



Giving Back

with the Battle River Community Foundation

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You can make a difference to others this season

It's been another tough year for many people. Higher interest rates, rising costs of goods and services, coupled with global uncertainty have created a challenging reality for many individuals and not-for-profit organizations.

In this, the season of giving, it's a good time for those of us who are able to look beyond our own families and consider how we can support others. While none of us can solve all the problems of the world, between us we can make a positive difference to others.

If you have people on your personal gift list who "have everything" why not make a charitable donation in their name. They'll be pleased to know you were thinking of them, and appreciate that someone less fortunate will benefit from your generosity.

Gifts of cash, stocks, insurance or property that are made to the Foundation before the end of the calendar year may be beneficial for tax purposes – allowing donors to help others while also helping themselves. And those gifts will keep on giving in the years to come, ensuring the Foundation can continue enhancing the quality of life of our east central Alberta neighbours.

Big or small, all gifts are welcome and all gifts help the Foundation to help others. If you'd like to consider making a donation prior to December 31, please connect with our office, or any of the Board members listed on page 4 of this report.

We wish you all the best of the season!

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Introducing the Foundation's new Executive Director

The Battle River Community Foundation is pleased to introduce its new Executive Director, Bobbi Way.

Bobbi, who joined the Foundation team in early October, settled in Camrose with her husband a few years ago and accepted an invitation to attend her first Community Builders dinner in 2022. That evening left her inspired by the Foundation's commitment to helping others and she even found herself thinking "I could work for that organization."

Thanks to the upcoming retirement of current Executive Director Dana Andreassen, Bobbi has the opportunity to fulfill that wish. She is looking forward to building relationships and learning about local donors and recipients. "It is an honour to be part of stewarding the legacy created by founders, board members, donors and staff," she says.

Welcome aboard, Bobbi!



Commitment and belief make the difference

Diane Hutchinson is the first to admit that when people imagine a "typical" donor to the Battle River Community Foundation she is not what usually comes to mind.

"I don't fit that stereotypical image of someone with a high profile and a significant amount of financial resources," she explains. "But actually, most donors to the Foundation are people just like me – people who believe in the work the Foundation does and have a commitment to supporting it."

Diane's been a donor to the Foundation since the very early days. "I was born and raised in Camrose," she says, "and I love my hometown. Right from the Foundation's beginning, I knew I wanted to be part of an organization that was helping to keep the community strong."

Although she says she's never been in a financial position to make a "huge" gift, what Diane has done is commit to making small, regular gifts. She dedicates memorial donations to the Foundation, sends gifts to the Foundation in honour of friends and family on special occasions and has also purchased a life insurance policy that will allow a fund to be set up in her name at some point in the future. "I'm both a short-term and long-term donor," she says. "My immediate gifts get pooled together with the donations of others to help make a difference right away. And by paying the premium on an

insurance policy that will benefit the Foundation when I'm gone, I'm also making a long-term gift that's going to keep on making a difference."

Though none of Diane's individual donations have been of significant size, they've added up over the years and you'll now find her name on the list of people who have given between \$10,000 and \$25,000 to the Battle River Community Foundation.

"I don't have big financial resources, but I do have big belief in the Foundation," she says. "They're committed to supporting the local community and I'm committed to helping them do it."



Benefitting from the support of the Foundation

Nora-Lee Rear, the Executive Director of the Camrose Women's Shelter Society (CWSS), wants to be very clear that economic factors are not the cause of family violence. But for people with a heightened need for power and control in their homes, external triggers such as rising costs and financial pressures can certainly be a catalyst.

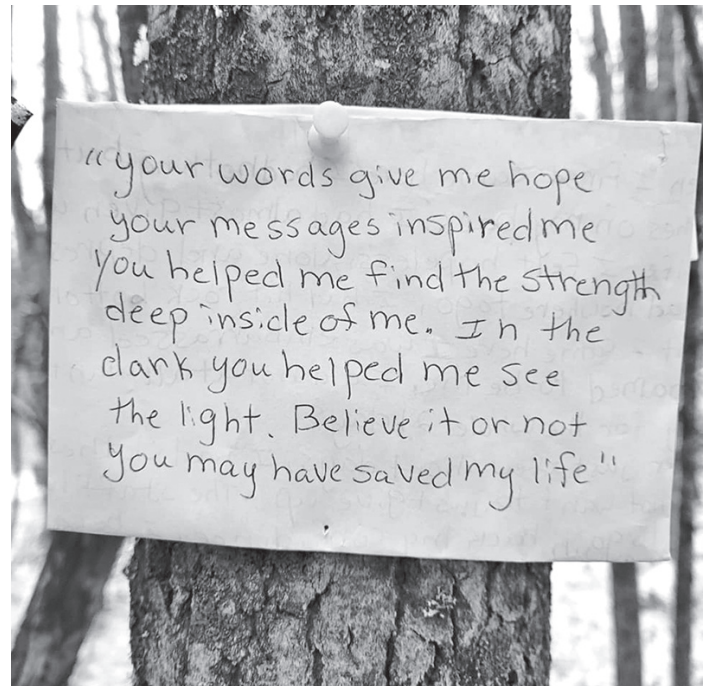
In general, society has been through a rough few years which unfortunately impacts the steady increase in usage of both the emergency shelter facilities where families flee for safety, and the outreach programs. About 450 women and children per year come through the shelter, while more than 50 other families use the programs but do not stay in the house.

"Over the past year, the shelter has hit capacity, and even been over capacity – quite a few times," she says. "It is disheartening to know that after 40 years we still need a shelter in Camrose, but I'm also comforted knowing that one is available locally for Camrose, and the vast rural surrounding area. As the economic situation gets worse, shelters see the fallout of the pressure families are facing. Shelters are one of the last resources that most folks turn to, or want to access. But we are here for the most vulnerable and worst times for families."

That's why the Camrose Women's Shelter team is grateful for the support of organizations like the Battle River Community Foundation. "They fund two equally great programs for CWSS," Nora-Lee explains. "BRCF is a strong advocate for our organization, and consistent in their grant support."

One of the programs funded by the Foundation has been in place since 2020 and helps make access to therapists more immediate for shelter clients. According to Nora-Lee, offering any kind of therapy during a stay in shelter is not a good practice. It can leave folks open to more trauma as the stay in shelter is short, but when clients are ready to move on, the Shelter can provide access to one of two different therapists who will take clients into their caseloads quickly. "That outreach has been very successful," she says. "One of the therapists told us that clients on their caseload are some of their most dedicated clients, who put in a lot of work to heal from the trauma and abuse they have endured".

The other program the Foundation has supported for many years is a program which helps children who have



been exposed to violence in their home. It runs at the same time as a Mom's program and helps kids learn how to identify and regulate their emotions. With staff who are experts in attending to kids emotions, they go on field trips or visit recreation facilities, have birthday celebrations or Halloween parties – things that help make life in shelter feel more 'normal' - with the grant dollars covering costs. There's even a component of Outreach funding which is used to supply families with lunch supplies for kids to take to school and for monthly activities for kids who struggle with understanding and reframing the dynamics of their parents' relationships. Children are extremely intuitive and are impacted by interpersonal violence in all aspects of their lives, whether or not they are directly involved. Having access to an adult, whose primary focus is to help kids cope with and overcome the emotional and psychological challenges of growing up in a home where interpersonal violence and abuse is the norm, helps kids build resilience and heal from trauma. "Hopefully by providing this type of support, the intergenerational cycle of violence will be broken".

"We are very grateful for the Foundation and their support," says Nora-Lee. "What they provide goes far beyond the dollars they give. They're supporting all aspects of the community and helping build a more positive future. There's no way to put a value on that."



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Thanks for the great nights!

The Battle River Community Foundation was honoured to offer two celebrations this fall. The first, held October 13, was hosted by Brian and Eileen Hunter in Camrose, while the second, held November 4, celebrated the 100+ Women Who Care program in Flagstaff County.

The events, each of which raised funds to create a long-term fund in support of causes in the Community Builders' local areas, were an opportunity for guests to gather, share a meal, bid on auction items and share stories about those being celebrated.

Though the funds are still coming in and the totals are not yet finalized, it appears that, combined, the two events raised more than \$145,000 for the two funds

Thanks so much to everyone who attended or supported these events. We are looking forward to being able to celebrate together again next year!



Although this is not primarily intended as a fundraising solicitation, the Alberta Charitable Fundraising Act requires us to notify you that the Battle River Community Foundation is expecting to raise approximately \$50,000 in donations to existing and new endowment Funds in year end donations. Income from these Funds will provide annual grants to support charitable projects and programs that serve residents of our region.

Estimated costs of this newsletter are \$2,000.

For further information, contact Bobbi Way at 780-679-0449 or visit our office at 4906-46 Street, Camrose, Alberta.

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