



2025 Annual Report

Spruce Grove and District Agricultural Society
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About Us

The Spruce Grove and District Agricultural Society is a non-profit charitable organization, formed in Spruce Grove in 1972 through grants from the Alberta Government to support rural infrastructure. The intent of Agricultural Societies is to encourage improvement in agriculture and in the quality of life of persons living in an agricultural community. We do this by developing programs, services, and facilities based on the needs of this community.

The Spruce Grove and District Agricultural Society is committed to building community and sowing and preserving memories!

History

The Spruce Grove and District Agricultural Society (Ag Society) was formed in May of 1972, when a group of people agreed to fundraise for a recreational center for the *Town of Spruce Grove*. Fifty-four members signed the original charter. They applied for and received a loan of \$455,000.00 from the federal government to build a recreational center for the community.

An additional grant of \$50,000.00 came from the province and another \$7,500.00 was raised to build the Scarlet Room on the second floor of the building, recognizing the RCMP 100th birthday. A large wooden sculpture¹ was commissioned and hung in the room and the building was completed in 1974, with an opening ceremony held to celebrate. The 'g' in *Agrena* was agreed upon to recognize the contribution of the Ag Society. Today, the wooden sculpture hangs on the north wall of the Ag Society Workshop.

As part of the *Agrena* funding agreement with the federal government, the Ag Society was required to organize an *Agra Fair* for 25 years at the new facility. The first one was held in 1974, and it became one of western Canada's largest events of its kind. The *Agra Fair* ran for 27 years, ending in 2000. After a 22-year break, on the Ag Society's 50th Anniversary in 2022, *Agra Fair* was revived and has grown each year since.

The *Alberta Wheat Pool Grain Elevator* was built in 1958 after a fire destroyed one of three working elevators in Spruce Grove. In 1995, Spruce Grove's only remaining elevator was closing and scheduled for demolition. A letter from *Alberta Wheat Pool* dated March 1, 1995, said it would be uneconomical to continue to operate the elevator and it would be demolished during the 1995-1996 grain season. The Ag Society saw its potential as a monument to the agricultural heritage of the area and as a tourist attraction. It was purchased by the Ag Society from *Alberta*

¹Wooden sculpture by Paul Van Imschoot

Wheat Pool for \$1.00. The *Canadian National Railways* donated the non-functioning piece of railroad, siding the immediate north of the elevator. Our Grain Elevator is still in working condition and is maintained by the Ag Society, with painting and restorations done regularly.

The title to the land the elevator sits on was transferred from the Canadian National Railways to the Ag Society when the final payment was made. The first acre was bought in March of 1997 for \$20,000. The second acre was bought in July of 1998 for \$14,000. The local *Rural Electrification Association (REA)* donated funding to fence the property.

Since 1998 events and activities have been hosted at the Elevator Site including pancake breakfasts, corn roasts, kid's carnivals, harvest fairs, and informative Elevator tours.

In 2001, the *Spruce Grove Archives* moved onsite into an Atco trailer purchased and renovated by the Ag Society using lottery funds. In 2006, the Workshop and market building were constructed with the goal of using the facilities to host a farmers' market, gift shop, and museum displays. Through a lease agreement, the *Spruce Grove Farmers' Market* has operated on site since and a museum was opened in 2007 in the west end of the Workshop and started to receive donations.

2010 saw the abandoned *Spruce Grove Water Tower* transported to the elevator site by Agricultural Society volunteers, with the help of local businesses and a generous donation by a local philanthropist. Work began, first with the sandblasting and undercoating of the tank, and a local mural artist was engaged to create a mural. On November 8, 2011, the historic *Water Tower* was erected on the elevator site.

The *Red Barn*, built in 1947 by William Martin Miller, was moved onto the elevator site in 2016 from the Miller farm just off highway 60. It is an example of the workmanship of yesterday's farmers. In 2021 it was put onto a permanent foundation where it sits today.

After several years of planning, the *Spruce Grove Agricultural Community Garden* was established in 2019 at 455 King Street, Spruce Grove. The land was provided by the *City of Spruce Grove*, through a land use agreement. The community garden is designed to fulfill a need in the community, diversify the programs of the Ag Society and drive new interest and membership.

The community garden has been widely successful, with the goals to build awareness of where our food comes from and an appreciation for the health benefits of growing locally and consuming fresh produce. It also provides a sense of community with an educational component and involves local schools through educational partnerships.

The Government of Alberta declared the Spruce Grove Grain Elevator a Provincial Historic Resource October 2020, after members of the Ag Society applied for this prestigious title. The Historic Designation document says:

The Alberta Wheat Pool (1958) Grain Elevator, Spruce Grove, is provincially significant because it is an excellent representation of themes in Alberta's history relating to agricultural production and the grain trade. It is an excellent, intact working example of a wooden grain elevator - an increasingly rare building type that played an important role in Alberta and which has long been recognized as an iconic landmark within the province and across Canada.

With this historical designation, the Ag Society is responsible to maintain the building and the grounds around it in its original form. Maintenance is performed on a regular cycle, most recently with painting in 2012, 2016, and 2024. Major repairs were done in 2016, with board replacement, sandblasting, painting, windows completely rebuilt and significant foundation reinforcement in 2024.

Over the years as the Ag Society collected historical agricultural equipment from many donors, a building was needed to protect these items from the weather. In 2021, a 100' X 30' machinery display building, dubbed *Machinery Row*, was constructed. By 2023, the need to get power to *Machinery Row*, the *Water Tower* and the *Red Barn* was realized, with the construction of a replica *Train Station* to house the necessary electrical panels. The *Train Station* will also be used as a ticket booth for events in the future.

2025 Board of Directors & Staff

We would not be able to function without the leadership and dedication of our Board of Directors.

Being a Board Member takes significant commitment and demonstrated action. As local governance expert and prior Spruce Grove Mayor, George Cuff notes – Boards must '*Model the expected behavior of the organization*²' and we are fortunate to have this in our Board.

We extend sincere THANKS to all individuals who volunteered on our Board in 2025.

Teresa Bateman, President

² Cuff, G. (2014). Local Government Leadership Academy: Managing the Council/Board-CAO Relationship. Retrieved from: <https://lgla.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/George-Cuff-LGLA2014.pdf>.

Gerry Lawrence, Vice-President
Alison Munro, Treasurer
Brianna Ryfa, Secretary
Barbara Scott, Director - Skydancer Indigenous Cultural Society Partner
Tammy Ryfa, Director - Bookkeeper
Don Benoit, Director
Nicola Eddy, Director
Darren Snopek, Director
Brenda Goulette, Director

Board Members changes since 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM):

Sid Livingstone, Past-President – Retired from the Board February 2025.

Staff

Michelle Tokar, Administrative Coordinator

Rebecca Mbanyele, Archivist
Four summer staff with support of Canada Job Grants

A huge SHOUT OUT to our AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!! Our volunteers are the heart of everything we do. Their generosity, dedication, and willingness to step in—rain or shine—make everything we do possible. Whether they are managing the site, flipping pancakes, running activities, greeting guests, managing our books, planning member meetings, or supporting behind the scenes, their passion strengthens our community. We are truly grateful to each and every one who helped make this a great year!

President's Report

'I don't know where time has gone' is exactly how I felt about this last year! I am excited and pleased to share the work of our Board, Committees, and our dedicated Volunteers, with this Annual Report of our 2025 achievements.

In the fall of 2024, we completed the review of our Bylaws, which was approved at last year's Annual General Meeting (AGM), and we had a draft of a newly revised Strategic Plan ready for Spruce Grove and District Agricultural Society – Annual Report 2025

approval at the March 2025 Membership Meeting. These two documents form the basis for what guides the organization.

Bylaws:

The Bylaws are our legal and governance framework and define HOW we operate.

Their key values include:

- **Legitimacy and Compliance:**
Ensures the Society operates in accordance with the Agricultural Societies Act and maintains eligibility for provincial funding and grant programs.
- **Clear Governance Structure:**
Defines roles and responsibilities of the Board, officers, and members — reducing conflict and confusion.
- **Transparency and Accountability:**
Establishes fair processes for meetings, voting, elections, and membership, which builds trust among volunteers and the community.
- **Continuity and Stability:**
Protects the organization during leadership changes by providing consistent rules and procedures.
- **Conflict Resolution Tool:**
Offers a formal mechanism to address disputes and guide decision-making in a fair and predictable way.

Strategic Plan:

The Strategic Plan gives the Society a shared vision and direction, merging community needs and the Society's mission into clear priorities and actions. It essentially outlines WHERE we are going and HOW we'll get there.

The key values of a Strategic Plan are:

- **Focus and Alignment:**
Clarifies what the Society stands for, what success looks like, and how limited volunteer time and resources should be used.
- **Community Relevance:**
Ensures the Society continues to reflect local agricultural, cultural, and recreational priorities — keeping programs meaningful and well-supported.
- **Stronger Funding and Partnerships:**
Demonstrates to funders, sponsors, and the province that the Society has clear goals, measurable outcomes, and sustainable plans for growth.

- **Board and Volunteer Engagement:**
Provides a roadmap that energizes volunteers and helps new members quickly understand where the Society is headed.
- **Evaluation and Accountability:**
Sets measurable targets that allow the Board to assess progress, celebrate achievements, and adjust direction when needed.

When the Bylaws and Strategic Plan are current and aligned, the Society operates smoothly, in a well-governed, forward-thinking manner that creates community trust. This provides stronger positioning in our District with opportunities for secure funding that ultimately helps us grow our impact.

As we worked on our Strategic Plan, we knew agriculture and our rural District are core to our being, and we also knew there is a need to reach the 40,000 Spruce Grove urban residents who may not connect with the word ‘Agriculture’. Our updated objectives show a broader connection, specifically our goal to “elevate both rural and urban agriculture, horticulture, homesteading, and micro-farming...”.

Having both these guiding documents updated and current is a big win for our Society. The development process of a Strategic Plan really helps a Board commit to the organization. It provides a chance to dig deep into our goals as an organization and plan our future.

To maintain accountability, the Board has now integrated the 2025 Strategic Plan into our decision-making and operational planning processes. Work was done in May 2025, with the Board and Committee Leads to review all strategic priorities identified in the Strategic Plan and develop a Strategic Action Plan. The Board works on these action items monthly, to focus on achieving our goals.

After thoughtful discussion, the Board decided not to renew the lease agreement with the Spruce Grove Farmers’ Market for the 2026 season. The Ag Society will be focusing on expanding and enhancing our facilities, grounds, and programs and will work with the Farmer’s Market Board to close out our working relationship over the next few months. We are deeply grateful for the many years of partnership and the positive impact this collaboration has brought to our community.

As I reflect on the close of my second year as President, I note that leading this organization is work I didn’t realize I needed, and I mean that seriously. The goals I spoke of when I first started in 2023 still stand true for me and remain my commitment to the society and its members: *leadership, clarifying roles and responsibilities, engagement, being strategic, informed decision-making, teamwork and accountability*. Even with the many volunteer hours I’m

putting into this role, I really enjoy the teamwork, the people, the community, and I remain grateful for the opportunity.

Sincere THANKS to all our Volunteers! I don't believe it matters if you give one hour – or 1000+ hours, we CANNOT do this work without YOU. The commitment and positivity everyone brings to the Ag Society are an inspiration and contribute to the wonderful community we have. I look forward to the prospects we have together in 2026.

Best regards, Teresa Bateman, President

Financial Report

The Simply Accounting program continues to ensure simplified and smooth management of reports for projects of the Ag Society, with easier reporting, budgeting, and timely management of year end accounting procedures.

While our organization remains financially strong, our dependence on grant funding and lack of sustainable financial sources remains a concern for the Board. These areas are being further explored with work being done on a Sustainable Financial Strategy – a Priority Action coming out of the Strategic Plan. These actions include increasing revenue, grants, sales of merchandise, expanding municipal and regional partnerships, and developing a legacy funding program.

As our organization activities, grants, and sponsorship grow, the financial complexities grow too. The development of a Finance Committee is key to focused work in this area and includes the Treasurer, Bookkeeper, and a member who is not on the Board. We have volunteers for all these positions to start following the AGM.

Budgets are requested from Committee Leads by September, to prepare the budget for Board approval before the AGM. This process will be moved forward to June in 2026 to allow more time for the Finance Committee, so Leads are encouraged to consider their needs earlier next year.

Insurance costs are monitored, with comparative quotes received from several providers, with us electing to stay with our existing insurer – NFP.

Financials will be available for viewing at the AGM, along with a presentation from the Treasurer.

2025 Highlights

It was recognized in the strategic planning process that we need to reframe our committee structure, blending those groups that do similar activities. This was completed to create a more efficient organizational structure and may change as we put it to work.

There are now 9 main committees – with sub-groups that do the work of the Society. The following is a summary of their work throughout the year.

Committee Restructuring

AGLC

As a non-profit organization licensed with the Alberta Gaming, Liquor, and Cannabis, the Ag Society can raise funds through charitable gaming including bingo, casino, raffles, or pull tickets. While there are rules for the use of proceeds, financial management and reporting, and operational compliance, these fundraising opportunities provide key resources for the society.

Bingo:

Lead: Linda Livingstone

Alternate Lead: Leslie Montgomerie

Volunteer hours: 1094

Bingos remain a key fundraiser for Ag Society, with 19 Bingos in 2025. There remains a roster of about 45 people who are on the Bingo call list. We thank them for their dedication and willingness to work these events. Most bingos require 11 workers, with some needing up to 14 workers, so we are always looking for more people to help out.

Meal vouchers were slightly increased for volunteers in 2025, so besides getting great steps in you get a nice meal.

Communication goes out regularly to the Bingo volunteers, the [SignUp.com](https://signup.com) works well for volunteers to sign up to the dates and roles they wish to take part in.

Volunteers are always needed. Contact Bingo@sprucegroveagsociety.com to learn more.

Casino:

Lead: Rick Lee

Ag Society did not have a Casino in 2025, although our financials reflect the 2024 event that was paid out in October 2024 – the start of our financial year. We expect our next Casino in 2027.

Preservation

Archives:

Lead: Cheryl Lux Warholik, Sharon Acheson

Committee hours: 708

Through successful collaboration with the City of Spruce Grove and the Spruce Grove Public Library, the archive collection was moved to new space at 35 Fifth Avenue, Spruce Grove on April 28, 2025. This move ensures we meet current archival preservation standards of 24/7 environmental monitoring and increases access to the public. This move took several years of planning, and we are grateful for the use of the space and ongoing collaboration.

Oral history collection was enhanced, with a grant received in December 2024 that supported purchase of equipment (video capable camera, audio recorder) and hire of an interviewer. Ten additional histories were collected.

Our Archivist, Rebecca Mbanyele, continued her work with grant supported full-time hours until June 1, 2025, moving to part-time until April 30, 2026. This position has been partially funded through grants, along with our operational funds. Grants to cover Archives expenses and staffing are pending.

She manages Access to Memory (AtoM), a web-based, open-source application for standards-based archival management, with the goal of having public online access to our collection soon.

Policy development continued to be a huge part of Rebecca's role, with significant policy development and approval this year:

- Spruce Grove Archives Preservation Policy (reviewed & approval 2025)
- Spruce Grove Archives Acquisition Policy (reviewed & approval 2025)
- Archives Acquisition Policy (approved 2025)
- Operational Mandate of Spruce Grove Archives (approved 2025)
- Oral History Manual of Spruce Grove Archives (approved 2025)
- Spruce Grove Archives Processing Manual (approved 2025)
- Access Policy for Spruce Grove Archives (approved 2025)

The “1940’s Town of Spruce Grove” diorama was restored and move to the Archives space within the library. Using financial, time donations, and a grant from a private foundation via the Edmonton Community Foundation, specialized tables were built to display the diorama and a glass top was constructed for security. This will potentially allow the Diorama display to “travel” to other locations for the community to enjoy.

Maintaining accessibility to local archival information in the Tri-Region Municipalities is a key goal of the Archives and Ag Society. Significant additions were made to the collection in 2025 including the Spruce Grove Examiners from 1980 to present, the Horizon Stage Collection, and further materials from the City of Spruce Grove, Spruce Grove Public Library, County of Parkland Agriculture and Environment Services Department, Stony Plain Pioneer Center, and TriCala Adult Learning Program. Connections with local community associations, 4-H clubs, and other Tri-Region groups will continue in 2026.

Community awareness and connection is an important factor for the Archives as it is a value reported in grant applications. A new Logo was developed for the Archives and weekly social media posts focus on historical themed archival materials have increased awareness and community engagement significantly. Some posts, like the October 1 pictures and story of the Huber’s Garage reaching over 16,000 views and increasing followers.



There has been a significant increase in the public and researchers accessing the Archives. A display with a historic video was featured at the Agra Fair and a presentation to the Clymont Community Association created some collaboration opportunity. This fall three community workshops were offered to further increase awareness and access of the Archives.

The Archives now has all qualifications for submission of application to become a member of the Alberta Archives Society, with acceptance pending. This has been a monumental goal with sincere and committed focus of the Archives Committee over the last several years.

Museum:

Lead: Sharon Acheson - Retiring

Seeking new LEAD

Committee hours: 708

There are three distinct parts to the Ag Society museum collection – Machinery Row, the Grain Elevator and its contents, and the household items in the workshop and Agra Room Storage.

All museum inventory was added to the Past Perfect database, with the trophy and plaque collections cleaned, photographed, and documented as well. A collection of paintings, framed

materials and documents were transferred to the Archives. The cabinets at the Agra Room in the Agrena were changed out to showcase sports, quilting, and bench show historical items. The antique doll display was also a popular showcase at the Border Paving display cabinets for several months.

Progress on Machinery Row has been slow this year, as the teams were very busy with outdoor clean up and landscaping at the Elevator site. Platforms for equipment in Machinery Row were completed and installed, with signage added on all pieces of machinery. A volunteer Project Manager is now in the role of ensuring the grant driven work is completed within the structured timeline. The hope is that both Machinery Row and the Red Barn can be open for viewing during any public events for the summer of 2026.

As considerations are underway for improved utilization of Ag Society facilities, discussion has occurred about the museum space inside the Workshop. Concerns have been noted that the collections of museum items are poorly accessed and limit certain uses in the space. A suggested Traveling Museum has been agreed to be a better option, with the items separated into themed groupings, stored and integrated into historical rotating displays in various locations throughout the district, and perhaps even school displays.

A new Lead and team of volunteers is needed to research, plan, create, track and manage the process. Please let us know if you are interested in taking part.

Communications and Marketing:

Lead: Nicola Eddy

Committee hours: 760

CRM and Webpage Upgrade

Our Communications Team has been incredibly busy this fall, laying the groundwork for one of the Society's biggest operational upgrades to date: the implementation of our new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) and membership management system. This project represents far more than just a software change. The CRM will allow us to centralize our data, streamline processes, and significantly improve how we support our members. It will also strengthen sponsor and donor relations, enhance our marketing efforts, and give us real data to guide engagement and future planning.

Beyond these benefits, the CRM will finally give us better tools for managing volunteer hours, coordinating event logistics, and improving overall time management across committees. These features will help us recognize, support, and celebrate the many volunteers who keep our Society thriving, while also making our event processes smoother and more efficient.

The CRM implementation also requires a major website upgrade from Bandzoogle to WordPress. This transition will open the door to new website features, improved integration, and a more flexible platform that supports our long-term goals. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to **Panda Rose** for continuing to host and support our technical needs throughout this transition—their expertise has been invaluable as we modernize our systems.

This work represents months of planning, dedication, and collaboration, and it will set us up for even greater success in the years ahead.

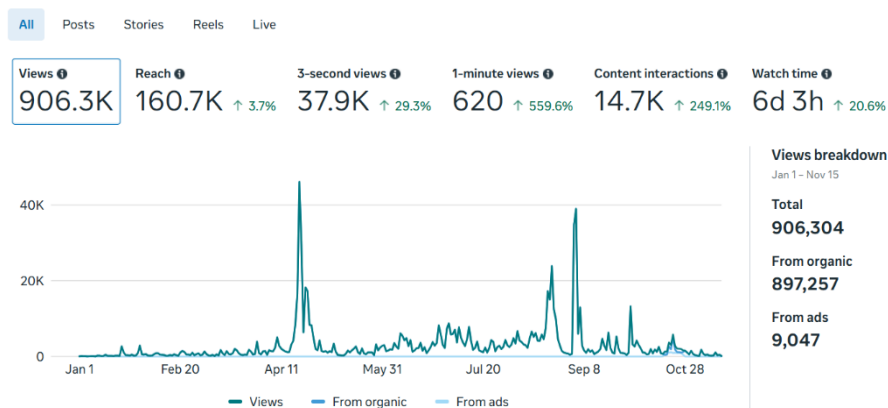
Communication

Email communication increased for most of the year, with an open rate on emails just over 79%. This rate is nearly double of recent global benchmarks³, which is something to celebrate!

Social Media Marketing

Ag Society social media channels have taken a huge leap this year with the spikes noted above reflecting historical Archives posts, Spring Carnival, Agra Fair, and Murder at the Elevator. These stats reflect exceptional creativity from our summer staff, our Archivist, and some key volunteers.

Over the last year, Facebook followers have increased by 116%, returning viewers by 833%, and content interactions have increased by 249%. We are grateful for our engaged and active online community.



The changes in our social media channels have resulted in monetizing our posts so every click, like, watch or comment contributes to some small financial reward for Ag Society. It's not much, but we are hoping to earn \$10.00 by the end of the year!

Other Marketing

A series of bookmarks, with links to our site, were created for giveaways at events and displays. This was the alternative to brochures, which are more expensive to print and difficult to keep up to date. The self-guided Grain Elevator tour booklet is always popular with those who tour the

³ <https://mailotrix.com/email-open-rate-statistics/>

elevator. A new version was created by a summer staff member, and a grant was received to cover some of the printing costs for 2026.

Volunteers managed displays at several events this year including the Stony Plain 4-H Beef Achievement Day, the Tri-Municipal Region Fall Info Night, Agra Fair, and multiple dates at the Alberta Treasury Branch (ATB). These opportunities provide a chance to share information about the Ag Society and connect with our community.

Community Garden:

Lead: Don Benoit

Committee hours: 602

Spruce Grove Agricultural Community Garden is designed to fulfill a need in the community, diversify the programs of the Ag Society and drive new interest and membership. The community garden project is intended to provide a sense of community with an educational component, while instilling pride and ownership in growing local produce. It creates awareness of where our food comes from and forms appreciation for the health benefits of growing locally and consuming fresh produce.

This project came about in 2019 after three years of planning. With leased land from the City of Spruce Grove, the garden is located at 447 King Street, Spruce Grove, AB., across from Central Park and the Agrena. Garden boxes are rented each year for a cost of \$33.00, with \$10.00 of the fee providing each gardener a membership to the Ag Society. It took three years (2019-2021) to build out the 62 boxes that make up the space, and since then additions have included a community box, a paved pathway system, compost bins, fruit bearing trees and shrubs, and the installation of concrete benches and a picnic table at the site.

Tree Canada Grant & Orchard Area

- Eleven fruit-bearing trees and shrubs were planted in Fall 2024 with support from a Tree Canada grant.
- Informative signs were installed in April 2025, identifying each tree or shrub and its future fruit.
- As the trees mature, the fruit will be harvested for Pie-making sessions at the garden, or donation of surplus produce to the Parkland Food Bank.

Gardener Orientation & Spring Activities

- April's Gardener Orientation welcomed 23 gardeners, including 6 new volunteers who have expressed interest in helping with other Society events (including 2 for Bingos)

- The Committee hosted a composting display during *Spruce Up Spruce Grove*, the City's annual community clean-up and tree-planting event.
- Weed control remains a challenge; plans are underway to establish a schedule for natural weed-spraying.

School Partnerships

- Two Spruce Grove Composite High School (SGCHS) classes continued their stewardship of garden boxes. Students assisted with box repairs, weeding, soil turning, and watering trees before spring planting. This partnership remains a strong and positive ongoing collaboration.
- Brookwood Elementary students also visited the site to learn about horticulture and help manage two of the garden boxes.

Agra Fair Participation & Visitor Engagement

- The Committee created a beautiful float for the Agra Fair Parade. On-site, the Committee hosted over 130 guests for minnow races and self-guided tours.
- The Spruce Grove Fish & Game Association joined us for the fourth year, helping children build birdhouses—45 birdhouses were completed and taken home in 2025.

Garden Plot Judging (Agra Fair)

Visitor-voted awards were presented in the following categories:

- Most Impressive Veggie: Boxes 22, 21, 34
 - **Magical Bloom:** Boxes 22, 21, 60
 - **Tallest Plant:** Boxes 12, 25, 16
 - Weed-Free Perimeter: Box 33
 - **Best in Show:** Boxes 31, 40, 21 (to be recognized at the Winter Blooms Gala, February 2026)
- Congratulations to all our gardeners!

Future Plans

- The Committee continues to work toward establishing a second Community Garden site in Spruce Grove.
- Planning is expected to progress in the coming year.
- Mentorship will be provided to the new garden committee, using the proven success of our first garden as a model.

Events:

Lead: Michelle Tokar

Committee hours: 442

Events are a great way for the Ag Society to connect with our community. They attract interest, engagement, and new members. It is vital to have events that address variable interests and either focus on our objectives as an organization or build community.

This list includes the smaller on-site events hosted this year:

March 15 – Intro to Beading

Participants created a beautiful strawberry pin with the Skydancer Indigenous Cultural Society. We were thrilled to cost-share this sold-out event.

May 25, 2025 – Planters Workshop

Guests built their own 1.5' x 1.5' wooden planters. Everyone had a great time, and we welcomed participants from as far as Edmonton and St. Albert.

June 14 – Flapjacks on the Tracks (Funds raised \$1123.79)

A community garage sale and pancake breakfast sponsored by Hash the Browns. Despite another cold and rainy day, we still saw a strong turnout. Mayor Acker and Councillor Carter joined us and helped flip pancakes.

July 5 – Music at the Elevator: Orvald Wayne Concert (Funds raised \$544.10)

Our first addition to the Elevator Concert Series featured Orvald Wayne, who performed a mix of Country and Rock music. Attendance was fantastic, with over 100 tickets sold. This was our first licensed event, with snacks and drinks available for purchase.

September 20 – Fall Harvest & Agricultural Societies Day

A corn boil and hot-dog lunch were served by Mayor Acker and our volunteers. Our fall garage sale was a success—no rain! Families enjoyed glitter tattoos, old-fashioned games, pony rides, and a variety of other activities.

Changes to Events Management

Because events are such an essential part of our work, we're committed to dedicating more focus and energy to how we plan and manage them. Focusing on the Ag Society objectives noted in the Bylaws, our goal is to engage both urban and rural people, with events and activities that involve agriculture, horticulture, homesteading, and microfarming, and focus on improving the overall quality of life of our community.

Our events help us strengthen community connections, welcome and diversify our membership, deepen understanding of our organization, and create meaningful opportunities for agriculturally based education, along with socializing, community building, and fundraising. We are also hoping to develop youth leadership, promote tourism to attract visitors, and showcase cultural, educational, and interpretive insights that educate and inspire our community.

Volunteers have stepped up to lead this restructured work, some already deeply involved in the past. Board Director, Brenda Goulette will oversee and support the organizational event planning with Michelle Tokar, our Administrative Coordinator, supporting the Small and Large Event Leads and Project Leaders.

Small Events

Lead: Tora Matys – with multiple Project Leaders

Tora Matys is a new member this year and was attracted to the Ag Society through our Music at the Elevator event in July. She is keen on launching some new and exciting events, and we are looking for interested committee members to help with planning. Stay tuned as Tora and the Events Committee work to build a monthly schedule of activities and events for 2026.

Scott Woods Concerts:

Project Leader: Phyllis Lindberg

Committee hours: 41

(Funds raised: \$1958.26 - 2024; \$2817.40 - 2025)

For at least 10 years the Ag Society has hosted the Scott Woods Concert, as a successful fundraiser. This year's concert was, Monday, November 17, 2025, where the Christmas themed show played to a sold-out crowd at the Stony Plain Community Center.

Scott's love of fiddling has been passed down through six generations. He studied classical violin from age four and plays several instruments: drums, bass, piano, guitar, saxophone and clarinet. Scott is a multiple winner of the Canadian Open Fiddle Contest, the Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Championships and a Canadian Fiddle Entertainer of the Year. For seven years Scott was the musical director of Memories of Don Messer's Jubilee, which toured extensively in Canada. Scott lives in Fergus, Ontario, enjoys riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle and travelling with his Airstream trailer. Almost all of the Scott Woods concerts are fundraisers for churches, charities and other important community organizations.

This concert takes very little effort for the Ag Society and is a great fundraiser – raising considerably more than 2024. As this event is so popular in our community, plans are underway for a potential spring concert in June.

School Field Trips:

Project Leader: Sid Livingstone

Committee hours: 88

Two schools took part in our School Field Trips at the Elevator in 2025. Prescott Learning Centre, with 75 – Grade 2 students on May 29 and Brookwood Elementary School with 95 – Grade 2 students on June 17.

We were grateful to have lovely weather both days this year. Old-fashioned games were a hit, with the help of 5 Latter Day Saint – Senior Service Missionaries (who complete full or part time missions abroad) and Ag Society volunteers. Sheep Shearing was a big draw, with the help of Ag Society member Joe Milne, and for the first time Robert Barclay from the Farmers' Market displayed some of his pottery skills.

During the lunch hour on both dates, Parkland Search and Rescue, provide a presentation on a program called Hug A Tree. The Hug A Tree program, teaches kids on how to prepare themselves if they ever get lost. The presentation included a video and interactions with the students. Each student received a Hug A Tree Certificate, Hug A Tree crossword, colouring book and word search. Both Teachers and Volunteers were impressed with the presentation.

Spring Carnival:

Project Leader: Rick Lee

Committee hours: 312

(Funds raised 2024: \$13,487.15; 2025: \$17,210.25)

After last year's success, The Ag Society engaged in a three-year partnership with our neighbors Wild Rose Shows Inc. to host a Spring Carnival in April each year.

This event starts with Wild Rose Shows setting up for provincial inspections the carnival equipment in early April, then opening to the public: April 17, 18, 19, 20 and again April 24, 25, 26, 27. A safety professional was engaged to perform site visits for us prior to the public opening, and then randomly throughout the weekends.

Pre-sale wrist bands were available for several weeks prior and the Spruce Grove Farmers' Market ran extended hours during these weekends. Ag Society volunteers managed a booth at the gate throughout the busiest times, offering Elevator tours to over 200 guests. Overall, people were thrilled to see the structure and learn how it works, with many locals commented that they had driven by the building their entire life and never been inside.

This collaboration included advertising with posters shared throughout the Tri-Region, digital billboards, and social media blasts. Our President even had a fun carnival games challenge with City of Spruce Grove Mayor, Jeff Acker.

As well as being very fun for our community, this event has very little expense to us with large fundraising results. We extend sincere thanks to our partners Wild Rose Shows, our Volunteers for being on site hosts, the Spruce Grove Farmers' Market for the extended market hours, and our community for the great support!

Large Events

In our new structure, Darren Snopek, Board Director, will continue his role to lead Large Events – which includes Agra Fair, Winter Blooms Gala, and our new Murder at the Elevator event. These three events create significant fundraising as well as community reach, bringing together hundreds to thousands of people from our community and beyond.

Agra Fair:

Leads: Darren Snopek, Tammy Ryfa, Brenda Goulette, Alison Munro

While these Leads log nearly full-time hours for weeks prior to the event, many Project Leaders contribute significantly to the planning:

Sid Livingstone – Pancake Breakfast	Moira Juleff/Noreen Smith – Bench Show
Leslie Montgomerie/Chelsea Hart – Parade	Tracy Stroud/Leslie Montgomerie – Volunteers
Harry Vandelaak – Food Trucks	Don Benoit – Community Garden
Pat Kuster – Music Jam	- And many other supporting roles!
Nicola Eddy/Barb Scott – Emcee's	Staff: Michelle Tokar/Summer Staff – Concession

Committee hours: 2314

Originally launched in 1972, the Agra Fair became a staple of Western Canada's fair circuit and was revived in 2022 for the Ag Society's 50th anniversary. Our region's most beloved summer tradition was bigger and better for 2025, taking over Central Park and the entire Agrena from **Saturday, August 23 to Sunday, August 24**. The Agra Fair welcomed families from across the Tri-Municipal Region, greater Edmonton area, with some out of province and out of country visitors, over the two full days.

Saturday and Sunday both started with a pancake breakfast that fed hundreds of people! The Tri-Region loves PANCAKES – with over \$3300.00 in ‘by donation’ contributions collected, which had our teams running more than once for more supplies!

The Parade had 68 floats, with horses, marching bands, kids on bicycles, and local VIPs, municipal leaders, and businesses decking out their floats. There were raving reviews from those who took part and approximately 5500 community members lined the route to enjoy the sights.

Guests were welcomed back to Central Park with our Skydancer Indigenous Cultural Society partners, Indigenous Learning Otenaw – Camp Circle at the TeePee. Families enjoyed lots of activities through the purchase of Kids’ Passports, which unlocked a world of two-day entertainment, including pony rides, glitter tattoos, minnow races, games, snacks, and unlimited inflatable games and bouncing.

Golf carts shuttled people around to help them get from local school and public parking areas, and the Mayor Challenge saw our municipal council teams challenging and heckling each other. There was a petting zoo featuring local animal rescues, multicultural performances featuring local Ukrainian, Filipino, Bollywood, Irish, and Indigenous dancers. An extensive vendor Market provided shopping through the Stu Barnes Arena, with toe-tapping local talent at the Music Jam in the afternoon sunshine.

The Bench Show, held in the Curling Rink, showcases handicrafts, art, photography, baking and preserves submitted for judging. Submissions were down this year, we think due to a misprint in the Bench Show booklet, yet it was still a treat to walk through and observe all the beautiful work, lovely vegetables and flowers, and delicious baking! The Quilt Show highlighted serious craftsmanship as well and a Quilts of Valour presentation awarded a gorgeous Canadian branded quilt to a local veteran.

The Health Zone celebrates several successes in 2025. The MAN VAN – Prostate Cancer Centre mobile blood testing for early detection of prostate cancer, where 36 tests were completed, with 3 men with elevated levels sent for further testing. The Stony Plain Lions Club offered free vision screening for children through their KidSight program. They did 72 exams with 12 kids referred to an Optometrist.

The Community Garden hosted their famous minnow races, with bird houses being built with the support of the Spruce Grove Fish and Game Association. Guests were encouraged to walk through the garden and rate the boxes for a number of contests.

Saturday closed out with a headline concert by country singer Travis Dolter with a mechanical bull, food, and beverages – a great way to complete the day. Most features at Central Park

occurred again on Sunday, along with the first-ever *Agra Fair Car Show – The Grove Classic*, welcoming over 70 vintage vehicles to quickly join the car show summer circuit!

As a nostalgic fair with a modern twist, it's obvious our community LOVES this event! Special Thanks to the Ag Society team who works tirelessly, or tiredly, to make this event SHINE.

Sincere thanks to our generous and committed Sponsors, the City of Spruce Grove team, who offered ongoing support, the Spruce Grove Rotary Club for trading volunteers (we contribute several volunteers to their RibFest event each year), our friends at Kiwi Nurseries who so generously help us with transporting supplies, set up / take down, and providing vegetables larger than life for decor!!

Agra Fair 2024		Agra Fair 2025	
Sponsorship	\$41,200.00	Sponsorship	\$43,600.00
Donations / Onsite Sales	\$ 6,911.68	Donations / Onsite Sales*	\$30,228.84
Revenue	\$48,111.68	Revenue	\$73,828.84
Expenses	\$36,637.52	Expenses	\$61,570.37
Total Profit	\$11,474.16	Total Profit	\$12,258.47

Attendees (approx.)	6900	Attendees (approx.)	9000
Parade entries	60	Parade entries	68
Number of Sponsors	36	Number of Sponsors	43
Vendors	15	Vendors (new large market)	65
Food Trucks	6	Food Trucks	6-7
Kids Passports Sold	120	Kids Passports Sold	325
Bench Show Registrants	173	Bench Show registrants	106
		Bench Show entries	438
Community Garden Visitors	215	Community Garden Visitors	132
SGFG Bird Box Giveaways	215	SGFG Bird Box Giveaways	132
Volunteer Hours	3300	Volunteer Hours	4200

Winter Blooms Gala:

Lead: Darren Snopek

Committee hours: 68

Unfortunately, the February 2025 Winter Blooms Gala was cancelled.

A new Gala Committee was established in Fall 2025 and is already hard at work planning the 2026 Winter Blooms Gala, taking place on **Saturday, February 21, 2026**, at the **Elks Social Hall in Spruce Grove**. This year's celebration promises a fresh menu, elegant entertainment, a silent auction, and an awards presentation. Plus, embrace the theme of the evening—

MASQUERADE! Masks will be available for purchase on-site as guests enjoy dancing and a live DJ.

Murder at the Elevator

Lead: Darren Snopek

(Funds raised \$3650.44)

Our first murder mystery was held for two nights, October 3 & 4, 2025. All feedback proves this event was an outstanding success, with tickets selling out within just four days. With the support of the Horizon Players, the interactive evening was filled with intrigue, laughter, mystery, delicious food, and a strong sense of community.

With a mystery based around history, with some added twists, the evening took clue finders to all the historical sites on the property as they sleuthed for clues, picked up on hints, and witnessed the history of our community.

Guests travelled from as far away as Camrose and Calgary to take part. This event will certainly return next year, with planning already underway on the next mystery! Special thanks to the creative brains and planning team behind the event!

Financial Stability

Grants/Fundraising

Sponsorship

Lead: Brenda Goulette

Lead: Tammy Ryfa

Committee hours: 740

Organizations like ours require grants to do much of our work. The Grants, Fundraising, and Sponsorship Committee's work is crucial to our goals!

This year the teams demonstrated significant effort and commitment to securing funding for our initiatives.

Grant Applications and Outcomes:

- Total grant funds applied for: \$356,492
- Grants received: \$80,372
- Pending grant decisions: \$162,881
- Grants declined: \$102,000

Grant Writing and Fundraising Efforts:

- Approximate hours dedicated to grant writing: 215 hours

- Fundraising activities peaked during April and May, requiring the largest number of committee hours during this period.

Fundraising Results:

- Total cash raised: \$50,200
- In-kind contributions received: \$23,100

Business Outreach and Sponsorship:

- Number of businesses contacted: 1,053
- Total sponsors secured for 2025: 51

In summary, 2025 saw substantial outreach and engagement from the Grants/Fundraising Committee, resulting in significant funds raised and a broad network of business contacts. These efforts position us well for continued success in the coming year.

Our teams are still exploring the Grant Advance program, an online database platform that helps match us with foundations that are willing to provide funding. We can always use more help on this team, please reach out if you like to do research, write a compelling story, and enjoy financial duties.

Sponsorship was reframed in fall 2024, with a formal Sponsorship Program developed and circulated by a group of volunteers through early 2025. This program makes sponsor recognition more formal, ensuring those providing financial support to the Ag Society get measurable results (i.e., advertising, social media ads, signage in Workshop and at events, shout outs, etc.) for their contribution. Now that we trialed this process, we have fine tuned the model and are relaunching again, with the addition of custom sponsorships, legacy funding, and a recurring donor invitation.

We tried the new online system called Rafflebox for our raffles and 50/50s in 2024. While it worked okay, it just couldn't match the number of tickets we sell with our traditional, manual paper tickets. So, we went back to paper ticket sales for 2025, which brought in a fantastic **\$1,280.00 profit** over two days at the Agra Fair.

Scholarships:

Lead: Corrine Paradis

Committee hours: 9

Since 2019, the Ag Society hosts a scholarship each year to assist a student from the Tri-Municipal area who is enrolled in an Agriculture related field of studies at an accredited post-secondary institution.

Our 2024 Award Winner was Tyler Visser, who was headed to

In 2025, the Board increased this award to \$1000.00 for two individuals. Information and application forms are distributed to high schools and post-secondary schools in the region with follow up phone calls and emails. Our website and social media channels help push the information out to the community.

Students are expected to submit:

- a copy of their final Grade 12 marks, or most recent transcript.
- a copy of their letter of acceptance to a post-secondary institution.
- a letter of reference outlining their participation and work ethic pertaining to community and volunteer activities, clubs or jobs; and
- a written submission explaining their interest in the chosen field and how their choice will support or improve agriculture in Alberta.

The submissions are reviewed by the Scholarship Committee for completeness, and two recipients were chosen. The winning students are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Ag Society where their \$1000.00 awards are presented.

Governance:

Lead: Teresa Bateman

Committee hours: 83

The Ag Society Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028 was approved by members at the March 2025 Membership Meeting and then distributed to membership. Committee Leads and interested members were invited to contribute to the Strategic Action Plan in May. This Action Plan is now a living document, and the Board reviews it and our Organizational Goals at every monthly meeting.

Organizational Goals: The outcomes we will achieve that support the realization of our ten-year vision (Strategic Plan 2025-2028).

We will achieve our Vision and Mission with these organizational goals:

- A cohesive and effective communication management
- A streamlined and complete governance structure
- A complete facility and site plan/ strategy
- A reliable and sustainable financial strategy with multiple revenue streams
- An optimal human resource strategy
- An agricultural initiatives plan

Archives Policies have been approved in 2025, with Organizational Policy development well underway. Our goal is to circulate a draft *Organizational Policy Manual* to the Board, Staff, and Committee Leads for review in the first quarter of 2026.

Human Resource Management

Leads: Gerry Lawrence, Alison Munro, Teresa Bateman

Hiring:

Four summer students were hired through the *Canada Summer Jobs Program* for 2025. This program is available for not-for-profit, public and private sector employers with 50 or fewer full-time employees. It provides wage subsidies to support quality summer work experiences for youth aged 15-30 years.

One staff was hired to focus with site duties primarily, which had a major focus this summer, with a second staff assisting as well and helping a bit with community garden maintenance. Two staff were mainly administrative roles, including social media. All staff share Elevator tours and they are always a big help with onsite events and Agra Fair.

The Administrative Coordinator position is entering year three, with Michelle Tokar in this role. The biggest change to her role this year, was moving Event Coordination to volunteers. This change allows more dedicated focus for the administration side of her role, which has become more demanding.

Archivist Rebecca Mbanyele continues in her position, moving from full-time to part-time in June. This has been a very demanding year for the Archives, and Rebecca's leadership and knowledge has been substantial to our success. We have been in discussion with the City of Spruce Grove related to our continuing need for funding for this role.

Nominating:

There are 6 Board positions up for election at the December 2025 AGM. These include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| ● Treasurer | ● Director |
| ● Secretary | ● Director |
| ● Director – Skydancer Partner | ● Director |

The Board is responsible to ensure succession planning, which means to identify critical positions within the organization and develop action plans for individuals to assume those positions. Succession planning isn't about protectionism of individuals in positions, but consistency in leadership and experience, so that the organization is managed effectively.

The AGM package can be accessed [AT THIS LINK](#) or by viewing the AGM information on the Ag Society website at <https://sprucegroveagsociety.com/home>.

Site Management

Lead: Alison Munro

Site/Repair & Maintenance:

Lead: Rick Lee

Committee hours: 734

The Repair and Maintenance team work very hard keeping the grounds in nice shape throughout the year and the coffee is always on Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:00 am. This crew has grown this year with several new participants. There is always room for more help on this TEAM!

One of their Winter/Spring tasks including painting and improving the two highway signs – one on Highway 16A eastbound near Century Road and one southbound on Jennifer Heil Way, north of Grove Drive. The second location posed problematic this spring with its initial permitted location along Grove Drive. Evening funsters changed our signage frequently, sometimes amusingly! We managed to change the permit, install a mesh cover, and move the sign to its current position and the problems subsided.

The Archives building, now dubbed the ‘Arch Building’ is now being used for a combination of meeting space and storage. Wire mesh has been installed around the perimeter to deter the local skunk population, which have caused us much discomfort over the last two years. We are hoping this is effective so we can continue to use this space productively.

Overseeing the clean up on site this summer proved to be a big job, but quite a difference was made. Landscaping was completed around the back and south of Machinery Row, and along the fence to the Train Station. Several loads of garbage were hauled away and one of the thrashing machines was salvaged after pulling parts that could be used on the one we kept. Clear plexiglass panels were installed so visitors can see the working mechanisms inside the machine.

We are in conversation with the Knights of Columbus about the clock tower received after the renovations at Columbus Park several years ago. This tower is in bad condition and will require quite an investment to cover refurbishing. Time will tell if a partnership refurbishes the structure.

Although there is still more to do in the spring, the site is certainly looking better than it did. Future plans for the site include more site clean up, and planning is underway for an Indigenous Garden.

Site Management Plan

Lead: Gerry Lawrence

One of our Strategic Priorities is to develop a Site Management Plan. This work started this spring and included gaining perspectives from those interested in sharing ideas for our future. This plan is assessing every square foot of our property to develop a logical approach to site management that addresses future needs. Some of the landscaping and clean up is directly a result of this preliminary work.

Provincial Heritage Designation

Part of our overall considerations for site management is impacted by our Provincial Heritage designation. Our September Membership Meeting included a report from *Carlo Laforge, Heritage Conservation Adviser, Government of Alberta (GOA)* - sharing information related to this designation. His presentation included information about the legislation and regulations affecting a provincial historic site, standards and guidelines, and preservation grants and support.

The *Spruce Grove Alberta Wheat Pool Grain Elevator* is one of 15 provincially designated grain elevators in Alberta including: Andrew, Big Valley, Castor, Leduc, Mayerthorpe, Meeting Creek, Nanton (2), Paradise Valley, Radway, Scandia and St. Albert (2). There is only one other designated grain elevator in Alberta and that is the Alberta Wheat Pool Grain Elevator and Annex – Municipal Historic Resource in Sexsmith.

According to the [Historical Resource Act \(2022\)](#), it is actually illegal to...*‘destroy, disturb, alter, restore or repair any historic resource or land that has been designated’...or ‘remove an historic object from an historic resource that has been designated’...* (Subsections 20(9) and (10)).

We were also reminded that the entire west side of our site is included in the designation, which includes everything from the west of the main gate. That means we cannot alter that side of the site without confirming the project with the Heritage Conservation office of the GOA. This is a good reminder as we consider our site plan.

Project Management

Lead: Harry Vandelaar

Due to all the site development work this summer, little progress occurred in Machinery Row. We are grateful Harry Vandelaar has willingly taken on the Project Management Lead. He will be

working toward ensuring the grant funded development continues and the main building can be publicly accessible as a museum, and the south end a useable four-season maintenance shop.

Our Community Partners

Words are not enough to THANK our amazing community sponsors, partners, and supporters! It's because of all of you, that this community is what it is, and we can be what we are. Thank you for helping us be the community builder we desire to be!

Building Community ~ Sowing Memories

Skydancer Indigenous Cultural Society	Spruce Grove Public Library	Wild Rose Shows Inc.
Stahl Peterbilt	City of Spruce Grove	Kiwi Nurseries
Kuipment Locator	McLeod Home Building Centre	Servus Credit Union
Victor Moroz Realtor	Answer Trailer Rentals and Sales	Lewis Farms Ltd.
Grove Collision	Emmaline Bags	The Black Dirt Company
Envoy Rentals	Beyond Graphic	Landmark Dirtworks
Robinson Brennis LLP	Tober Hembling & Associates	Rococo Homes Ltd.
Parts Stop Auto & Industrial	United Farmers of Alberta UFA	Edmonton Bouncy Castles
HUB Legal	Calibre Drilling	Kal Tire
Parkland Moving	Pertium Group	Hannah Reaper
Stony Plain Seed Cleaning Plant	Nelson's Handyman Services	Costco Wholesale Canada
West Parkland Gas	INN Hotels	Parkland Dental
Core Electric	Jo's Yarn Garden	Tyson Moroz
Amanda Lindberg KC	Bartle & Gibson Co. Ltd.	Zender Ford
Woodland Quilts	Core Electric	Spruce Grove Saints
Homegrown Foods	Best Western – Stony Plain	Ricky's All-Day Grill
Sandyview Farms	Chris Hansen Marketing	Dryden Insurance Ltd.
Jack's Drive-In	Ravenwolf Brewing	Gifts and Gadgets
Main Street Law	Panda Rose	Mint Therapeutics
Boston Pizza	Hash the Browns	M & M Meat Shops
Spruce Grove Fish and Game Association		Spruce Grove Square Dance Club
Sincere apologies if we missed anyone, please advise and we will update.		