

Town of Canmore
Tourism Task Force Members

Martin Bean

Martin comes to the Tourism Task Force with over 30 years of leadership experience in the Tourism and Transportation Industry. Martin and his family have lived in Canmore for more than ten years and he is currently the CAO of the Bow Valley Regional Transit Services Commission, operating Roam Transit. His background includes management roles with tour operator, charter bus, and aviation organizations. Throughout his career, operational excellence along with marketing and customer service have been the key focus areas for the organizational teams he has led. Martin has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Waterloo and an Executive Leadership Certificate from the University of California at Berkeley.

Jodi Conuel

Jodi leads the Shift: Climate Transitions program at the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley. In this role, she uses a variety of community engagement tools to empower Bow Valley residents to take meaningful action on climate change. Jodi is motivated by a long-standing interest in climate change issues, sustainable living and human-wildlife conflict resolution.

Prior to joining the Biosphere Institute, Jodi's career focused on human-wildlife conflict, mitigating the environmental impacts of development projects, and habitat enhancement. She has also received her Red Seal Cook Qualification and has many years of experience working in the restaurant industry.

Outside of her work at the Biosphere Institute, Jodi serves as Secretary on the Board of Bow Valley Green Energy cooperative, working to make renewable energy affordable accessible here in the Bow Valley, and as the lead for the Bow Valley Climate Action communications team.

Sarah Elmeligi, PhD

Sara has been a proud Canmore resident since 2007 and has been playing in the Bow Valley's mountains for most of her life. Sarah is an ecologist whose work with grizzly bears and large landscapes has influenced land management in Alberta and BC for more than a decade. Her graduate research integrated biological and social data to better understand how grizzly bears select habitat around recreationists, and visitor expectations of park management. Her PhD focused on trails in Banff, Kootenay, and Yoho National Parks. She also has experience working with local environmental non-profit organizations, First Nations communities, and other stakeholders to improve protection of western Canada's wilderness. She has worked for Alberta Parks as a planner, creating recreational facilities that improved ecological integrity and the visitor experience. Her interdisciplinary work examines landscapes holistically, aiming to create management recommendations that balance the needs of wildlife and people. Sarah is grateful every day to live, work, and play in her own version of paradise. Her work and passion lie in understanding what human-bear coexistence means and how societies can achieve it. She operates her own environmental consulting business – www.saraheconsulting.com.

David Huggill

David is a long time Bow Valley resident having lived first in Lake Louise then Banff and is privileged to now be able to call Canmore home for over 20 years. A corporate sustainability practitioner David has experience working with all three levels of government, major national corporations and not for profit organizations across western Canada in the energy, protected areas and tourism sectors. He has a master's degree in the area of corporate and environmental sustainability which he uses to challenge the notion of 'business as usual' and continually seek opportunities to optimize and improve efficiencies.

David's passion is his family and feels extremely fortunate to call Canmore and the Bow Valley home – they especially appreciate being able to take advantage of all the outdoor recreational opportunities available to them in this amazing place.

Sean Krausert

For the last quarter century, Sean has been involved in the community and is passionate about Canmore's well-being.

Married for over 31 years, Sean and Janet have two adult children who are proud products of Canmore through and through. Originally a lawyer, soon after moving to Canmore Sean's eclectic career gravitated towards executive management and leadership that has included experience in the not-for-profit, private and public sectors. With CAUSE Canada, Sean provided oversight to international relief and development programs being implemented in West Africa and Central America in the areas of literacy, micro-credit, basic health and food security. Not being one to back down from a challenge, Sean has also been involved in large entrepreneurial initiatives ranging from managing the development of a resort in Canmore to creating technological-based health devices approved by Health Canada. In the public sector, Sean was twice elected as Town Councillor with a reasoned and balanced approach to protecting the environment, responsible development, increasing affordable housing and supporting initiatives aimed at promoting business while also addressing the high cost of living in our community. While on Council, Sean sat on the boards of the Bow Valley Regional Transit Services Commission (including 3 years as the Chair), the Downtown Business Association, the Canmore Community Housing Corporation, the Canmore-MD of Bighorn Inter-Municipal Committee and Tourism Canmore Kananaskis. Sean is also an ordained deacon at St. Michael's Anglican Church, and was the initial force and co-founder of Food & Friends Community Dinners at St. Michael's Hall, which to date have served almost 90,000 free dinners since its inception in early 2013. Sean currently sits on two quasi-judicial boards with the Town of Canmore - the Subdivision & Development Appeal Board (currently Chair) and the Assessment Review Board.

The Tourism Task Force offers the opportunity for the community to embrace a key economic driver, and do so on terms that fit for residents of Canmore as well as visitors. Canmore is OUR community to build together, and the work of the Tourism Task Force is a conduit to shape one of the major building blocks.

Rachel Ludwig

Skills

- 15+ years in the Bow Valley Tourism Industry
- 10+ years of leadership, proven team player
- 5+ years DMO Experience

Experience

March 2019 - PRESENT

Tourism Canmore Kananaskis - *Operations Manager & Interim CEO (current)*

- Represent Tourism Canmore Kananaskis to members and the public
- Strategic Plan Execution
- Development and execution of annual business plan
- Preparation of annual budget, cash flow forecasting and monthly financial updates
- Manage and hire staff and contractors
- Meet with the board at least once a month to report on current progress, issues and developments.
- Organize and represent Tourism Canmore Kananaskis at trade shows and familiarization tours with media and travel trade partners
- Build and maintain partnerships with stakeholders such as Travel Alberta, Destination Canada, Town of Canmore, Alberta Parks, KID, etc.

February 2018 - February 2019

Banff & Lake Louise Tourism - *Business Development Manager, Europe & Australia*

- Responsible for \$600,000 budget
- Supervised 2 representatives in Germany and Australia
- Team lead for Simpleview (CRM) implementation, developing of SOPs for department
- Responsible for application and tracking of Travel Alberta Coop Funding
- Collaborated with members and Travel Alberta on Fam Tours
- Gathering of in-market intelligence to share within the team and with members
- Planned and executed tour operator training
- Attendance of trade shows including planning and follow-up

February 2017 - February 2018

Bow Valley Chamber of Commerce - *Executive Assistant and Membership Manager*

August 2013 - September 2016

Tourism Canmore Kananaskis - *Business Development Associate*

December 2008 - August 2013

Brewster Vacations (now Pursuit) - *Reservations Manager*

Education

University of Leipzig, Germany - *Magister of Political Science with minors in History and Journalism*

Michelle MacDonell

Michelle first started visiting Canmore in the 1980's with her family and she quickly fell in love with the place because of its beauty and all the activities Canmore offered. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Winnipeg and her teaching certificate from the University of Calgary, Michelle moved to Canmore in 1993 determined to find work that would enable her to call Canmore home. After a couple of years working for Bow Valley College in town, and some other short term teaching contracts around the area, Michelle obtained a full time position at Banff Community High School teaching Chemistry, Physics, Math and Outdoor Education. In 2006 Michelle's husband retired from the Calgary Fire Department and Michelle left her full time teaching position in Banff to enjoy spending active time with her husband. Since then, other than a few short term teaching contracts, Michelle has been retired, and living the Canmore life.

For Michelle, "living the Canmore life" is defined by so many things. It is pursuing outdoor activities such as hiking, climbing, biking, and skiing. It is enjoying and participating in the many amenities and activities our town has to offer, such as Elevation Place, Arts Place, the Folk Festival, the Highland Games, and Canada Day celebrations. Michelle feels privileged to have been able to experience all this in the natural beauty of our local surroundings, amid an abundance of clean running waters, magnificent mountains and lakes, and impressive wildlife. She believes that these things that are important to her while living the Canmore life are also important to the majority of Canmore residents.

Michelle has seen many changes in Canmore over her years living here. Some good, some bad, some inevitable, and some that could have been foreseen. She believes that we have fallen behind in terms of our dealing with the steady increase in visitors to our town. Covid-19 has brought an unprecedented surge in the number of visitors, although she believes we would have eventually come to the same outcome as people discover this special place. Our town and the wilderness areas around us are being loved to death. Canmore is a town now based on tourism, so we do need tourists. What we also need, however, is the infrastructure, the manpower, and the strategies to deal with the increasing influx of people to our town and surrounding areas. This becomes particularly critical when our visitation peaks due to events that can be foreseen - such as weekends or holidays - or unforeseen - a pandemic that closes Banff National Park. Michelle believes that the opinion and needs of the average person, whether born and raised here, or those who have chosen to make Canmore home, have been underrepresented in planning the way forward in our town. She feels the focus in the past has been on building a larger and better tourism industry, rather than a larger and better community. Michelle does not believe the two are mutually exclusive.

Michelle wanted to be a part of the Tourism Task Force to give input and feedback from a Canmore citizen's point of view on how the future of Canmore, and all that that encompasses, will look. She wants to be able to help her incredible mountain town have long term success: socially, economically, and environmentally.

Norbert Meier

Norbert has lived in the Bow Valley since 1976 and in Canmore since 1979. He spent 32 years at the Banff Centre in a variety of managerial roles in Leadership Development, Human Resources, and Hospitality/Conferences. Norbert was also the Centre's Chief Environmental Officer. Since retiring from the Banff Centre in 2009, he has operated an executive coaching practice. Norbert has been involved with the Alberta World Cup Cross Country Society since its inception in 2003 and has been involved in one way or another in the 7 cross country skiing world cup events we have been able to bring to Canmore since 2005.

Christie Pashby

Christie Pashby is a journalist and marketer with more than 25 years of professional experience in the travel and tourism industry. She has been a reporter, an editor and an entrepreneur (owner-operating a successful international guiding business for 15 years). Currently, she runs the Content Marketing program for Pursuit. In her (limited!) spare time, Christie is a keen paddler, poet, hiker, skier, reader, Scotch drinker and pie baker. Christie is also raising an 8-year-old multilingual daughter and a pup named Breezy in Canmore, where she has been based since 2000.

Carol Poland

Carol began as a “weekender” commuting from Calgary to Canmore from 2007-2012. Then in 2012, Carol and her husband purchased their full-time residence and part time business; Grandview Chalet B&B @ 112 McNeill, Homesteads neighbourhood. They retired from their previous professional careers (veterinarian and geologist respectively) and now enjoy hosting guests in their purposely built & private B&B home. Carol is also President of the Canmore Bow Valley Bed & Breakfast Association.

Carol enjoys an active outdoor lifestyle of skiing, hiking, kayaking, cycling, and has joined various organizations including the Canmore Seniors Association, Canmore Nordic Ski, and Canmore Community Cruisers. Carol wants to give back and contribute to her community; hence she is a volunteer/member of Canmore Rotary Club, Snow Host at Canmore Nordic Centre (CNC), cycling pilot for Cycling without Age trishaw for seniors, and regular volunteer at various ski/biathlon events at the CNC.

Carol has a lifelong appreciation for the environment and supports the preservation and stewardship of our mountain parks, including wildlife and natural habitats. She sees the most recent COVID-19 influx of overuse and abuse of our local trails and parks as a call to action for public-scale intervention and individual personal involvement of education and engagement with those who don't understand nature.

Carol's concern:

She loves living in this mountain tourist town and hopes it maintains its natural community appeal, but how do we manage tourism and environmental stewardship responsibly before we destroy what we love?

Geoff Powter

Geoff has been a Canmore resident since the mid-1980s. He first practiced as a clinical psychologist with Mental Health Services for the government when he arrived, and since the early 1990s has been working as an organizational consultant with his company Watershed Organizational Development Group, and has been faculty with Leadership Development at The Banff Centre.

Geoff has a passionate love for the mountain world, and has been an avid climber and adventurer all of his adult life. He has created more than 50 new rock and ice routes in the Bow Valley, and has been a member of 13 Himalayan expeditions. Geoff has also been writing about the world of adventure and risk for more than 30 years. He has written extensively for international magazines, and has won nine National Magazine Awards. He has written two books. 'Strange and Dangerous Dreams: The Fine Line Between Madness and Adventure' won the Jury Prize at the 2006 Banff Mountain Book Festival, and his latest book, 'Inner Ranges' won the Climbing Literature Prize at the 2019 Banff Festival, was shortlisted for the UK's Boardman Tasker Award for Mountain Literature, and won the National Outdoor Book Award in the US.

Geoff was awarded the Summit of Excellence Award for lifetime contribution to Canadian mountain culture in 2012, and he was appointed to the board of Travel Alberta in 2016.

Geoff and his wife Kathi Irvine live in Canmore.

Mace Rosenstein

Mace and his wife, Louise de la Fuente, came to visit the Canadian Rockies from Washington, D.C. as tourists in 2014 and within a year had started to divide their time between Canmore and Washington. As the focus of their life has continued to move North they are now seeking to relocate permanently to Canmore. They are continually seeking ways to deepen their ties to and relationships in the community — for example, by participating in this Task Force and by supporting artsPlace, in particular in its development of Indigenous programming initiatives.

Mace practiced communications law in the United States for more than 35 years and continues to consult from time to time. Over the years he worked on a number of cross-border matters involving Canadian media and telecommunications companies — including Rogers Communications, Bell Canada and the old MacLean-Hunter and Canwest Global — and Canadian restrictions on U.S.-sourced television content. In a former life Mace was a disc jockey and producer at commercial and non-commercial radio stations in Boston, Chicago and Washington, D.C.

Mace is grateful to have the opportunity to serve on the Tourism Task Force.

Dawn Saunders Dahl

Since 2008, Dawn Saunders Dahl has been actively working with Indigenous arts communities in Alberta through public art opportunities, art exhibitions, projects and events. The responsibility to understand her ancestry, to care for the land and to share our teachings that are repeated in her everyday conversations with Indigenous communities that influence her work and perspectives. Dawn is of Métis (Red River Ojibway) and European (English, Scottish, Irish, Norwegian, Swedish, French) ancestry. She is honored to have been gifted the Stoney Nakoda name *Âba Thâ Wîyâ*, which translated means the dawn.

Dawn attended the final TRC in Edmonton and the commitment she made at that event continues to guide her. She knows that today she can be seen as someone who could have certain advantages, these are privileges that she did not grow up with. She uses her arts administration positions to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are present in all aspects from start to the end of projects. Dawn has actively continued to find out more about the name she was born with (Grouette) and to find ways to embrace this side of the family. At the Metis Nation of Alberta and Winnipeg archives, she found a number of Metis Scrips, books and articles about her family. She has travelled to Winnipeg, Ste. Agathe and Ste. Anne to continue to find out more about the history of Point a Grouette (now known as Ste. Agathe, Manitoba) and how it affects projects within her work and studio.

Dawn is also a practicing artist and creates in Studio 209, a working studio that is part of the Artists of Elk Run artist group located in the Industrial area of Canmore. Her studio work is a reflection of her personal history which strives to generate discussion and awareness around issues of community, culture and identity. She comes from a long line of farmers in Alberta, and when she confirmed her family's 'hidden' Metis (Red River Ojibway) identity, her practice shifted to further explore the Land and connections between Community, Blood Memory and Ghosts. Dawn's deep interest in place, genealogy, and reconciliation/action with Indigenous communities reinforces her responsibility to understand her ancestry, to care for the land, and to share. Her studio work is a mix of landscape and portrait painting in watercolors and oils, recently she has started to incorporate video and polaroids that speak of her experiences growing up and about her Metis ancestry. She documents and collects dirt and water in jars from the farms where her family members lived. The landscapes are based on photos she has taken while travelling or created in plein air and has begun to incorporate the importance of Indigenous place names with the work.

Dawn attended Red Deer College and has two BFA degrees in Painting and Ceramics from University of the Arts (formerly ACAD) in Calgary. She started her administration work in 2008 with the creation of The Works Indigenous Art Program and in the public art department at the Edmonton Arts Council. Dawn currently works at the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Galerie Cite at La Cite Francophone in Edmonton and is the Curator of Indigenous Public Art for the Ottawa Public Library and National Library and Archives Joint Facility (opening in 2024). She is also a board member at the Alberta Craft Council and a member of the Moh'kinstis Public Art Guiding Circle for the City of Calgary.

Rob Seeley

The Bow Valley has been Rob's home since the mid 80's. At that time, he worked for AGT (now Telus) as a Line & Station Installer, accepting a position in Canmore and moving here permanently in 1990. Rob started 'On the Line Telephone Services' in 1993 and opened The Telus Phone Store as an Independent Dealer in 1994, expanding and opening a second location in Banff in 1999. Shortly after opening the Banff location, Rob was a founding member and chaired the Small Business Association of Banff. During that time, in cooperation with Banff Lake Louise Tourism and the Banff Lake Louise Hospitality Association, Rob presented on behalf of the SBAB to Banff Council, to support the creation of a sustainable funding model for Banff Tourism. Becoming interested in the municipal process, Rob successfully ran for Canmore Council in 2013 & is currently in his second term. Rob sits on the Tourism Canmore Kananaskis board as a Council representative. Rob's son Karl was born in Canmore and recently graduated from Canmore Collegiate High School and has been accepted to UBCO in Kelowna. After 26 years, Rob and his wife Kathy have successfully sold their retail and service business to an Alberta based company: The Phone Experts.

Adam Walker

Adam Walker has been calling Canmore home since 2007 and in that time he has worked for and owned several businesses in a variety of industries, including tourism. In 2013 Adam and wife Tammera became the proud owners of Canmore Cave Tours, which has been introducing visitors from near and far to the underground world for over 27 years and which has been recognized as a Canadian Signature Experience. Adam is also a founding member of the AdventureHUB group, the primary goal of which is to foster collaboration and support for small businesses involved in the Tourism Industry.

Adam's background is diverse and includes education in Outdoor Pursuits, Geosciences and Design – all of which have proven useful in the operation of a Cave Tours business. His interests are equally diverse – he is currently the sitting Vice President of the Alberta Speleological Society and is actively involved in cave exploration locally and abroad. He enjoys the many mountain adventures the Canadian Rockies has to offer and sharing them with his son Toby. And, as a self-professed geek, he loves all things digital.

Adam is excited to be a part of Canmore's Tourism Task Force and to help shape the future of tourism in our town.