



## The Mount Pleasant Fitness Challenge



In the spring of 2009, volunteers with Mount Pleasant Community Association decided to test a program to encourage community networking while providing inspirational support for fitness and healthy living.

With contribution from both the community and from Stepping Stones, a collaborative program of The Calgary Foundation and First Calgary Savings, community members came together for a ten week fitness event. Organizers initially provided each participant with a pedometer and a workbook, and encouraged participants to find “walking buddies” from within the group. At weekly info sessions, they recruited health, nutrition and fitness experts from within the community to share their knowledge

Organizers were delighted with the outcome as 41 people participated, ranging in ages from 30 to the mid 80’s.

The winner of the pedometer contest was 73 years old, clocking in 347,763 steps in the ten weeks. Special Events Director Jill Wolodarsky tells us that the winner calls herself “a Saskatoon girl who was brought up on meat and potatoes.” The winner also reported that for the duration of the event she ate more vegetables than ever, and concluded that she will continue to walk three days per week. The benefits of this program multiplied when the winner donated her cash prize to a local community health center where she volunteers.

Inspired by the positive response from the neighbourhood and the determination of the first group to improve their health and fitness habits, The Mount Pleasant Community Association plans to offer this kind of program again.