

FIREFIGHTER STAIRCLIMB
CHALLENGE

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On **Sunday, May 3, 2020**, 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:

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Media Kit

The 2019 Event Results

- 568 firefighters climbed the BOW stairs, individually or in teams from their home fire departments.
- Year three of the 'Challenge the Chief' civilian climb saw eight civilians accept Chief Dongworth's challenge and they collectively raised \$83,671 to race him up the BOW tower.
- The 2019 Challenge the Chief title went to 911 Operator, Evan Birch.
- Participants hailed from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Texas, Alaska, California, New York, Australia, New Zealand, and Denmark.
- \$300,420 (net) was raised by firefighters and the community.
- The top fundraising team from Fort McMurray raised \$20,250; the top individual from Whitecourt raised \$9,735.
- The fastest time was 11:31 minutes.

Race Results

Top Category Winners:

- Top Male 18-35yrs: Ian Leew, Calgary FD, 12:03
- Top Female 18-35yrs: Ricky-Lee Devries, Champion FD, 18:17
- Top Male 36-50yrs: Geoff Pyke, Horizon Emergency Services, 11:31
- Top Female 36-50yrs: Liz Demers, Canmore Fire Rescue, 15:36
- Top Male 51+yrs: Rob Zimich, Calgary FD, 13:56
- Top Team: 6 Station Delta Force, Calgary FD, 51:22
- Top Individual Fundraiser: Curtis Visser, Whitecourt FD, \$9,735
- Top Team Fundraiser: Horizon Emergency Services, Fort McMurray, \$20,250

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
- **Randy O'Dell House** 3910 Seton Drive SE

Carma House



Randy O'Dell House





Wellspring Quick Facts

- **History:** Wellspring Calgary was co-founded by John Stephure, Rita Egizii, and Barbara Cunnings 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 permanent centre, Randy O’Dell House opened in October 2019. This centre is named after Calgary entrepreneur Randy O’Dell who sadly passed away before the centre was opened.
- **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, their caregiver, and their family members are welcome to join Wellspring Calgary free of charge and without referral.
- Wellspring Calgary has served more than 6,700 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 **90+** 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.

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