of interesting topics; thanks to Bill Skinner, Gus Yaki, Wayne Meikle and Graeme Connell for facilitating these opportunities.

In total, these public education experiences engaged 258 people over 15 tours and presentations. Volunteers contributed 53 hours of their time to make it all possible.

Many thanks to our *Wellness Program* Assistants who accompany our tour guides to ensure group safety, and to AEP who provided financial support for our ReWilding Through Restoration tour development through their Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program. As always, we extend a special thank you to Wayne Meikle for continuing to share his in depth knowledge and personal experiences during his walking tours.

YOUTH NATURE PROGRAMS

For the past five years, the Friends have offered our *Youth Nature Program* as a way of engaging youth in outdoor education experiences. Our Notice Nature, Soil Secrets, Amazing Adaptations and Fish Creek Stewardship Adventure programs encourage groups such as Cubs, Scouts, Guides and Brownies to visit the park and learn about the park ecology.

In 2017 volunteers took on additional organizational roles for this program such as the booking and communication tasks needed to schedule the sessions. Our dedicated *Youth Nature Program* volunteers contributed 36 hours over five sessions, engaging 59 young people. These volunteers also had the opportunity to facilitate a craft station as part of the AEP Star Night events, engaging 450 people through an additional 36 hours of volunteer time.

Thank you to Megan Blaxley, Doreen Fulton, Rebecca Gillhespy, Kumiko Kamiike, Lucy Poley, the Popowicz Family, Dave Reid, Kathy Season, Val Shartau and Jennifer Solem for your time and ability to inspire local youth through this program.

BIRDING COURSE



Barred Owl at Shannon Terrace,
photo courtesy of Fred Bowen.

Hundreds of bird species live in, or pass through the park, during the year. For the past 12 years Gus Yaki has been leading the popular Winter, Spring and Autumn Birding Courses to teach people about these birds and the importance of environmental conservation.

Over 380 students took part in these outdoor sessions between September 2016 and October 2017, many of whom took the course during all three seasons. Demand for these courses continues to grow as more people discover, and re-discover, the fascinating world of birds.

The Friends are truly grateful to Gus and all of the hardworking and dedicated voluntary leaders, who contributed close to 4,160 volunteer hours last year. Thank you to John and Lorrie Anderson, Daniel Arndt, George Best, Kingsley Blades, Rob Brown, Trevor Churchill, Bernie Diebolt, Kris Fernet, Wlad Franco-Valias, Janet Gill, Barry Hertz, Peter Hoyer, Bob Lefebvre, Doug Maxwell, David Mitchell, Rose Painter, Aileen Pelzer, Stephen Phelps, Stephen and Dorothy Spring, John Stegeman, Diane Stinson, Marian Swatschina, John Thompson, Wayne and Joan Walker, and Rob Worona.

MINIBUS TOURS

The open air electric minibus provides an amazing way for people to experience the park. It is perfect for those who may have mobility issues, or who are simply looking to cover more ground than is possible on foot. The Friends are constantly striving to develop new programs centered around this extremely useful vehicle and in 2017, there has been an increased demand for private tours from the community. Below is a summary of minibus outings this past year.

Bob Bakker, film and digital photography enthusiast and voluntary photography instructor, led Photography tours on June 20, August 12, and September 7 and 23. Fifteen participants enjoyed learning about the art and science of photography, and experienced the park in a new way.

On August 8, Marshall Vokey led a Leave It To Beaver beaver-education tour to explore areas of the park that have been impacted by these animals, and six people came out on this tour.

The minibus was also used for a wedding shuttle and private tours on September 12 and 16. Wayne Meikle led a tour for UAL on June 29 (*pictured below.*)



The minibus has also become essential transportation at events like *Parks Day & Creekfest* and *A Taste of Autumn.*

Special thanks to all Minibus Tour Guides and to the volunteer drivers Bob Andrew, Carl Johnson, Helen Newel and David Reid.

PARKS DAY & CREEKFEST

This year, close to 2000 community members celebrated Canada 150 and the 25th anniversary of the Friends at *Parks Day & Creekfest* on July 15. This one-day event is an important component to our watershed awareness campaign, that encourages environmental stewardship and highlights this province's parks and protected areas.



We would like to thank performers Peter Puffin's Whale Tales, Jennie Harluk, and AEP theatrical

interpreters, Wellness instructors Diane Smith and Naomi Parker, guides Wayne Meikle and Marshall Vokey, local MLAs Richard Gotfried and Graham Sucha, and Janis Turner from the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society.

It was wonderful to have so many community-focused groups and individuals who set up interactive displays and exhibits for kids and families. Special thanks to AEP staff, the Government of Alberta, Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association, Alberta Native Plant Council, AEP – Push to Open, Archaeological Society of Alberta – Calgary Centre, Bow Habitat Station and the Sam Livingstone Fish Hatchery, Calgary Crime Stoppers Association, Calgary



Public Library, Calgary River Valleys, Carnivals for Kids at Heart, Graeme Connell, Green Calgary, Kananaskis Outfitters, MEC, Sylvia Prochownik, Rocky Mountain Adventure Medicine, Rocky Mountain Eagle Research Foundation, Rancho at Fish Creek Restoration Society, Trout Unlimited Canada, Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society and Starbucks.

We are truly grateful for all the volunteers who helped in a variety of positions. Thank you to everyone who came out and helped us celebrate two important milestones at *Parks Day & Creekfest* in Fish Creek.

We would also like to acknowledge this year's *Parks Day & Creekfest* supporters: the Watershed Stewardship Grant - a program of the Land Stewardship Centre is supported by AEP, Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Real Estate Foundation, The City of Calgary, First Calgary Financial, The Calgary Foundation, the Pumphouse Theatre, Great Events Catering and the Bow Valley Rancho Restaurant.

Photos courtesy of David Mitchell. Clockwise from top left: Jennie Harluk, Alberta Parks presentation *Riddle of the Wetlands*, Peter Puffin's Whale Tales song writing workshop, Bow Habitat Station.



A TASTE OF AUTUMN

WINE & BEER TASTING AND SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER



Close to 90 people attended the fourth annual *A Taste of Autumn* – Wine & Beer Tasting and Silent Auction Fundraiser on Friday, September 15 and welcomed this magical season of change in the park. At *A Taste of Autumn*, we celebrated our 25th anniversary and raised over \$8000 to support Friends programs through the sale of tickets, auction items and raffle tickets.

Thank you to the following groups and individuals for donating silent auction items or otherwise contributing to the success of this event: AEP, Boston Pizza, Fred and Marie Bowen, Calgary Co-op, Canmore Nordic Centre, Canyon Meadows Cinemas, Capture Nature Winners: Sheila Watson, Tony LePrieur and Don Hladiuk, Color Me Mine Pottery Studio, Field Stone Fruit Wines, Friends Minibus Drivers and Birding Course Instructors, Richard Gotfried MLA, Great Events Catering and the Bow Valley Rancho Restaurant, Kari Horn, Yasmin Irani, Jayman Built, Carl Johnson, Julie Marwood Photography, Kensington Art Supply, Last Best Brewing Company, Kelsey McCay, Wayne Meikle, Bob Morrin, Miko Photography, Helen Newel, Jim Pescott, Sylvia Prochownik, Robin Read, Dave Rodney MLA, Sheila Schaetzle, Stuart Scott, Jennifer Solem, Peter Spear, Strides Running Store,

Trail Sports, The Venturers Society, Vistek and Paul Schofield, Graham Sucha MLA, and Wild Rose Brewery.

Local beverage producers Chinook Honey Meadery, Six Corners Brew Works, and Tool Shed Brewery returned to *A Taste of Autumn* and provided samples to guests. Jennell Rempel, Community and Partner Relations Team Lead for AEP East Kananaskis, returned as MC. Special guest and long time supporter of the Friends of Fish Creek Graham Sucha

MLA for Calgary-Shaw addressed the audience and introduced Keynote Speaker, Kevin Van Tighem. Kevin is a local naturalist, conservation advocate, ecologist, biologist and author of over 14 books. He read from his newest book *Our Place/Changing the Nature of Alberta*, and sold autographed copies. We are truly grateful that he donated funds from the book sale to the Friends.

Special thanks to WestJet for donating the Gift of Flight prize of a round trip flight for two to anywhere WestJet flies. The raffle ran in the months leading up to *A Taste of Autumn* and the lucky name was drawn at the end of the evening. Congratulations to Erika Fredette for winning the WestJet raffle prize! Thank you to all the volunteers who helped in a variety of positions to help the event run smoothly, and thank you to everyone who attended the fourth annual

A Taste of Autumn.

Photos courtesy of David Mitchell.



REPORT FROM FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK

Jennell Rempel, Community and Partner Relations Team Lead

Congratulations to the Friends on an incredibly successful 25th Anniversary year! I am truly grateful for the opportunity to work alongside the Friends and am pleased to provide a report for the 2017 Annual Report.

The Friends are essential to addressing increasing urban pressures within Fish Creek Provincial Park. New and continuing programs provide volunteers, staff, and community members with opportunities to give back to nature, learn, and have fun along the way. Core programs like *Park Watch* continue to generate timely reports that facilitate better management through directed maintenance, enforcement, ecological baseline data, and public engagement opportunities.

Hands-on restoration and conservation projects like shoreline restoration are key to providing experiences that positively influence the way we understand habitats protected within this urban Provincial Park.

Wellness program expansion has led to an even greater diversity of ways for people to connect to

Parks. One program I personally connected with were the “*Good Grief*” walks.

Learning alongside volunteers and staff in how to support each other when we are going through times of transition and sadness, and to do this together in nature, was a transformational experience. This program opened everyone’s eyes to the possibilities of the healing that can happen through walking in nature together.

ReWilding Through Restoration is a significant step toward a wilder Fish Creek Provincial Park, where conservation, restoration, education and volunteer opportunities come together to create a healthier park for all of us; plants, animals, and city-dwellers alike.

The Friends were recognized with the Partnership Appreciation Award at this year’s AEP Volunteer Conference. This has only been awarded 8 times in the 17-year history of this category, and the Friends were the very first organization to receive it. It is only fitting that during their 25th Anniversary year, that they be recognized for their excellence and continued evolution and leadership in community engagement and volunteerism.

Photos - from the top, Streambank restoration volunteers working along the creek in October, *Good Grief* participants (photo courtesy of Alice Glowacki) Friends 2017 staff Kumiko, Katie, Chris, Shana and Nic with MLA Karen McPherson at the AEP Volunteer Conference on Sep. 23 (photo courtesy of AEP.)



2017 OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

Award Recipients

- Bill Hiebert Inspiration/Volunteer of the Year: Gail Goldsmith
- Board of Directors – Board Member of the Year: Henry Villanueva
- Board of Directors – Community Service Award: Tom Jackman
- Friendmaking and Fundraising: Carl Johnson
- Steward in Action: John Bradley
- New and Noteworthy: Bruce Mitchell
- 25th Anniversary Project: Michelle Mueller
- Special Award: Wayne Meikle
- IT Genius: Benjamin Baragar

Special Recognition

- Gus Yaki and the Birding Course leaders
- Youth Nature Program volunteers
- Social Enterprise Instructors and Tour Guides: Wayne Meikle, Drew McKibben, Bob Bakker, Diane Smith, Gwen Draude, Naomi Parker, Ronna Schneberger, Gerry Mulhall, Yasmin Irani and Jim Pescott
- Weed Whackers: Bev Lane and Esther Wiebe
- The Venturers Society
- All of the volunteers who helped with the 25th Anniversary Projects

2016 - 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|
| • Chairman | Tom Jackman | • Vice-Chairman | David Mitchell |
| • Treasurer | Phil Greer | • Secretary | Stewart Scott |
| • Director at Large | Bob Morrin | • Director at Large | Henry Villanueva |
| • Director at Large | Richard Link | • Director at Large | Kari Horn |
| • Director at Large | Lori Mainland | • Director at Large | Robert Bell |
| • Director at Large | Linda Dudar | • Park Liaison | Jennell Rempel |

2016 - 2017 FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK STAFF

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| • Executive Director | Nic Blanchet, nic@friendsoffishcreek.org |
| • Program Coordinator | Shana Barbour, shana@friendsoffishcreek.org |
| • Program Coordinator | Katie Bakken, katie@friendsoffishcreek.org |
| • Communications Coordinator | Chris Lalonde, chris@friendsoffishcreek.org |
| • Program Assistant | Kumiko Kamiike |

2016 - 2017 FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK CONTRACTORS

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| • Bookkeeping Services | Gail Foster |
| • TD Learning Naturally | Jenna LeBlanc |
| • TD Learning Naturally | Claire Petursson |

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

The Friends would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the following volunteers. Your hard work and commitment to our programs and events, and the sustainability of Fish Creek, is a true inspiration.

John & Lorraine Anderson, Bob Andrew, Josee Archambault, Daniel Arndt, David Arnott, Anna Aubrecht, Diana Badenduck, Katie Bakken, Robert Bakker, Don & Dani Barrington, Jo-Anne Bechtel, Lori Belair, Valerie & Jason Bell, Robert Bell, Andrew Bellavie, George Best, Barbara Bishop, Jennifer Blagden, Megan Blaxley, Nora-Jane Bonner, Bob Bowman, John & Fran Bradley, Robert Brown, Peter Burell, Tim Carlielle-Shaw, Sheila Carter, Ryan Cartmell, Joe & Toni Cavar, Trevor Churchill, Graeme & Lois Connell, Toni Constable, Kathy Cottrell, Kathy Cox, Hanna Dahlgren, Jacqueline Deegan, Ron Deshayes, Bernie Diebolt, Jim Donohue, Z. Doughtry, Gwen Draude, Linda Dudar, Leona Dvorak, Daniel Edwards, Erin Elliott, Lana Eves, Brian & Sheryl Farewell, Sean Feagan, Josh Feddema, Kristopher Fernet, Julie Figures, Susan Fossey, Ymène Fouli, Wlad Franco-Valias, Byron Frederick, Justin Fry, Doreen Fulton, Nicolas Gazzard, Alan Genereux, Joe Gerritsen, Janet Gill, Rebecca Gillhespy, Kayla Giroux, Gail Goldsmith, Ian Grant, Phil Greer, Mauro Guzman, Linda Haines, Darlene Halwas, Joanne Hatch, Barry Hertz, William Hiebert, Larry Hobson, Kari Horn, Dan Hornsberger, Wayne Hortensius, Peter Hoyer, Megan Hume, McCrae Iles, Stanley & Mike Ingham, Yasmin Irani, Tom Jackman, Gail Jardine, Jeremy & Caroline Jasper, Carl & Liz Johnson, Nicole Kahal, Kumiko Kamiike, Jason Kang, Chalise Kemp, Brian Kergan, Kyla & Vicki Kerr-Wilson, Adam Kucharski, Lanielle Laframboise, Olivia Laing, Dorothy Laing, Bev Lane, Bob Lefebvre, Bob & Dianne Leonhardt, Richard Link, Halle Longmuir, Lindsay Low, Candance Lynn Church, Rachel Mackay, Andra MacLauchlan, Shelley MacLellan, Lori Mainland, Rick Mar, Brenda & Natalie Masuda, Doug Maxwell, Drew McKibben, Wayne Meikle, David Mills, Debbie.lee Miszaniec,

Bruce & Diana Mitchell, David Mitchell, Bob Morrin, Michelle Mueller, Gerry Mulhall, Stephen Mulholland, Murielle Nagy, Darcy Nakamura, Gordon & Lynda Needham, Larry & Helen Newel, Liz Nicolichuk, Jack Nodwell, Christine O'Grady, Rose Painter, Naomi Parker, Aislinn Perry, Jim Pescott, Lesley Peterson, Stephen Phelps, Sarah Piowarczyk, Lucy Poley, Robert & Pat Pollard, Yvonne, Natasha & Alexandra Popowicz, Jack Pound, Patricia Prevey, Slavica Pribilovic, Rhys Prochaska, Sylvia Prochownik, Neil Puffer & Joyce Crew, Bill Quayle, Linda Rae, Susan Rahal, Rose, Will, Karen & Michael Ratliffe, Dave Reid & Diane Lyders-Reid, Aileen Rhodes, Mike Risely, Joyce Ritsco, Lynda Rive, Richard Robb & Donna Leonard, Gabrielle Roberge, Theresa Romansky, Libby Roth, Peter Roxburgh, Neil Rubeniuk, Liza Schach, Stewart Scott, Kathy Seaman, Valerie & Kimberley Shartau, Bryan Simpson, Stuart Simpson & Jean Channon-Simpson, Christina Skilton, Bill Skinner, Caitlin Sloof, Doreen Smale, Ryan & Joanne Smart, Diane Smith, Henny Smit-Nielsen, Jennifer Solem, Dann Soloman, Stephen Spring, Nicole St. Arnaud, Michell Stager, Carole Steeves, John Stegeman, Don Stiles, Diane Stinson, Peter Strouhal, Gene & Anne Swain, Marian Swatschina, James Taylor, Philip Taylor-Smith, John Thompson, Murray Thompson, TJ Timonera, Tony & Lesley Turner, Reka Vasarhelyi, Leao & Leagh Vermeylen, Chris Villacorta-Lopez, Henry Villanueva, Melanie Violette, Bryan Vithilingen, Marshall Vokey, Wayne & Joan Walker, Mairenn Welsh, Larry White & Mary Madeline White, Esther Wiebe, Blake Wies, Sabrina Wilde, Robert Worona, Gus Yaki & Aileen Pelzer, Tammy Yee, Don Yuen, Syl Zacher, Ruth Zinck, Len Zybutz & Debrah Wood-Zybutz

THANK YOU 2016 - 2017 DONORS

The Friends would like to thank the individuals and organizations below for their generous donations! These contributions were made between October 2016 and October 2017. We are truly grateful for your support and look forward to another great year in the park!

Includes donors of in-kind goods and services. Thank you to everyone who donated through CanadaHelps, and to all donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Deer Level \$5,000 - \$14,999

Max Feldman
SunLife Financial



Beaver Level \$1,000 - \$4,999

Lori Beattie, Keith Ferguson,

Tim Hopwood, Peter Hoyer, Douglas McIntosh, David Mitchell, Noela & David Moffit, Murielle & Chester Nagy, Stewart & Janice Scott, Wayne & Joan Walker, Gus Yaki & Aileen Pelzer, M-E2 Foundation

Aspen Level \$500 - \$749

Jeff Biggs, Neil Burns, Graeme Connell, Margaret Elzinga, Janet Gill, Barry Hertz, Perry Longinotti, Judy MacLachlan, Bob & Louise Morrin, Larry & Helen Newel, Lori Ryan, Linda Saunders, Nadine Sawotin, John Stegeman, Jeff Tonge, Julie Wasson



Deer and aspen photos courtesy of Anne Elliott,
beaver and background photo courtesy of Phil Smith

Cont'd on next page

THANK YOU 2016 - 2017 DONORS

CONT'D FROM PREV PAGE

Birch Level \$100 - \$499

David & Norma Anderson, Tracy Anderson & Alan Harvie, Deborah Apps, Gail Arienza, Dan Arndt, Bob & Christina Arnold, Katie & Jeremy Bakken, Wyatt Balko, Shana Barbour, Rick & Elaine Barnes, Catriona Bedford, Brenda Berge, Laura Bicknell, Emma Blake, Nic Blanchet, Norma Boa, Rita Borrow, Sally Bowen, Bob Bowman, Robert & Maureen Bracken, Mark & Mary Ruth Bradley, Simon Brante, Nico Brennan, Neil & Gail Bridge, Rob & Teresa Brown, Gerry Burger-Martindale, Michael Buschman, Andrew Choules-Nisbet, Karen Chow, Sylvia Clark, Lorna Coglón, Kim Cole, Barry Connatty, Carol Davenport, Suzanne Dias, Bill & Elizabeth Dittmer, Larry Doucet, Nadiya Dubinina, Julie Figures & Rory Young, Tim Flaherty, Bea Flood, Rick Foster, Wlad Franco-Valias, Grant Gale, Elaine Gidluck, Gail Goldsmith, Lili Goncalves, Donna Goy-Edwards, Phil & Ellen Greer, Shannon Greer, Elaine Gussman, Vicki Gustafson, Erin Hallahan, Greg & Jacquie Halpen, Sheila Hardman, Diane Healy, Terrance Hergott, Wendy Herrler, Bill Hiebert, Don & Marianne Hladiuk, Laurie Hodson, Kari Horn, Michael Ingham, Yasmin Irani, Marcie & Dave Jensen, Carl Johnson, Bill Klasky, Christopher Lalonde, Beverley Lane, Krista Langille, Cathy Leroux, Marsha Levy, Lisa Listgarten, Kathy Livingstone, Andra MacLauchlan, James Marshall, Jeff Maser, Deborah Massier, George & Margaret McBride, Gillian McCarron, John & Susan McWilliams, William Moysiuk, Peter Mullaney, Lynda & Gordon Needham, Sheena Parker, Ralph & Jo-Anne Parks, Katherine Pederson, Stephen Phelps, Joe Plazio, Jill Pollock-Ceh, Sylvia Prochownik, Valerie Pruegger, John Pysklywec, Robin Read, Sharon Richardson, Barbara Ross, Scott Sarjeant, Ronna Schneberger, Douglas Sharp, Richard Slopek, Dorothy & Stephen Spring, Angela Springer, Kris

Stanley, Ellen Stewart, Diane Stinson, Carol Stokes, Mike Thomas, Victoria Tkaczyk, Bree Tucker, Carol Uggerslev, Jill Ukrainec, Andrew Van Oene, Kevin Van Tighem, Leao Vermeylen, Joan Wauters, Ruby Whelan, Esther & David Wiebe, Susan Williams, Rob Worona, Julia Zagorsky, Chevron, Pure Cycle

Special Recognition

Sandra Annesley, Bob & Marie Bakker, Ray Bazan, Barb Borchert, Jay Bradley, Robert Bridge, Marg Burgart, Lorraine Campbell, John & Joan Davies, Ray Demers, Ron Deshayes, Jim Donohue, Anona Dowling, Joan Duffy, Noreen Dyck, Michael & Bush Eastep, Joy Ely, Mary Enright & Keith Morton, Terrie Faber, Mary Fay, Kris Fernet, James Fielding, G Andrew Fitch, Debra Giba, Sharon Gray, Gerald Halford, Robert Hardie & Virginia Rowe-Hardie, Pam Hawkes, Lavina Hoffman, Louis Hogan, Harold Hovdebo, Allan Hunt, Tom & Tracy Jackman, Barrie Johnson, Jason Kang, Susan Keen, Adrianna Lazlo, John Lecuyer, Ross T Lennox, Bob & Dianne Leonhardt, Lori Mainland, Charlie Manucot, Al Maser, Kyle McKinnon, Joanne McNair, Bruce Mitchell, Carol Moore, Masao & Sheila Nagao, Dorainne Neal, James Ostrander & Elena Scachcherl, Shirley Otway, Wendy Palichuk, Ronald & Rochelle Platt, Robert & Patricia Pollard, Gerald Pulak & Elizabeth Churchill, Janet & Anthony Ratliffe, Rose & William Ratliffe, Manoj Raythatha, Errol Renwick, Cathy Ross, David & Rose Scollard, David Shackleton, Joanne Smart, Nancy Smyth, Michelle Stager, Don Stiles, Hans & Ingrid Stolzenberg, Graham Sucha MLA, Gene & Anne Swain, Francine Swanson, Nancy Swerhun, Donald & Marilyn Talbot, David Taylor, Scott Thomas, Kylee Van Der Poorten, Larry Wasylw, Sigrid Wili, Terry Wilson, Donald & Louise Yont, Syl & Mary Zacher, Ruth Zinck, Banff Centre For Arts And Creativity, Team TELUS Cares, Tuesday Hikers, West Island College

THANK YOU COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Fish Creek Provincial Park Staff and Alberta Environment and Parks

AB Invasive Species Council, AB Liquor and Gaming Commission, AB Riparian Habitat Mgmt Society (Cows and Fish,) AM 770, Better Impact, Bow River Basin Council, Braeside Community Association, Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth, Calgary Foundation, Calgary Public Library Fish Creek, Canada Helps, Canadian Web Hosting, Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology, The City of Calgary, Chinook Country Historical Society, Data for Good, Elbow River Watershed Partnership, Friends of Kananaskis Country, Great News Publishing, Jane's Walk, McKenzie Towne Community Association, Mount Royal University, Nature Calgary, Local Scout groups, Propellus, Prospect Human Services, Push To Open Nature, Ranche at Fish Creek Restoration Society, Royal Bank, St. Mary's University, SunWest Christian Fellowship Kids Church, Trout Unlimited Bow River Chapter, Trout Unlimited Canada, United Active Living, The Venturers Society and the Wild Bird Store.

Special thanks to all local businesses and community centres who help us raise awareness within the community about our programs and events.

Fish Creek Provincial Park Staff

Don Carruthers Den Hoed, Jennell Rempel, Irene Till, Meagan Montgomery, Julia Millen, Rob Hummel, Jeremy Bakken, Roland Kirzinger, Shalane Friesen, Troy Christianson, Ryan Hannusch, Brian Ferguson, Taylor Coveart, Arthur Blaxley, Bryce Kuhn, Julie Simpson, Alyssa Allchurch, Jody Bares, Blake Weis, Rudy Szymanek, Dan Skahan, Lisa Grant, Karine Lantiegne, Adam Schwarz and the Sikome Aquatic Staff, Joan Friedel and Joe Oberhoffner and the Sikome Gate Staff

Glenbow Ranch: Randy Ramsden, Trevor Jackson, Theresa Bogatko, Jennifer Williamson, Trevor Thome



3 Things for Canada Action Squad at the Fish Creek Public Library in July 2017.



Venturers Society of Calgary

Matthew Beaulieu, Trevor Boardman, Jonathan Bricker, Mike Depper, Len Esau, Chris Flint, John Hank, Linda Harvey, Michele Jean, Tim Krynen, Fred Lorenz, Mitch McCarthy, Ed Quiring, Rachel Ryan, Travis Schwab, Conrad Tiedemann and Lindsay Watkinson.

Pictured here, volunteers and members of the Venturers at the Cookhouse.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Phil Greer, Treasurer, Friends of Fish Creek Board of Directors

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2017, the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Society reported a net loss (excess of expenses over revenues) of \$10,642 compared to a net loss of \$8,550 in 2016.

Our revenues for financial reporting purposes were \$288,970 in 2017 compared to \$333,327 in 2016. This decrease is primarily the result of reduced grant revenue reported in 2017. Our most recent Casino, in January 2017, provided us with \$70,645 in net proceeds used to partially cover operating expenses in 2017 and 2018. Our TD Learning Naturally education program is primarily funded through an agreement with TD Friends of the Environment Foundation which provided an annual grant of \$40,000 per year for the years 2014 to 2017. Negotiations are underway to renew this important source of funding.

We incurred expenses for financial reporting purposes in 2017 of \$299,612, a decrease of \$42,265 over 2016 expenses. The most significant individual cash expense is salaries and benefits which amounted to \$173,000 in 2017.

Our total cash position was \$189,628 at September 30, 2017, compared to \$173,269 at September 30, 2016, an increase of \$16,359. This position provides us with a strong opening cash balance to fund our operations for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Accounting rules require that restricted funds received be deferred until the related expenses for the specific program or initiative are incurred, which is why our cash position improved in spite of reporting a loss this year.

The Board of Directors authorized the transfer of \$10,000 from the Society's restricted "rainy day reserve" to fund ongoing operations, which compares to the \$20,000 transferred from the Fund last year. The Fund now totals \$7,500.

To fund our future operations, we continue to apply for grants and sponsorships but Casinos continue to be a significant source of our funding. Use of these funds is restricted by our gaming license but a significant portion can be used for our staff's salaries and benefits. We also continue to see growth in our revenues from our programs, donations and other fundraising initiatives like our *25th Anniversary Brick Pathway* program and the annual *Taste of Autumn* event.

The Board and Management are continually seeking funding opportunities, particularly sources of unrestricted funds. These initiatives include targeting Calgary based corporations, foundations, and known supporters of Fish Creek Provincial Park. We continue to develop our planned giving program to facilitate donations through wills and estates as well as recurring donations through automatic bank withdrawals.

The Board has approved a Budget for the 2017/2018 fiscal year that allows the Society to operate a full complement of programs and maintain its current staffing levels. We have again engaged independent auditors to report on our 2017 financial statements and copies of our audited financial statements are available by contacting the Society's office.

Cont'd on next page

TREASURER'S REPORT CONT'D FROM PREV PAGE

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION (UNAUDITED)

Revenues and expenses	Year ended September 30,	
	2017	2016
<u>Total revenues</u>	\$ 288,970	\$ 333,327
Member and education program expenses	216,905	260,661
<u>Administration expenses</u>	82,707	81,216
<u>Total expenses</u>	299,612	341,877
Excess of expenses over revenues	\$ (10,642)	\$ (8,550)

Financial Position

Assets

Unrestricted cash	\$ 81,059	\$ 46,893
Restricted cash	108,569	126,376
Restricted term deposits	35,369	34,949
<u>Total other assets</u>	63,452	25,761
	\$ 288,449	233,979

Liabilities

Deferred contributions	\$ 186,181	\$ 141,126
<u>Other liabilities</u>	89,328	69,271
	275,509	210,397

Net assets

Internally restricted	9,999	20,199
<u>Unrestricted</u>	2,941	3,383
	12,940	23,582
	\$ 288,449	\$ 233,979

THANK YOU 2016 - 2017 SUPPORTERS

Eagle Level \$50,000 +



Bobcat Level \$25,000 - \$49,999



**TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation**



Owl Level \$15,000 - \$24,999



Deer Level \$5,000 - \$14,999



Beaver Level \$1,000 - \$4,999



Elemental
Wellness



Jim Pescott

**THE OUTDOOR
CLUB of the
FLC Seniors**

**Maria K. Eriksen
and Harold Hanen
Fund at the
Calgary Foundation**

Aspen Level \$500 - \$749



Birch Level \$100 - \$499