







# Easter Seals Alberta

## 2023 Report to Community



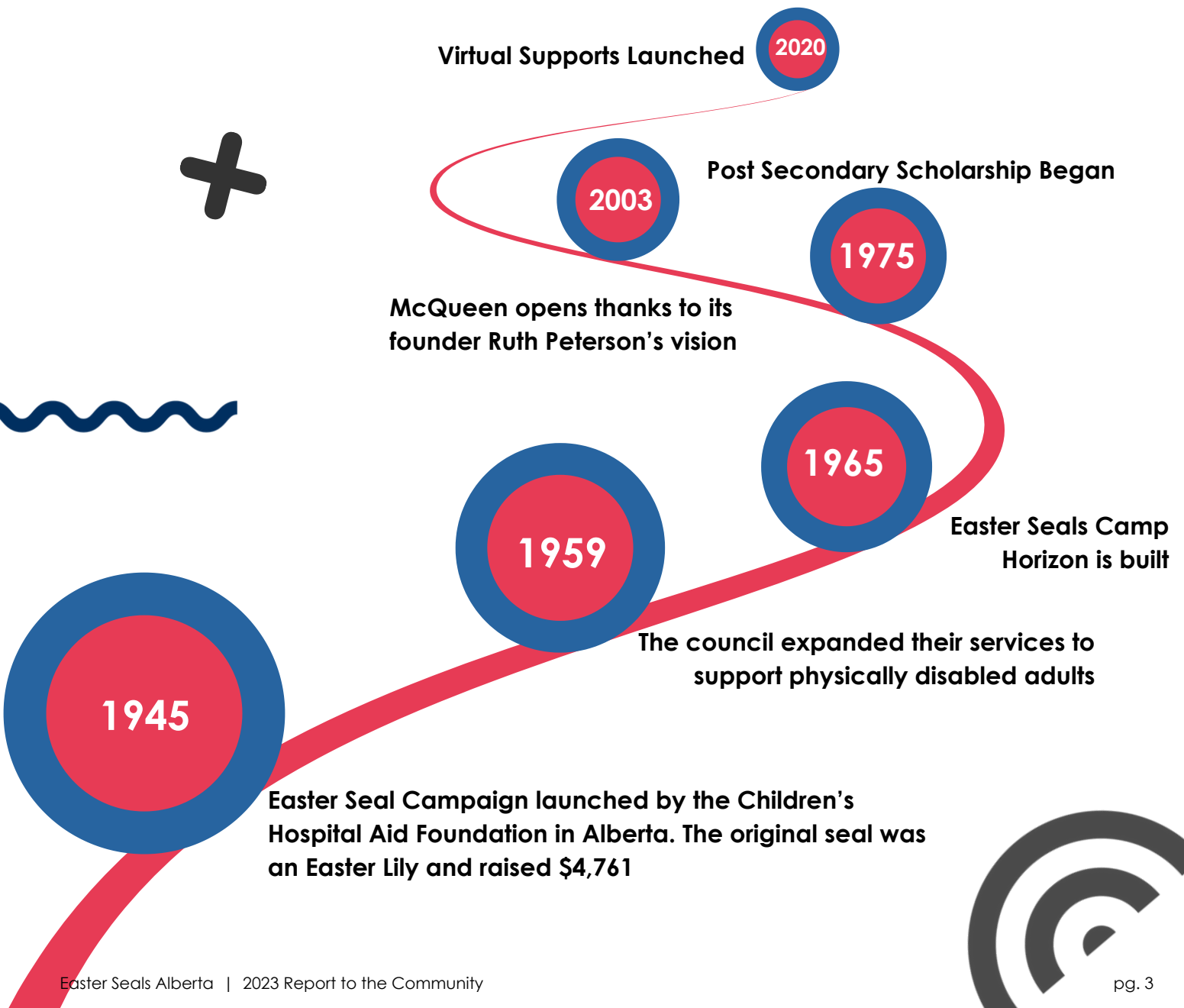
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# A History of Supports

For nearly three quarters of a century, Easter Seals Alberta has grown and established a number of different programs and supports. The history of the organization reflects the needs of the time – as new disability-related organizations have come and gone, and government policies and supports have changed, we have always had the same mission; to support the needs of Albertans with disabilities and medical conditions.

Since our humble beginnings, funds raised by community have supported mental wellness, education, research, and social wellbeing of people with disabilities. Today, we continue this legacy through our evolving supports and programs, including the accessibility supports we offer today.



# Easter Seals Alberta

Life with a disability can be expensive. Together, we strive to ensure that the resources individuals need for an independent and full life are available. You make this possible through our main supports:



## EASTER SEALS CAMP HORIZON

Easter Seals Camp Horizon provides year-round inclusive camp experiences for individuals of all ages with disabilities and medical conditions. Camp offers a unique opportunity for campers to build self-esteem and independence. Activities challenge their mind and body while creating lasting friendships and lifelong memories.



## EASTER SEALS MCQUEEN HOME

McQueen Home is a self-governed, nine-bedroom home in Edmonton for individuals with a disability looking to achieve more independence, greater inclusion in the community, and access to employment, education and recreation.



## ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS

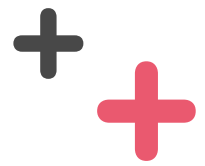
Our programs provide critically needed equipment and support to those who qualify physically and financially. This includes the Equipment Loan Program, home automation program, disability travel card, and virtual programs.



## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS

Educational supports are essential to ensure equal access to learning opportunities and academic success. Our programs range from adaptive technologies to personalized mentorship plans and financial aid for high school and post-secondary students.

# Guided by Community



Easter Seals Alberta is governed by our amazing volunteer board of directors. These individuals dedicate their time and expertise into shaping our organization by providing intellectual capital and strategic resources to fuel our success. They serve on behalf of YOU.

## Board of Directors

**Vineeta Maguire**  
President

**Graeme Auchincloss**  
Vice President

**Adam Darbellay**  
Treasurer

**Dan McPhee**  
Past President

**Christina White Prosser**

**Trevor Brick**

**Stephen Connelley**

**Kathy Sorenson**

**Makrina Morozowski**

**Dorothy Arts**

**Kyle Scott**

**Susan Anderson**

**Heather Tyminski**

Dear community,

Gratitude is a word I have been thinking about a lot lately. I could not be more grateful for our community's support and kindness over the past 73 years. Our community continues to inspire me every day and allows us to further our mission of fostering inclusion, independence and recreation for individuals with disabilities and medical conditions. Your support has helped some truly incredible people this past year; providing them with housing, adaptive equipment, scholarships, and life changing outdoor experiences at Camp Horizon. I am always overjoyed to hear all of the stories from our clients throughout the year. Talking to our clients each day reminds me of the life changing impact our community makes.

This year we focused on sustainability. Not only did we make some much needed improvements to the Camp Horizon property, but our Equipment Loan Program revamped the application process to make a more accessible and efficient process. In addition, we welcomed in new scholarships to support high school and post-secondary support for individuals with disabilities and continued to provide safe, stable housing for our residents at McQueen Home.

We know the world is always changing and with that, the needs of people with disabilities are changing as well. We will continue to strive to provide resources that will help support the mental and physical wellbeing of Albertans. To continue to accomplish our mission we must evolve, innovate, and lead the transformation of our programs and services. I am very excited to experience another year with our clients, as we further our vision of inspiring potential, building community and enriching lives.

**Katherine Such**  
Chief Executive Officer



# Meet our Ambassador, Mac



Easter Seals Alberta 2023 Ambassador, Mac Walsh, first attended Easter Seals programming at 19 years old. They joined our online programming during the early years of the pandemic. These online programs helped give Mac a sense of connection and belonging during their most isolating years. Since then, Mac has spent a number of years happily attending summer and Christmas camp at Camp Horizon in person.

Through this role, Mac feels they have been given so many amazing opportunities to further develop their advocacy and public speaking skills while connecting with the community and sharing just how important Camp Horizon and Easter Seals Alberta are to them. Some of Mac's favourite memories from their time as ambassador include sharing their story with different groups, like at the JC Anderson Memorial Golf Tournament, as well as during the Camp Horizon spring open house.



This summer, Mac will return to Camp Horizon, not as a camper, but as full time staff for the first time! In this role, Mac hopes to be able to continue to inspire others and provide campers with the same special camp feeling they were given.

**“I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to represent Easter Seals Alberta as their ambassador over the past year. Through this role I have learned and grown so much and it is my hope that by hearing my story, others will feel less alone, as well as understand the importance of camp for Albertans with disabilities.”**  
- Mac, 2023 Ambassador



# Let's Break this Down

Throughout 2023, thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, we had an incredible impact on Albertan's with a disability or medical condition. Here's a quick breakdown of the supports that were provided:



Lunches are the most important meal at McQueen. They make sure to break bread together everyday. On Fridays they look forward to 'lunchable' day!



## Easter Seals McQueen Home

Easter Seals McQueen Home is a nine bedroom fully accessible home that was developed to fill a gap in available housing options for people with disabilities; by providing a fully staffed, supportive living environment and community for people with disabilities that require assistance to live independently.

The dedicated staff at McQueen Home ensure everyday that the house feels like a home and everyone there feels supported. They provide 24 hour care, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year. The lead member of this incredible staff, Cindy Moisan, was the recipient of a Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal last year. For over four decades, Cindy has been instrumental in the continued success of Easter Seals McQueen Home. Her empathy, hard work and enthusiasm have furthered independence, enhanced quality of life and provided a caring, safe and supportive home environment for McQueen residents.

Residents enjoy activities around the house year round. They try to spend every lunch together and do something special for holidays. Last year, the residents dressed up as a truck together as a group, and spent an evening together in the summer along with their families at the annual McQueen barbeque. They stay active in community by going out to enjoy things like hockey, going to the gym, shopping, concerts and sporting events.



**McQueen employs 9 full-time staff each day in order to provide the necessary supports. This incredible team provided 78,840 hours of client support in 2023!**





**494**  
**Campers**

**14**  
**Volunteer**  
**Work Crews**

**115**  
**Facility**  
**Bookings**

**55,240**  
**Hours of**  
**Programming**

# Easter Seals Camp Horizon



Since 1965, Easter Seals Camp Horizon's mission has been to provide children and adults with disabilities and medical conditions life-changing outdoor recreation experiences.

In 2023, along with our successful summer camp season, we worked to improve the camp facilities themselves. We started the summer out with revamping our sports equipment!

We began with our basketball court. Removing obstacles that were obstructing accessibility, adding new nets, and giving the whole court a fresh coat of paint! Next, we received new floor hockey equipment, regraded the volleyball court, and added new safety features to our bike program.

We also worked to make Camp Horizon more sustainable and efficient this year. Using multiple grants, we replaced the windows in our buildings to make them more energy efficient, and installed new furnaces.

Your support to improve camp facilities will ensure campers continue to create lifelong memories for generations to come.



## Halloween Howler

This year we successfully hosted the annual Halloween Howler at Easter Seals Camp Horizon. It was a day of spooky celebration with people from the Bragg Creek community, our supporters and camper alumni coming out to celebrate in full costume. Attractions included a tractor ride, crafts, lawn games, and a fire pit. The counsellors even converted one of the cabins into a haunted house! It was a day to build new memories and a great way to reconnect after the summer.



## Christmas Camp

In 2022, we were excited to relaunch our annual celebration of overnight Christmas Camp at Easter Seals Camp Horizon. It offers adult campers the opportunity to enjoy festive crafts and activities while spending time with their camp family of friends and longtime staff.

Christmas Camp was offered on December 17-18. Our 24 campers enjoyed numerous Christmas activities together, including holiday activities, movies and a Christmas dinner. We welcomed back a longtime pair of volunteers, who make time every year to surprise campers with presents from Santa and Mrs. Claus.



# Camp Memories

## Meet Casey

Every year we hear amazing stories from our campers about the memories they have made during the summer. This year, Casey felt compelled to share her story.

In Casey's hometown, she didn't have many people she could relate to. So, her network suggested Casey check out Easter Seals Camp Horizon. The first time Casey attended, she was shy and reserved. But in the summer of 2023, Casey was determined to come out of her shell.

She challenged herself to participate in all the activities, despite her fear of heights. She spent time connecting with her roommates, who she speaks to now outside of the camp season. And she even wrote letters to some of the counsellors. Now, she talks to the friends she made this summer every day and goes to every Easter Seals Alberta event she can. Casey also encourages people to attend Easter Seals Camp Horizon whenever she can.

**"I wish camp lasted all year long."**

To Casey, camp really is a second home.



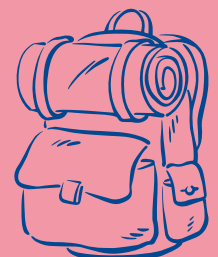
**Favourite Activity at Camp: High Ropes**



**Number of Snacks Eaten at Camp: 13,000**



**#1 Item Lost at Camp: Socks**



**What do Campers do When They First Arrive? Meet their bunkmates!**



# Off-Season Magic

Like all good things, summer camp season has to end, leaving the property at Camp Horizon open to other bookings. In order to build sustainability, the property is utilized in the shoulder season to offer outdoor educational programming and a community space for a variety of other partner groups. Whether it's a school for a day of outdoor education, a corporation looking for a beautiful place to have their work party, or a couple wanting to spend their special day out in beautiful Kananaskis, we are more than happy to host them at camp.

## A Day to Celebrate and Give Back



Alex and Nick are a very outdoor orientated couple who were not sure if they would ever get married. They had been together for ten years and having a wedding with all of the formalities just didn't feel like them. But, Alex's sister had attended Easter Seals Camp Horizon with her school, and when the couple made the decision to get married after attending their friend's more casual wedding, they knew they wanted to have it at Easter Seals Camp Horizon.

**“We're a big fan of the outdoors, we both spend a lot of time out there, and we both feel really strongly that people should be able to experience that. Regardless of their ability level.”**

In addition to booking their wedding at camp, the couple went a step further with their support by asking guests to donate to Easter Seals in lieu of wedding presents. As they had been living together for so long, they didn't feel like they needed anything, so instead they chose to give back so everyone can experience the outdoors.

To them, camp was the perfect place to have a wedding, and we couldn't be more excited they chose to spend their special day with us AND support people with disabilities.





# Accessibility Supports

Accessibility Supports provides vital equipment and support to Albertans with disabilities and medical conditions. This umbrella program includes the Equipment Loan Program, Home Automation, Disability Travel Card and Virtual Programs.

This year, our Accessibility Supports team continued their community outreach by attending community networking, information sessions and events. They contacted over 200 Family & Community Support Services locations across the province in order to provide updated information about Easter Seals Alberta programming. In consultation with community, they modernized the Equipment Loan Program application form and processes. These changes better meet the needs of our clients and expedite processes to ensure clients can access the equipment they need as quickly as possible.

You have changed countless lives with your donations through this program. With equipment support, our clients have the chance to gain more independence, be included, and participate in their day-to-day activities. Your support through the Accessibility Supports Program can make a meaningful difference in someone's life.



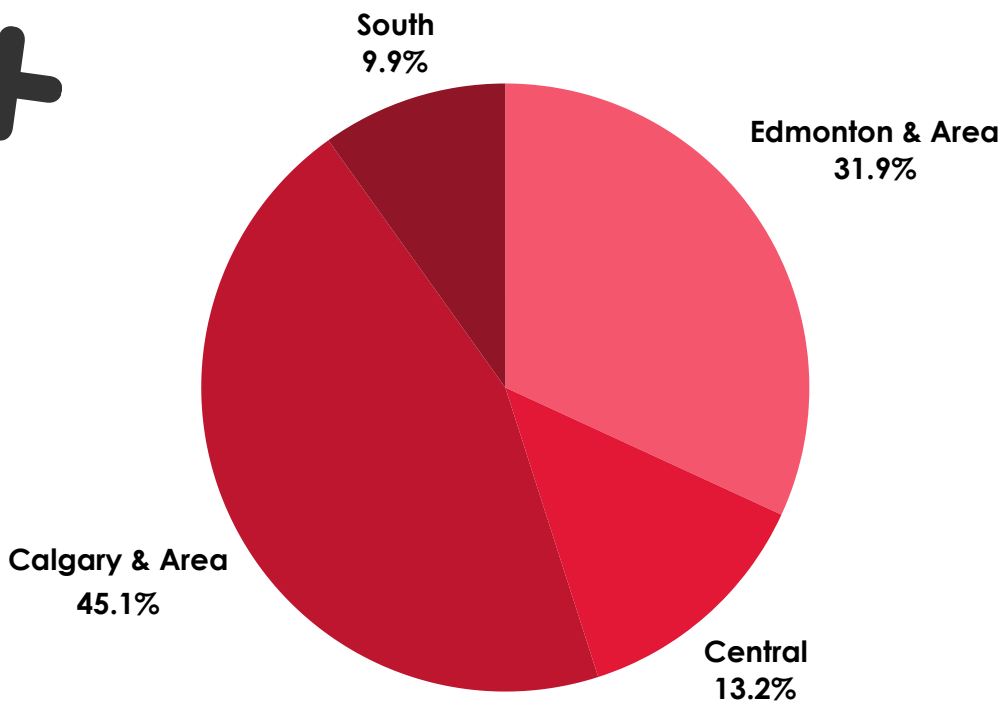
**“The increased mobility has done a great deal for my mental health. I hadn't expected that. Now it is more than just a means of transport. It has helped improve my overall health.” - Michael, a recipient of our Equipment Loan Program.**





## Equipment Loan Program

Through this support, persons with disabilities and medical conditions can build more independence. Our Equipment Loan Program exists to be a funding option for individuals who have exhausted all other resources for accessibility equipment. When government funding falls short, your donations through the Equipment Loan Program are there to fuel community inclusion, independence and self-esteem.



Percentage of Clients by Region





# Virtual Programs

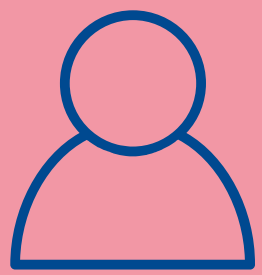
Easter Seals Alberta's online program, Adventure Camp at Home, delivers a virtual experience that mirrors what our traditional camp program offers. The program empowers participants by encouraging them to connect, learn, and play. It educates participants and gives them the opportunity to meet in a virtual environment to explore themes together through games, arts and crafts, music, movies and even virtual field trips!

In 2023, Adventure Camp at Home hosted **321** online sessions with **1,566** attendees. Easter Seals offered 8 program sessions each week, moving up to 10 during the summer months thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs program.

Towards the end of the year, we adjusted the program due to client need, and moved down to 1 weekly session on Mondays, with an end of the month movie session on Friday. This change allows us to still give participants a place to connect every week, while encouraging clients to connect independently and take their friendships they make with us into their own hands.



**321 Online Sessions**



**1,566 Attendees**



# Scholarships

This past year Easter Seals Alberta awarded **30** scholarships to recipients enrolled in high school and post secondary education. We invite you to hear stories from some of them below.



## Workplace Readiness Mentorship Program

The Workplace Readiness Mentorship Program is proudly supported by Sun Life Canada. The program aims to help students succeed in university and transition into the labour force.

### Meet Chris

Chris always struggled in school, leaving him feeling “stupid”. It wasn’t until he diagnosed with ADHD later in life that he understood why he struggled. Determined to change things, Chris is pursuing a career as a teacher to provide more supports so neurodivergent kids never leave the system feeling the way he did.

**“This scholarship allows me to focus on school and my family, instead of my finances. To me, this scholarship will give me time. Thank you so much for this. It will never be forgotten and always be appreciated.”**

## Phyllis Davidson Scholarship

Created in loving memory of Phyllis Davidson, The Phyllis Davidson Scholarship program offers post-secondary academic financial assistance to students living with disabilities that require mobility aids.

### Meet LeeLa

LeeLa is a 37 year old living with Multiple Sclerosis. She is a Bachelor of Arts student at MacEwan University finishing her second year of an Honours Anthropology degree and minoring in Classics.

**“Words cannot adequately express just how much receiving this scholarship means to me. For the first time in a long time, I feel like I can truly do anything. Multiple Sclerosis is a life-altering, uphill battle that often makes the simplest tasks more complicated. Wonderful initiatives like this scholarship help remove some barriers and restore my hope of being an inspiration for my children.”**







## + Accessible Technology and Mentorship Program

Easter Seals partnered nationally with Scotiabank for the Supporting Students through Accessible Technology and Mentorship Program, which aims to bridge the gap that the cost of accessible accommodations, specialized technology, learning aids, attendant care, support services, and accessible transportation can create for students living with disabilities.

### Meet Tyrell

Tyrell is a grade 11 student, who lives with Cerebral Palsy, hydrocephalus and is vision impaired. He applied to the program so he could purchase an iPad to support his education.

**“Tyrell loves to use the EZ reader on his iPad because it highlights the words and reads with him. He has a difficult time with fine motor skills, [but] the iPad gives him an opportunity to type instead of having to hold a pencil, allowing Tyrell to answer for himself! We are so thankful and so excited to have this opportunity for Tyrell to learn at school and home easily.” - Lyndsay, Tyrell’s mom**

## Norman Denoon Memorial Scholarship

Established in memory of Norman Denoon, the Easter Seals Alberta Norman Denoon Memorial Scholarship offers post-secondary academic scholarships to students living with disabilities or medical condition that have made a significant contribution through volunteerism or advocacy.

### Meet Kylie

Kylie was playing hockey when she began to feel dizzy. As the symptoms progressed, she was admitted to the hospital and was diagnosed with dysautonomia. Her symptoms progressed into daily migraines, fainting, and seizures. These changes led to anxiety and depression.

Seeing the gaps in her rural community when it came to mental health, she knew she would try to fill that gap. This inspired her to pursue a Bachelor of Arts-Psychology and Mental Health.

**“The money from this scholarship is going to help pay for my schooling and future. Thank you for not only helping me, but in the long run, helping so many more people as well.”**



# Events

## Red Shirt Day

Thank you to everyone that wore red on May 31, 2023. Your support created a colourful display of solidarity for the disability community as individuals with disabilities, families, allies and corporations came together.

In 2023, our Red Shirt Day celebration was supported by Litco Law. They sponsored the day, helping brand our red shirts, which supporters stepped up to purchase across the province to raise more awareness. Not only that, but they also donated a \$5,000 gift match.

Held on the Wednesday during National AccessAbility Week, Red Shirt Day in 2023 marked the 5th anniversary of the movement.



## Kevin Karius Celebrity Golf Classic Presented by Prism Flow Products

This year we saw a shift to the annual Kevin Karius Celebrity Golf Classic, presented by Prism Flow Products, as Prestige Event Planning took the reigns and hosted the event as a third party fundraiser in partnership with Kevin Karius.

The energy at the event was electric, raising over \$90,000 thanks to the generosity of the sponsors, players, volunteers and celebrities. Proceeds from the event totaled more than \$25,000 and will ensure clients in northern Alberta have access to the resources they need.





## A Decade of Dedication: JC Anderson Memorial Golf Tournament

Back in 2009, Susan Anderson was introduced to Easter Seals Camp Horizon by a passionate friend and Easter Seals board member. Inspired to do more, Susan shared the story with her father - JC Anderson - and 'the rest is history.' He donated \$50,000 to refurbish the pool right away, but once he saw the other facilities, he wanted to do more. JC Anderson took the reigns on a \$10 million fundraising campaign for new dormitories at camp, kicking it off with an initial \$1 million donation.

JC had a vision – to ensure kids with disabilities had a place to play and belong, no matter what their diagnosis. A place where they could be kids, make new friendships, and learn valuable life lessons that would make them unstoppable well into the future.

To honour his incredible legacy, our annual golf tournament was named after him in his memory. His daughter, Susan Anderson, continues to lead the charge as a board member, passionate advocate and supporter.

2023 marked the tenth year of this event's naming in JC Anderson's memory. While we struggled to regain normalcy after COVID, the community's support last year resulted in raising event attendance by over 50%!

The tournament takes place across from the Anderson family ranch at the picturesque Sirocco Golf Club. Over the years this event has sent numerous kids to camp, giving them the opportunity to create life long memories.

This event has raised more than \$900,000 over the last decade, in large part due to the Anderson families support. Because of this event, Easter Seals Camp Horizon looks very different today. We are grateful for Susan and the JC Anderson Family Foundation for their dedication and commitment to Camp Horizon and ensuring JC's Legacy lives on.





Paper Egg Campaign,  
Easter 2023

**Community events helped  
raise more than \$325,000!**



Great Outdoor Comedy Festival  
Summer 2023



Larlyn Golf  
Tournament  
Summer 2023



Breathe Outdoors Gear  
and Grub Event June  
2023

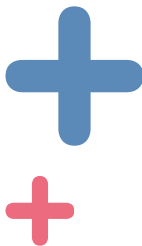




# Century 21



Thanks to the generous contributions of participating Century 21 brokerages in Alberta, we would like to acknowledge the 2023 Kids to Camp Club members and Golden Heart Award Recipients. These realtors, and others across Alberta, collectively donated or raised more than \$70,000 to help send kids to Camp Horizon:



Ciaran O'Neill

John McNeill

Deborah Clark

James Mabey

Jeffrey LeBlanc

Julie Vesuwalla

Ralph Sears

Geneva Tetreault

Robert McIntyre

Diana McIntyre

Miranda  
Freedman

Brent Anderson

Together with Century 21's continuous support and philanthropic spirit, 33 kids in 2023 had the opportunity to go to Easter Seals Camp Horizon, where they could meet new friends, learn new skills, and make lifelong memories.

# Volunteers

Easter Seals Alberta could not make the impact we have without our incredible volunteers. Whether you lent camp your pair of hands, helped out at one of our community events, assisted at one of our casinos, or fundraised for one of our programs.

This year we were supported by **545** volunteers that put in a total of **6022** hours. We couldn't make the impact we do without those volunteers, so if you joined us, we sincerely thank you.





# Together we are UnstoppABLE®



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