



Community Campaign

After almost 50 years of providing quality, affordable accommodation and services to people over 65 years of age, the Greater Edmonton Foundation (GEF) needs to raise money to build more affordable housing for Edmonton's low to moderate income senior citizens. This is the first time in the history of GEF that the community is being asked to help so we can meet the demand for the increasing number of seniors who need affordable housing.

Seniors living on fixed incomes are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet in Edmonton's booming economy. With rents skyrocketing and apartments being converted to condominiums, seniors are finding themselves out on the street in many cases. With a growing wait list of more than 500 people, the Foundation desperately needs to build new residences to meet

the demands of an aging population.

Alberta's population is aging so quickly that the number of seniors is expected to increase by more than 40% in the next 10 years. Affordable seniors housing is required in all areas of Edmonton and with the community's help, GEF plans to develop other properties in Rosslyn, Ottewell, Lauderdale, Meadowlark and Holyrood. One hundred percent of funds raised from the Foundation's *Building for Life* community campaign will be put toward the cost of building more affordable housing for seniors.

By building new seniors housing, GEF will not only be helping seniors who need a place to live but also their families. Often it is the family who becomes the caregiver for their mother or father as they age. GEF sees this

community campaign as part of the solution to the affordable housing crisis currently facing Edmonton and area residents.

To learn more about the Greater Edmonton Foundation and how you can support your changing community, please call 780-482-6561.



Breakfast Fundraiser

Wednesday,
November 5, 2008
7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Westin Hotel

Call 780-482-6561
to get involved.

Britannia Gardens Fire

On February 22, tenants were evacuated from their homes at Britannia Gardens Apartments when a fire spread through the building resulting in \$4 million worth of damage. The fire was caused when a torch ignited an exterior wall during a routine re-roofing project. Seven apartments on the upper two floors were severely damaged as the flames spread to the attic and eventually caused a portion of the roof to collapse. Damage caused by

the fire and water was so extensive that no one can live in the building, including the suites that were not directly touched by the fire, until the reconstruction is complete. All 65 tenants were safely evacuated from the building and have been relocated, some within other GEF residences and some have moved to other accommodation. Construction crews are working on restoring the building and while it is closed, GEF is refurbishing

the entire complex, including modernizing the elevator, replacing the kitchen cabinets in all of the suites and making several other upgrades to improve access and quality of life. The building is expected to be back in operation by the fall of 2009.

Retaining Staff in a **HOT** Economy

GEF: Housing for Seniors employs nearly 400 individuals and is experiencing the same challenges other employers face due to a shortage of workers in the Edmonton labour market. And with lodges in operation 24 hours a day, it becomes more



30 Years of Service!
L to R: Karen Bee, Marlene Boyke,
Janice Agard, Theresa Baier

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the next page*

Did you know?

GEF is featured on the Edmonton Economic Development website as having some of the best practices in recruitment and retention.

Check out some of our initiatives at www.edmonton.com/employersofchoice

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important than ever to maintain the Foundation's presence in the community and explore new ways to retain and recruit employees.

GEF employees truly are second to none and the Foundation takes pride in showing its staff how much they are appreciated. Throughout the year, GEF hosts numerous staff morale initiatives and team building activities.

February 27 was GEF's annual **Staff Appreciation Day** and employees participated in a variety of activities and received a vest with the GEF logo.

Each year GEF celebrates and recognizes employees who have been with the Foundation for over five years. This year's **Long Service Awards** celebration was held on March 14 and GEF proudly honoured 47 employees by presenting

them with awards. Four employees received recognition for 30 years of service to GEF.

To reward good performers who are reliable workers, GEF initiated the **Dependability Performance Bonus**.

Employees are delighted with the new system as it is another way that they are being rewarded for good performance.

GEF isn't the only one that thinks its employees are special people. The **You're Welcome Edmonton Awards**, hosted by Edmonton Economic Development Corporation & Edmonton Tourism, recognizes people in the hospitality and service sector who provide superior and consistent customer service to visitors and local residents.

Twenty-six GEF employees and volunteers were nominated for awards.

This year, Magdalena (Nena) Adarna from Rosslyn Place was the award recipient in the Outstanding Food Services category.



Nena Adarna
Outstanding Food Services
You're Welcome Edmonton
Award Recipient

Resident Wellness and Participation

The Foundation's biggest priority is the residents' happiness and continued health.

Now in its fourth year, the **Summer Active Program** promotes active living and wellness for seniors living in GEF residences across the city. For several months, residents participated in activities like

poker derbys, walk-a-thons, sneaker days, beach ball volleyball, golfing and vegetable bowling, and then came together for a wind-up celebration on July 10 at Hawrelak Park. The day included a BBQ lunch, games, an awards presentation for the most active residence and music by the Banjo Buskers Trio. Bus transportation for

the residents was generously provided by the City of Edmonton.

Earlier this year, GEF partnered with students from the University of Alberta to offer a series of 14 art classes to residents at **Meadowlark Place**. To showcase the residents' artwork, an **art show** was held on March 26.

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The beautiful canvases lined the walls in the common area of the lodge. The atmosphere was that of a real art show as people came by to view the artwork and have refreshments while mingling with the artists.

In May, **McQueen Place celebrated its 10th anniversary.** Joining the GEF residents and employees for the occasion were Honourable Heather Klimchuk and Councilor Ben Henderson.



McQueen Place 10th Anniversary

It turned out to be a reunion for many former residents and employees of the old McQueen Lodge and everyone spent the afternoon visiting and enjoying refreshments.

GEF Board of Directors

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We hope you enjoyed

the premiere edition of *Community Connections*, the newsletter of the Greater Edmonton Foundation (GEF): Housing for Seniors. Our newsletter is published to keep you up-to-date with what's happening at GEF. If you would like to learn more about GEF and the work we do, please join us for a GEF Experience Information Session and Tour.



Front L to R:
Jennie Weleschuk,
Irene Bosch,
Heather Klimchuk,
Raymond Swonek,
Dorothy Harrison.

Back L to R: Edith
Clarke, Rosella
Markle.

Community Initiatives Program Grant

On September 26, Honourable Heather Klimchuk, presented GEF with a cheque for \$30,000. The grant from the Community Initiatives Program, administered by Alberta Culture and Community Spirit and funded through the Alberta Lottery Fund, will be put toward the cost of the new GEF bus.