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Warm-Up Time for Calgary Tower Climbers

An estimated 1,000 Calgarians brought forth their wild side today in support of Alberta's wilderness at the Earth Day celebrations held at the Calgary Tower.

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) played host to the **18th Annual Climb & Run for Wilderness**, which saw participants climbing the 802 stairs to the top of the tower, raising \$110,000 and still counting that will go directly to the organization's efforts to conserve and protect our province's wild lands, wild waters, and wildlife.

"It was an amazing day," says AWA Executive Director Christyann Olson. "Everyone had so much fun celebrating Alberta's wild spaces this Earth day weekend."

Run for Wilderness

With the sound of an air horn the day kick-started with the **Run for Wilderness**, racers tearing around the base of the Calgary Tower and then up the 160 m (525 feet) to the top. This year Vincent Pialoux was the fastest, finishing the race in 8 minutes, 55 seconds. The fastest female was Lesley Farrar who finished in 10 minutes, 34 seconds.

Team Challenge

Next, the team challenge took off, with groups competing for who could climb the stairs the greatest number of times. Shell Canada, the event's platinum sponsor had 5 teams come out. The prize for most climbs went to Team Quic - Orange, which collectively climbed the tower 83 times, while the team fundraising prize went to EnCana Team 4, for raising \$2240.

Climb for Wilderness

Deputy Mayor John Mar opened the stairs for the individual climbers, the day's most popular event which saw everyone enjoying the long hike up. This year's oldest male climber was Richard Guy who managed to climb the stairs seven times at the age of 92. Joining him as oldest female climber was his 90-year-old wife Louise.

The Prairie Mountain Fiddlers and Raging Grannies sang to the jubilant crowd while wildlife mascots and clowns entertained children, many of whom had their faces painted in celebration.

The **Wild Alberta Expo** was a huge success, where scores of people learned more about the over 30 organizations working on environmental issues.

Al Dunlop of Shell Canada, along with AWA staff and volunteers, presented awards to the winners of the events. During the awards ceremony, a special presentation was made to the Cockett family for their amazing support, this year marking their twelfth consecutive year of climbing the tower as a family.

Truly, a spectacular celebration of Alberta's wild spaces this Earth Day weekend, AWA would like to thank all our sponsors, the 145 volunteers, and the hundreds of Calgarians who made this event such a success.





For more information on the Climb visit www.climbforwilderness.ca

Contact: Nigel Douglas (403) 283-2025

More information on Alberta Wilderness Association can be found on the web at
www.AlbertaWilderness.ca

