



Hello, My name is Ed Karpetz and I am pleased to be the Ambassador for the 2010 edition of Betty's Run for ALS. I attended Western Canada High School and the University of Calgary prior to joining the Canadian Forces in 1974. I received my Pilot's Wings in 1976 and was posted to Cold Lake Alberta to be trained as a fighter pilot. As I drive northbound on Crowchild trail, I am pleased to see the CF5 Freedom Fighter Jet on the pedestal at the Military Museums, as I flew that airplane during my fighter training. I proceeded to West Germany and flew the CF104 Starfighter from 1978 -1982. An academic itch led me to pursue a degree in dentistry at the University of Alberta from which I graduated in 1986. I worked as a military dentist, where I was deployed to Somalia for a 6 month mission in 1993, as a civilian dentist in Drumheller, and as a contract dentist to Corrections Canada. I never got flying out of my blood and joined the Air Reserve of the Canadian Forces in 1998. I trained as a helicopter pilot and over the next 9 years was sent on deployed operations twice for 6 months to Bosnia - Herzegovina. I ended my military career in 2007 after serving as Commanding Officer of 400 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in Borden, Ontario. I joined Kenn Borek Air in Calgary and was trained as a Captain on both Beech Craft King Air models 100 and 200. One of the most interesting jobs I have ever had was flying as a medical evacuation pilot in the high arctic of Canada based out of both Iqaluit and Inuvik.

In 2008, I joined a local company called Air Sprint and was trained to fly a Cessna Citation XL Business Jet. I was able to fly clients all over North America and it was a great opportunity to get back into jet flying. In the Fall of 2008 I started to notice the smallest changes in my mobility. I thought my jeans were too small when I found myself tripping over the occasional crack in the side walk. It was like I was not able to pick my feet up to clear the small vertical changes that I would encounter on a path. While I was skiing in the spring of 2008 I had injured one of my shoulders and while receiving physiotherapy I also noticed some weakness in my left hand. I asked the physiotherapist about this and he said I should be looking at my neck and not my shoulder as a possible cause of the weakness I was feeling. My Doctor referred me for an MRI on my neck, booked for March of 2009. Over the winter I became limited in being able to raise my arms above my shoulders and knew that I was no longer safe to fly. One of the hardest things I have ever had to do was to ground myself as a pilot. The last day I flew was mid-February 2009. After the MRI, my Doctor wrote letters of referral to both a neurologist and a neurosurgeon and

while waiting to see a specialist I fell in a parking lot by my car and was unable to get up. My Doctor told me I needed an EMG test and I went to the Foothills Medical Center in early April 2009 where they admitted me and I received a diagnosis of ALS three days later.

It has certainly been an interesting journey since that day and I would never have anticipated the level of support that would be coming my way as a result of a diagnosis of ALS. With both the support of the ALS clinic and the ALS Society the many questions that my family and I had were always answered quickly and most professionally. My first request to the ALS society was for a device to help me do my buttons up. Little did I know that this was the tip of the iceberg. One day at the ALS clinic I described to Jane Rivest that my children and I had seen the stand up recliner chairs at a medical store. Not only did she say she had chairs available but how tall was I and what colour would I like? Within a week Medi-Chair employees were in my home setting up just what I needed. That level of service and support has continued and has enabled me to have a great quality of life as I live with ALS. The Society has been tireless in its support and sensitivity to the needs me and my family. I have had no less than 100% service and support from the Society and I applaud the contributions of each and every one of its members. Please join me and all who have been touched by ALS to make this year's Betty's Run another unqualified success so that the Society can continue in its mission. Thank you.