

PORTFOLIO

Web content
Biographical article
Speechwriting
Travel writing
Promotional article
Academic writing



KELSEY STRACHAN

kelsey@rockediting.com
346 - 500 - 3326
rockediting.com

Springbank Park for all Seasons

In summer or winter, for playing sports with a team, organizing a conference, or just getting away from the city, take a trip to Springbank Park for all Seasons.

Sport Facilities

Located just south of Highway 2, Springbank Park for all Seasons was built by the Springbank community in the late 1960's, and underwent numerous upgrades in 2005. It includes indoor and outdoor recreational facilities to accommodate every type of sport activity. In the summer, local clubs and leagues play soccer, baseball, softball, lacrosse, and inline hockey on the outdoor fields and rinks.

In the winter, teams play hockey on the fully-equipped arena or go curling on the curling rink. Families are also encouraged to bring the kids and come out for public skating. Located on 31.5 acres of rolling Alberta prairie, it's the perfect place to wander the trails, go for a picnic, or participate in a club sport. Only a short drive outside of Calgary, it's a perfect getaway no matter what season.

Conference Facilities

The Springbank facilities are community-owned and promote the community spirit. Banquet and lounge facilities are available for conferences, banquets, and wedding receptions, where you can relax in a country setting just outside of the city. For a fun time with the family, Springbank also has a large playground, snack bar, and in the summer, a farmer's market. After spending time in the sun, take advantage of these recreational facilities to enjoy your day at Springbank Park for all Seasons.

Faithful and fruitful: the ministry of Glenn and Lori Patrick

It was a Tuesday afternoon on a cold November day in 1988. Sitting at his desk at the Boys and Girls Club of Calgary, Glenn Patrick couldn't shake the deep compulsion that he was supposed to go up north to Edmonton. Since the summer, he had been feeling prompted by the Spirit to leave his job and university studies behind, and to heed the advice of his friend Harvey Trauter to attend Northwest Bible College and to help as a volunteer in a new church plant, West Edmonton Christian Assembly. Already in his third year of Physical Education at the University of Calgary and working in a job that he loved, leaving it all for the unknown seemed illogical. But the call he felt in his spirit was persistent. Finally, he realized he couldn't hold out against it any longer. "Okay, Lord, I'll go!" he said aloud. He got up, walked into his boss's office, told her that God was calling him to go to Edmonton, and he was going to do it.

Glenn gave up his apartment in Airdrie, packed his car up with a few books, his Bible, some clothes, and a sleeping bag, and headed north the next Sunday afternoon. He pulled into the parking lot of Callingwood Elementary School a few minutes before 6 pm, just in time for the evening service. As he headed in, he couldn't help but notice a very pretty young woman coming in with her sisters and parents—Lori Janz. Lori couldn't help noticing him, too.

Only two months after its very first service in the school gym, West Edmonton Christian Assembly was already growing quickly. As the only pastor, Harvey couldn't run everything himself, and he believed Glenn would be helpful launching a youth ministry. He had government funding to cover a full-time salary for the next four months, and when Glenn bumped into an old acquaintance from Airdrie who offered to let him stay in an apartment for free in exchange for help with the building maintenance, Glenn felt it was confirmation that he had been right to follow God's leading to Edmonton.

The following January (1989), Glenn enrolled at Northwest Bible College, attending classes full time and throwing himself into his role as youth pastor. He made it a goal to personally connect with every youth who attended or visited WECA, and the investment was paying off. The youth ministry was flourishing; at their first youth retreat at Alberta Beach the previous October, 72 youth registered for the weekend, even though the regular attendance of WECA was only 125 people at the time. "I really, really enjoyed it. I learned everything as I was doing it," Glenn says. "Because we had a large youth ministry, I had to learn how to develop leaders." One of those leaders was Lori, who was actively involved with the youth ministry.

After nine months in Callingwood School, the church had outgrown the space, and moved to a strip mall in La Perle, where they renovated an old Red Rooster store and transformed it into a multi-functional space for Sunday services and community celebrations. By this time, Glenn had settled into a rhythm of part-time school at NBC and full-time leadership at WECA. "I loved my role," he says. He would go out into the parking lot of the strip mall where neighbourhood kids were skateboarding and invite them into the youth service. He and Lori became engaged, and were married at WECA in 1992. "We were leading the youth as a team," Lori says. "It was a great season of life." WECA now had a regular attendance of 350 people, and in 1995 opened the doors of the new church building they had constructed on 199 Street, out on the far edge of the city.

In December 1996, Harvey left Edmonton, to join the staff of a church in Langley, BC. The Board of Deacons at WECA struck a Search Committee to find the next lead pastor for the church. After several months of considering various candidates, the Committee and the entire Board voted unanimously for Glenn to step into the senior role. Though Glenn still felt strongly connected to the youth and young adult ministry that he had led for the past nine years, he was willing to put the same amount of hard work and

energy into leading the entire church. “We cared about the church, and we wanted what was best for it. We felt that if everyone had confidence in us in the senior pastor role, we would take it on,” Glenn recalls. “And I really took it on. I threw myself 100% into the work.” On March 2, 1997, he officially took on the mantle of WECA’s senior pastor. It wasn’t the first new role he had taken on that year—Glenn and Lori’s first daughter, Ainslay, had just been born in January.

One of Glenn’s first hires was senior associate pastor Darwin Pichette, whose strengths were organizing and implementing. Under their combined leadership, church attendance doubled over the next three years from 400 to 800. Glenn oversaw his first building phase as lead pastor when Phase 2 of the WECA building added on the auditorium balcony, prayer room, rehearsal room, and children’s ministry wing. “It was a big learning curve,” Glenn says. “But as always, I did what I know. I was able to work with things where they were at, and had many excellent staff and volunteers working with me. I always felt that it’s very important to keep the church unified.”

Though her priority in this season was her three young daughters, Lori still volunteered alongside Glenn where help was needed. She provided admin support to the Children’s Directors, Denise Kroeker and Ingrid Rust, before accepting a part time role in women’s ministry with the PAOC District Office in 2004—a role she would work in for the next 14 years. When their fourth daughter, Sadie, was a baby, Lori stepped in to help as the interim Children’s Director when Denise moved into the small group ministry area and Ingrid developed family ministries. Soon the role became permanent, and from 2008 to 2019 Lori led the children’s ministry at WECA with dedication and heart. “All our life together, we’ve always said to the Lord that we’d be willing and available to do whatever he called us to do,” Lori says.

The years rolled on. The next phase of building saw the gym, new offices, café, youth room, Children’s Worship Centre, and ministry corridor added to WECA over 2008 and 2009. New staff came and other staff moved on to different opportunities. Glenn and Lori continued the annual tradition of gift giveaways on Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. Their girls grew up serving in the church and developing lifelong friendships along the way. Glenn began his morning tradition—currently in its 25th year—of going on a 45 minute prayer walk through West Edmonton Mall to pray for the church, community, and city. WECA ran incredible full theatrical Easter productions, and recreated an ancient Biblical world for the Bethlehem Walk Experience. Somewhere along the way, Glenn started his sermon series on the book of James.

Over the course of his time at WECA, Glenn has done it all: youth group, young adults, men’s ministry, leading worship, preaching, helping with small groups, weddings, funerals. “I’m not a strategic, CEO-type of leader; I just want to get together with people,” he says. “WECA was always the only right fit for me. I evolved into this—like a garment that becomes comfortable over time.” He has had the privilege of presiding over baby dedications—and then conducting the marriage ceremony for one of the babies he dedicated all those years ago. “Not many people get to have the opportunity I did—to start in one church and finish in the same church. I’ve been able to be in the same church my whole ministry career, and it’s been very fruitful.”

Though not fully sure of where their path is leading next, Glenn and Lori are sure of one thing: WECA is still home. “We feel loved, respected, and honoured,” Lori says. Glenn adds, “I still want to be useful and contribute where I can even though my full time role has concluded at WECA,” Glenn says. “I care deeply about WECA. It’s been my family. I’m blessed. I’m truly blessed.”

Frank Slide Speech - Year of the Coal Miner Opening Night Gala

Time: 2.25 minutes

Good afternoon. We've heard a great deal so far about the miners who struggled against all odds, and some who even gave their lives, to dig deep into the coal mines of Alberta. There were certainly sacrifices made—a lot of them, in fact. But possibly none so great, or so terrible, as the sacrifice of the little town of Frank.

Frank was a south Alberta mining town, nestled in the shadow of Turtle Mountain. It was fairly prosperous, boasting six hundred residents, a livery, a railway, a dairy farm—and of course, the coal mines.

The miners worked hard; they got up in the early dawn gloom to head towards the dark caverns in Turtle Mountain, mining cartloads from the rich seam of coal winding through the mountain base.

The morning of April 29, 1903, seemed to be no different—but as the predawn sky began to lighten, shale, then rocks, then boulders began to roll down the mountainside. In less than two minutes, the whole face of the mountain crumbled, smothering Frank with ninety tonnes of rock.

Where once a quiet town had slept, clouds of dust rose, and boulders the size of houses covered the valley floor. And deep underground, seventeen miners were trapped.

A community was lost that day. But in the face of the tragedy, a flood of people from the other mining towns in the Crowsnest Pass, loaded with blankets and food, came to the aid of the survivors. And after fourteen hours in the dark, the seventeen trapped miners dug their way to freedom, becoming the heroes of the day.

We can only speak well of those men who continued to go back into the mines after hearing about such a disaster, and the ones who were trapped, but later returned—even after such a catastrophe, they had a job to do, and they did it.

Today, we celebrate this legacy and remember those who risked so much and gained so little for themselves. Today, we remember the tragedy of Frank's Slide. Today, we remember the courage of the coal miner. Thank you.

Pints and Polecats at The Stag Llangernyw, Wales

What do an antique pair of skis, a stuffed stag, teacups, an old iron plough, and assorted chamberpots have in common? They're only a few of the items that hang from the beamed walls and the low ceilings of The Stag, a small pub in the hills of Denbighshire in northern Wales. The Stag has been a fixture in the village of Llangernyw since the 1600's. No one can quite remember when the tradition of decorating the pub with antiques began, but the current owners, Darryl and Maria Flynn, have kept the tradition going. Ancient swords cross, vintage leather skates dangle, and antique brass bridle rosettes pepper the enormous stone fireplace, where a fire can be found crackling merrily on a rainy evening.

Halfway between Llanrwst and Abergele, The Stag is right off the A548, the main road through the village. Locals gather at the Stag for an evening drink and families drive the winding rural roads on Sunday afternoons to enjoy a relaxing pub lunch. For a few pounds, you'll get a generous serving of good old-fashioned pub fare, made with all organic vegetables and local beef and lamb. Enjoy your chips and pint in the front room, where you'll find the bar, big chairs gathered around the fireplace, and a sunny seat near the window, or have a quiet conversation in one of the two adjoining dining areas stocked with solid old wood tables and chairs.

If a little history and a magnificent view sounds intriguing, head next door to St. Digain's church. Through the heavy black iron gate, a paved path runs through a maze of weathered headstones, some of which are reputed to be from the 6th century. Across from the white chapel is a 4,000 year old yew tree, the oldest tree in Britain. It is rumoured that an English King camped under the tree with his army in the 1300's while on a campaign against the Welsh. Beyond the churchyard, the view is spectacular. The ground drops away into a valley, and rises up again a mile away, dotted in yellow gorse and brown and purple heather.

A visit to the Stag begins with a picturesque drive through the hills and finishes with a delicious meal and a cold pint. If you're ever in this Welsh part of the world, be sure to visit this pub.

The Stag is open Monday to Saturday from 12 pm to 3 pm and from 6 pm to 11:30 pm, and Sundays from 12 pm to 11 pm. For more information, you can contact the Stag at +44 (0)1745 860 213.

Big Hearts, Big Success

When you first walk through the doors, you may notice the larger-than-life mural of antique airplanes on the back wall. Or perhaps your eyes would be drawn to the row of colourful art pieces across the room, or to the cluster of white-coated chefs in the far corner. You've just entered ECCCC's first annual **big Hearts fill tummies** fundraiser.

On February 28, almost 200 guests joined the Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation at the Blatchford Field Hangar in Fort Edmonton Park to raise support for Edmonton's School Lunch and Nutritious Snack Programs. Statistics show that one in five Edmonton children often come to school having had no breakfast, and with little or no lunch in their backpacks, it's very difficult for them to concentrate on their schoolwork. Now, helped out by the **big Hearts fill tummies** night, the School Lunch Program continues to feed hungry children, thanks to fundraising totals topping \$20,000.

The night kicked off with entertainment by children in the Art Start program. 22 children showcased their talents through short dance, choral, and instrumental presentations. The bright music and dance numbers were a fun opening to the evening, and offered a sample of the success of ECCCC's programs.

Next on the night's agenda was an auction of enticing appetizers created by chefs from eight gourmet restaurants and caterers in the city, including Characters Restaurant, Chateau Lacombe's LaRonde, Hotel MacDonald's Harvest Room, Gem Catering, Packrat Louie Kitchen and Bar, Ric's Grill, the Westin's Pradera Café, and Terry Vaughn's. Jasmin Hoeven, the Program Manager of Edmonton's School Lunch Program, says this unique auction idea was a great success. "The chefs really went above and beyond—they were having a great time competing with each other, and of course, everyone loved the results."

Following the intense competition, guests queued up for a buffet dinner, and wandered across to the art displays to make silent auction bids. Jacqueline Biollo, the Founder and Director of the ArtStart program, says auctioning pieces created in the ArtStart program was great for the event—and for the children. "The kids knew that their art was for the auction, so they were really proud that their work was going to be sold." Bright crayon colours and abstract paper shapes, framed and covered in sparkling glass, waited in line to be taken home by the highest bidder. And on each table, miniature works of art made eye-catching centerpieces. For Jacqueline Biollo, the art showcase was the highlight of the event.

The snappy music of the Big Breakfast Boogie Band rounded off the evening, and concluded a successful first run for the **big Hearts fill tummies** fundraiser. Budding young artists and gourmet chefs are already looking forward to next year's event, which no doubt will be packed with big entertainment, big competition, and big smiles.

Building a New Civilization: Virtual Teams, Tasks, and Technologies

Our civilization is changing. We are becoming a virtual world, populated with virtual people. We are part of many virtual societies, be they professional, academic, or personal. Globalization is bringing people together from around the world into a single sphere. Globalization itself “has been influenced above all by developments in systems of communication, dating back only to the late 1960s” (Giddens, 2003, p. 10). Since the development of the computer, communication technology has mutated and multiplied, and has grown to become all-powerful—powerful enough to create this new civilization.

Like any new civilization, we must create social practices, and like any new activity, it is often achieved through trial and error. Grosse writes that “learning how to handle the technology and dealing with different cultures pose the biggest challenges [for virtual teams]” (2002, p. 23). The technology used by virtual teams is explored by Maruping and Agarwal in their paper on managing teams through information and communication technologies (ICTs). In this study, they discuss the concept of how virtual teams can accomplish a certain task or to address a particular issue by utilizing a specific ICT. They address three types of team processes, and suggest how an ICT can carry out these processes successfully.

The first process is the conflict management process, encompassing task conflict, or disagreements between group members on how to complete a task; relationship conflict, or tensions between group members unrelated to the actual tasks being completed; and process conflict, or disagreements between group members on how to manage tasks or allocate resources. Conflict is often unavoidable in virtual teams because “team member diversity is inherent given the boundary spanning nature of such teams” (Maruping and Agarwal, 2004, p. 979). They suggest that in order to overcome conflict, collaboration must be achieved, as this illustrates a joint group concern for completing the tasks successfully while ensuring good interpersonal relationships are maintained.

A fitting ICT for this goal during the early stages of the team project would be one that is high in feedback, symbol variety, and parallelism, such as a videoconference or teleconference. This allows team members to interact as fully as possible at the initial stage of the project. Once the team is established, an ICT high in feedback and symbol variety, but low in parallelism, such as a person-to-person phone call, will be effective in creating collaboration because relationships have already been established.

The second process is the motivating and confidence-building process, which “involves the continuous encouragement of team members to maintain high levels of performance” (Maruping and Agarwal, 2004, p. 982). Here, team members need to be able to communicate personalized and meaningful feedback through ICTs that have high reciprocity, such as instant messaging. This instantaneous and personal type of ICT is second best to face-to-face communication, which is often impossible for members of a virtual team.

The third and final process Maruping and Agarwal (2004) discuss is the affect management process. This relates to managing the emotional stability of the group by regulating individual team member emotions (p. 983). Regulation of emotionality is done through positive social communication between group members. An ICT such as video conferencing, which is high in feedback, symbol variety, and parallelism, will be effective in carrying out non-work-related communication.

In their conclusion, Maruping and Agarwal (2004) suggest that empirical testing of their propositions is still important. However, their overall proposition that ‘team leaders and managers need to be deliberate in their consideration and selection of ICTs to manage virtual team communication’ (p. 988) has not been unexplored. Grosse (2002) states that virtual teams need to select the most appropriate communication channel to realize their purpose (p. 26). As technology evolves, the ways virtual teams work will also continue to evolve. After all, we are “creating something that has never existed before, a global cosmopolitan society. We are the first generation to live in this society, whose contours we can as yet only dimly see” (Giddens, 2003, p. 19).

In his discussion of globalization, as an apt description of our new virtual world, Giddens (2003) states that “globalization isn’t only about what is ‘out there’, remote and far away from the individual. It is an ‘in here’ phenomenon too, influencing intimate and personal aspects of our lives” (p. 12). Each message communicated through an ICT, though originating from a distance, impacts us personally. However, when the practicality of an ICT is not taken into consideration by team members or managers, it can have negative results.

Recently, I spent a year completing a writing contract for a software company. The company was located in a different city, and interaction between me, my manager, and my coworkers was done through the use of ICTs. Grosse (2002) notes that “virtual team members need to choose an appropriate communication channel for their purposes and be sure to balance distance work with face-to-face communication” (p. 22). However, the original face-to-face interaction was limited to the initial interview with my manager and a short introduction to one of the project coordinators. No relationship building was carried out with the software developers, with whom I was required to interact with regularly during the contract. Maruping and Agarwal (2004) state that “teams using technologies that are high in media richness during the early stages of team development are more likely to be successful” (p. 981).

As our virtual team relied mainly on email during the early stages of team development, we experienced a high level of task conflict. Because we did not have a strong foundational relationship, our team members did not automatically pull together to resolve the issues required to complete a task. Even though we contacted one another regularly by email, we did not feel comfortable enough with one another to ask simple or obvious questions, which at times were necessary to completing a task successfully.

As we continue to learn through these type of experiences, our new virtual civilization will eventually find its equilibrium in today’s global world through the combination of task and technology.

References

- Giddens, A. (2003). *Runaway world*. Routledge, New York.
- Grosse, C.U. (December 2002). Managing communication within virtual intercultural teams. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 65 (4), 22-38.
- Maruping, L.M., and Agarwal, R. (2004). Managing team interpersonal processes through technology: A task-technology fit perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89 (6), 975-990.