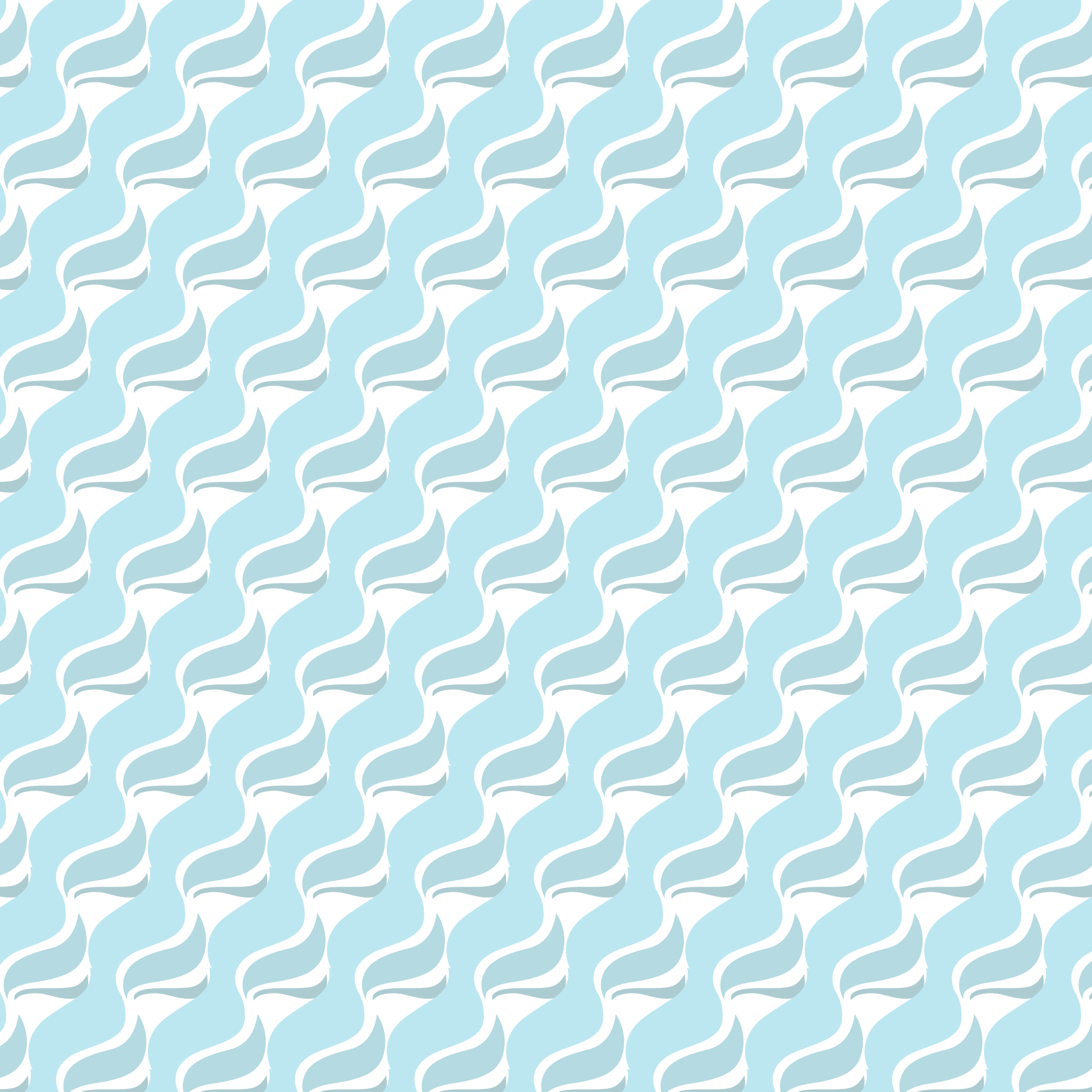
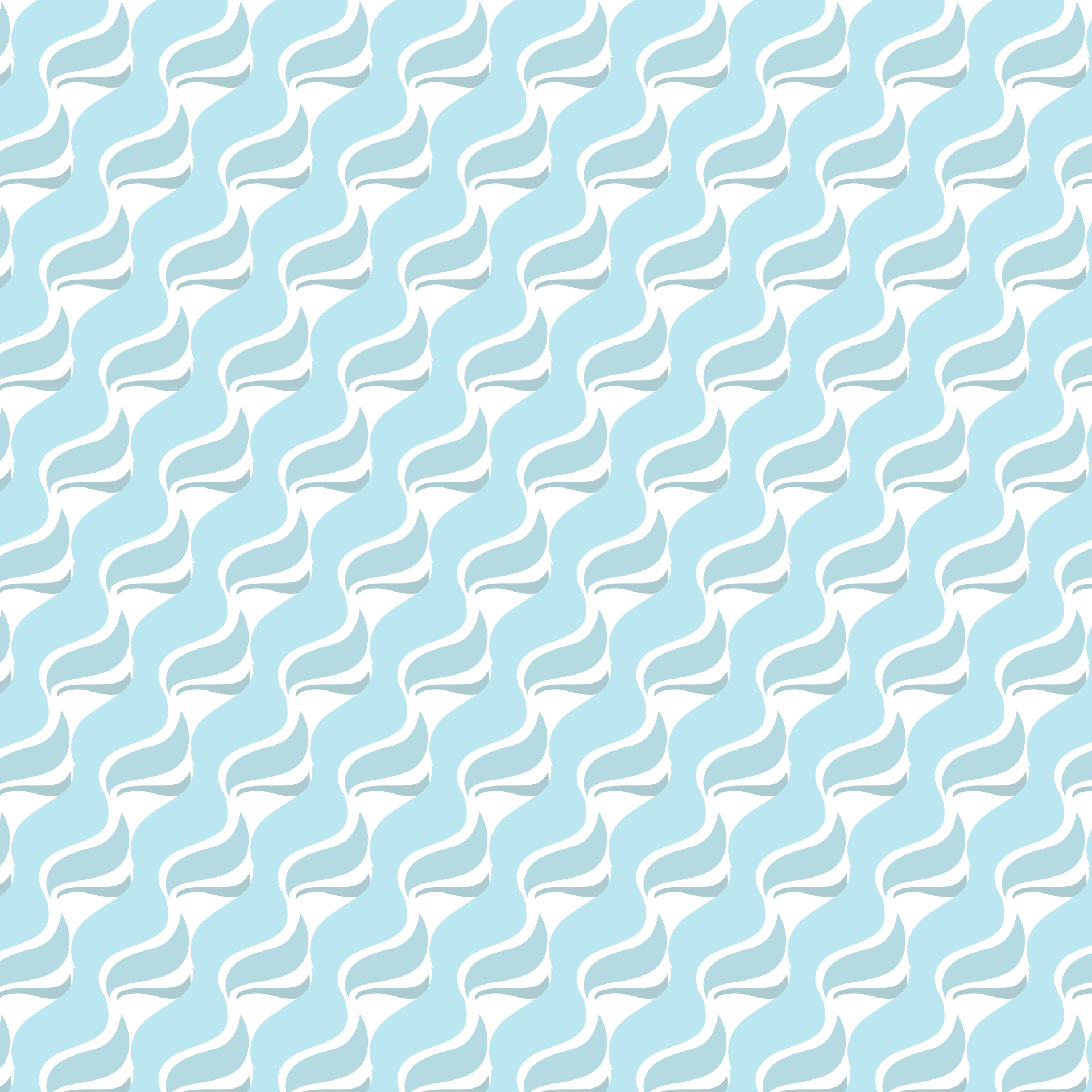




PRINCE GEORGE
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
all for our community.

*A Brief History of
the First 25 Years
of the Prince George
Community Foundation
1995 - 2020*





DEDICATION

Dedicated to our partners, friends and communities that have inspired and supported us.
May we continue to have the privilege of helping Prince George and our northern communities thrive!



FOREWORD

There are 191 community foundations currently in operation across Canada. While they may be separated by the vastness of our geography, they are very much unified in their overarching objectives - to create and support funds capable of improving the lives of their citizens and that leave a legacy.

In celebration of its 25th anniversary, this is the first chapter in the story of the Prince George Community Foundation.

I was there at the beginning. What started out as an idea quickly gained momentum as the concept was shared enthusiastically and the founding board was formed. How far we have come since the seed for the foundation was planted in 1995, thanks in large part to the dedicated volunteers who gave of their time, their professional and experiential expertise to guide the foundation through the formative period. Incorporation, financial policy, operational procedures and risk mitigation are just some of the areas that had to be researched for a sound structure and to create a trusted platform for the foundation.

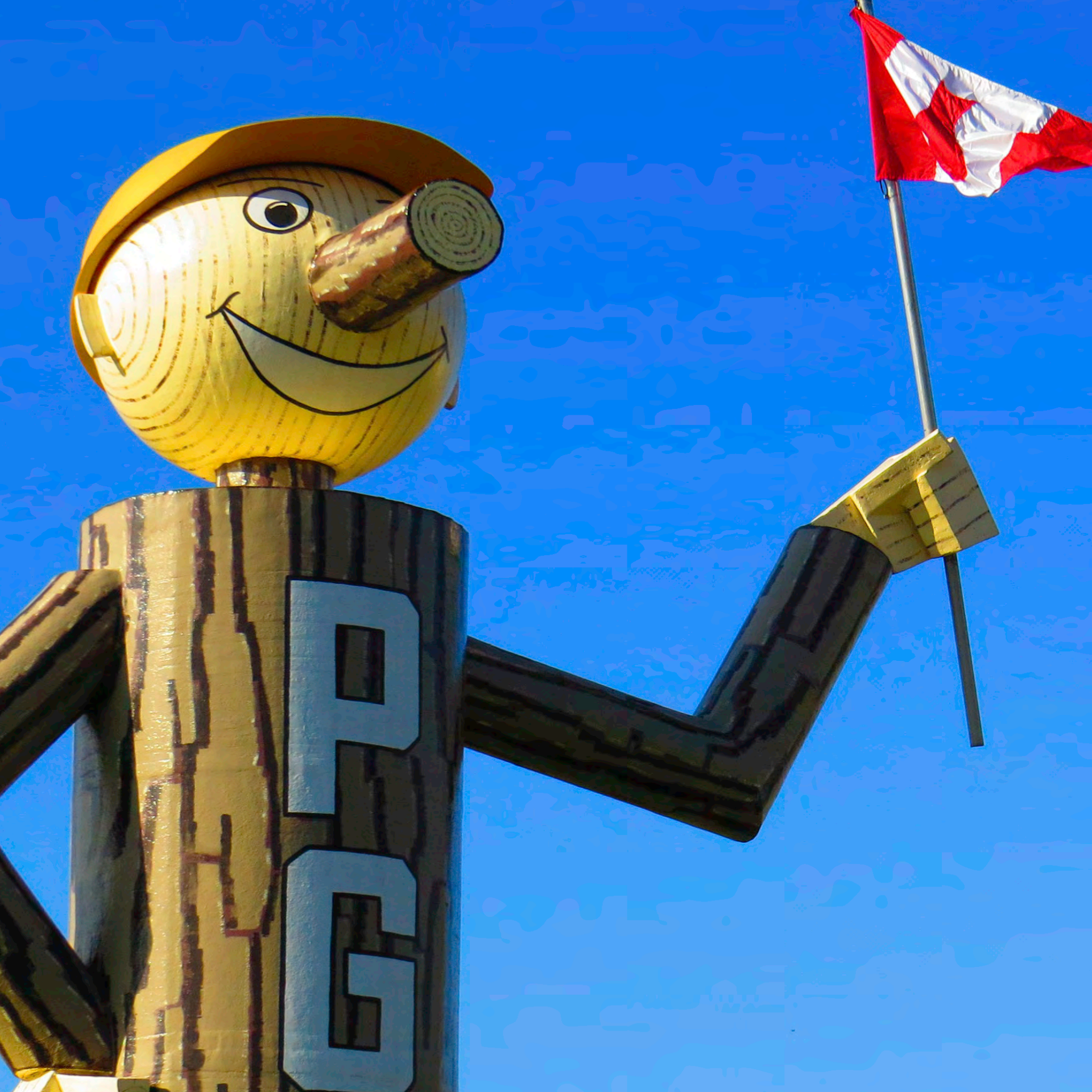
With administrative procedures in place, a top-quality board and enthusiastic and passionate volunteers, the Prince George Community Foundation provided comfort to potential donors. It provided the opportunity for people to make a sustainable difference to the quality of life in their community.

From that single seed in 1995 grew a strong network of roots, connecting and supporting our northern communities. By 2020, the Prince George Community Foundation provided management and operational oversight to 17 community foundations from the northern region. The growth has been amazing, and I am so proud to have been a part of this incredible story.

I hope you enjoy reading about this first chapter in the story of the Prince George Community Foundation, and that it inspires you as much as it has me. The foundation provides a unique opportunity to support our great community in perpetuity. As a donor or a volunteer, your community will thank you, as will those who benefit from the proceeds of your gift or your time. It's a wonderful opportunity to give back to your community.

John Backhouse
Mayor, City of Prince George, 1986 - 1996







A Brief History of the First 25 Years

of the Prince George Community Foundation

∞ 1995 to 2020 ∞

Giving a Legacy to our Community ~ Forever



Photo by Chuck Chin

1994: AN IDEA TAKES SHAPE

A movement was sweeping across Canada in the 1980s and 1990s to create local foundations aimed at improving the lives of the citizens in Canadian communities. By building endowment funds and granting the income to local charitable organizations, community foundations were supporting the philanthropic aims of donors while also addressing some of the emerging financial needs of local communities immediately and in perpetuity.

While attending municipal meetings in the Lower Mainland in the fall of 1994, Prince George Mayor John Backhouse recalls watching a report to city council by the Richmond Community Foundation. The foundation was providing the income from its \$3 million of endowed funds back to the local community in the form of grants.

Inspired by this, Mayor Backhouse returned home keen to share the idea for a new community foundation for the city of Prince George. He met with City Manager, George Paul, who immediately got to work researching the concept.



Mayor John Backhouse

Within months of being tasked to review the idea, George Paul and City Finance Manager, Bill Kennedy returned to the Mayor's office armed with their findings and a plan. There was strong interest from local people and organizations to leave a lasting legacy within the community. With no local philanthropic organization able to accept or support endowments at the time, financial gifts were being directed outside Prince George to provincial or national charities or to other non-charitable organizations entirely. There was an opportunity and a desire for a community foundation in Prince George but there was much work to be done to make it a reality.

Mayor Backhouse called a meeting of volunteer community leaders to gain consensus and take action to move forward from concept to reality. Those volunteers formed a steering committee with the mandate to develop a local registered community foundation. From November 1994 to 1995, the steering committee, led by Murry Krause as Chair and George Paul as Secretary, met in the Annex at City Hall and worked through the many details associated with their mandate.



"I got involved because I had an idea; a letter went out from my office inviting people to a meeting at City Hall. I chaired the meeting, described the concept and requested their support. I don't think there was a single negative comment. It was all very typical Prince George; our attitude of 'let's-get-on-with-this' and 'let's-go'."

Mayor Backhouse on the creation of the foundation

"It was important for Prince George to have a community foundation. It was part of the maturing of the community."

Murry Krause on the importance of creating the foundation

One of the first orders of business of the steering committee was to create a mission statement, which was conceived and agreed upon by consensus during the first meeting of the committee. Over time, the objective of the foundation has remained consistent while the statement has evolved.

ORIGINAL MISSION STATEMENT

To create a Community Foundation that enables others to enhance the quality of life in Prince George by the attraction and prudent stewardship of accumulated capital, distributing the income by way of grants to respond to local needs and interests as a caring, ethical and independent Community Foundation.

UPDATED MISSION STATEMENT

We provide an opportunity to make a lasting philanthropic donation to enhance your communities ~ forever

The Prince George Community Foundation (PGCF or foundation) was incorporated under the Society Act of BC on October 25, 1995. The signatories on the founding documentation were Murry Krause, Jan Christiansen, George Paul, Ron East and Tom Steadman.

With its incorporation complete and the PGCF officially established, the steering committee identified community leaders for nomination to the board of the PGCF in November 1995. Nominees were invited to

Steering Committee Members

Murry Krause

United Way, City Council

Tom Shand

Hospital Foundation

Mike Hamer

UNBC

David Wharrie

CNC, Hospital Foundation

Lyn Hall

City of Prince George

Rosemary Currie

Murray Sadler

Legal

Ron East

Media

Ed Dylke

Child Development Centre

David Coflin

United Way

George Paul

City Hall

Jan Christiansen

Legal

Brent Campbell

Accountant, Finance

Tom Steadman

Community Supporter, a UNBC Founder & Implementation Planning Group Member



a PGCF Steering Committee meeting in February 1996 and it was at that meeting that the first PGCF Board of Directors (Board) was appointed.

Many of the members of both the steering committee and the inaugural PGCF Board remain active in, supportive of, and contribute to the foundation and the community to this day.

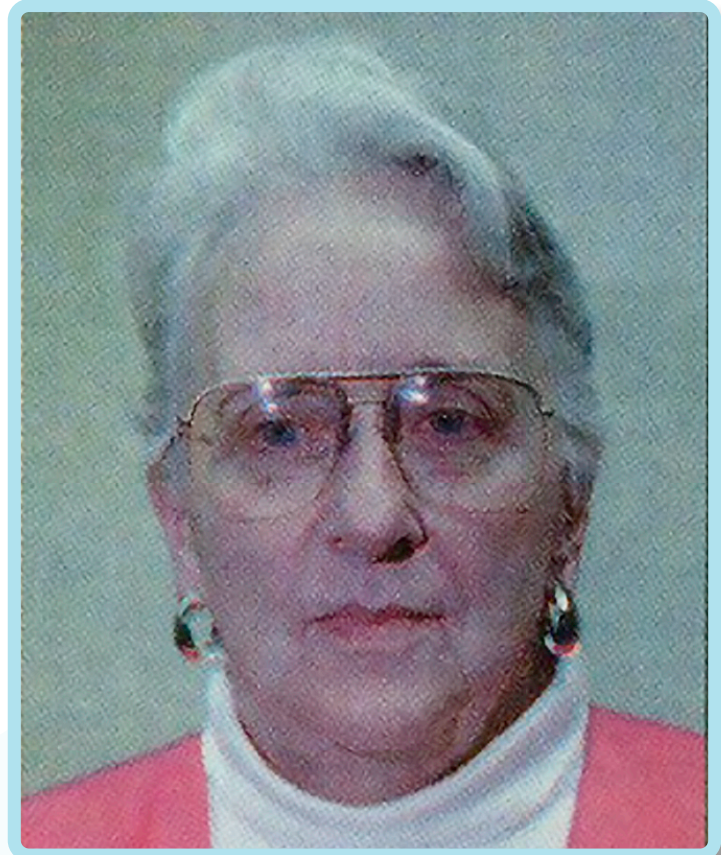
“We really wanted [the PGCF Board] to be broadly based and ensured it would be by having the Mayor of Prince George as an automatic member of the Board. That was a way of making sure that the general public would always have a doorway into what was going on with the foundation.”

Founder Jan Christiansen – on appointing the Mayor of Prince George as an ex-officio member of the Board.

Bev Christensen quickly became elected as the first President of the PGCF.

“Ron East contacted me by phone and invited me to a meeting to ‘learn more about the community foundation movement’. At that point it was unclear whether I was attending the meeting as a citizen or a reporter. So off I went with my notebook, just in case I needed to make notes to use if writing about the community foundation movement. At that ‘information meeting’ there were many community leaders and they were handing out pamphlets and other material related to the purpose of a community foundation. I was reading that material when I realized a meeting had started and they were calling for nominations for president and, within minutes, I was nominated, seconded and elected. I honestly do not remember who nominated me as it happened so fast. I was still concentrating on reading the material they had handed out.”

Bev Christensen on being elected first PGCF President



Above: Bev Christensen

First Board of Directors 1995

Bev Christensen
President

Mayor John Backhouse

Noreen Rustad

Tom Steadman

Ron East

Daphne Baldwin

Lance Morgan

Bob Harkins

Vasso Vahlas



Bev's first order of business was to find more about her new task and she didn't have to wait long for her opportunity. She attended her first meeting of the Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) in Calgary in 1995. CFC President, Monica Patten warmly welcomed Bev and the PGCF to the CFC 'family' and Bev returned home from that meeting armed with mountains of information to share with the Board.

Work began in earnest to further define the structure of the foundation. Committees were established for various purposes including identifying and managing investments and determining grants. A logo was created to assist with widespread promotions and publicity. Bev Christensen remembers fondly the day she and Noreen Rustad chose the logo for the foundation, which was created by Concept Design, a local artist and friend.

In the period of one year, the PGCF developed from an idea to a reality. This marked the beginning of the first 25 memorable years of the foundation's journey.



The Prince George Community Foundation



Photo by Chuck Chin



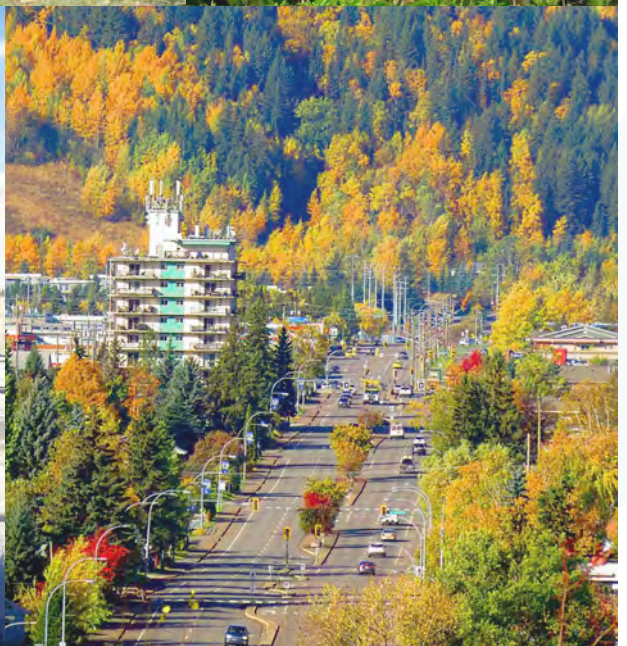




Photo by Chuck Chin

FUNDRAISING, DONATIONS AND GRANTS

With the PGCF incorporated, a board appointed and an approved mission statement, the foundation applied for and was granted charitable status from the Federal Government. Committees were in place and it was time to get on with raising endowment funds.

Early on in the life of the PGCF, there was a consensus among the steering committee members that the foundation would not compete with other local charities for donations from the community. David Wharrie remembers the camaraderie amongst the organizations in the early days when everyone talked to each other. Further, as the president of the Prince George Regional Hospital Foundation (now known as the Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation (Hospital Foundation)), Tom Griffiths recalls how the Hospital Foundation was proud to play a role on the steering committee for the PGCF and respected the maintenance of the original intent of the foundation to not compete with other community charities by actively fundraising. This sensitivity was paramount to the PGCF maintaining good relations within the community.

1996 - 1997

DeWit Life Insurance Gift

President Bev Christensen & members of the first PGCF Board were present at City Hall when one of the PGCF's first gifts was received - a life insurance policy from Gerry DeWit. This was publicized in the Prince George Citizen newspaper on March 1, 1997 as a way of promoting the foundation.

The Mechanics of an Endowment

A financial endowment is a legal structure for managing a permanent pool of investments for specific purposes within the community, according to the will of its founders and donors. These investments are administered by the foundation to benefit the community.

The funds are structured with the principal value kept intact, while the investment income is available for use each year. The endowed funds are not touched so their income will be available forever. A first in our community, with the creation of the PGCF, individuals, families or businesses could designate the income from their endowment to a charity of their choice or leave it undesignated.

Income from designated and undesignated funds is given back as grants to charitable organizations in our community in the foundation's areas of interest (arts and culture, sports and recreation, health, education, local environment, and social services) at a spring grant reception. The income from endowed funds held by charitable organizations are distributed at a fall reception.

Donating to the overall operation and administration of the foundation is also an option that strikes a chord with PGCF Board members, management and those who have been closely involved with the careful and frugal operation of the society.





Bev Christensen receiving life insurance policy from Gerry DeWit



Bev Christensen, Gerry DeWit & members of the first PGCF Board

Types of Endowment Funds

Initially, three types of endowment funds were established to improve lives of residents of Prince George in perpetuity. As of 2020, there were 181 funds in the PGCF. As of 2021, there are 193 funds with the PGCF.

Family Funds

Created by any family with the proceeds being either designated to a specific charity or undesignated and distributed by the PGCF Grants Committee. Nearly half (49%) of the funds held by the PCGF are Family Funds.

Agency (Organizational) Funds

Funds established by a charitable organization as permanent endowment funds to ensure an ongoing source of financial support for their programs and operations. The agency transfers ownership of the Fund to the PGCF under the agreement and the annual income is distributed to the charitable organization.

Field of Interest Funds

These funds generate income to benefit broad charitable areas in the fields of: arts and culture, sports and recreation, health, education, local environment, and social services. The PGCF makes granting decisions based on these broad fields of interest.



The Backhouse Roast

Bev Christensen recalls the need to raise funds for the newly created foundation and the tribute roast held on October 5, 1996 for retiring Mayor John Backhouse provided the fitting occasion to do just that. Bev Christensen recalls talking to hundreds of people at the event and that significant funds were raised (\$76,000) thanks to the persuasiveness of Harry Backlin and Henry Novak and other business leaders.

The tribute also raised the profile of the PGCF as there was a great deal of publicity for the event and record setting attendance to say goodbye to the popular mayor and former alderman as he retired from his 16 years on City Council. This fundraiser provided the first major designated fund for the PGCF with income designated to the Prince George Public Library, the trails system and street youth programs in Prince George.

The event was held at the newly constructed Civic Centre. The capacity crowd successfully tested the new kitchen and the staff provided an excellent dinner with BC premiers past and present joining in the merriment. The notable local critic of all things political, broadcaster Ben Meisner, offered up the comment that he couldn't believe 1,000 people were gullible enough to pay \$35 for a dinner of edible flowers which he was certain came from former Premier Bill Vander Zalm's Fantasy Gardens or to hear some "washed-up politicians" speak. Also joining in the fun was then-Premier Mike Harcourt who took some lambasting as well.

Morgan said Backhouse would probably open a bingo hall when he retired. "He's glad Mike Harcourt is here tonight because he's so experienced in the bingo field," said Morgan.

Even Darlene Mazari, B.C. minister of Municipal Affairs at the time of the Saravino incident, couldn't resist.

"Isn't it refreshing, Mike, to be in a community where businesses give to charities instead of the other way around," she said to Harcourt.

Broadcaster Meisner said he couldn't believe that 1,000 people were gullible enough to pay \$35 for a dinner of edible flowers he figured came from Bill Vander Zalm's Fantasy Gardens or to hear some washed up politicians speak.

He gave Backhouse credit, saying he's "the only one to leave office on his own."

Surprise guest George Backhouse, John's brother from Kelowna, took everyone back with his opening statement.

"We've heard a lot of crap here tonight," he said, explaining the Backhouse boys came from humble beginnings in Liverpool, England.

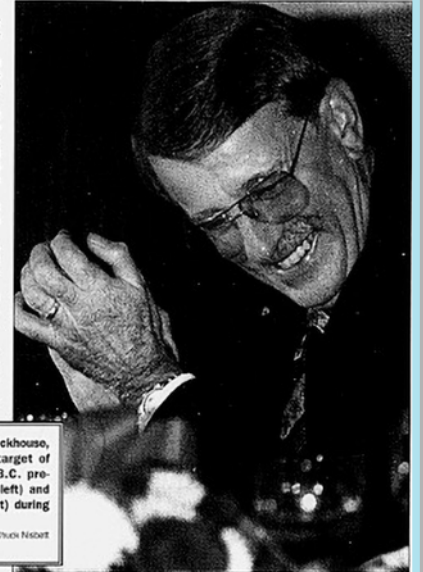
"I was six and one-half years older than John, and I had to look after the little buggers all the time, so as soon as I could, I left home," said George.

John got his revenge on George and

JOHN referring to the city manager.

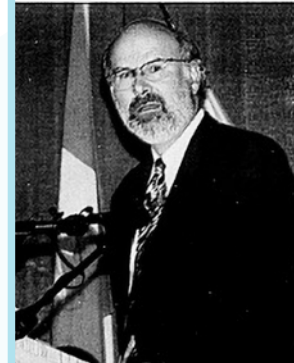
Backhouse told Harcourt he learned the tricks of the trade by watching him

success, but the joint success of all who contribute towards developing "a really fine city."



Prince George Mayor John Backhouse, retiring this year, was the target of speakers including former B.C. premiers Mike Harcourt (below left) and Bill Vander Zalm (below, right) during roast here Saturday night.

Citizen photos by Chuck Hecart



Backhouse roast: Food, fun for foundation

Tribute to outgoing mayor Oct. 5 benefits community causes

Citizen staff

It's shaping up to be one of the biggest parties ever held in Prince George.

Almost 1,000 tickets have been sold for Mayor John Backhouse's roast and tribute dinner Oct. 5.

"There's still a few tickets left, but we expect a sellout by the end of September," said Joan Jarman, one of the organizers.

The event, attracting prominent guests from throughout B.C., will be held in the Civic Centre where staff say it's the first time all three sections of the main hall will be used for a public function of this kind.

Roasters include former B.C. premier Mike Harcourt and Bill Vander Zalm, former NEP cabinet member Darlene Mazari, former provincial Liberal leader Peter Bentley and former CMC president



JOHN BACKHOUSE

Charles McCaffray. From the home-front, the roast features Bev. Lance Morgan, Ben Meisner, Harry Backlin, a surprise roaster and master of ceremonies Bob Harkins.

But before the roasting, snorting and boozing takes place, dinner will be served. Its several courses include hand-picked wildfennel greens with alder smoked B.C. salmon, wild berry balsamic vinaigrette with edible flowers, chicken breast with special stuffing, seasonal vegetables, roasted Panzermore potatoes, a variety of rolls and chocolate mousses cake on a pool of strawberry cereals with tea and gourmet coffee.

Tickets, at \$35, are available at The Globe, CMC, CPG and city hall.

The tickets will cover the cost of the dinner and it's hoped that pledges and donations will be made during

the evening, in Backhouse's name, for the new Prince George Community Foundation, said city manager George Paul.

Backhouse, a director, has specified three worthy causes within the Community Foundation for funds donated in his name: the Prince George Public Library, Rivers Trail System and street youth.

The Community Foundation, incorporated a year ago, is designed to build an endowment fund with earned interest used to support community activities of the donor's choice.

Cultural, research, environmental and social programs, and scholarships are a few examples of how money could be used.

The foundation fund is \$30 at \$15,000 at this time from donations.



Family Funds

The first family fund was established by Daphne Baldwin. After the loss of her husband George Baldwin in a tragic motor vehicle accident near McBride on his way home from work, Daphne and her family wanted to remember George with a family fund.

The Kinsley Family created the second family fund. Former alderman and soon to be the newly elected mayor, Colin Kinsley (Mayor of Prince George from December 1996 – November 2008) had been supportive of the creation of the foundation during his tenure as a Prince George City Councilor. Colin remembers a visit by Noreen Rustad to his office soon after his election as mayor. Noreen invited Mayor Kinsley to start a family fund, thanked him for his support, and invited him to join the PGCF Board of the foundation as Mayor of Prince George. Other family funds followed.

"The reason we started a family fund was because we recognized the opportunity to invest in the community. Besides, I was doing fundraising and you cannot talk to others about donating if you were not prepared to do it yourself. If you have a passion for something, you cannot just forget about it. This is a way of giving back to the community. With the PGCF, volunteers are there because they want to be - it's so much fun to work with people like this because they are always so upbeat and looking to do something for someone else."

Noreen Rustad on starting a family fund

The Foundation

The Newsletter of the Prince George Community Foundation

Fall, 2000
Issue #4

FOUNDATION TO GRANT \$20,000 THIS YEAR

Investing in the lives of our families, friends, and neighbours.

The most rewarding aspect of fundraising for the Prince George Community Foundation is grant making. Several grants were awarded for the 1999 year, \$12,000 dollars was invested into our community through the grants listed below. Grants for the year 2000 totalling \$20,000 will be announced at this year's 'Citizen of the Year Dinner'.

1999 GRANTS AWARDED:
Autism BC - \$500
Healthiest Babies Possible - \$2,000
D.A.R.E. Prince George (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) - \$2,500
Elder Citizens Recreation Association - \$1,200
Northern Family Health Society-Healthiest Prince George Public Library - \$750
Oral History Group - \$750
Community Planning Council - \$2,000

For more information on grant applications please contact Martin Winkelaar with the Prince George Community Foundation at (250) 614-7849.



Pearl Hiebert from the Prince George Council of Seniors. The Council of Seniors was awarded \$2,000 to upgrade equipment, purchase and install (2) internet connections for the Senior's Activity Centre.

FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT GROWS OVER \$500,000 MARK!

Building Dreams in our own Community

The Baldwin fund is one of the first family funds held in trust with the Prince George Community Foundation. It is this fund woven with several other funds which allow the foundation to award grants and to continue improving the lives of residents in Prince George into perpetuity.

Donations to the Prince George Community Foundation can be directed to one of our many funds or can be channeled into the establishment of a new fund. The foundation holds Special Purpose Funds. Another type of fund is Organizational Funds which are held with the foundation- but are used strictly for that organization's needs.

A third fund type is our Family or Corporate Funds where the income is disbursed based on where the foundation determines greatest need or at the discretion of the donor family or corporation.

Donor Funds are the heart of the Prince George Community Foundation. Without these funds the foundation would not exist and possess the ability to use grants to make dreams come true in our community. The Foundation is grateful to the many families and individuals who have stepped forward in the 2000 year to make wishes come true for our community. Please join us in saluting some of the funds which are held with the Prince George Community Foundation:

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS:

- Community Care Fund
- Citizen of the Year Fund
- Youth Fund
- Northern Medical Education Fund
- Sports Legacy Fund

FAMILY FUNDS:

- Baldwin
- Boelcher
- Allan Bridges
- Brownridge
- DeWit Insured Fund
- Dzeff
- Elze
- Everloff Memorial
- Hazebrod
- Kinsley
- Lance & Pat Morgan
- Nosok
- J & N Rustad
- M & E Rustad
- Memorial
- Widdie
- Adam Zimmerman

ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDS:

- College of New Caledonia
- Cranbrook Hill Greenway Society
- Prince George Concert Association
- Prince George Hospice Society
- Prince George Public Library
- Prince George Weavers' & Spinner's Guild
- United Way of Prince George



Daphne Baldwin and daughter Elizabeth hold husband George Baldwin's photo. The Baldwin Fund, is one of the many Family Funds held with the PGCF to improve the quality of life in Prince George.

"The Foundation" newsletter from Fall 2000 celebrating PGCF milestones



Organization Funds

The first Organization Fund was from the College of New Caledonia (CNC).

On behalf of CNC, Registrar Jim Blake presented an endowment fund cheque to the PGCF, received by President Noreen Rustad. The fund was matched and soon the total was over \$200,000. The income from the endowment is returned to CNC annually for scholarships & bursaries.



FROM COMMUNITY TO COLLEGE TO COMMUNITY

Noreen Rustad, President of the Prince George community Foundation presents a cheque for \$750 to Jim Blake, representing the College of New Caledonia. The scholarship fund comes from the income on the endowment fund created by CNC within the PG. Community Foundation.

Dave Milne photo

PGCF President Noreen Rustad is pictured returning the income from the CNC Endowment Fund to CNC Registrar Jim Blake for student scholarships in perpetuity.



Citizen photo by Dave Milne

Noreen Rustad, co-chair of the Prince George Community Foundation, receives \$50,000 in endowment funds from Jim Blake, CNC vice president, for future college student scholarships.

CNC contributes \$50,000 to Community Foundation

by BERNICE TRICK
Citizen staff

The Prince George Community Foundation received \$50,000 from the College of New Caledonia Monday to establish an endowment fund for future college student scholarships.

"We hope the fund grows to a substantial amount," Jim Blake, CNC vice-president said during the cheque presentation.

CNC expects to make additional contributions to the fund, and both Blake, and Noreen Rustad, co-chair of the community foundation, hope other local organizations will do the same.

The endowment fund will be invested and interest earned used for scholarships for deserving CNC students in all study disciplines. CNC has a \$1.5-million fund invested in bonds and other investment areas for scholarships.

"This money going into the community foundation is yet another way to invest. "The

foundation manages the money," said Blake.

Rustad said the foundation is a good way for organizations to invest because "it's a pooling of small amounts for a variety of worthy causes."

"We offer the opportunity for other organizations to invest within the community foundation to benefit their own organization and the community at large."

The foundation was established to enhance the quality of life in Prince George by encouraging people to give for worthy causes, and by dispersing grants into the community.

CNC's contribution increased the foundation's total endowment fund to \$360,000.

"We'll soon be in position to make a marked difference in the community," Rustad said.

Last year, the foundation made its first community grant to the local Schizophrenia Society for a children's education program using puppets.

On behalf of CNC, Registrar Jim Blake presented an endowment fund cheque to the PGCF, received by President Noreen Rustad. The fund was matched and soon the total was over \$200,000. The income from the endowment is returned to CNC annually for scholarships & bursaries.



Field Of Interest Funds

Field of Interest Funds are created to help support broad areas of interest as previously described. In 2021, there were 24 different funds in this category. Some examples of these funds include:

- Cultural Communities Legacy Fund
- PGCF Operating Fund
- Festival of Arts Legacy Fund
- Good Cheer Club Endowment Fund
- HYPE Endowment Fund
- 94X Safe Streets Fund
- Children of Prince George Endowment Fund
- Disadvantaged Youth Endowment Fund
- Employment Services Endowment Fund
- PG Youth Soccer Association
- PG 2008 BC Seniors Games Legacy Fund

BC Arts Renaissance Fund

In 2007 the Province of BC provided a grant of \$25 million for arts and cultural organizations to match grant funds to create their own permanent endowment funds. The combined funds continue to this day to be held for the local organizations at their local community foundations. It was fortunate the PGCF was established and running smoothly when this opportunity presented itself. The following legacy funds are held with the PGCF as a result of this government initiative:

- The Prince George Symphony Orchestra
- Two Rivers Art Gallery
- Theatre NorthWest
- Exploration Place

These organizations received their matching funds from the BC Arts Renaissance Fund and each year they continue to receive income from their endowments held locally at the PGCF. Donors are able to continue to donate to these 'funds for the ages'.



"A special memory was the local professional arts organizations that raised their own permanent funds that were matched by the BC Arts Renaissance fund then to be transferred to a local community foundation. The Prince George Symphony Orchestra, Theatre NorthWest, Two Rivers Art Gallery and Exploration Place all participated in this legacy opportunity. We were so fortunate that the PGCF existed at that time as it had the capacity to hold these funds at a time when the requirement was to keep them within a community foundation."

Elizabeth MacRitchie, PGCF President (2004 to 2006) on the arts legacy opportunity provided by the existence of the PGCF

Northern Medical Programs Trust

During the year 2000, there was such a shortage of family doctors in Prince George that a huge standing-room only rally was held in the CN Centre. During that rally, Dr. Charles Jago, President of the University of Northern BC (UNBC) offered to look into the possibility of starting a medical program at UNBC. There was such a huge outpouring of community support that many wanted to donate funds to help make this happen. As president of the PGCF, Noreen Rustad talked to both Dr. Jago and David Wharrie, the fundraising director at the Hospital Foundation, about creating a fund to support the concept.

"One memorable accomplishment during my time as President was being able to take in the initial funds for the Northern Medical Program. The community wanted to support this idea in a tangible way and we were the best-positioned organization to receive these funds. Once the medical program was up and running the funds were transferred to the university for the Northern Medical Program. If the foundation had not been in existence it may not have been possible to garner these funds, which helped to show the government that we, the citizens of Prince George, were ready to put our money where our mouth was. We like to think that the foundation played a small part in making this happen."

Noreen Rustad, PGCF President (1999-2004)

As neither UNBC, nor the Hospital Foundation were in a position to accept funds for the concept of a northern medical program, the PGCF stepped in to accept donations for the Northern Medical Education Fund until the concept for the medical school turned into reality and UNBC could accept the funds.

When the funds were presented to UNBC, they became the basis of the Northern Medical Programs Trust. These funds were combined with contributions from individuals, communities and corporations across northern BC, and with their financial help the UNBC Northern Medical Program came to fruition.





Noreen Rustad and Dr. Charles Jago at the presentation of the North Medical Education Fund and a symbolic pinecone to UNBC.

UNBC Northern Medical Program, there was continued support for the wider field of medical professionals by the community through the foundation. One such example of this support was an endowment that was established at the PGCF for a CNC Nursing Student Bursary.

The Annual Dr. Bob Ewert Lecture

In the fall of 2004, when the first class of the Northern Medical Program students began their studies, the community celebrated with the first Dr. Bob Ewert Lecture and Dinner (Ewert Event) at the Prince George Civic Centre. The Northern Medical Society developed the concept of the event and approached the PGCF to be a partner in this annual community celebration. Dr. Ewert was the first specialist physician in Prince George and was the son of one of the pioneer family doctors in the city.

The intent of the Northern Medical Program was to train medical doctors who would study, live and stay in the north, and remain in the north after graduation. The result has been approximately 350 graduates to date with the current class size of 32 students/year. Of these 350 graduates, over 100 are working in Northern BC.

The primary purpose of the annual Ewert Event was to celebrate the coming together of academic, civic, medical and government leaders to produce this amazing outcome. The birth of the Northern Medical Program began with a gathering of approximately 7,000 residents of northern BC at the Multiplex arena in Prince George in June

The funds for the start of the Northern Medical Programs Trust were presented to UNBC along with a mounted and engraved pinecone as a symbol of our northern forests. The engraved inscription reads: *The Prince George Community Foundation proudly presents the Northern Medical Education Fund to UNBC 2002. WATCH IT GROW!*

The pinecone remained on display in Dr. Jago's office during his tenure as President of UNBC.

The PGCF Board and friends continued to support the Northern Medical Programs Trust through the annual Dr. Bob Ewert Memorial Lecture series.

In addition to supporting the





Prince George Free Press, July 2002 celebrates initiation of a nursing student bursary in the name of Bea Dezell

Directed towards the PGCF Ewert Event endowment fund to cover the speakers costs in perpetuity (Dr. Bob Ewert Memorial Lecture Fund) as well as an endowment fund for Northern Medical Program student bursaries (Dr. Bert Kelly Legacy Bursary Fund).

Dr. Charles Jago was instrumental in securing the Northern Medical Program at UNBC to the benefit of the school, the community and Northern residents. His legacy will live on in perpetuity in the physicians that graduate each year and the patients they go on to help. Dr. Jago is the recipient of the Order of BC (2013) and Order of Canada (2005) in recognition of his work.

2000 acknowledging the region's health care crisis and physician shortages. The result was a short 4 years after this rally, the first medical students arrived in the community and were front page headlines in northern newspapers. Funds raised from the lecture event initially were directed to the Northern Medical Programs Trust at UNBC.

The PGCF supported and held community funds which were raised at local events to assist the Northern Medical Program students with the additional costs of travelling to distant northern training sites. These PGCF funds became the first donation of \$20,000 from the community to the newly established Northern Medical Programs Trust at UNBC. Each northern community agreed to donate \$1 per citizen to this trust and over time, the Northern Medical Programs Trust has grown to over \$10 million.

For the past 15 years, the lecturers have been the anchor for the Ewert Event and have included David Snadden, Gavin Stuart, David Suzuki, Ralph Klein, Gwynne Dyer, Charles Keating, Terry O'Reilly, John Furlong, Wade Davis, Chris Hatfield, Romeo Dallaire, Kim Phuc, Martin Magne, Darby Allen and 'Pinball' Clemens.

Additional funds raised by this event have been directed towards the PGCF Ewert Event endowment fund to cover the speakers costs in perpetuity (Dr. Bob Ewert Memorial Lecture Fund) as well as an endowment fund for Northern Medical Program student bursaries (Dr. Bert Kelly Legacy Bursary Fund).



PGCF Operating Fund

In addition to fundraising for the purpose of providing funds into the community, it was also important to find funds to help cover the administrative costs of the foundation.

Operating expenses for the PGCF are now met in three ways:

1. Donors designating their donation to the operating fund of (or directly to) the PGCF;
2. Annual special events (i.e., Citizen of the Year and the FARR WIC Golf Tournament); and
3. From a small administrative fee.

Early on, Noreen Rustad was successful in collecting donations from various organizations to support the administrative costs of running the office and the foundation. In the early years of the PGCF, the foundation operated 100% on sponsorships, donations and volunteers, with no administration fee on endowments.

Noreen and her team were also successful in encouraging large corporate organizations to support the foundation and some of its important annual events (such as Citizen of the Year and the FARR WIC Golf tournaments). The proceeds from these events inject annual funds into the PGCF Operating Fund to allow the foundation to continue to grow and evolve on an annual basis.

"On one occasion in the early days when Bev Christensen was away, I was running the board meeting and I mentioned that it was my birthday. Tom Steadman was there and said, 'So tell me what your age is and I will write a cheque in that amount for the PGCF.' He thought that most women don't like to tell their age; however, in our family, my mother was always bragging about her age right up to 105 years old. So I said, 'I am 55 – write the cheque.' Up to that point, we had no operating money for printing and stamps or the like. Those expenses were absorbed by the directors."

Noreen Rustad on being creative in fundraising for the PGCF

Vancouver LEAD Fund – Donation Matching

One of the first major sources of funds for the PGCF was a \$50,000 fund that was matched dollar for dollar by the Vancouver Foundation. The Vancouver Foundation's mandate in the 1990's was to match local funding and to mentor local community foundations. The \$100,000 LEAD Fund is held by the Vancouver Foundation as an endowment for Prince George. The income is returned to the PGCF annually and granted into the community.



Regional Funds and Northern Development Initiatives Trust (NDIT)

The PGCF followed the example set by the Vancouver Foundation during our early years and now supports 17 northern communities or regional districts by holding and investing their funds for annual disbursement within their own communities. Income earned annually is returned to the community or regional district for disbursement. Each individual community determines the award of specific grants through their respective grant committees. This allows smaller towns, which may not have the available fiscal and human resources needed to effectively create and maintain their own foundation to enjoy the benefits a foundation has to offer.

The PGCF partnered with NDIT and their Community Foundation Matching Grants where regional communities could start an endowment fund for their community with an initial donation of \$50,000. NDIT would match the initial donation to create an endowment fund with a community foundation for these communities with an initial amount of \$100,000.

These community foundations are managed locally and distribute funds to their own local programs. The PGCF invests the funds of these community foundations in our pool of funds and provides administrative support.

Past PGCF presidents fondly recall the NDIT and its impact on Prince George and northern communities:

"During my term, we continued with the support of NDIT to provide seed money to communities in the northern region and to charitable organizations to start their own funds to support their organizations. With the PGCF providing management support, this program helped grow the endowment fund and provide annual funds for the needs of communities and charitable organizations."

*Jim Imrich, PGCF President
(2009-2011)*

"One of the biggest changes we made during my time on the PGCF Board and in the role of president was our partnership with NDIT and the regional outreach that we initiated for surrounding communities in the north. Given that my employment took me in to (or through) almost every community in the north I was uniquely positioned to promote the matching NDIT funds for establishing new community foundations (or community funds with an existing foundation). Through presentations to the municipal and regional district councils in Terrace, Kitimat, Burns Lake, Fort St James, McBride, Mackenzie, Williams Lake, Dawson Creek and many others, the message of what a community foundation is and the value it can provide to a community spread throughout the northern half of our province and resulted in a number of new foundations as well as significant growth to the overall asset base of the PGCF as many of those communities established their funds under our umbrella. That work continues to this day and those funds continue to grow to provide grants back into the source communities while also providing a larger asset base to the PGCF to reduce overall investment management fees and to provide sustainable operating revenue by way of the small admin fee that the PGCF collects."

Ray Noonan, PGCF President (2012-2015)



Grants

In the early years, two questions were always on the mind of our founders and board members:

1. Where could donations be found to build the endowment?
2. Where would the funds come from for the first grant?

The PGCF Board recognized the importance of making a grant as soon as possible after the incorporation of the foundation in order to show that giving to charities was at the heart of the PGCF. With the success of fundraising efforts in the foundation's inaugural year, the answer to both questions became clear.



Some of the puppets used to teach children about mental health.

A Milestone – First Grant Awarded

The first grant was awarded by the foundation in 1998 and it helped publicize the work of the foundation. Well known personalities, Reverend Lance Morgan and broadcaster Bob Harkins were on the first PGCF Grant Committee that awarded a \$1,000 grant to the local chapter of the BC Schizophrenia Society. The funds were used to purchase hand puppets (much like the muppets made famous on Sesame Street). The puppets aimed to teach school-aged children about schizophrenia and mental health and have reached more than 1,000 students during their many years of use.

The first grant of funds into the community was a special milestone and a harbinger of good things to come. In the past 25 years, \$3.3 million has been granted back to northern charities.



A Focus on Youth and Sports

The PGCF Grants Committee had an early focus on youth, thanks to retired school principal and PGCF director, Jack Blair, as well as retired School District 57 administrator, John Stevens. Jack worked with the HYPE (Helping Youth in Philanthropy Endowment) committee to encourage philanthropy in our local youth. John worked with the School District 57 Millennium Scholarship Fund committee. This fund has raised over \$500,000 for endowed scholarships for local students.

Small grants for organizations have been very effective as Johanna Jenkins, president of Kids Sport and Nancy and Pat Harris from Spinal Cord BC recounted to the PGCF. They lauded the seedling grants, which the PGCF provided their organizations, to enable them to reach out for larger grants by showing that their local community foundation was supporting their work.

Helping the Community In Crisis

Some notable events requiring a quick response from the foundation were the:

Nechako River Flooding

In 2002, the winter freeze-up of the Nechako River resulted in the flooding of homes and buildings along Pulp Mill Road, River Road and Morning Place off North Nechako Road. The PGCF opened its doors to provide meeting space and help with a coordinated response.

Our community came together in crisis. Meetings were held at the PGCF office with members of the respective communities, the PGCF board and committee members, the Red Cross, impacted companies, and other groups. The community banded together to work on plans to best support the people affected by these events. The PGCF is proud of the work we did, and continue to do, to be able to support our community, our region and its citizens through times of crisis.

COVID-19 Pandemic

2020 was unprecedented in numerous ways as the world faced the global COVID-19 pandemic. The PGCF is pleased to have been able to play an important part in helping support our community and region in recovery efforts for our areas most vulnerable during this time.

Because of the strength of its endowment, the foundation was pleased to be in a position to immediately grant emergency funding to those most in need. \$60,000 was granted to local food banks in our community and the United Way of Northern BC's COVID relief fund.



Through the PGCF's partnership with Community Foundations of Canada, working with the Federal Government, we were entrusted to disburse funds from the Emergency Community Support Fund to 13 different communities in Northern BC and the Cariboo. By February 2021, these funds had amounted to over \$ 400,000 in relief funding.

The PGCF continues to partner with Community Foundations of Canada and the Federal Government on additional relief programs for not only Prince George residents but the entire region.

2002

A Major Milestone

From the beginning, Mayor Backhouse had a goal – and the goal was for the foundation to reach \$1 million. There was great cheering when the PGCF topped that mark in 2002.

"I received a phone call from Noreen Rustad in the fall of 2002 and she told me that the fund had reached \$1 million – it was absolutely incredible. Just a great moment . . . Noreen and I cheered about it."

Mayor John Backhouse on the \$1 million milestone

Foundation funds top \$1 million

by BERNICE TRICK
Citizen staff

The Prince George Community Foundation's funds now total more than \$1 million.

In making the announcement Thursday, Noreen Rustad, outgoing president, said the funds managed by the foundation had reached \$1,036,367 this week.

"This represents a tremendous achievement for a relatively new community foundation," Rustad told those attending the annual general meeting. "We have just completed our seventh year of operation,

and to go from nothing to over \$1 million in endowments in that short period of time is a major accomplishment," she said.

(Endowment funds are those where money is invested and only the interest earned is used for grants over a long period of time.)

The foundation is a registered charity which holds endowment funds contributed by organizations and individuals. Earnings are used to support a variety of projects within the community.

"The fact that during our 2001-02 fiscal year our fund balances grew by \$203,769 shows that the cit-

izens of Prince George have accepted and support the community foundation," Rustad said.

"As a result, we are better able to assist members of our community who want to leave a lasting legacy to make the community a better place to live, and we can help community service organizations who want to establish an endowment fund to support their programs and projects."

The foundation has established a variety of endowment funds to assist organizations including the Millennium Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarship money to School District 57, an endow-

ment fund for scholarships at CNC, and an endowment fund for the Prince George Public Library and the United Way.

The foundation's endowments also provide annual income for artistic programs, trail maintenance and social programs. In addition, 25 funds have been established to provide a lasting legacy in the name of a sponsoring family, or in the memory of a former resident of the community. The earnings from endowments and contributions from the Vancouver Foundation enabled the foundation to make grants totalling \$43,896 in the 2001-02 fiscal year.

After seven years of tireless promoting and fundraising the Prince George Community Foundation has finally reached its target of \$1 million in endowments – and poised to start giving.

"I think it's exceptional in this community and in this economic climate that businesses are still supporting us," said the Foundation's outgoing president Noreen Rustad, a founding director who has been "committed passionately" since the beginning.

"This is not the end of it's just the beginning; now we can concentrate on what we're supposed to be doing – giving," she said.

On November 12 the foundation reached \$1,036,367 in endowments. During the 2001-2002 fiscal year alone, the fund grew by \$230,769, the biggest donation year yet, and a sign that the people of Prince George finally know about and support the Community Foundation, Rustad said.

"We are seen as a viable operation, now

that we have money and can start giving out grants."

The PGCF is a registered charity that holds endowment funds contributed by organizations and individuals which are distributed as grants to help improve the community over a long period of time.

The PGCF is one of 80 of its kind across Canada.

The foundation has so far established a Millennium Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships to School District 57, an endowment fund for scholarships to the College of New Caledonia and endowment funds for the Prince George Public Library and United Way. Over 25 funds have been started by families and individuals to support future programs and city development.

The money is invested by a committee with the expertise of professional investment company and there is a pay-out to the endowment fund of 4.5 per cent per year. Although investment



Rustad

THE FREE PRESS PEOPLE NOVEMBER 21, 2002

Community foundation reaches goal

return is subject to economic climate and market volatility the initial investment is secure.

"In the past year we have already been able to make grants totaling \$43,896," said Rustad.

Some of this grant money went to The Canadian Mental Health Association, David Douglas Botanical Garden Society, Elder Citizen Recreation Association, PG Arts and Cultural Coalition, PG Hospice Society, the PGSO, Project

Friendship and other community organizations.

Rustad said she will remain on the board and continue volunteer work for the foundation despite stepping down as president.

The incoming president is Bill Kennedy, who worked in finances for the city before his retirement.

"He is very knowledgeable and the money is in good hands," said Rustad.

News article from The Free Press on the PGCF funds reaching \$1 million in 2002



"One of the major accomplishments during my time as President was when our endowments reached one million dollars. This milestone indicated that the citizens of this community supported our fledgling foundation financially. It made fundraising less difficult. We had a proven track record of 'giving back to our community' in the form of grants with the income from our endowments. In the early days before we had significant funds to disburse I had to say to people 'trust me with your money!! We promise to use it wisely'. When we reached this important goal, the community could see the foundation as a viable organization not just a 'good idea'."

Noreen Rustad, PGCF President (1999-2004)

Financial Policy & Weathering Market Uncertainty

The PGCF spent much time and energy ensuring fiscal responsibility and sound financial policy as a priority in the early days.

Bill Kennedy long term Director and PGCF President (2004), recalls his term as president was largely devoted to establishing policies and procedures while working within the restrictions imposed by the Income Tax Act, and other regulations. At the outset, the annual budget for grants was quite small but the foundation executive recognized that, in order to gain the trust of donors, processes and procedures to ensure sound financial management would help give assurance that the foundation's funds were securely managed, and that grant monies were properly used.

The PGCF has weathered many storms, not the least of them financial. Jim Imrich recalls the economic turmoil of 2008-2009 and how the risk mitigation that had been put in place by the foundation allowed continued stability in a difficult economic time. The foundation used a stability program to enable its funds to weather up to three years of difficult financial times. The program worked well and there was no significant down turn in funds for community projects.

Investment Readiness Program (IRP)

In 2019, the PGCF became a Regional Partner for the IRP. The IRP is funded by the Government of Canada and aims to provide funding to help social purpose organizations become investment-ready. This is in preparation for a \$755 million social Finance Fund the Canadian government will invest over 10 years. With matching from the private sector, a total of \$2 billion of investment will be available for social purpose organizations to enhance their impact and participate in the social finance market.

The IRP offers funding between \$10,000 to \$100,000 to support social purpose organizations which includes non-profits, charities, co-ops, and for-profit social enterprises, to advance towards or become ready for social finance investment.

The PGCF, in partnership with Community Foundations of Canada and the Government of Canada, was chosen as the IRP partner for funding in the Cariboo, Northern & Haida Gwaii regions of BC. Through this initiative, the foundation has awarded over \$200,000 to further support social enterprises in the north.





Photo by Chuck Chin

SPECIAL & NOTABLE EVENTS AND PUBLICITY

Annual Events

The Citizens of The Year Award & Gala

Recognizing the need to raise the profile of the foundation, Bev Christensen suggested the PGCF host an annual “feel good” event. For several years the Prince George Rotary Club had held a Citizen of the Year (COTY) event. After discussions with the foundation, the Rotarians gifted the event to the PGCF. Initially a competitive award recognizing one winner annually, the event evolved into a celebration of up to 6 special community volunteers. The PGCF’s first COTY event was held in 1997 with Bob Harkins taking the top honour. Foundation Board Secretary, Carol Waldie remembers Lance Morgan as the master of ceremonies of the first COTY event and what a big personality he was and how he kept everyone laughing.

Over the past 25 years, the COTY event has recognized and celebrated 41 special Prince George citizens. These men and women have gone above and beyond in their community volunteerism and philanthropy. Be it through their time, talent, expertise or advocacy efforts, without them Prince George would not be the city it is today. They are important threads in the fabric of our community and the COTY event provides much-deserved accolades for their contributions.

The COTY gala has been and continues to be a major profile and fundraiser for the foundation.



1997 COTY Winner – Bob Harkins

COTY AWARD RECIPIENTS (1997 - 2019)

1997 – Bob Harkins	2015 – Anthony Everett
1998 – Gord Molendyk	2015 – Dr. William Osei
1999 – Horst Sander	2015 – Diana Nakamura
2000 – Murry Krause	2016 – Cindy Smith
2001 – John Flatt	2016 – Nowell Senior
2002 – Tom Griffith	2016 – Trelle Morrow
2003 – Anne Martin	2016 – Karen Underhill
2004 – Shirley Gratton	2016 – Ann Halikowski
2005 – Bill Lynch	2016 – Lorraine Hilland
2006 – Baljit Sethi	2017 – Shawn Rice
2007 – Dick Voneugen	2017 – Selen Alpay
2008 – Michael Kerr	2017 – Ron and Dee Neukomm
2009 – Ray Gerow	2017 – Harold Hartshorne
2010 – Sharon Hurd	2018 – Les Waldie
2011 – Darrell Hubbell	2018 – Dr. Charles Jago
2012 – Monica Peacock	2018 – Nancy and Pat Harris
2013 – Andy Beesley	2019 – Chuck Chin
2014 – Roy Spooner	2019 – Albert Koehler
2015 – Bill and Judy Russell	2019 – Noreen Rustad



FARR/WIC Golf Tournament

This annual event for the PGCF raises administrative funds for the foundation thanks to Roy Stewart, Jim Rustad, Brian Brownridge and others who have organized and volunteered at this event for over twenty years. Brian Brownridge was famous for encouraging his fellow golfers to participate and to 'empty-their-wallets' as they supported the endeavor. Noreen recalls Brian as the most influential fundraiser of the tournament. Many golf balls continue to become victim to the water hazards at the Prince George Golf and Country Club during the playing of this annual event.

The Gingerbread House

The PGCF took opportunities, both big and small, to introduce and publicize the foundation to the community. One early and memorable opportunity that occurred over several years was the raffling off of a Christmastime gingerbread house at the Northern Hardware Store. Thanks to Gladys Thorp, known locally as 'the gingerbread lady', for her generous donations of gingerbread houses that both raised the profile of, and helped in fundraising for, the foundation. Volunteers recited the story and mission of the PGCF as they sold tickets to members of the community. It was an opportunity to not only fundraise but also to connect people to and with the foundation.



One of the many Gingerbread houses donated by Gladys Thorp.

Legacy Events

When provincial or national events come to Prince George, local fundraising takes place in order to cover the expenses associated with hosting the event. Once expenses for an event are covered, the host community is often the recipient of any residual legacy funds.

Examples of some of these events include:

- BC Festival of the Arts (1986; 1998)
- Tim Horton's Roar of the Rings Canadian Curling Trials (2009)
- Scott Tournament of Hearts (2000)
- Canada Winter Games (2015)



The residual legacy funds from these events needed a home. The PGCF is able to step in and provide the structure and mechanism for the income (in the form of grants) to be distributed to similar local charitable organizations from the legacy funds in perpetuity.

BC Festival of The Arts Legacy Fund

In 1986 the BC Festival of the Arts held its annual event in Prince George for the first time. This brought together hundreds of top visual artists, musicians, dancers and speech arts performers from over 34 local festivals. Prince Charles and Princess Diana arrived to open the festival, thrilling everyone with their presence.

The Prince of Wales Scholarship for the Arts was established by School District 57 to commemorate the royal visit. It utilized legacy funds from the BC Festival of the Arts. Fundraising efforts by School District 57 administrators continued through various events such as golf tournaments. The fund has grown from an original \$49,000 to over \$500,000, for the benefit of graduating high school students. The name of the fund and the scholarship were changed to the Millennium Scholarship Fund at the start of the new millennium in 2000 and is now part of the Springboard to Success Fund.

In 1998 Prince George hosted the BC Festival of the Arts for a second time. The legacy funds from this event were used to create a second endowment fund with the PGCF for the purpose of supporting established artists and art organizations in our community.



Bill Christie and Phil Redmond present a cheque to the PGCF in 2000. The funds will earn interest for the Millennium Scholarship Fund (MSF). The MSF is a joint project of School District 57 and the PGCF. From Left: Bill Christie (School Board Chairman); Elizabeth MacRitchie (Co-Chair MSF); Phil Redmond (School District 57 Superintendent); Allan Reed (Co-Chair MSF); and Carol Waldie (PGCF Vice-President).



Notable Events

Prince George Community Foundation Park

In addition to increasing the profile and publicizing the concept of the foundation in the early days, it was equally as important to create a physical and sustainable presence in the city. The community park at 7th and Dominion Street was identified as an opportunity to create such a presence. The park is home to the Labour Day Classic Road Race and the Terry Fox statue, which recognizes the first major long distance run in which Terry participated with his friend, Rick Hansen. Prince George Mayor and Council supported the request to name the park in the name of the Prince George Community Foundation.

An official opening was held on September 28, 2001. Mayor Kinsley officially opened the park using an axe to cut the 'lumber ribbon'. The axe had been used by Noreen Rustad's father, Mayor Garvin Dezell, to open the original park years earlier.

A sign identifying the official name of the park as the Prince George Community Foundation Park was erected in September 2001.

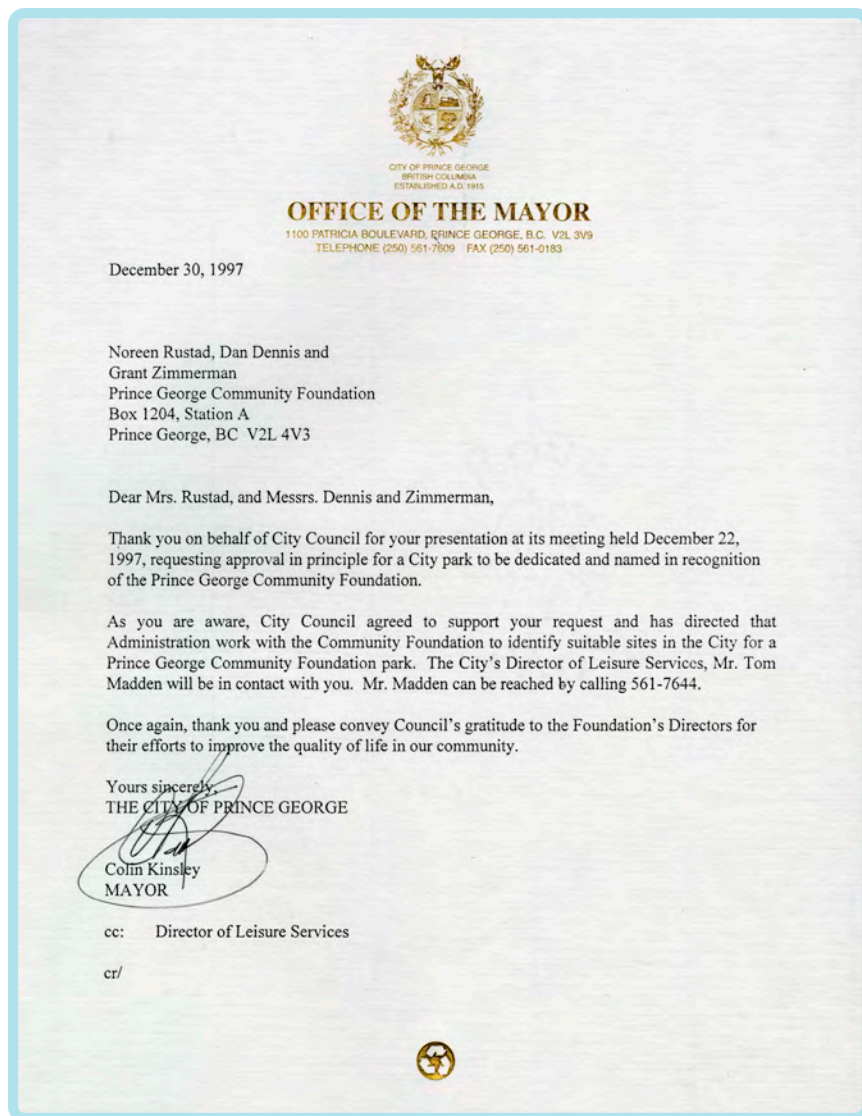


Mayor Kinsley officially opening the Prince George Community Foundation Park, September 28, 2001



Mayor Kinsley and PGCF Board members at the opening of the Prince George Community Foundation Park





Letter from Mayor Kinsley supporting the naming of the park.

A Home for the Foundation

Horst Sander set up the first foundation office upstairs at Studio 2880 on 15th Avenue in March 2002. It was an exciting day when the files, desks, brochures and posters were moved from Noreen Rustad's home-based office to this new and dedicated space. The PGCF's first paid staff member was Irene Heese, who joined the team on a part-time basis in 2002.

Noreen Rustad recalls that opening up that first PGCF Board office was one noteworthy milestone during her time as PGCF President. This meant that directors and volunteers didn't have to do all their work from home offices and there was now a storefront presence. She recalls that, "we thought this would lighten the load for the directors but in fact it just gave us more time to do more!"

The PGCF remained at Studio 2880 until September 2013, when the office moved to the lower level at the Coast Inn of the North under the guidance of Ray Noonan as President and Brenda Langlois as the Executive Director.

CURRENT AND PAST EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Irene Hesse
Lorraine Grant
Judy Neiser
Brenda Langlois
Cindy Storozinski
Rae Ann Noonan & Mindy Stroet





Photo by Chuck Chin

HONORARY MEMBERS AND LIFE MEMBERS

Our Honorary Members (formerly called Honorary Directors) and Life Members are special contributors to both the foundation and also our community.

The PGCF would not exist without the dedicated volunteers who freely give their time, resources and skills to provide the leadership and future direction of the foundation. The foundation acknowledges certain community-minded individuals who have shown particular regard and passion for the PGCF by offering the position of Honorary Member and Life Member.

Honorary Members are elected every five years and their term can be renewed. Life Members are chosen from those who have donated decades of support to the foundation and are appointed at the Annual General Meeting of the foundation.

The profile and credibility of the PGCF increased with the appointment of well known and respected citizens as Honorary Members. Our first Honorary Members attended a celebratory reception at Noreen and Jim Rustad's home in 2003.

Bev Christensen recalls that Noreen and her husband Jim made their home available for the celebration of grants on many occasions. Bev also notes that Noreen was the one who, among many other things, ensured that people who helped the foundation were properly thanked.



Honorary Members and Life Members of the PGCF

Original Honorary Members

John Backhouse
Brent Campbell
Bev Christensen
Ron East
David Emerson
Dr. Charles Jago
Dr. Jack McKenzie
Gordon Leighton
Dr. Lance Morgan
Henry Novak
George Paul
Edel Toner-Rogala
Chief Barry Seymour
Penny Stewart
Dick Voneugen
Dr. Terry Weringer
Roy Yip





Photo by Chuck Chin

CELEBRATING TODAY & LOOKING AHEAD

In 1994 John Backhouse had an idea. 25 years later he likens the PGCF to a healthy and growing tree with a root network that has anchored itself firmly throughout northern BC. This important network supports the work of the foundation and reciprocally, the foundation supports the network.

As we reflect on the first 25 years of the PGCF, we celebrate how far we have come. We have:

- *Developed from an organization exclusively run by volunteers to paid staff of four (1 full-time and 3 part-time).*
- *Distributed over \$3.3 million in grants.*
- *Significantly increased the scope of grants:*
 - *In 2020 and in honour of our 25th Anniversary we gave out a one-time \$25,000 grant.*
- *Increased the size of our grants! Grants used to be in the range of \$1,000 - \$2,500; now applicants can apply for grants of up to \$10,000.*
- *Continued to expand our reach in the community and region through initiatives such as RBC Future Launch, Gender Equality Pilot Fund, Investment Readiness Program and Vital Signs.*
- *17 regional community foundations under the PGCF umbrella.*

"Here we are – it has come to fruition. The community should be very proud of our community foundation. I played a very small part at the beginning on the steering committee and I had to learn about community foundations. As the current mayor, I now represent the city on the PGCF Board . Getting the message out to be better known in the community so people understand what we do is so important. The foundation is an important part of our community. Those folks that started this set a great vision...and I think the world of the founders."

Lyn Hall, Mayor of the City of Prince George



As we embark upon our next quarter century, we have come a long way, but we continue to have work to do. We will continue to focus on increasing our impact in the community. We will do this by focusing on raising funds and increasing the endowment. In 2020 alone, the PGCF gave out more than \$850,000 through endowment grants, emergency response funding and flow-through grant programs with the CFC/Government of Canada. Continuing to increase the benefit to our community is a foremost priority of the foundation.

As we move forward, we will:

- As a priority, seek to continue to develop our reach and increase our support within the community and to the regional community foundations in order to better serve the needs of charities and non-profits.
- Work to continue to increase the size of grants being awarded and identifying increased funds for general purpose use.
- Aim to reach \$15 million in endowed funds – something that was far beyond anyone’s imagination or realm of possibility when John Backhouse brought his idea for the foundation to city council in 1994.
- Identify opportunities and strategies to utilize the PGCF Vital Signs findings in order to collaborate with other community stakeholders and systematically work to tackle some of the bigger issues in our community.
- Identify action strategies to engage a multi-generational group of citizens in our community and inspire a younger generation (e.g., 30 - 50 year olds) to become more actively invested in the foundation and its programs.

In order to support the community and the foundation, there are many opportunities for friends of the foundation to identify and seize opportunities and to take action for the PGCF, the community and the region. You can:

- Continue to be an active part of your local community foundation.
- Give and share the story of your gift.
- Teach your children, grandchildren, relatives and friends the important contributions your gift can make to our community.
- In celebration of a birthday or anniversary, ask family and friends to make a donation that supports the good work that charities and non-profits are doing every day to make our home & community a better place to live.
- Look for news on the foundation's website to learn more about supporting the Prince George community.



The Prince George Community Foundation is proud to have been part of our great community for 25 years. We look forward to continuing to support and challenge those around us, and inspiring an ongoing commitment to improving the quality of life for our citizens and our region for the next 25 years and for generations to come.

"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."

-Greek Proverb-



CURRENT HONORARY MEMBERS

Les Waldie

Don Bassermann

Colin Kinsley

Bev Christensen

Jim Imrich

Lorraine Grant

Judy Jackson

Dr. Dennis Johnson

Dick Voneugen

Ray Noonan

Bill Stewart

Horst Sanders

LIFE MEMBERS

Murry Krause
Founder

Dr. Lance Morgan

Noreen Rustad

Jan Christiansen
Founder

Leonard Zirnhelt

George Paul
Founder

Tom Steadman
Founder

Ron East
Founder

Dr Charles Jago

Brian Brownridge

Elizabeth MacRitchie

Henry Novak



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Prince George Community Foundation may not be in existence if it was not for the forethought and dedication of then city Mayor John Backhouse. Thank you to John for seeing the value in a community foundation and the benefit it would bring to the Prince George community. Your vision started this great journey we are on.

To George Paul, City Manager, Bill Kennedy, City Finance Officer and all of the members of the steering committee for your hard work and dedication in establishing the Prince George Community Foundation. We would not be where we are today without you.

Thank you to Bev Christensen and the members of the inaugural Prince George Community Foundation Board for your passion and drive to really make the foundation a part of this community. We so appreciate all of your efforts.

To all of our fund holders, donors, supporters, and sponsors – thank you. We are forever grateful to you all for believing in the foundation and giving to the community through the investment of your funds.

A huge thank you to Elizabeth MacRitchie for the hours of work that she put into researching the foundation's past through the UNBC Archives; listening to interviews of our past steering committee members, board members and donors; and meeting with the foundation in order to prepare a draft text for this book. We are so very appreciative of all the time and energy you have put into helping this book come to life.

To Noreen Rustad – thank you for helping to pour through the UNBC Archives with Elizabeth and contributing your memories to make this book a reality. We are so fortunate to have such a strong advocate of the Prince George Community Foundation as part of the organization.

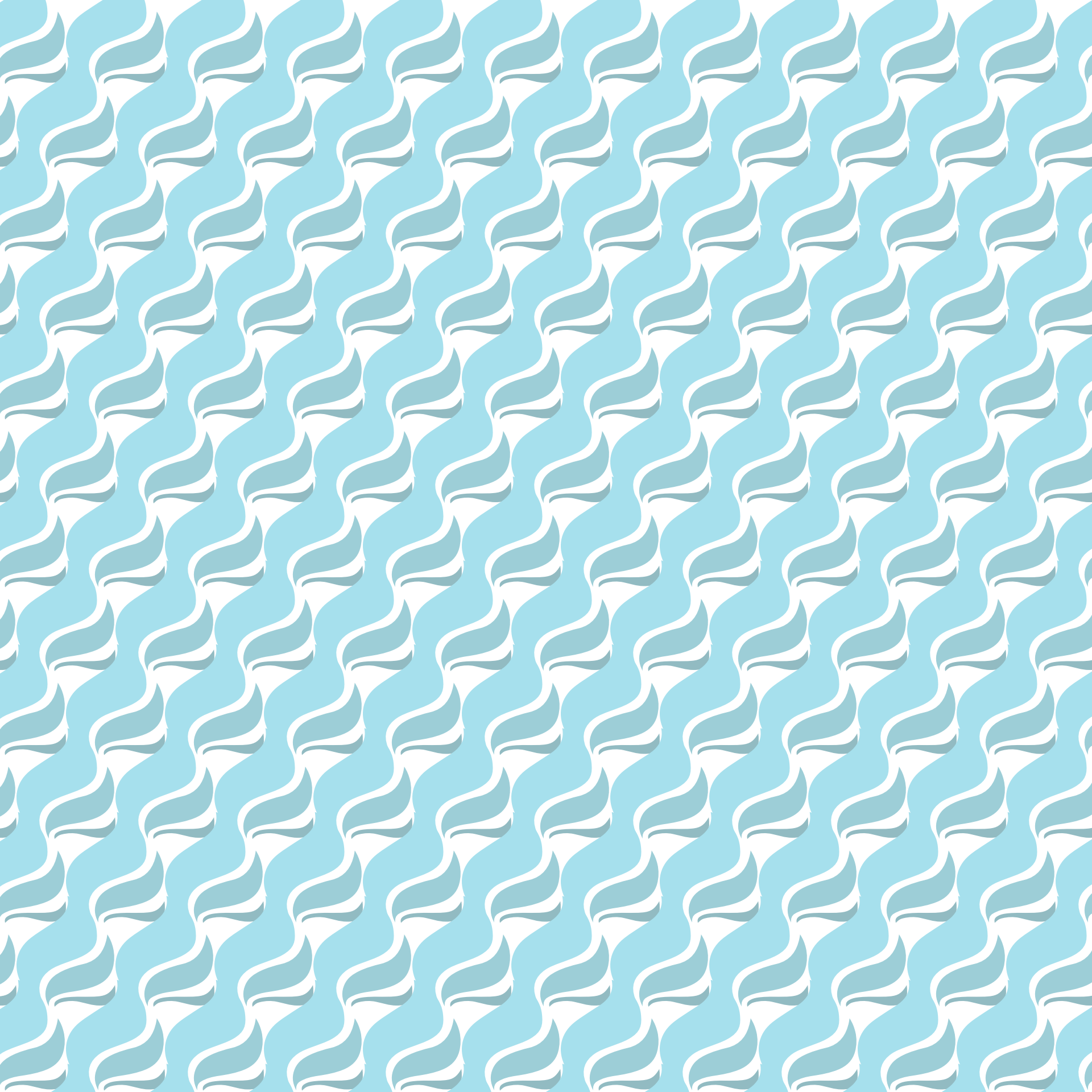
To Kendra Low our incredible writer and editor. Thank you for taking the time to turn our words into the book we are holding today. We couldn't have passed the finish line without you – thank you.

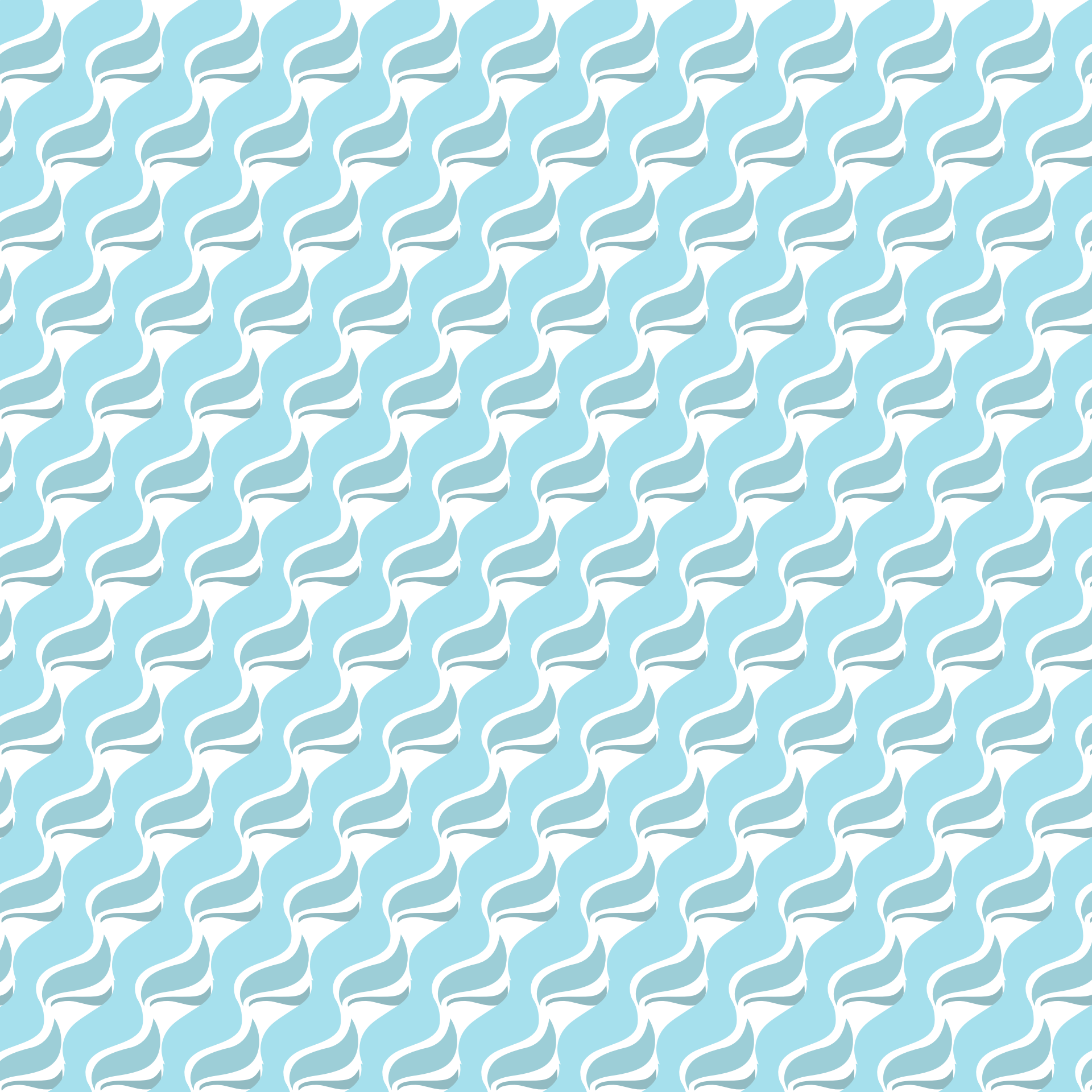
To Jeff Maihara, we are so appreciative of the time you have spent creating the design for our book and presenting our memories so beautifully. Thank you.

To Chuck Chin - thank you for so graciously sending us your beautiful photographs to include in this book. The community is lucky to have you capture these memories.

To all of the past and present Board members, Life Members, Honorary Members and staff – thank you. Thank you for all of the work you put in to help grow the Prince George Community Foundation into what it is today. We cannot wait to see what the next 25 years brings us!









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