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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives Receives 2026 Robert R. Janes Award for Social Responsibility

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Edmonton, Alberta – The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) is pleased to announce that the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives will receive the 2026 Robert R. Janes Award for Social Responsibility in recognition of its outstanding work to provide reactive and impactful community initiatives and programming following the devastating impacts of the 2024 Jasper Wildfire Complex.

The Award recognizes the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives for its leadership in supporting multi-faceted community recovery efforts, including immediate initiatives that supported residents and businesses who returned to the townsite in the fall of 2024, and ongoing programs and services that support their community.

Supporting the health and well-being of the community's senior population was an immediate priority when museum staff and volunteers were able to return to the Town of Jasper. The museum developed and hosted a virtual seniors' coffee hour to connect displaced seniors with those who had returned to the community. Museum volunteers expanded and scaled up an ongoing bottle recycling fundraiser program to provide a critical service after the town's only bottle depot was destroyed in the wildfire. The museum immediately offered a vacant lot beside its building as a site for interim housing, which now houses families displaced by the wildfire. Through exhibits and programming, the museum has created opportunities for collective reflection and documentation of the wildfire's impacts, and in 2024 they reimagined their annual Festival of Trees exhibit and silent auction to support residents who lost belongings in the wildfire.

The Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives' important role as a community hub and gathering space for organizations displaced by the wildfire has fostered a sense of joy, celebration, and normalcy for residents returning to the community.

"It is truly inspiring to see the many ways the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives became a hub for their community through this difficult time," said Jennifer Forsyth, Executive Director / CEO of the AMA.

Deeply rooted in its community, the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives is a resilient, socially responsible community gathering place. Their reactive multi-faceted recovery efforts stand out as a model for other museums responding to the needs of their community after experiencing a collective experience, emergency, or disaster.

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The Award will be presented at the Association's 55th Anniversary Gala and Awards Ceremony presented by Know History on September 23, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Wyndham Edmonton Hotel and Conference Centre, held as part of the Alberta Museums Association's 2026 Conference, *The Adaptable Museum: Embracing Creative Stewardship for a Sustainable Future*.

Background

The Robert R. Janes Award for Social Responsibility is the vision of Robert R. Janes, C.M., PhD, created to support and further the work of museums that are solving community issues and promoting health and well-being. Together with the AMA, the ambitious goal of the Award is to create vibrant and sustainable communities by investing in programs that affect real social and environmental change, and which have the potential to create public benefit on a larger scale. The recipient of the Robert R. Janes Award for Social Responsibility receives a financial contribution to investigate drivers for success, scale up activities, and create a model for others to follow, thereby contributing to the long-term impact of museums in their communities. For more information about the AMA Awards Program, please visit museums.ab.ca.

The Alberta Museums Association provides a variety of programs and services to over 500 museums and museum professionals across Alberta. Through its focus on community engagement, social responsibility, and sustainability, the AMA utilizes its funding, accreditation, awards, and professional development opportunities to support institutions in their vital role as leading contributors to the social, cultural, and educational fabric of Alberta. The AMA believes that museums can leverage their positions as trusted institutions to encourage respectful dialogue, provide educational opportunities, and bring awareness to some of society's most pressing issues.

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