

FIREFIGHTER STAIRCLIMB
CHALLENGE

CHALLENGE
THE CHIEF

On **Sunday, May 5, 2019**, hundreds of firefighters from across North America will climb the steps of Calgary's BOW tower, one of Western Canada's tallest buildings, in support of firefighters and citizens living with cancer. Hosted by the Calgary Firefighters Benevolent Society, this annual event grows in number and spirit every year! Calgary is poised to cheer on the brave ones who will climb the **775 vertical feet – 1,204 steps of The BOW Building** in full duty gear. **Starting at 3,400 feet above sea level**, this climb is the highest elevation firefighter stairclimb in the world!

Inspired by **Seattle's Scott Firefighter Stairclimb**, and founded by **Kathy Blas**, sister of Calgary fallen firefighter, **Gord Paul**, this event is fully endorsed and supported by the **Calgary Fire Department** and the **International Association of Firefighters Local 255**. In Alberta, there are 17 presumptive cancers recognized as occupational hazards of the firefighter's job. The goal of this event is to bring awareness and support to all firefighters and citizens living with cancer. Event proceeds support Wellspring Calgary, a local non-profit organization that offers programs, services and resources for people living with cancer and their caregivers.

Wellspring Calgary is delighted to announce Wellspring will gift a portion of event proceeds to support the Firefighters Assistance Charitable Society (FACS); their mission is to empower and strengthen the firefighter by enhancing the success and resilience of the firefighter community.

This is an annual event held every spring in Calgary, Alberta.

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Calgary businesses and organizations are unprecedented in their support for people living with cancer. See for yourself:

[View our 2019 Partners and Sponsors](#)

Media Kit

The 2018 Event Results

- 480 firefighters climbed the BOW stairs, individually or in teams from their home fire departments.
- Year two of the 'Challenge the Chief' civilian climb saw six civilians accept Chief Dongworth's challenge and they collectively raised \$43,364 to race him up the BOW tower.
- The 2018 Challenge the Chief title went to Calgary Deputy Police Chief Ray Robitaille.
- The 2018 'President's Cup' union challenge went to Derek Orr, Cochrane Firefighters Association President, IAFF Local 4819.
- Participants hailed from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Texas, and Norway.
- \$238,500 (net) was raised by firefighters and the community.
- The top fundraising team from Fort McMurray raised \$27,250; the top individual from Lake Louise raised \$7,722.
- The fastest time was 11:03 minutes.

Race Results

Top Category Winners:

- Top Male 18-35yrs Time – 11:03, Geoff Pyke, Calgary
- Top Female 18-35yrs Time – 14:05, Karla Cairns, Swift Current
- Top Male 36-50yrs Time – 11:09, Scott Vandermeer, Calgary
- Top Female 36-50yrs Time – 17:15, Jenn Jackson, Canmore
- Top Male 51+yrs Time – 14:09, Rob Zimich, Calgary
- Top Female 51+yrs Time – 28:54, Shirley Roy, Cypress County
- Top Team Time – 49:43, Station 6 D Shift
- Top individual Fundraiser – \$7,722, Jason Connell, Lake Louise Fire Department
- Top Team Fundraiser – \$27,250, Canadian Naturals (Horizon Emergency Services)

CHALLENGE THE CHIEF Winners:

- Top Time: 16:24, Ray Robitaille, Calgary Deputy Police Chief
- Top Fundraiser: \$12,900, Dave Lye, Encana

PRESIDENT'S CUP Winners:

- Top Time: 13:15, Derek Orr, Cochrane Firefighters Association President, IAFF Local 4819
- Top Fundraiser: \$1,000, Mike Carter, Calgary Firefighters Association President, IAFF Local 255

The real winners from this event are the firefighters and citizens living with cancer who access the free resources provided by Wellspring Calgary. We aim higher each year (in terms of fundraising, not building height!) to increase awareness and fundraising dollars in support of those living with cancer.



Wellspring Calgary is a warm and welcoming community that provides a comprehensive range of programs, resources and support **free of charge and without referral to anyone living with cancer**. Wellspring's programs also support the family and friends of those living with cancer. **Our vision: No one has to face cancer alone.**

What kind of programs?

We offer **evidence-informed** programs that meet the emotional, social, practical and restorative needs of people living with cancer. Our programs are complementary to medical treatment. Examples include (but are not limited to):

Educational – Brain Fog, Money Matters, Healing Journey, Returning to Work, speakers (credible experts who address pertinent issues related to cancer)

Expressive Arts – Creative Journaling, watercolour, digital storytelling, drumming, music

Movement and Meditation – Indoor (Yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong, relaxation, visualization, Healthy Steps, Moves in Rhythm) and Outdoor (hiking, skiing, urban walking)

Caregiving and Self Care – Men's group, Advanced Cancer Support, Caregiver classes, energy sessions, grief support

How do programs and resources help?

They inform and empower people to play a role in their wellness. The community of others who understand help people to feel connected so they don't feel isolated and alone in their struggles.

Where is Wellspring located?

We have two centres in Calgary:

- **Carma House** at 1404 Home Road NW
- **Fountain Court** at #120, 703 – 64 Ave SE

Carma House



Fountain Court





Wellspring Quick Facts

- **History:** Wellspring Calgary was co-founded by John Stephure, Rita Egizii, and Barbara Cunnings-Versaavel and began operation in 2007.
- **Our Calgary centres:** Carma House, the original permanent centre for Wellspring Calgary, opened in June 2009. The house was built and donated by local business Carma Developers (now Brookfield Residential) which continues to be a major sponsor and donor. Our second centre opened in October 2016 at Fountain Court SE. This is our interim south location until we move into our permanent second home in Seton this fall. Wellspring Calgary Randy O'Dell House opens September 3. Click to learn more [Randy O'Dell House](#).
- **Network:** Wellspring Calgary is modelled after and is a member of the greater Wellspring Cancer Support Foundation – the 'Wellspring network'. Based out of Toronto, this Canada-wide network of community-based centres provide emotional, social, spiritual and informational support to individuals and families living with cancer. The first Wellspring opened in Toronto in 1992.
- **Members:** Any adult who has had a cancer diagnosis of any type, and their loved ones, are welcome to become a Wellspring Calgary member free of charge, without referral, and at any point on their journey. Wellspring Calgary has served more than 5,000 members since 2007.
- **Programs:** Wellspring Calgary freely offers social, emotional, spiritual, psychological and practical support through a variety of programs, resources and speakers. Currently Wellspring Calgary offers **45+** evidence-informed programs per season (Fall/Winter, Spring/Summer).
- **Funding:** Wellspring Calgary receives no government or agency core funding but relies solely on the generosity of individuals, corporations, foundations and grassroots fundraisers.
- **Our Team:** Wellspring Calgary has sixteen permanent staff, occasional contract employees, 75 facilitators, and more than 192 volunteers. Annually volunteers donate more than 10,000 hours of service to help make Wellspring possible.
- **Other centres across Canada:** Currently there are eight Wellspring centres across Canada, including a second one in Alberta - Wellspring Edmonton.

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