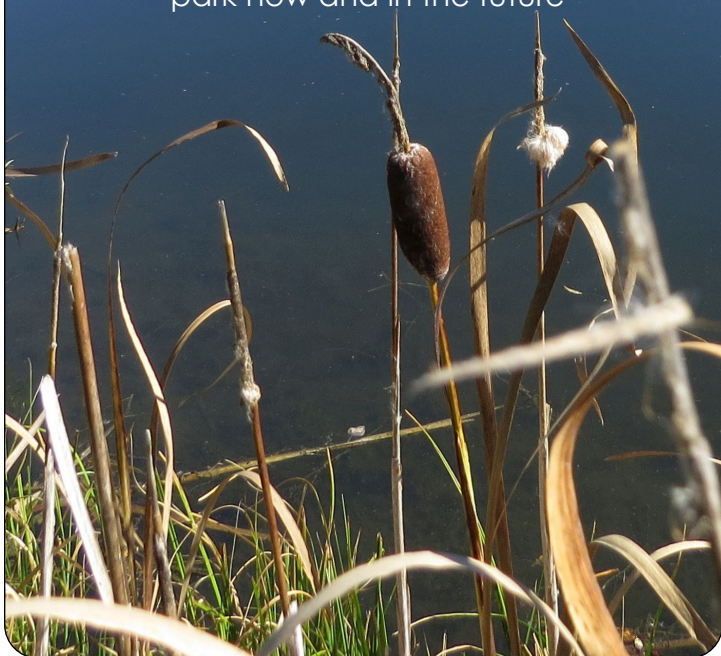




FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK
ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 2015 - SEPTEMBER 2016

Facilitating environmental
awareness opportunities in Fish Creek
for the benefit of those who cherish this
park now and in the future





ANNUAL REPORT

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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.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Tom Jackman

Chairman of the Board of Directors, Friends of Fish Creek

2016 was a solid year for the Board of Directors of the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank all of our volunteers, members, donors, sponsors, supporters and community partners.



Our collaborative association with the Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance finally resulted in building the Fish Creek Mountain Bike Skills Park at Bankside. This project took considerable oversight with diverse positions from the numerous stakeholders but now everyone can enjoy this popular addition to the park (pictured above.)

The reality that our park is in the middle of a city was evidenced in the gas line upgrades that became necessary after the 2013 flood. The construction work interrupted park life, however with change there is opportunity; we are positioning a new Native Grasses program to be established in the area where landscaping is needed as a result of the construction (future site of ATCO Heritage Grassland pictured above.)



The Board of Directors is pleased to welcome two new members, Lori Mainland and Linda Dudar, both of whom live near the park and advocate for the positive influence that natural spaces have on quality of life. Lori has professional experience in health care administration and Linda is the Dean of Education at St. Mary's University, right on the park boundary near Glennfield. We look forward to their contributions and diversifying our board composition.

Our returning board members continued to provide support and guidance to the organization and the governance committee rolled out new policies on Website Privacy, Information Technology and Dedication Benches. We will continue our efforts to grow and improve the Friends of Fish Creek for the future.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Nic DeGama-Blanchet
Friends of Fish Creek Executive Director

2016 saw the Friends build upon the successes of 2015 and further expand the range of programs we can offer to our members and park users. Our established programs have gone from strength to strength whilst our new ones are rapidly building a following. Our city has seen some hard times lately and we are glad to be able to contribute to the opportunities available for individuals to experience peace and tranquility in Fish Creek Provincial Park. Despite difficult times in Alberta we have had another record year from our donors and supporters and we are eternally grateful for the support we have received and for the opportunity to engage, inform and entertain all of those who have attended our programs.

Special mention must go out to our amazing birding course volunteers; this course is responsible for introducing hundreds of people every year to the wonders of nature and the great outdoors. Lifelong naturalist and dedicated volunteer Gus Yaki and his team do so much to build and develop a group of people who come to love, understand and work to sustain the natural areas and the creatures that live in them, and to grow this group every year providing a service not just to the park but to the city of Calgary and beyond.

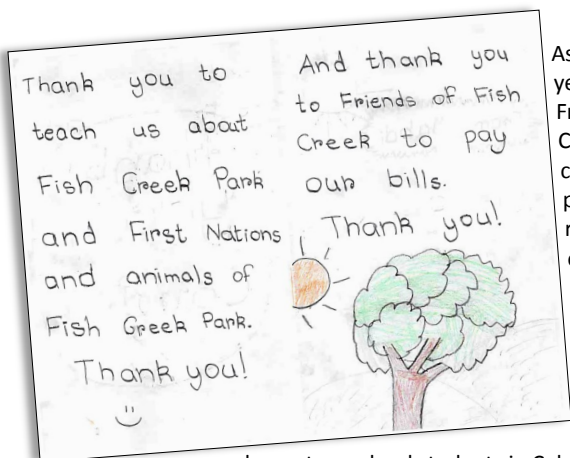
As we develop our role as facilitators to help develop the ways that our community uses and engages with the park we must thank all of the highly skilled and entertaining course instructors who come to us with ideas for engaging and beneficial programs. In particular, we have seen the growth of our suite of wellness programs and the enthusiasm to expand both the capacity of these programs and the diversity.

We are very happy to share the news that, after working closely with ATCO, we have developed a Heritage Native Grassland project on the site of one of the areas disturbed by the recent pipeline replacement. Many of you will have noticed the new pathway surrounding an area of bare dirt south of the parking lot at the Bow Valley Ranch. The area has been seeded with a mix of grassland species that will represent what the grasslands were like in this area prior to settlement. We will be working with ATCO over the next 3 years to nurture this area and provide a major asset to the park which will provide unique educational and interpretive opportunities. Other programs we plan to begin tackling in 2017 will include an effort to replace the aging cohort of poplar trees in the park and the continuation of our riparian restoration activities.

As many of you know Katie will be away this year so Shana will be stepping up to a full time position with the assistance of Kumiko Kamiike who will fill the role of Program Assistant whilst Katie is away. I know you will all join me in welcoming Kumiko and wishing her success in her new role. And last but not least; 2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the Friends of Fish Creek and we will be releasing some very special 25th anniversary engagement opportunities early in the new year!

TD LEARNING NATURALLY REPORT

Claire Petursson
TD Learning Naturally Coordinator



As in previous years, the Friends of Fish Creek has continued to play a critical role in ensuring the maintenance of barrier free access to outdoor education for

elementary school students in Calgary through the TD Learning Naturally Program at Fish Creek Provincial Park. In the 2015-2016 school year the TD Learning Naturally Program funded 58 days of field trips to Fish Creek Provincial Park for Kindergarten through grade 6 students.

This means that between September 2015 and July 2016, 2,836 elementary students in Calgary came to the park on 67 busses free of charge. The TD Learning Naturally Program, in cooperation with Alberta Parks, provides the unique opportunity for students from schools who may not be able to provide field trips to do so at no cost. This amazing program is made possible through funding from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, individual donors to Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society and in kind support from Alberta Parks. In many cases, students who come to the Park with this program are having their first hands-on outdoor learning experience in a natural setting in Canada and the experience is truly unforgettable and impactful. Depending on their grade, students who come to Fish Creek as part of the Learning Naturally Program will participate in a curriculum based immersive outdoor learning tied to Science or Social Studies topics that they are currently learning about in school.

The first half of the 2016-2017 school year saw close to 1600 students visit Fish Creek Provincial Park on a TD Learning Naturally Program funded field trip. The need for this program grows each year and the number of participating schools in need has grown dramatically from 42 in 2015-2016 to 73 in 2016-2017.



FISH CREEK SPEAKER SERIES

The Fish Creek Speaker Series is one of the Friends' longest running programs and is now managed in partnership with Alberta Parks. This program provides many opportunities for both Friends' members and non-members to learn about a variety of topics relating to Fish Creek and surrounding areas. Over 510 patrons attended these talks at the Environmental Learning Centre between Oct. 2015 and Sep. 2016.

Oct. 22 - The Flood Giveth and the Flood Taketh Away: Excavation of a Two Thousand Year Old Buried Tipi Ring in Fish Creek Provincial Park – Dr. Dan Meyer, Lifeways of Canada Ltd

Nov. 19 - The Place of Parks and Nature at End of Life – Sonya L. Jakubec, Associate Professor at MRU; and Don Carruthers Den Hoed, Kananaskis Region Alberta Environment and Parks

Jan. 21 - Fish Creek: From Gentle Stream to Wild River and Everything in Between – Katie Bakken, Friends of Fish Creek Program Coordinator

Feb. 25 - Sticks and Stones: Using Bioengineering to Improve Fish Habitat – Lesley Peterson (P.Biol) Provincial Biologist, Trout Unlimited Canada

Mar. 24 - Top Dog: The Ecology, History and Survival of Gray Wolves in Kananaskis and

Alberta – Melanie Percy, Regional Park Ecologist, Heritage Protection Team Lead (pictured here)



Apr. 28 - Estate Planning: Leave a Lasting Legacy for Cherished Green Spaces and Healthy Families – Marissa German, McLeod Law Associate

May 25 - A Journey through the Mountains and Meadows of Kananaskis – John McFaul, Professional Hiking Guide

June 22 - Qi Gong and the Fish Creek Wellness Showcase – Dianne Smith, Qi Gong Instructor; Gwen Draude and Naomi Parker, Yoga and Guided Meditation Instructors; and Sylvia Prochownik and Jim Pescott, Painting Instructors

Sep. 22 - Geology on your Doorstep: Exposed Rocks and Fossils within an Hour's Drive from Calgary – Jon Noad, Geological Consultant

We would like to thank all presenters and special guests including representatives from Elbow River Watershed Partnership, Calgary River Valleys, Weaselhead, RiverWatch, Stanley Park to Glenmore Dam Preservation Society, and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. Special thanks to the following volunteers who helped these events run smoothly: Dave Arnott, Doreen Fulton, Kumiko Kamiike, Jason Kang, Jennifer Solem, Larry and Helen Newel, Doreen Smale and Syl Zacher.

THE FISH CREEK COMMUNITY FAIR

The third Fish Creek Community Fair Volunteer Showcase was hosted on Feb. 27 at the ELC and 88 people attended to learn about and sign up for volunteer programs. Thank you to all new and existing volunteers!

TRAIL CARE



The Single Track Trail network in Fish Creek Provincial Park extends over 14 km between Macleod Trail and 37 St and provides cyclists and hikers with unique recreational opportunities. Special thanks to the Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance and Alberta Parks for helping

to make this program possible. Thank you also to Joe Gerritsen, Peter Spear and the other volunteers who help out year round to maintain and improve the single track trail network. The construction of the Fish Creek Mountain Bike Skills Park is now underway at Banside and has already proven to be a very popular location for riders of all ages.

Ten volunteers from Corby Spirit and Wine completed routine trail and park maintenance near Bebo Grove on June 2 as part of Corby's Responsib'All Day. Four volunteers from the 253rd South Heritage Scout group came out on June 15 to reclaim a 104 metre section of trail near Evergreen. On July 9 the CMBA completed trail maintenance on approximately 600 metres of trail near Bebo Grove and on Sep. 27, CMBA volunteers built a wetland crossing structure and completed maintenance on approximately 17 metres of single track near Bridge 1 (pictured here). Nine volunteers from Deloitte came out for the second year in a row as part of Impact Day on the snowy morning of Oct 7. Fifty metres of unauthorized trail was reclaimed near Bebo Grove and the volunteers worked at reclaiming trail sections near Marshall Springs.

BIRDING COURSE

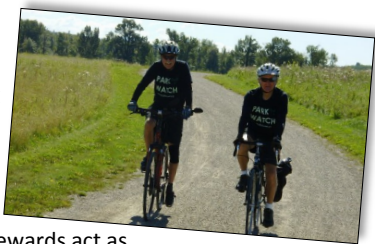
Over 370 participants took part in the Autumn 2015, Winter 2016 and/or Spring 2016 Birding Course. Many Birding students return each season for this long-running and successful program, designed to help people enjoy



the splendours of nature and learn about the importance of environmental sustainability. We would like to thank Gus Yaki, lifelong naturalist and dedicated volunteer, for organizing these courses and to the following volunteer instructors: Lorrie & John Anderson, Daniel Arndt, Sandy Ayer, George Best, Kingsley Blades, Rob Brown, Trevor Churchill, Bernie Diebolt, Dan Edwards, Kris Fernet, Wlad Franco-Valias, Janet Gill, Carole Hachey, Barry Hertz, Peter Hoyer, Gary Kurtz, Bob Lefebvre, David Mitchell, Joanne Nemeth, Rose Painter, Ralph Parks, Aileen Pelzer, Stephen Phelps, Stephen & Dorothy Spring, Carole Steeves, John Stegeman, Diane Stinson, Marian Swatschina, David & Martha Taylor, John Thompson, Dave Vernon, Wayne & Joan Walker, Bill Wilson and Rob Worona.

PARK WATCH

Over 20 years ago, Park Watch started out as a means of assisting Alberta Parks staff in the protection and preservation of this unique landscape, and as a response to the increasing degree of park use. Park Watch Stewards act as educators, ambassadors and extra eyes and ears for Alberta Parks and Friends staff. They help park visitors with questions or directions, and assist Conservation Officers in monitoring the park so that important issues such as graffiti, regulatory infractions and injured wildlife can quickly be addressed.



Our 2016 Park Watch season proved to be one of our most successful on record, with 55 Stewards contributing 757 hours over 155 shifts throughout the park between May 1 and October 31. This is an increase of almost 30% over the previous year, which stands as a testament to how much our volunteers value the park and their role as its stewards.

Some of this year's highlights include:

- Newly designed Park Watch t-shirts to increase Steward visibility were well received by volunteers and park visitors. Thanks to Larry White for his help in coordinating this impactful project and to HSBC for their financial support.
- Tim Horton's coupons were awarded to park users observed picking up after their dogs. Thanks to the Braeside Tim's and Carl and Liz Johnson for spearheading this initiative.
- One Steward team responded quickly in an emergency situation, contributing to the life-saving rescue of a canoer stranded on Poplar Island.

Following such an epic Park Watch season, we'd like to offer our additional thanks to those seasoned Stewards who mentored our new teams: Neil Rubeniuk, Bill Skinner, Jo-Anne Bechtel, Dave Reid, Syl Zacher, as well as to Neil and the Ratliffe family - Rose, Will, Karen and Michael - for sharing the role of Supply Coordinator this year.

CAPTURE NATURE - PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST



On July 1, the Friends launched the second annual photography contest, Capture Nature! This year we had 21 contestants who contributed 91 amazing photos in the categories of Action, Landscape and Macro, in both Adult and Youth divisions. The results were breathtaking, and they showcased the

diverse natural majesty of this amazing park and the photographic expertise of park visitors. We offer our sincere thanks to Vistek - the Capture Nature official sponsor - and MEC for donating prizes. Thank you to everyone who participated and to voluntary jurors Bob Bakker, Robb Bell, Jean Channon-Simpson, Michael Doyle, Alan Lam, Bob Leonhardt and Dann Soloman. Congratulations to Tony LePrieur for his First Place Winning photo (pictured here) and to all participants.

RIPARIAN STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The Friends' Riparian Stewardship Program evolved in several significant ways in 2016.



Restoration

Monitoring - We worked closely with volunteer Caroline Jasper who developed a monitoring tool designed to measure the establishment and growth of native

willows and poplars planted at our restoration sites. This new measurement tool allowed us to determine a success rate for willow establishment of 83% at our 2015 Hull's Wood site, which is considered to be incredibly high in the restoration sector.

Restoration Fieldwork - Two restoration work days were held this year:

- October 12 - volunteers harvested mature willows for transplanting at our Bridge 11 and Hull's Wood restoration sites.
- October 13 - 285 willow stakes and 11 poplar seedlings were planted at these sites with additional soil scarification, the addition of mulch around the bases of plantings and a new fence erected to protect our work near Bridge 11 (pictured above)
- All new and previously planted willow stakes and poplar seedlings were numbered at both sites to allow for regular monitoring and evaluation.

Partnerships and Collaborative Opportunities – we welcomed several opportunities to support other work being done in the watershed through the engagement of Friends' volunteers or the loaning of tools and equipment from our new Community Toolshed to these efforts:

- The Bow River Chapter of Trout Unlimited conducted restoration work near Bridge 9.
- The Elbow River Watershed Partnership completed fieldwork near the Fish Creek headwaters.
- Trout Unlimited Canada and the Nature Conservancy of Canada completed a poplar planting project on Legacy Island.

In all, 46 volunteers contributed 269 volunteer hours in the monitoring and hands-on restoration work completed with the Friends and our partner organizations. We are grateful for their dedication, as well as the continued support and guidance of our community partners: Alberta Parks, The Venturers Society, Cows and Fish, and Trout Unlimited Canada.

These projects were made possible through financial support received from the Bow River Basin Council, the Land Stewardship Centre, Alberta Environment and Parks (Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program) and Deer Valley Co-op.

FISH CREEK CLEAN-UPS

The Friends of Fish Creek share resources like bags and litter-pickers with community groups interested in self-directed clean ups in Fish Creek Provincial Park. This year, over 100 volunteers and participants collectively spent 300 hours picking up trash.

Over and above this total, many Park Watch Stewards spent time on their shifts picking up garbage, especially around picnic sites (pictured above, Park Watch Steward at Bebo Grove.) Some groups focused on “micro-litter” like gum wrappers and others focused on “mega-litter” such as flood debris along the Bow.



This fall, we entered into a Community Service Learning Agreement with students taking a fourth-year Conservation Biology course at St. Mary's University to assess and remove human-made flood debris left by the receding flood waters of 2013. These students, with the support of Alberta Parks' Flood Recovery Volunteer and Partner Coordinator Julia Millen, orchestrated a large-scale clean up near Mallard Point, and removed 2½ truckloads of debris from this area.

Thank you to everyone who picked up garbage in the park this year: Friends of Fish Creek Volunteers & Park Watch Stewards, 253rd South Heritage Scouts, 83 Juno Beach Squadron Air Cadets, Sundance Cubs, St. Mary's University students and families, and YMCA Southwest Calgary YMAP participants.

WEED WHACKERS

The 2016 Weed Whackers season proved to be another great success, with over 1,000 kilograms of invasive weeds removed from Fish Creek Provincial Park! Weed Whackers is an integral component of our Community Watershed Stewardship Project, where we engage nearby residents and park visitors in hands-on stewardship activities. On each outing, participants learn to identify invasive plants and about the importance of preventing further invasive introductions by planting native species and annuals in home gardens.



Some of the species we targeted this year included spotted knapweed, common tansy, common burdock, yellow clematis, scentless chamomile, dame's rocket, black henbane, and more. Over 10 outings, 182 volunteers and participants actively contributed to the health of the Fish Creek watershed by removing bag upon bags of invasive plant material from grasslands, forests and riparian areas throughout the park. Thank you to all the volunteers who took part this year and to Park staff and

the Venturers Society staff for supporting the program! Pictured here, Scouts ready to battle black henbane near Votier's Flats on June 16.

TREE WRAPPING

This year, tree wrapping was ramped up, due to increased reports from the public and from our Park Watch Stewards regarding increased beaver activity throughout the park. Tree Wrapping Crew Leaders were recruited and we led 8 tree wrapping and re-wrapping outings in 3 areas: along the Bow River near Mallard Point, along Fish Creek down the hill from Parkland, and the forested area near the Boat Launch.



Eighty-eight volunteers wrapped and/or unwrapped over 400 poplars and aspens, collectively dedicating 265 hours to monitoring and replacing wire. Over time, trees that have been wrapped may die due to the girdling effect of the wire. Looking to the future, we cannot simply

keep wrapping trees with wire without a sustainable and user-friendly means to track the locations and status of wrapped trees. We are also exploring the possibility of painting the base of vulnerable trees with a mixture of paint and sand to deter beavers. Thank you to all 2016 Tree Wrapping Volunteers and Crew Leaders! Pictured here, Tree Wrapping Crew Leaders learn from Fish Creek Maintenance Worker, Jeremy Bakken, on May 25.

YOUTH NATURE PROGRAMS

2016 marked our fourth year of offering experiential, outdoor youth programming and it was an exciting year, with three new programs launched! We successfully delivered eight programs to local youth groups including Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts. Eighty children took part in these outdoor experiences, raising almost \$500 to support further education and stewardship initiatives in the park. In addition to our *Amazing Adaptations* program (formerly *Naturalist* program,) which has been running since 2013, new programs include:

- **Notice Nature** - Get to know some of the park's forest trees and plants and take part in a wetland exploration!
- **Soil Secrets** - Uncover what happens to rain after it falls to the ground and learn about the secret life of soil by digging in and getting dirty!
- **Fish Creek Stewardship Adventure** - Visit Fish Creek Provincial Park, Canada's largest urban park, learn about an issue threatening the park's ecosystem and take part in a hands-on conservation project to improve the ecosystem.

Thank you to our Youth Nature Program Volunteers for playing a critical role in program development and delivery, occasionally hosting programs without staff! And much gratitude goes to Fish Creek Provincial Park staff for generously sharing park resources with us.

Congratulations to our 2016 Youth Nature Programs Award Winner, Dave Reid, for his unwavering enthusiasm for the program, his time and energy developing *Soil Secrets*, and for all the ways he contributes to the Friends of Fish Creek's programs and events. Thank you Dave!

WELLNESS IN FISH CREEK

Thanks to the dedication of skilled and generous instructors, the Wellness suite of programs is turning into one of our most successful endeavours. Each year the Wellness program allows us to engage community members who otherwise may not be familiar with the Friends or the park. Although the rainy summer resulted in the cancellation of some wellness sessions, those that went ahead were well-attended.



Yoga

Naomi Parker of Elemental Wellness and Gwen Draude of Birds of a Feather led outdoor yoga sessions for their fourth year at the Bow Valley Ranch from July until September on Wednesday nights. In total 45 participants came out to take part in yoga, relax, unwind and connect with nature. We are very grateful for Naomi and Gwen's enthusiasm, hard work and dedication throughout the year.

Full Moon Meditation

Gwen and Naomi also led Full Moon Meditations on full-moon evenings in July, August and September with an astounding 82 participants attending. One of these evenings was the Qi Gong/Full Moon Meditation Super Class on July 19 that saw 37 people join together to connect with nature and each other (pictured above.)

Spring Forest Qi Gong

In 2016 the Friends teamed up with Diane Smith, Spring Forest Qi Gong Certified Instructor, to offer Qi Gong, an ancient Chinese form of harvesting positive energy in the body. Eighty-five participants took part in Qi Gong on Tuesday evenings, including the Qi Gong/Full Moon Meditation Super Class. Thank you Diane and we look forward to working with you in 2017.

Painting in the Park

The Friends collaborated with local artists once again this year to deliver one-day painting classes in the park. 19 participants took part in these courses over the season and we would like to thank the instructors and Swinton's Art Supply.

Capturing Nature: Painting Day in the Park

(Aug. 20, Debbie.lee Miszaniec)

Painting in the Autumn Breeze (Sep. 14, Sylvia Prochownik)

Paint What You See (Oct. 22, Jim Pescott)

Thank you to the Wellness volunteers who helped these programs run smoothly: Anna Aubrecht, Megan Blaxley, Gail Goldsmith, Gail Jardine, Kumiko Kamiike, Slavica Pribilovic, Liza Schach and Doreen Smale.

MINIBUS TOURS

The open air electric minibus is an amazing vehicle for touring the park and the demand for private minibus tours increased this year as more people became aware of this opportunity. In addition to private tours, we collaborated once again with local experts to provide Photography and Archaeology-themed minibus tours. The unfavourable weather in the summer did cause some tour cancellations and other challenges, but overall it was a successful and enjoyable season. On June 14, the minibus was showcased on Global News as Wayne Meikle, retired park planner and founding member of the Friends, guided a tour from the Bow Valley Ranch to Votier's Flats. Through a partnership with United Active Living, 20 seniors were able to experience Fish Creek Provincial Park from the comfort of the minibus. Wayne and Katie Bakken, Program Coordinator, also had a chance to share knowledge through private minibus tours.

Photography – Unleash the Power of Your Digital SLR Camera

Bob Bakker, film and digital photography enthusiast, led 5 outings and in total 29 participants came out to improve their photographic abilities with Fish Creek Provincial Park as their subject.

Archaeology in the Park: Finding the Pioneers (pictured below)

Drew McKibben, Friends of Fish Creek Interpreter, led 4 tours for 28 people and only one scheduled tour was rained out. These tours were a great way for people who may or may not be familiar with the park to learn about the history of the early pioneers who made this area their home and the archaeological evidence they have left behind.

Thank you to all guides and special thanks to the volunteer minibus drivers Bob Andrew, Carl Johnson, Helen Newel, Dave Reid and Syl Zacher.



Jill Jennings, AB Parks Accessibility and Inclusion Programmer and the **Push to Open Nature Program** led 7 mini bus tours with a total of 47 participants. Minibus tour participants had a variety of different physical abilities and the minibus was able to accommodate most of their needs and provide access to the park.

WALKING TOURS

In addition to minibus tours, Wayne Meikle led a variety of walking tours to share his knowledge with park visitors and we are thankful for his volunteer time and generosity.

May 6 & 7, two Jane's Walk outings - Seeing Beavers as Nature's Helpers

June 6, Walking tour for Southland Leisure Centre

July 7, Marshall Springs Walking Tour

July 23, History of the Bow Valley Ranch for Historic Calgary Week

Oct. 26 & 27, two sold out Ghosts of Fish Creek tours with a total of 96 participants

PARKS DAY & CREEKFEST

The unification of two established events, Creekfest and Alberta's Parks Day, was christened Parks Day & Creekfest and moved to the Glennfield area of Fish Creek on July 17. Close to 2,000 people came out to celebrate parks, nature and watersheds. We faced some challenges with hosting the event at Glennfield rather than at the Bow Valley Ranch, but seeing as Parks Day & Creekfest was much larger in size and broader in scope than Creekfest had been, the new location worked out well.



We had an amazing team of community and Alberta Parks personnel to kick off the festivities, including MC Roland Kirzinger - Environmental Education Coordinator, Mr. Graham Sucha MLA and Mr. Richard Gotfried MLA, and the new area manager of Fish Creek Provincial Park - Don Carruthers Den Hoed. Performances by Alex Boisselle, Coyote Kids Theatre, Peter Puffin's Whale Tales, and Duncan Baker of the K-Country Interpretive Theatre kept the audience entertained throughout the day. Community members enjoyed guided walks and demos from Wayne Meikle, founding member of the Friends of Fish Creek and retired park planner; Ruth Zinck, also a founding member of the Friends of Fish Creek and experienced fly fisher; Naomi Parker and Gwen Draude, yoga instructors; and Tyler McClure from Wildsmart, who gave a discussion and demonstration on the proper and effective use of bear spray.

We would like to thank the following exhibitors for their participation in Parks Day & Creekfest: AB Biathlon Club, AB Bike Swap, AB Institute for Wildlife Conservation, AB Invasive Species Council, AB Mycological Society, AB Native Plant Council, AB Off Highway Vehicle Association, AB Parks: Ecology, Inclusion, Information, Interpretation, Public Engagement, and Trail Crew; AB Wilderness Association, Alpine Club of Canada, Archaeological Society of AB, Boston Pizza, Bow Valley Rancho Restaurant, Bow Valley Stewards, Bow Valley WildSmart, Calgary Forest Area (pictured here), The Calgary Foundation, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, City of Calgary: Parks-ReTree and Wildlife, Library, and Watershed; Calgary Forest Area, Carnivals for Kids at Heart, Cows and Fish, Crime Stoppers, Friends of Kananaskis Country, Great Events Catering, Green Calgary, Kananaskis Outfitters, MEC, Nature Alberta, Pumphouse Theatre, Rancho at Fish Creek Restoration Society, Researching Amphibian Numbers in Alberta, Rocky Mountain Adventure Medicine, Rocky Mountain Eagle Research Foundation, St. Mary's University, Tourism Canmore and Trout Unlimited Canada.

Special thanks to First Calgary Financial – a division of ConnectFirst Credit Union, and McLeod Law LLP for sponsoring Parks Day & Creekfest. We are also very grateful to Alberta Parks' Julie Ryan and Marie-Pierre Chappeland for helping to organize this event, and to the Friends of Kananaskis and the Bow Valley Stewards. Thank you to all performers, exhibitors, special guests, tour leaders, volunteers, and community members who came out to make Parks Day & Creekfest a truly memorable and amazing event!

A TASTE OF AUTUMN



The Friends of Fish Creek hosted the third annual A Taste of Autumn Wine & Beer Tasting and Silent Auction Fundraiser at the Meadow Muse Pavilion on September 16. Over 80 people attended and we raised close to \$5,000, all of which directly supports our goals of engaging community members and enhancing the sustainability of Fish Creek Provincial Park.

There were paintings, gift baskets, certificates for tours and much more available for auction. Jennell Rempel, Friends of Fish Creek Liaison and Community and Alberta Parks Partner Relations Team Lead, enjoyed her role as Master of Ceremonies and keynote speaker and local ecologist Chris Fisher gave a thoughtful and entertaining presentation entitled *The Values of Fish Creek Birds*.

Local producers Chinook Arch Meadery, Six Corners Brew Works, Last Best Brewing & Distilling, Field Stone Fruit Wines and Fallentimber Meadery set up beverage tasting stations, and volunteers did an amazing job in a variety of positions that helped the evening run smoothly. We would like to extend our thanks to volunteers Bob Andrew, David Arnott, Doreen Fulton, David Mitchell, Lynda and Gordon Needham, Larry and Helen Newel, Libby Roth, Doreen Smale, Carole Steeves, and Tony and Lesley Turner.

Special thanks to First Calgary Financial – A Division of ConnectFirst Credit Union and Craig Senyk for supporting this event. We are grateful to the following organizations and individuals for their contributions: Boston Pizza, Capture Nature Photography Contest Winners: Larry Doucet, Tony Leprieur, Jonn Malmqvist and Ken Pride, Canmore Nordic Centre, Canyon Meadows Cinemas, Color Me Mine Pottery Studio, Don and Mary Beth Cowie, Eaglequest Golf Douglasdale, Fish Creek Naturopathic Medicine, Fish Tales Fly Shop, Richard Gotfried MLA, Great Events Catering, Janet Horbacio Photography, Jayman Built, Julie Marwood Interiors, Jim Pescott, Prints Charming, The Pumphouse Theatre and the Calgary Foundation, PURE Cycle, Radiance Med Spa, Robin Read, Rick Robinson Photography, Dave Rodney MLA, Sheila Schaetzle, Soffritto, Peter Spear, Strides Running Store, Sunsational Day Spa, Trail Sports, The Venturers Society of Calgary, Vistek and Dann Solomen, Gus Yaki and all the Birding Course instructors, and Yoga Dot Calm.

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the third annual A Taste of Autumn – Wine & Beer Tasting and Silent Auction Fundraiser the most successful one yet.

REPORT FROM FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK

Jennell Rempel
Community and Partner Relations Team Lead

Once again, Alberta Parks is pleased to report on the highlights of the many projects made possible through the collaboration with the Friends of Fish Creek:

Riparian restoration: Enhancement activities along the Bow River and Fish Creek (including tree and shrub planting, soil scarification, mulching, woody debris installation, and installation of cuttings to improve riparian health) went very smoothly, and is a great example of their ability to work with multiple organizations towards a goal that benefits Fish Creek Provincial Park. By pulling together Parks' staff, the Venturers, Trout Unlimited, Cows and Fish and park volunteers they accomplished a project that would have been difficult for any one of them to pull off. Without their efforts in this area there would be no creek bank restoration occurring in the park.

Flood debris clean-up along the Bow River: A focussed project began in the fall of 2016 bringing together Parks, the Friends, and St. Mary's University to map non-natural debris south of Mallard Point. It culminated in a clean-up day involving 6 student team members plus 33 volunteers drawn from St. Mary's (students, faculty and families,) Friends volunteers, and volunteers from a YMCA youth program. 2 ½



event will serve as a model for other larger -scale debris events which will be planned for next spring and summer. Pictured here, flood debris clean up volunteers Fall 2016, photo courtesy of Julia Millen.

Weed Whackers: This program has been running for many years and is a very important part of the invasive plant management program in the park. It is incredibly well run and efficient. Various groups are pulled together to get the job done, including properly disposing of the bags of weeds. This program is a huge benefit to our maintenance and ecology programs.

Park Watch: This long-standing Friends Program is an essential part of our ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the park. The feedback, photos, and engagement of Park Watchers provides the park with a consistent base of reliable information that helps staff to target and address issues as they arise. In such a vast urban park, this wouldn't be possible without such a successful program. The program continues to improve year after year.

(Cont'd on next page)

REPORT FROM FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK

(Cont'd from previous page)

Tree wrapping: If it wasn't for the efforts of the Friends in this area there would be few if any trees protected against beavers. The Park provides the supplies and the Friends organize the volunteers and schedule the outings, which is the most difficult part of managing the program. The Friends really do make this program possible.

Tree painting: Painting trees with a paint and sand mixture may be a cost effective way to prevent beavers from taking trees. We did not want to launch full scale into this method without some concrete evidence that the method is effective. The Friends have organized a student conducted research project through St. Mary's University to try the method and measure the cost and results. The organizational work is mostly finished now, with the field work commencing in 2017. Again, this would not have happened without the Friends.

Fish Creek Speakers' Series at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre: The Friends continue to do a great job in managing the Fish Creek Speaker Series program. These events almost always sell out thanks to the Friends' marketing efforts. They manage registration, payments, volunteers to do all the set-up and striking of the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre for each presentation and make it very easy for us to have Parks' speakers participate in this series.

TD Learning Naturally Program: The TD Learning Naturally Program Coordinator is an integral part of the education team in Fish Creek, and Claire Petursson has been a wonderful addition to the Learning Centre environment. This educator works with both Parks and Friends staff. This program continues to offer education program opportunities to thousands of students each year that otherwise may not have an opportunity to participate in education programs in Fish Creek. For many of these students the field trips they participate in are their first experience in a provincial park so it is doubly beneficial for Alberta Parks.

Star Nights: The Friends of Fish Creek continue to support and participate in the bi-annual Star Night events held at the ELC in conjunction with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. This unique evening event provides visitors with a view of the night sky, and many opportunities to learn about the complex nocturnal world at work in Fish Creek Provincial Park. Pictured here, Kumiko Kamiike and Helen Newel at Star Night, photo courtesy of Shalane Friesen.



Community Engagement: The Friends assist staff in promoting programs and events and in disseminating important information to volunteers, members and the general public through many avenues including their regular newsletter, posters, emails, and notifications to local publications. This is a huge asset to Park staff and goes a long way to helping us get our messages out to the greater public. Our sincere thanks to the Friends of Fish Creek, you are an incredible partner!

2016 OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

Helen and Larry Newel	Volunteer of the Year
Wayne Meikle	Educator of the Year
Diane Smith	Social Enterprise
David Mitchell	Board of Directors
Gail Goldsmith	Wellness Program
Gus Yaki and the Volunteer Birding Instructor	Birding Course
David Mills	Trail Care
David Arnott	Creekfest
Carl Johnson	Minibus Driver
Bill Skinner and Bryan Simpson	Park Watch
Jason Kang	Fish Creek Speaker Series
The Venturers Society	Weed Whackers
Rose Ratliffe and Caroline Jasper	Restoration
Dave Reid	Youth Nature Programs
Lynda and Gordon Needham	Behind the Scenes
Benjamin Baragar	IT Genius
Rob Bell	Capture Nature
Kumiko Kamiike	New & Noteworthy Award

VENTURERS

Mike Depper, Lindsay Watkinson, Ed Quiring, Michele Jean, Len Esau, Trevor Boardman, Jonathan Bricker, Robert Cornell, Chris Flint, John Hank, Linda Harvey, Tim Krynen, Fred Lorenz, Mitch McCarthy, Travis Schwab, Conrad Tiedemann

2015 - 16 FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK STAFF

Don Carruthers Den Hoed, Jennell Rempel, Roland Kirzinger, Rob Hummel, Irene Till, Troy Christianson, Ryan Hannusch, Marie Plavetic, Travis Sjøvold, Claire Petursson, Shalane Friesen, Jeremy Bakken, Julia Millen, Jill Jennings
Seasonal: Arthur Blaxley, Thomas Blake, Johnathon Matula, Danielle Burke, Richard Crabbe, Adam Schwarz, Emily Buchanan, Rudy Szymanek, Jody Bares, Lisa Grant, Karine Lanteigne
Glenbow Ranch: Huntley Johnston, Trevor Thome, Maria Lynn, Randy Ramsden

2015 - 16 FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman	Tom Jackman
Vice-Chairman	David Mitchell
Treasurer	Phil Greer
Secretary	Stewart Scott
Director at Large	Bob Morrin
Director at Large	Richard Link
Director at Large	Ainsley Grant
Director at Large	Henry Villanueva
Park Liaison	Jennell Rempel

2016 FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK STAFF

Executive Director, Nic DeGama-Blanchet, nic@friendsoffishcreek.org
Program Coordinator, Katie Bakken, katie@friendsoffishcreek.org
Program Coordinator, Shana Barbour, shana@friendsoffishcreek.org
Communications Coordinator, Chris Lalonde, chris@friendsoffishcreek.org
Bookkeeping Services, Gail Foster

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

October 2015 – September 2016 Volunteers

We are truly grateful for the hard work and tireless dedication of our skilled and gifted volunteers who make our programs, events, courses and activities possible. A very heartfelt thank you goes out to:

Lorrie & John Anderson, Bob Andrew, Daniel Arndt, David Arnott, Natalie Assaf, Anna Aubrecht, Sandy Ayer, Laura Bakken, Robert Bakker, Benjamin Baragar, Don & Dani Barrington, Jo-Anne Bechtel, Brian Bell, Robb Bell, Valerie & Jason Bell, George Best, Valarie Best, Barbara Bishop, Kingsley Blades, Megan Blaxley, Nora-Jane Bonner, Patti Bradshaw, Rob Brown, Sheila Carter, Joe & Toni Cavar, Jean Channon-Simpson, Jason Cheever, Sarah Christensen, Tyler Christiansen, Ronnel Chua, Trevor Churchill, Kathy Cottrell, Don Cowie, Kathy Cox, Blair Cunningham, Glenn & Brayden Darichuk, Rick Delamont, Cathy Dewan, Bernie Diebolt, Michelle Dolenc, Deanna Downton, Michael Doyle, Gwen Draude, Linda Dudar, Tim Duncan, Leona Dvorak, Dan Edwards, Judy Elliott, Len Esau, Mirna Farahat, Brian & Sheryl Farewell, Louise Favreau, Josh Feddema, Kris Fernet, Wlad Franco-Valias, Justin Fry, Jan Fulawka-Chicilo & Justin Fulawka, Doreen Fulton, Nicole Gaskell, Nicolas Gazzard, Alan Genereux, Marissa German, Joe Gerritsen, Janet Gill, Rebecca Gillhespy, Gail Goldsmith, Vance Gough, Ian Grant, Phil Greer, Mauro Guzman, Carole Hachey, Heather Hamby, Jeff Hearn, Susan Hearn, Barry Hertz, Bill Hiebert, Michele Hitman, Kim Hooper, Peter Hoyer, Mike Ingham, Tom Jackman, Sonya Jakubec, Gail Jardine, Caroline Jasper, Jeremy Jasper, Carl Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Kumiko Kamiike, Jason Kang, Heather Keizer, Michael Khalil, So Young Kim, Adam Kucharski, Gary Kurtz, Dorothy Laing, Alan Lam, Norm Landry, Bev Lane, Richard Larson, Bob Lefebvre, Bob & Dianne Leonhardt, Michele Levay, Richard Link, William Long, Halle Longmuir, Lori Mainland, Drew McKibben, Wayne Meikle, Margaret & David Meisner, Trevor & Christy Mercier, David Mills, Debbie.lee Miszaniec, Bruce Mitchell, David Mitchell, Lori Mitchell, Bob Morrin, Michelle Mueller, Gordon & Lynda Needham, Joanne Nemeth, Larry & Helen Newel, Jack Nodwell, Rose Painter, Naomi Parker, Ralph Parks, Stephen Phelps, Alexandra, Natasha & Yvonne Popowicz, Jack Pound, Slavica Pribilovic, Rhys Prochaska, Neil Puffer & Joyce Crew, Bill Quayle, Will, Rose, Karen & Michael Ratliffe, Dave Reid, Joyce Ritsco, Theresa Romansky, Libby Roth, Neil Rubeniuk, Ali Samih, Liza Schach, Stewart Scott, Kathy Seaman, Bryan Simpson, Stuart Simpson, Bill Skinner, Caitlin Sloof, Doreen Smale, Diane Smith, Phil Smith, Jennifer Solem, Dann Soloman, Stephen & Dorothy Spring, Nicole St. Arnaud, Carole Steeves, John Stegeman, Don Stiles, Diane Stinson, Jennifer Stokes, Marian Swatschina, James Taylor, David Taylor, John Thompson, TJ Timonera, Tony & Lesley Turner, Ryan & Krista Tweed, Ben Vance, Leigh & Leao Vermeylen, Dave Vernon, Chris Villacorta-Lopez, Henry Villanueva, Bryan Vithilingen, Wayne & Joan Walker, Larry Wasyliw, Cliff Wessely, Larry & Mary Madeline White, Esther Wiebe, Shelly Wiens, Sabrina Wilde, Bill Wilson, Rob Worona, Gus Yaki & Aileen Pelzer, Tammy Yee, Don Yuen, Syl & Mary Zacher, Ruth Zinck, and Len Zybutz & Debrah Wood-Zybutz.

THANK YOU DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

October 2015 – September 2016 Donors

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

Ian Bannatyne, Dean Bannister, Diana Bossley, Claudia Haas-Yeoman,
Erhard Krenz, Calgary Area Outdoor Council

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

Rick & Elaine Barnes, Keith Ferguson, Leslie Fillion, Tim Hopwood, Jeff Mitchell,
Noela & David Moffit, Wayne & Joan Walker, Gus Yaki & Aileen Pelzer, Eon
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Worona, Boston Pizza, Cenovus Energy Foundation, FLC Seniors Outdoor Club,
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THANK YOU COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Calgary, Propellus, Prospect Human Services, Push To Open Nature,
Ranche at Fish Creek Restoration Society, St. Mary's University, Trout
Unlimited Canada, Trout Unlimited Bow River Chapter, United Active
Living, The Venturers Society, the Wild Bird Store and the 253rd South
Heritage Scouts.

Photos top to bottom:
members of the
Venturers Society, Ward
14 Communities BBQ at
Southcentre, Trout Ultd
Bow River Chapter
planting willow and
poplar cuttings at the
newly installed Bridge 9



TREASURER'S REPORT

Phil Greer, Treasurer, Friends of Fish Creek

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2016, the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Society reported a net loss (excess of expenses over revenues) of \$8,550 compared to a net loss of \$24,473 in 2015.

Our revenues for financial reporting purposes were \$333,327 in 2016 compared to \$264,549 in 2015. This increase is primarily due to increased grant revenue and sale of dedication benches. Our most recent Casino, in January 2017, should provide us with approximately \$60,000 in net proceeds to be 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 provides an annual grant of \$40,000 per year for the years 2014 to 2017.

We incurred expenses for financial reporting purposes in 2016 of \$341,877, an increase of \$52,855 over the 2015 expenses. This increase reflects \$31,131 in expenses for the Mountain Bike Skills Park and increased costs for additional programs and training. The most significant individual cash expense is salaries. Our total cash position including term deposits was \$208,218 at September 30, 2016, compared to \$260,409 at September 30, 2015. This cash balance provides us with a strong opening cash balance to fund our operations in the 2016-2017 fiscal 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 \$17,500. 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 per 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 and donations.

The Board and Management are continually seeking funding opportunities, particularly sources of unrestricted funds. These initiatives include targeting large Calgary based corporations, foundations, and known supporters of Fish Creek Provincial Park. We are also focusing on 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 2016/2017 fiscal year that allows the Society to operate a full complement of programs and maintain its current staffing levels. The budget also includes innovative fundraising opportunities to recognize our 25th anniversary.

We have again engaged independent auditors to report on our 2016 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 previous page)

Revenues and expenses	Year ended September 30,	
	2016	2015
Total revenues	\$ 333,327	\$ 264,549
Member and education program expenses	260,661	209,721
Administration expenses	81,216	79,301
Total expenses	341,877	289,022
Excess of expenses over revenues	\$ (8,550)	\$ (24,473)

Financial Position

Assets

Unrestricted cash	\$ 46,893	\$ 33,015
Restricted cash	126,376	192,877
Restricted term deposits	34,949	34,517
Total other assets	25,761	4,667
	\$ 233,979	\$ 265,076

Liabilities

Deferred contributions	\$ 141,126	\$ 197,014
Other liabilities	69,271	35,930
	210,397	232,944

Net assets

Internally restricted	20,199	30,380
Unrestricted	3,383	1,752
	23,582	32,132
	\$ 233,979	\$ 265,076

THANK YOU 2015 - 2016 SUPPORTERS

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



TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation

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



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada



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



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



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