

want to see your company name here?

Contact the

Federation

of Calgary Communities

Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

For Advertising/Sponsorship Opportunities

403.244.4111

communityrelations@calgarycommunities.com



In partnership with The Calgary Real Estate News



Dive into summer at a community pool

Local pools become a focal point during the hottest days of the summer

Cindy Stephen
for the Federation of
Calgary Communities

During hot, lazy summer days a refreshing drink with ice might be nice, but a dip in the pool is the ultimate in cool.

"A pool defines summer fun," says Kathy Davidson, a director of the Calgary Outdoor Swimming Pool Association (COSPA). "Splashing in the pool with your friends and family. It's fun."

There are eight outdoor swimming pools in the city of Calgary, open for a very short 80 days in the summer.

Families drive from all over the city to spend a day in the sun, or for those lucky enough to live in a community with a pool, it's only a quick walk in flip flops.

"An outdoor pool, in an urban setting, is as close as you're going to get to going to the cottage," says Mike Gavan, executive director of COSPA who has been involved with many aspects of city parks and recreation since his days as a lifeguard in 1968.

"It becomes a focal point. A gathering place. The excitement level around a pool is incredible and everyone feeds off it," Gavan notes with delight.

COSPA is a not-for-profit organization that assumed operation of seven outdoor pools in 2004 when city budget

cut-backs threatened their existence. Gavan, who ironically advocated to cease pool operations when he was with the City of Calgary, heads up the society with a volunteer board of die-hard "poolies", as they call themselves.

They manage the facilities on behalf of the City of Calgary, and during the outdoor season turn over day-to-day operations to the community associations in which the pools are located.

"Communities get to keep all the surplus revenue they generate in those 80 days, through lessons and admissions. The objective is to operate the pools with enough of an incentive for them to make it worth their while," says Gavan.

Davidson, whose grandfather once managed the long gone Happy Valley aquatic facility and the old Mewata Pool, Calgary's first municipal pool, says it was important to the city that outdoor pools remain in operation.

"What I think is important is the volunteers in the community associations. They're all the same kind of people with a passion to see that their community "jewel" is there for its members," she says.

Community associations are now able to use the pools more creatively since the city relinquished control, so in addition to traditional lessons and open swim times, communities have hosted pool-side wine and cheese parties and made time available for private rentals.

Pools are located in Bowview, Forest Lawn, Highwood, Millican-Ogden, Mount Pleasant, South Calgary and Stanley Park, all built between 1956 and 1964.

The north west community of Silver



Cool off this summer with a dip in one of the city's outdoor swimming pools. There are currently eight outdoor pools in Calgary, open for 80 days in the summer.

Photo courtesy FCC

Springs is home to the last outdoor pool built in Calgary, which was established by Carma Developers in the early 1970s and is operated by the community through a direct lease agreement with the city.

"We have two pools; one is a diving tank. It adds to our bottom line. It's an opportunity for us to earn a few extra dollars," says Silver Springs Community Association past-president, Les Hunter. "Last summer was so warm, we were full every day. We were door-to-door with kids."

For more information about outdoor pools in Calgary visit www.calgary.ca.



Read previous Calgary Community columns on your smartphone

Get the free app for your phone at <http://gettag.mobi>