

Member's Statement

April 25, 2006

Wilderness Association Climb for Wilderness

Dave Rodney (MLA, Calgary-Lougheed): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate everyone at the Alberta Wilderness Association on an extremely well-organized event that was held this past Saturday. During the annual Earth Day climb and run for wilderness almost a thousand athletes climbed all 802 stairs of the Calgary Tower, right to the top. They raised more than \$100,000 for wilderness and wildlife protection in Alberta.

The top climbers on a team were Luke Way, who matched his record of 30 ascents, and Rosemary Gerspacher, with 28. The youngest climber was only two years old – that was little Madelaine – and if that's not impressive enough, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that the most experienced climbers were also the top individual fundraisers. Phyllis Hart is 91 years old. She raised \$2,700 and climbed the tower twice, while Ward Neale, who's 82 years young, raised \$970 and started the day with a one-kilometre run and a trip to the top of the tower, topped it off with another eight climbs of the tower.

Mr. Speaker, our hon. Liberal colleagues challenged our PC caucus in the event, and despite great efforts they couldn't quite beat us in the number of team climbs. Let's just say that we were able to reach just a little bit above and beyond in terms of fundraising in the midst of our friendly rivalry.

I'd like to thank my colleagues and our Calgary-Lougheed PC Association for their support and acknowledge my fellow climbers, including Joey Redman, who's here today as part of your MLA for a Day program; my web page designer, Thaddeus Brasok, and his little son, Harrison; Jim Hoey of TV's *The Dimestore Fisherman*; and the ever impressive Member for Calgary-Foothills as well. Perhaps you'll join us next year in the climb, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

