

# AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA AND NWT



## Annual Report 2005

*The Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of Alberta is dedicated to making everyday the best possible day for people with ALS by providing support, facilitating the provision of care, promoting awareness and helping find a cure.*

**AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY  
OF ALBERTA AND NWT**

**Annual Report 2005**



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# ALS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

## *Vision*

*Through increased, province-wide awareness, provide hope and access to equitable levels of support for people affected by ALS.*

As Honorary Chair, I am very pleased to send my best wishes to the ALS Society of Alberta. Since 1986 the Society has been committed to providing information and services to those living with ALS as well as supporting research towards a cure. These services would not be possible without the dedicated efforts of volunteers, donors and staff that go into raising both resources and awareness. I know this dedication and commitment continues to foster growth. I am proud to support this organization and wish you all the best in 2006.

*James K Gray, OC*

## *Values*

*RESPECT*

*ACCOUNTABILITY*

*CARING*

*PASSION*

*SERVICE*

*QUALITY OF LIFE*

ALS is a disease that touches whole families and communities. The unstinting efforts of volunteers, the generosity of donors and the unique skill of the staff combined to provide support and services to 187 people with ALS in Alberta in 2005. The real numbers of people affected are uncountable.

The following is quoted from a note recently received: *"Thank you for all your caring for our son, and all who suffer this horrid disease. It was such an encouraging feeling to know that there was such a strong organization behind us, and we are so grateful for all the support you gave."*

It is the courage - and encouragement - that comes from those with ALS, their families and friends that inspire us to live the Mission, Vision and Values of the ALS Society of Alberta.

Together, we do make a difference.

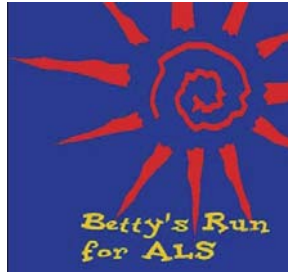


Tim Stauff, Chair, ALS Society of Alberta

## *Mission*

*The Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of Alberta is dedicated to making everyday the best possible day for people with ALS by providing support, facilitating the provision of care, promoting awareness and helping find a cure.*

# MILESTONES – 2005



## Another resounding success for the 9th Year

June 12 started off with a very special church service presided at by Reverend David Vincent and many of the congregation from St. Giles Presbyterian Church, including our ambassador Russ Savage. The Still Crazy Band (back for the ninth year) entertained, the RE/MAX tethered balloon soared, the Kids Zone vibrated and a great time was had by one and all. In all, about 1,300 people attended and, at the end of the day, **\$202,098** was raised. We would like to sincerely thank Russ Savage for so many things including his kind and thoughtful words, his many media interviews and for emphasizing to everyone the importance of community.



2005 Ambassador Russ Savage, his wife Irene and a throng of supporters start the 2005 Betty's Run for ALS



## June Walks for ALS Make a Big Splash!

Despite record rainfalls in the south, and with only 8 months since the last walk gatherings, Alberta's eight **Walks for ALS** raised over \$212,000! This is an all time record since the Walks started in 2001. Walks were held in Cold Lake, County of Mountainview (Didsbury), Edmonton, Lloyminster, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer and the very first walk in

Rocky Mountain House. This incredible accomplishment is the result of many very dedicated people who coordinated, led teams, walked, sponsored and pledged countless hours and generous dollars to support people living with ALS in Alberta and international research to find a cure. Thanks to all who contributed to the success the inaugural launch of the **Walk for ALS**. The results prove that the community of people touched by ALS is a strong, compassionate, hopeful, fun loving and talented group who stop at nothing to support one another.

**Together, the Betty's Run for ALS and Walks for ALS raised a grand total of \$414,567!!**

# MILESTONES – 2005 continued

## Corporate Calgary Charity Society Annual “Charitee” Golf Tournament reaches the \$100,000 mark in 2005!!!

Ever since the first “Charitee” golf tournament held in 2003, the organizing committee has had a goal of presenting the ALS Society of Alberta with a cheque for \$ 100,000 for funds raised on the single day of golf – this year they reached their goal in style. A special Thanks goes out to all who volunteered, participated and helped to achieve this milestone!

## 3 Albertans Awarded National ALS Honours

In May of 2005 the ALS Society of Canada presented **Chris Mann** (Chris passed away in September of 2005 from ALS) with the **Exceptional Public Awareness Program award** and **Jim McLaughlin** (Past Chairman of ALS AB) with the **William Fraser Leadership Development award** in recognition of their outstanding skills and dedication to people living with ALS. At the same ceremony, **Mary Lipsey** was honoured with one of three **Honorary Life Member awards** for her extraordinary volunteer contribution to ALS AB. Congratulations and thank you for remarkable work!

## Quilt Created by Lyn Skipper with LOVE



In June of 2005 Lyn Skipper presented the ALS Society of Alberta and the Betty’s Run Committee with a very special quilt that she had created. For the larger squares, Lyn took the fronts of the t-shirts for each of the 8 previous years of the “Run” as well as a photo of Betty she had transferred onto a t-shirt. She then sewed them all together to create a very special and lasting memory. Lyn thoughtfully chose the material to connect the t-shirt squares of the quilt. She used material with hearts for love, roads for the path that we follow and houses for the community that we are all a part of. The quilt now hangs in the Provincial office of the ALS Society of Alberta. Please come and have a look - it is truly a gift of love. Thank you Lyn, for this gift and best of luck in your future endeavors. You will be missed! (Lyn moved back to Australia with her family shortly after this picture was taken.)

Lyn Skipper stands next to her labour of love – the Betty’s Run for ALS Quilt

# MILESTONES – 2005



## ALS Clinic Doctors Honoured by the Lieutenant Governor

The ALS Society of Alberta extends enthusiastic congratulations to **Dr. Wendy Johnston** and **Dr. Sanjay Kalra** as recipients of the Alberta Centennial Medal. The Alberta Centennial Medal celebrates Alberta's first 100 years by paying tribute to Albertans whose achievements have benefited their fellow citizens, their community and their province. Dr. Johnston and Dr. Kalra received this award on November 21st from the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, the Honourable Norman L. Kwong, CM, AOE. The Lieutenant Governor is also the Patron of the ALS Society of Alberta. Dr. Kalra and Dr. Johnston lead the ALS Clinic at the University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton. His Honour first met Dr.'s Kalra and Johnston at the 2005 Walk for ALS in Edmonton and was impressed by their dedication and work. Both were later nominated for the Alberta Centennial Medal through support from the ALS Society of Alberta. Their dedication, compassion and international expertise help those living with ALS in many immeasurable ways and we are delighted that their many contributions have been acknowledged so prestigiously. Congratulations again on an award so well deserved!



*"Thank you all so much for all your information, love and caring during my husband's illness. Our family will never forget all you did for us". (North Region client's wife)*

# 2005 HIGHLIGHTS

**ADVOCACY:** Much has happened in the year since our Day at the Alberta Legislature. Meetings were held with:

**ALBERTA GOVERNMENT STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE**, with attention being given to the following messages:

- Equity to Access of Services
- BiPap assessment and provision,
- Access to Augmentative Communication Devices
- Equity of Self Managed Care funds across and within regions
- Training needs within community and institutional health workers

**ALBERTA HEALTH AND WELLNESS (AH&W)** - Population Health

Information exchange - Population Health Branch of AH&W generally deals with 'chronic' diseases and the impact on health care and the community. AH&W staff provided a government paper of 1999 ' The Prevalence of Motor Neuron Disease in the Province of Alberta'. It is accepted that approximately 200 persons live with ALS in Alberta at any one time. One of the authors, Lawrence Svenson, was present. His intention is to update this data in late 2005.

**CAPITAL HEALTH AUTHORITY** Met with Senior Operating Officer and staff to review services regarding placement for persons requiring respiratory support and care.

At the request of these government departments, ALS AB is providing regular updates of activities and progress. Specifically, 2005 saw some positive movement in addressing Bi-Pap issues and some very initial discussions in regards to access to Augmentative Communication Devices.

In addition to the above activities, in the fall of 2005 a letter was sent to targeted AB physicians, with a card highlighting ALS Clinic and Society resources across the province. The letter was a collaborative effort between ALS AB and the ALS clinics in both Calgary and Edmonton.

**ALBERTA HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE ASSOCIATION (AHPCA)** - Following the leadership of the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA), serious consideration is being given to finding a way to establish a Quality End of Life Care Coalition of Alberta, under the auspices of the AHPCA. ALS AB is very involved in this initiative as a coalition would strengthen the voice of palliative care in Alberta. Currently there is no provincial palliative care strategy and services are spotty and often not accessible outside major centres.

*"I realized that all of the hard work we have done has created an awareness and appreciation of our ALS community throughout the province, acknowledged also by several Palliative Care physicians and nurses who attended."*

*Jane Rivest, Client Services, S AB*

# 2005 HIGHLIGHTS *Continued*

**GOVERNANCE:** Currently the greatest challenge facing the ALS AB Board is recruitment. This was highlighted at our September 2005 annual planning day and greater efforts will be made to find qualified individuals to sit on the Board and to contribute to moving other initiatives forward.

**CLIENT SERVICES PROGRAM:** Equipment and Client Services have come together under the banner of the ALS AB Community Services Program and have committed to this common goal, *"To be a seamless web of integrated support for the client and their family with all involved agencies"*. Over the course of several months they worked at defining and articulating the work of the CST, including outcomes, outputs and performance measures

*"I have become a lot more aware over time of the importance of in-services in care centres. The staff appreciated the extra knowledge about ALS - some of these care homes had never had an ALS patient before. The other side of the in-services is that the staff also realizes that they can receive support from the ALS Society - which they can call anytime with questions. I feel that the person with ALS receives a lot more support and better care as a result of this."*

*Jane Rivest, Client Services, S AB*

Clearly, there is an ever-increasing demand for services and equipment. By working collaboratively, ALS AB is able to remain fluid and responsive to the needs of those with ALS in Alberta and NWT, filling gaps and avoiding duplication of services.

*"Our hearts were touched [by] the way our friend faced this disease, as well as by the support he received from his family, who in turn were supported by your Society. This made us aware, not only of this disease, but of all the needs of people with it. God Bless you in your work".*

## **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT / COMMUNICATION:**



THE ALS AB **WEBSITE** was built by Intrigue Design to be able to handle quick and easy updates as well as flash animation (movies and advertisements). Keep informed about important ALS issues and events by visiting the new ALS Alberta website: [www.alsab.ca](http://www.alsab.ca)

# ***2005 HIGHLIGHTS*** *continued*



**ALS SOCIETY BRACELETS:** The ALS Society would like to thank Mike Shirley for his great contribution to the design of these bracelets – it is truly a message from the heart. The bracelets are debossed (indented lettering) with the message “ALS It’s About Loving Someone” and the ALS Logo.

**WORLD’S FINEST CHOCOLATES (EDMONTON) :** February – June 2005 - The first shipments of Almonds hit the streets of Edmonton on Wednesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> – just in time for Valentines Day

**ALS ALBERTA AWARDED ALS CANADA “SEED” GRANT DOLLARS:** These funds were allocated in order to support the costs of development and early stage implementation of a new Personal Care Aid Training (PCAT) Program targeted at building knowledge and skills for individuals providing direct care to those with ALS.

*“You guys are 'tireless heroes' in our books, more help than most and for that I am forever grateful.”*

## **ALS PARTNERS:**

ALS AB continues to partner with our national ALS affiliates. By working together we support each other’s learning needs and build on our own skills and talents. ALS AB is very appreciative of the support given to the provinces by ALS Canada. We were pleased to host the January '05 Walk for ALS meeting in Edmonton, bringing together staff and volunteers from Manitoba west to BC. As well, staff frequently consult and engage one another and are very open to learning from and sharing with colleagues. Together, we are making a difference.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

In 2005 the Society had staff in the following positions:

Executive Director	1 x FT (Provincial Position)
Client Services Coordinator	1 x FT (South Region)
Equipment Program Coordinator	1 x FT (Provincial Position)
Senior Staff Assis't.	1 x .4 (Provincial Position)
Secretary / Receptionist	1 x FT (Provincial Position)
Manager, Resource Development	1 x FT (Provincial Position)
Manager, North Region	1 x FT (North Region)
Admin.and Volunteer Services	1 x FT (North Region)
Client Services support	1 x 24 hours/month (South AB - contract position)
Social Worker (MSW)	1 x 8 hours/month (South AB -contract position)
Speech Language Pathologist	1 x 16 hours/month (North AB - contract position)
Speech Language Pathologist	1 x 16 hours/month (South AB -contract position)
Bookkeeper	1 x 16 hours/month (Provincial - contract position)

ALS AB is finding contract staff an affordable way to engage knowledgeable professionals on an as needed basis to support our clients, the ALS AB Community Services Team and other health care professionals.

## **2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>CHAIR</b>	Tim Stauff
<b>VICE CHAIR</b>	Cathy Martin
<b>TREASURER</b>	Shelley Engstrom
<b>DIRECTORS</b>	Mark Stauff Daria Groch Arnold Jan Desrosiers Hank Geerlof Tara Pentney

## **TREASURER'S REPORT – YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005**

The year 2005 saw the financial picture of the Society end, once again, in a positive position. Total revenues of \$999,441 increased by \$121,465 or about 14% from the prior year, which allowed the Society to increase its direct client supports for services and equipment by approximately 13%.

In 2005, the Society experienced a significant increase in revenues generated through donations, a new fundraising initiative with World's Finest Chocolates and the Walk for ALS. The combined revenue increase for these three areas in 2005 was 30%. Through the hard work of our dedicated employees and volunteers, we expect that revenues in all areas will continue to remain strong again next year and in the years ahead.

Budgets for the 2005 year were prepared with the involvement of those responsible for achieving the targets. Overall, actual expenses were less than initially budgeted due to the diligence and commitment to fiscal responsibility demonstrated by the staff members of the Society.

The overall financial position of the Society is strong and its operating base is solid. This sound fiscal condition will sustain the critical work of the organization in the years to come.

I would like to extend my thanks to all those who have helped me fulfill my role as Treasurer during the past year.

*Shelly Engstrom*

*"It was only through the support of people like yourself that we were able to do what my husband wanted so much - to stay at home. Thank you so much, and for the support of the Society."*

## **AUDITORS' REPORT**

To the Members of the  
AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

I have audited the balance sheet of the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of Alberta as at December 31, 2005 and the statements of operations and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Society's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

Except as explained in the following paragraph, I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In common with many charitable organizations, the Society derives revenues in the form of donations and fund raising events, the completeness of which are not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, my verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Society and I was unable to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to revenues from donations and fund raising events.

In my opinion, except for the inability to verify the completeness of revenues referred to above, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at December 31, 2005 and the results of its operations and the changes in cash position for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Calgary, Alberta  
May 11, 2006

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

*Joe Banaschuk*

**AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA**

**BALANCE SHEET**

**DECEMBER 31**

ASSETS

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
CURRENT:		
Cash and short-term investments	\$ 369,258	\$ 406,477
Accounts receivable	7,714	32,095
Prepaid expenses	3,287	3,187
	<hr/> 380,259	<hr/> 441,759
NET CAPITAL ASSETS (NOTE 3)	<hr/> 341,703	<hr/> 223,411
	<hr/> \$ 721,962	<hr/> \$ 665,170

LIABILITIES

CURRENT:		
Accounts payable	\$ 31,862	\$ 194,187
Deferred revenue	38,808	1,000
	<hr/> 70,670	<hr/> 195,187
UNAMORTIZED CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS	<hr/> 333,962	<hr/> 216,317
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO CAPITAL ASSETS	<hr/> 303	<hr/> 7,592

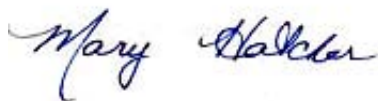
NET ASSETS

INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS	7,741	7,094
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<hr/> 309,286	<hr/> 238,980
	<hr/> 317,027	<hr/> 246,074
	<hr/> \$ 721,962	<hr/> \$ 665,170

Approved by the Board:



Board Chair



Executive Director

**AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<i>INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS</i>	<i>UNRESTRICTED</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	
			<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 7,094	\$ 238,980	\$ 246,074	\$ 153,521
EXCESS REVENUE FOR THE YEAR	(1,874)	72,827	70,953	92,553
PURCHASE OF CAPITAL ASSETS	2,521	(2,521)	-	-
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 7,741	\$ 309,286	\$ 317,027	\$ 246,074

**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
<b>REVENUE:</b>		
Donations	\$ 281,997	\$ 234,544
Walk for ALS (Note 4)	212,469	-
Walk to D'Feet ALS (Note 4)	-	169,949
Betty's run for ALS	202,098	207,122
Amortization of capital contributions	133,644	107,944
Fundraising	105,370	147,859
Third party fundraisers	34,367	3,235
Other	29,496	7,323
	999,441	877,976
<b>EXPENSES:</b>		
Client services	265,381	253,254
Equipment	174,774	137,657
Research	169,066	150,202
Amortization	135,518	109,586
Resource development	79,469	39,856
Education	31,376	29,097
Administration	30,291	28,913
Volunteer	18,800	15,770
Awareness	15,274	9,423
Advocacy	8,539	11,665
	928,488	785,423
<b>EXCESS REVENUE FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 70,953</b>	<b>\$ 92,553</b>

**AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Excess revenue for the year	\$ 70,953	\$ 92,553
Adjustments for:		
Amortization of capital contributions	(133,644)	(107,944)
Amortization	135,518	109,586
	72,827	94,195
<b>Changes in non-cash working capital</b>		
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivables	24,381	(25,939)
(Increase) decrease in prepaid expenses	(100)	26,194
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(162,325)	168,954
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	37,808	(24,000)
Cash flows from (used for) operating activities	(27,409)	239,404
<b>CASH FLOWS USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Purchase of capital assets	(253,809)	(141,119)
Cash flows used for investing activities	(253,809)	(141,119)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Capital contributions received	243,999	68,225
Cash flows from financing activities	243,999	68,225
<b>NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH</b>	(37,219)	166,510
<b>CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	406,477	239,967
<b>CASH, END OF YEAR</b>	\$ 369,258	\$ 406,477

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2005**

**NOTE 1: PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

The ALS Society of Alberta is a charitable organization incorporated under the Societies Act of Alberta. The Society is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from the payment of income tax under Section 149 of the Income Tax Act. The mission of the Society is to provide care and support for people with ALS and their families and to fund a cure.

**NOTE 2: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The Society follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

**Capital Assets**

Capital asset acquisitions are recorded at cost, except donated assets, which are recorded at fair value when fair value can be reasonably determined.

Capital assets are amortized at the following annual rates using the straight line method:

Office furniture and equipment	15%
Client equipment	20%
Automotive equipment	20%
Software	30%
Computer equipment	100%

**Investments**

Short term investments are recorded at cost.

**Donated Services**

Volunteers contribute a significant number of hours per year to assist the Society in carrying out its service delivery activities. Because of the difficulty of determining their number and fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

**NOTE 3: NET CAPITAL ASSETS**

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>	<u>Net Capital Assets</u>	
			<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Client equipment	\$1,051,254	\$717,296	\$333,958	\$216,315
Office furniture and equipment	23,353	15,608	7,745	7,096
Automotive equipment	9,500	9,500	-	-
	<b>\$1,084,107</b>	<b>\$742,404</b>	<b>\$341,703</b>	<b>\$223,411</b>

**NOTE 4: REVENUE**

The fundraising event Walk for ALS commencing in 2005 was, until 2004, known as Walk to D'Feet ALS.

# SHAPING THE FUTURE

ELIZABETH'S



CONCERT OF  
HOPE



## ELIZABETH'S CONCERT OF HOPE

When we move away there is always a small part of us that is left behind....

I am a nurse, wife and mother of three – and a former Calgarian. In 1997, 4 months after moving from Calgary to Ontario, I was diagnosed with ALS. It was with a sense of urgency that I started to question what I could do to change the voiceless and very poorly understood face of this illness.

About eighteen months later my husband, Marc and I returned, to say goodbye to all my friends. I didn't know they had planned a huge surprise party for us with well over 100 people. It was actually a fundraiser for our family and for the ALS Society of Alberta. It was a bittersweet ending .....or so I thought.

I returned to Ontario with a deep sadness and an unsettling feeling. I knew I had to do something significant to create public awareness. It came to me very suddenly after watching the video "Tears Are Not Enough". Music would be my forum. I would organize a high profile benefit concert.

I started writing letters and in 2001 that dream became a reality and the first Elizabeth's Concert of Hope was born. Since then, supported by the business community, the media and some of the royalty of the Canadian music industry we have hosted 7 concerts and raised over 1.9 million dollars for ALS.

Today, with the shadow of ALS looming, I must bring these shows to a close. To build national awareness I am taking the concerts on the road, traveling in my electric wheelchair by Via Rail across the country and in partnership with the provincial ALS Societies hosting 7 concerts coast to coast.

**The Calgary concert is booked at the Jack Singer Concert Hall for September 17<sup>th</sup>. And what a concert it will be!!**

The enthusiasm, excitement and absolute trust from the ALS AB and from former friends and colleagues have been quite remarkable. Many friends are working on the committee and one former nursing friend (with the blessing of her family) has agreed to accompany me across Canada for the two months as my personal assistant.

Calgary is still in my heart and hosting the concert it Calgary will allow me to bring my heart home. Together we will share the joy in creating this legacy and I will pass the torch. This dream has created a treasure chest of memories that will bring me comfort in my palliative years.

# SHAPING THE FUTURE

## IN DREAMS

*In dreams I am walking  
nothing hinders my way  
carefree with each step I take  
movements light and gay*

*Arms swing freely by my side  
companions to my feet  
my body never tires  
I move with graceful ease*

*Stepping lightly as I go  
footprints in the sand  
I am lulled by the rhythm  
of the cadence of the land*

*I will dance to life's music  
no partner do I need  
for now I lean on no one  
I follow **and** I lead*

*I am running, I am leaping  
and never more shall be  
a prisoner of this body  
for my dreams have set me free.*



*Elizabeth Grandbois, Feb'00*