

# WINGS

*The Official newsletter of The Roberta Bondar Foundation*

*Where is the TELE  
travelling to next?*

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*The Bondar Challenge  
sweeps across Canada*

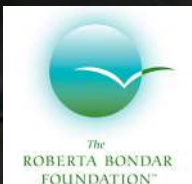
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*Shining a spotlight  
on Patti Thom*

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THE TRAVELLING EXHIBITION & LEARNING EXPERIENCE

# Takes Flight





# #Travelling Exhibition & Learning Experience

The Travelling Exhibition and Learning Experience (TELE) is a cornerstone of the Foundation and our programming. Through these exhibitions we are able to promote continuous learning about biodiversity and the environment across all ages. By helping others discover their own connection to nature through photography we share our values promoting curiosity, engagement, creativity, and respect.

During her mission aboard the space shuttle Discovery, Dr. Bondar was able to look at planet Earth from a new perspective, and what she saw was the inspiring beauty and yet fragility of Earth. Upon her return, Dr. Bondar made it her personal mission to ignite people's curiosity and respect for this planet through her work as a photographer. She has said, "when we engage in the natural world, we find a new focus and attachment. If we love the environment we'll protect it and live better lives because of that commitment to a healthy planet."

2015 was a groundbreaking year for the TELE with three installations spanning Manitoba and Ontario. These exhibitions included collab-

oration with an exceptional Canadian textile artist and in other locations on tour, featured a youth photography corner of winning submissions from our our Bondar Challenges.

The first stop on the TELE tour was the Buhler Gallery in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The gallery director and curator, Pat Bovey, selected pieces from the collection, and paired them with

works from textile-assemblage artist Carole Sabiston in an exhibit *Dreams & Realities – Human Sensitivity of Place*. The Buhler Gallery, located in St. Boniface Hospital, serves as a place of refuge for many patients and their families, medical staff and visitors. The Foundation is proud to have played a role in visually transporting vis-

itors in this location from the challenges of health to a world described as "stunningly beautiful" as a tribute to a healthy planet.

In February 2015, the *Dreams & Realities* installation moved to its next venue, at the Art Gallery of Algoma, in the community of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. This city is a special place for the TELE, as it is the hometown of the Foundation's president and Co-Founder, Dr. Roberta Bondar.

The final stop on the 2015 tour was First Canadian Place Gallery [FCP] in the heart of downtown Toronto. Dr. Bondar's work has been featured in the FCP Gallery on numerous occasions within the last 20 years. Situated in Toronto's bustling financial district, it is a great place for the thousands of employees each day who walk by the gallery to let their minds enter another part of the world. The Exhibition *Savannah Survivors*, introduced them to Dr. Bondar's photographs of the beautiful landscapes and animals of the shrinking African savannah.

During the April Earth month, Dr. Bondar addressed an oversubscribed audience with a talk on the shrinking African savannah of the Masai Mara and changes in the climate being experienced in various areas of the world.

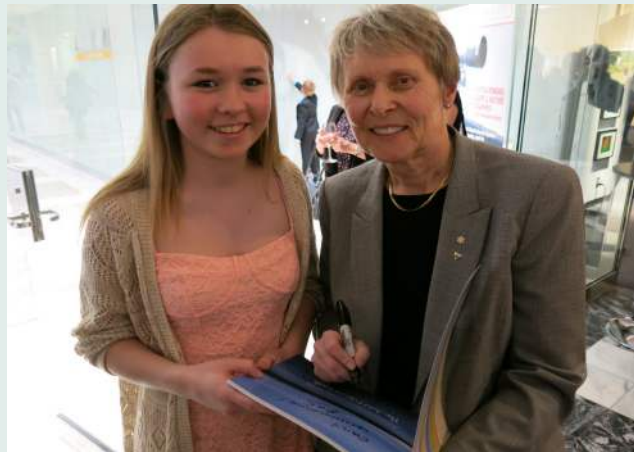
Another highlight from this exhibit featured photographs by youth winners from our various Bondar Challenge programs. Two walls displayed the program-winning photographs inside the gallery's exhibit and many of the young winners and their families attended the opening reception, some having flown

to Toronto from as far as Moncton, NB. Students had the chance to meet Dr. Bondar, talk about their work to guests, and receive public recognition for their work. The Foundation looks forward to continuing to feature Bondar Challenge winners at future TELE exhibits.

Where is the TELE travelling to next? The Foundation is excited to announce that a significant selection of pieces will be hosted by the Cambridge Butterfly Conservatory from May 1st, 2016 to October 31st, 2016. The exhibit *Landscapes of Biodiversity* will include 23 works from Dr. Bondar's Forests, Rivers and Lakes, and Wetlands biomes. Featured alongside

these large-scale prints will include a student wall boasting 10 Bondar Challenge winners photographs. The Conservatory is a great venue for the TELE as it showcases butterfly species of beauty from the natural world.

Interested in seeing the TELE in your community? Send your expression of interest to [info@therobertabondarfoundation.org](mailto:info@therobertabondarfoundation.org) and we will be in touch.





# WILDERNESS *Bondar* CHALLENGE

The Wilderness Bondar Challenge (WBC) returned to Wood Buffalo National Park for the fourth year. Through an exciting partnership with Parks Canada, Programs Coordinator, Carling Watson, represented The Foundation again this year. She joined the Grade 7 and 8 students from Fort Smith, NWT, Parks Canada staff, elders, teachers, and parent volunteers.

What made this year so special was the chance for our Programs Coordinator to reconnect with the students, teachers and staff, all of whom had experienced Sweetgrass together in 2014. The morning of departure, at Paul W Kaeser Junior and Senior High, the grade 9 students, who had participated at Sweetgrass in the Bondar Challenge that year, greeted Carling with hugs and hellos in the hallways.

Students hiked an impressive 14km after a bumpy two-hour bus ride and a windy 90-minute boat ride, to arrive at this magnificent wilderness setting where herds of bison greeted them. It never ceases to amaze everyone what these students, some as young as 11 years old, are capable of managing. This unique and rugged experience had many students carrying back packs with their gear weighing more than themselves.

Sweetgrass Station is a place near the Athabasca Delta, far removed from civilization and an urban setting. Students really engage, appreciate and ask questions about the nature that surrounds them. Everything added to the adventure - from the daily bison roaming through camp, to the wolves howling at night, and the trip to Lake Claire (which looked more like a giant mud pit this year). This wilderness setting makes for an especially interesting Bondar Challenge.

Our hope is that through the Wilderness Bondar Challenge, students will feel a sense of closeness and responsibility towards Sweetgrass and understand why it is so important to keep protected Wood Buffalo National Park, and other more remote places around the world. This park borders the Athabasca oil sands, an industry that continually threatens this wilderness. Wood Buffalo National Park truly is the final frontier and our Programs Coordinator is thankful to have had the opportunity to experience it and photograph its beauty with the students from Fort Smith, NWT.

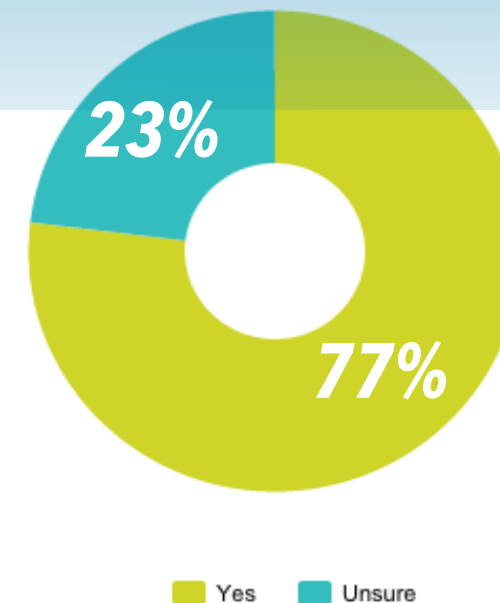


# Summer Camp BONDAR CHALLENGE

Since 2013, over 50 camps across Canada in six provinces have participated in the Summer Camp Bondar Challenge (SCBC) – connecting in new ways to the natural environment in which our camps are located. Each year, the Foundation makes adjustments to improve the SCBC experience. Each year, new training supports are developed to assist counsellors and directors in the delivery of the program with the camps providing their feedback to us.

Currently, a survey is in the field soliciting feedback from those that delivered the 2015 SCBC. Eleven camps have participated in all three years the program has been offered; an additional 10 camps, for the last two years. We welcome returning camps for summer 2016 and look forward to new participants joining in the SCBC fun. Applications to participate will be up on the Foundation website in February 2016.

The Foundation has received over 700 hundred complete submissions from camps across Canada from this past summer. We look forward to announcing the winners of the 2015 Summer Camp Bondar Challenge before the new year.



We asked camps if they would be interested in participating in the Summer Camp Bondar Challenge next summer. Here is what they said:

\* 0% of the camps said no, they didn't want to participate.







# SPOTLIGHT

## Patti Thom

*We are pleased to feature some exceptional camp directors and leaders in our WINGS semi-annual newsletter. In this issue of WINGS, we will hear from one of our multi-year participants, Patti Thom from Camp Tanamakoon. Located in Algonquin Provincial Park, during the summer, Camp Tanamakoon campers and staff have continued to impress the Foundation with their efforts and enthusiasm in the Summer Camp Bondar Challenge.*

**1** *Can you tell us a bit about what attracted you to Camp Tanamakoon and what inspires you to stay?*

I started at Tanamakoon as a very young camper and just knew that I was “home” from the start. It was a girls camp and it was Algonquin -that was the initial attraction. What inspired me to stay-the spirit of Algonquin and the spirit of Tanamakoon. Both came to define me. I love what I do and I believe I can make a difference.

**2** *Your camp has participated in the Bondar Challenge a number of times now. What is it about the program that keeps your camp choosing to continue to participate in the Bondar Challenge each summer?*

The Bondar Challenge provides a continuing education for our campers each year. The ones that started a few years ago return to work on higher

levels and just because they enjoy being out in the field shooting. Its like many other things-you get better with practice. We believe in the connection between the environment and photography and when you believe in something-its easy to support it.

**3** *When Dr. Bondar visited the camp a couple of years ago, we learned that you are an avid photographer. What got you started and what are you most interested in photographing?*

I became interested in photography as a young camper at Tanamakoon. My first camp director, Mrs Raymer, was an avid photographer and she became a big inspiration. I also developed a real love for the land and those two factors brought me to where I am today. I love to photograph kids-who wouldn't when you have thousands each year-they make beautiful subjects! But my most favourite is definitely plein air photography. I love the landscapes and sunsets and sun rises. I also love to photograph anything wild in nature.

**4** *There is no question that your campers are developing a keen eye for capturing beautiful shots. Judges see it in the high quality submissions. Tell us, what is your secret?*

It takes work on the part of those that teach campers. They need to educate themselves and they need to be just as excited about what they see as they expect the kids to be. When you take the time to give the kids those tips and lessons before they go out -the light seems to turn on for them. Kids get excited when they succeed and that makes them want to learn more about their cameras and about the land. It's not so much a secret -it's just some good solid work.

**5** *Why do you think it's so important for youth to spend time in nature, out of doors in the summer?*

As we all know todays kids are nature deprived. So

many kids are so wrapped up in technology and concrete jungles that they can barely see the beauty in the world around them. Spending time in the outdoors gives kids permission to “unplug”. Their senses become more acute-they see more clearly, they listen more attentively, they feel much more deeply.

**6** *The Bondar Challenge goal is to help participants connect with nature through photography. Do you think it has a lasting impact on the girls once they've participated or the leaders once they've delivered the program?*

I absolutely know for a fact that the impact can be lasting. I am living proof. Many of our campers who have been in the program for a few years now really look forward to returning and taking it up a level the next year. I see a change in some of the girls and staff. The staff who deliver it become attached to the program and want to do better themselves. The kids get excited about taking a great shot and understanding what the picture really is saying to them. Its no different than art- infact it is art in every sense of the word.

**7** *Any last words before we see you again next summer?*

It has been and continues to be a wonderful program at our camp. I marvel sometimes that something fairly simple to set up at our end has had the impact it has on our campers. We are grateful for the inspiration from Roberta Bondar and from the program. As a camp we often talk about great role models and mentors in our lives. Roberta Bondar has become that for many people both young and old. I do believe that once you have an enthusiastic follower the rest will fall in line!

Thank you, Patti for all that you do for the camping community and the campers at Camp Tanamakoon. Also, congratulations to all the girls at Camp Tanamakoon for capturing stunning photographs this summer.



# ECOlinks

In May 2014 and 2015, the Foundation presented and exhibited at the EcoLinks Conference. This conference is organized by the Ontario Society for Environmental Education (OSEE), an organization aimed at promoting and improving environmental education opportunities for students and teachers in Ontario.

The attendees of the conference are teachers interested in adding environmental programming to their classroom. A number of those participating in School Bondar Challenge first learned about it from the EcoLinks Conference.



*by Martha Price*

*The Roberta Bondar Foundation and My Class Needs Foundation have come together in an exciting new partnership. The alignment of these two organizations will provide teachers with the opportunity to deliver elementary and secondary students with an enriched and multifaceted education.*

We believe in a future where all students in Canadian publicly-funded schools have access to a rich and innovative learning environment, providing them with a broad range of experiences and opportunities. Across Canada there are over 160,000 teachers, spending \$90 Million out of their own pockets annually, which impacts almost 5 million students.

At MyClassNeeds.ca we enhance the learning environment in Canadian publicly-funded schools by linking teachers to donors who want to support them through our crowd-funding platform. Our process is easy, accessible, and fully transparent for both teachers and donors.

MyClassNeeds.ca supports students in Canadian publicly-funded schools by providing resources that enriches their learning experiences. We enable donors to support classrooms using a funding approach that is simple, transparent, and

accountable and provides an immediate connection to the needs of Canadian students. Since launching in 2013 we have raised over \$1,075,600 and funded over 1,066 projects, enriching the learning experience of 53,470 students across Canada.

## HOW WE DO IT

### 1. Teachers post

Certified teachers working in Canadian schools submit a classroom project proposal through our website - this includes a proposal to participate in the Bondar Challenge for Schools.

### 2. Donors give

Donors visit the website to donate and/or spread the word about the project.

### 3. Students Succeed

Once the project is fully funded, MCN coordinates the purchase and delivery of the required resources.

# Fusing & Song in NATURE ART

by Lydia Adams,  
Conductor & Artistic Director, Amadeus Choir of Toronto

A Celebration and Collaboration with the Dr. Roberta Bondar Foundation took place on Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at Trinity St. Paul's Centre, in the beautiful Jeanne Lamont Hall in Toronto.

The Amadeus Choir is one of the leading choirs in Canada, a community of singers in Toronto that seeks out innovative programming ideas for great and inspiring performances, with an eye for social change and justice.

The idea of highlighting the earth in different ways began a number of years ago as an idea to celebrate Dr. Bondar's 20th anniversary of her flight into space, and an opportunity to collaborate with our colleagues, the Elmer Iseler Singers, the Roberta Bondar Foundation and the Ontario Science Centre in a concert entitled The Music of the Spheres.

This past year, the Amadeus Choir wanted to put the spotlight on the water of the earth and Dr. Bondar agreed once again to come and speak to our audience about water, and to share her amazing photographs highlighting this precious global resource. The program was called Of Heart and Tide: The Gift of Water.

The Choir programmed all works to connect with the earth and its water, including two world premières by Canadian composers.



The first was a major work entitled Of Heart and Tide by Winnipeg composer Sid Robinovitch, with texts by Newfoundland poet E.J. Pratt. This was a commission by Amadeus Choir soprano Sandra Parsons in memory of

her parents. This stunning work has now been recorded for release in December of 2015 on a CD titled Voices of Earth.

The second première of the night was an amazing work written by Toronto composer Hussein Janmohamed. This



is his experience of writing the work in his own words: "I was living at the late Doris McCarthy's home and studio, Fool's Paradise, through the Doris McCarthy Artist-in-Residence Program of the Ontario Heritage Trust. Sun on Water finds its inspiration in the mystery of winter sunrises on Toronto's Scarborough Bluffs. The colours of the rising sun over Lake Ontario revealed a palpable silence and yearning from which the music emerged. The piece, written specially for Toronto's Amadeus Choir, is for a cappella choir and Tibetan singing bowl. The texts and musical influences come from Western sacred choral traditions, Middle Eastern rhythms, Hindu and Indic Ismaili Muslim devotion. Sun on Water begins quietly as deep waters rumble underneath. Sonic layers reflect the yearning of the sun and water, like lover and beloved, for each other. A burst of sun breaks forth. Yet, as the sun's rays shimmer on the surface of the lake, the deep water still echoes their mutual yearning for ultimate union."

This remarkable program was all tied together by Master of Ceremonies, Tenor and Broadcaster Ben Heppner.

It was a true honour and joy to once again collaborate with our amazing Canadian icon, Dr. Roberta Bondar through the Roberta Bondar Foundation in a program highlighting our environment and the need to sustain it for future generations.



# SOCIAL MEDIA & Beyond

by Barbara Bondar

Our RBF web presence continues to grow. On This Day [OTD] articles have even attracted the attention of Huffington Post peeps!

Our new section, Vision Changers, will have its debut in the first months of 2016. It will reside in RBF's online Resources and accessed via logos capturing four basic categories that reflect some of what has helped shape how we view our world. These will contain the updated OTD features whose subjects lend themselves to this special RBF website enrichment.



Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for RBF program users are now established. RBF's YouTube is presently taking its first public steps, although its private content has been available to registered program participants for the last few years via Toolbox password access. Since the several Bondar Challenge [BC] programs and materials are well in hand, we expect 2016 will see our foray into Google Hangouts as we move to advance engagement with these along with our other two programs – The Travelling Exhibition and Learning Experience [TELE] and the Roberta Bondar Lecture Series & Seminar Program [LS2P].

We are experimenting with animations to use with some of our materials and programs. Several initiatives and prototypes are in production for use to publicize, explain aspects of our programs, and for special events.

Meanwhile, we continue to compile ideas for downloadable materials, annotated links, and special tools to provide extra value for BC, TELE, and LS2P Toolkit users, as well as visitors who register for specific social media program offers or limited access to RBF website.

We continue to increase our followers on our Twitter, Instagram and Facebook pages. Hope you join us.

## Partnership work continues in Kenya

A late summer visit to Kenya allowed our President and Chair to: combine photographic field work in the Rift Valley, continue to build our relationship with the leadership of Starehe Girls' Centre and advance our educational work with Hoopers Africa Trust (HAT), our partner based in the UK.

As Patron of HAT, Dr. Bondar provided a keynote inspirational speech and stimulating Q & A discussion with the girls and young women who are the Trust's beneficiaries in the Masai Mara. A collaboration amongst trustees from the UK and the Mara, she also attended their bi-annual strategy meeting that sets directions for the year ahead. Both the President and Chair of The RBF participated in mentoring and workshop sessions, encouraging these young women to continue their education while building strategies to support their persistence and success.

Our gracious host, High Commissioner David Angell, briefed us on the progress being made in girls schooling and at Starehe, through the extraordinary vision and leadership of Mrs. Margaret Wanjohi. We also had discussions with Executive Director, Hendrina Chalwe Doroba, of FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists) and Dr. Helen Gichohi, Managing Director of Equity Group Foundation who champions the social and economic transformation of lives and livelihoods in Africa through innovative programs that leverage existing infrastructure and partnerships.

Video and still portraits of the African Savannah grasslands' complex ecosystem will be added to our Travelling Exhibitions, Learning Guides and materials used by our Foundation for educational work.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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## *Our Founding Partners*



## *Our Program Partners*



Grade 7 teacher, Allie McDonald, photographs a bison as it wanders through camp in Wood Buffalo National Park during the Wilderness Bondar Challenge.