

From There to Here
(LEA Communiqué 7, January 2016)

“Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up if only you try!” -Dr. Seuss

And did we ever...



Dreamers and doers create the open Fraya at Freezer Burn 2015

Photo: Lisa Sunrise Stephens

Hello Extraordinary Albertans! 2015 was a busy year for our community of dreamers and doers. As we move into 2016, we know we'll continue to learn, grow, and create together.

Before we think about where we're going, let's catch up on where the League of Extraordinary Albertans has been since the first half of 2015:

1) We created, funded, and participated in initiatives

Freezer Burn: Dark Side of the Rainbow. For our 8th annual Regional Burn participants received nearly \$16 000 in art grants, helping us create more art and fire than ever before! Lisa Ferguson captured the spirit of our gathering in our first official documentary, *This Is Freezer Burn*. Check it out here:

<https://youtu.be/g9Q2lgxLJcY?list=PL28948370487D32C3>

A Taste of That Thing in the Desert. During the Beakerhead festival in September, Alberta Burners created a unique evening inspired by Black Rock City. Calgarians were invited to join us at TELUS Spark for a night of art, music, performance, and all forms of Radical Self-Expression.

Decompocalypse: The Dust Settles. Alberta Burners welcomed back a chance to decompress together. We shared stories, meals, an effigy burn, and more.

Madskills Workshop Series. Under the guidance of some skilled doers, a group of Alberta Burners got together to hone their skills and build an art piece using fire, LED, and construction elements.

2) We directed resources back into our community through money donations

Burners Without Borders. You voted and we listened; a portion of our Freezer Burn surplus went toward Burners Without Borders, an organization that transforms communities through innovative disaster relief programs and community initiatives that make a lasting impact.

The following groups received donations toward their fundraisers for theme camps and projects:

- Space Gnomes - Rocket Fuel Fundraiser
- Disco Dive and Pussy Palace - The Catnip Studio Fundraiser
- Lazer Monkeez - Jungle Fever Fundraiser
- Rebel Bass Camp - The Bass Strikes Back Fundraiser
- The Grove/Zombeez - Fundraiser
- Unholy Grindhouse - Mad Max Mutant Vehicle Fundraiser

3) We demonstrated Civic Activation by donating our time

A Helpful Burner Recipe. LEA members volunteered at the Calgary Food Bank to process over 10,000 lbs of food into 245 hampers.

De-MOOPing the Default World. Alberta Burners joined forces with the annual Calgary Pathway and River Cleanup to strengthen our community's bonds by cleaning up litter in a city park.

Our volunteer efforts were featured on the Burners Without Borders website!
<http://www.burnerswithoutborders.org/projects/the-bwb-128-initiative>



*Drills and hardhats on, getting ready to build at Habitat for Humanity
Photo: Dreegyn*

A Little More Than 2x4s.

A group of Extraordinary Albertans gifted their time by helping out at Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta's Redstone Project! Through participation we helped 14 families build a better future.

Santa's Extraordinary Little Helpers.

A second annual group of merry elves headed to the Mustard Seed sorting centre before Christmas to help sort donations for adults experiencing poverty and homelessness.



*One of Santa's helpers was in the right place at the right time at the Mustard Seed Sorting Centre
Photo: Dreegyn*

4) We supported projects through our grant program



*The dragonfly before its own mind was blown up and the minds of onlookers were blown (figuratively)
Photo: Blake Betteridge*

Navigation of the Dragonfly.

With the help of an LEA grant, Blake Betteridge built this colossal dragonfly with a kerosene brain to have its mind blown when it was burned at the Golden West Music Fest on August 2nd.

Gnar Bar. The Limo Crew brought us this custom-built, flame-throwing community gathering space on wheels, complete with a bar and sound system. It's so gnarly that it was our host stage for a Taste of That Thing in the Desert.



The Limo Crew's Gnar Bar

Photo: Limo Crew



The White Forest

Photo: Amarin Dawn/Dave Klepacki

The White Forest. Amarin Dawn and Dave Klepacki brought us this beautiful art piece, offering a quiet space for Freezer Burn participants, day and night.

Penny the Goose. The LEA sent a little love down south in the form of support for Penny the Goose, a 12-foot tall Canada Goose who spread her glimmering wings in the Black Rock Desert. Built by Robert and Lisa Ferguson, Penny will spend the next four months as a symbol of hope and rebirth to the people of the town of Lucerne in Lake County, CA, a region that was victim to fires that destroyed 1,280 homes in September.



The back of one of Penny's wings, covered in Canadian pennies

Photo: Lisa Ferguson

5) We conducted our other business as usual

LEA board members, through individual efforts and official business at regular meetings, work hard to safeguard the resources entrusted to us in ways that benefit our community. In the last few months, we put our effort toward the following, and more:

- Maintaining an asset database to protect our physical assets
- Obtaining permanent storage for our assets
- Creating our LEA Board Member Agreement
- Creating a Venue and Property Checklist to protect our interests
- Maintaining professional and transparent documentation of our finances
- Amending our Policies & Procedures policy

So, what does our future hold in 2016?

We can't wait to see what's in store next. Here's what we know: We have brains in our heads, we have feet in our shoes. We can steer ourselves in any direction we choose. We're off to great places! (inspired by Dr. Seuss)

Check out extraordinaryalbertans.ca to see what we're all about and to access applications to lead initiatives and to receive grants to bring your creative dreams to life.