



**Federation
of Calgary Communities**
Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

Riding the road towards peace

IAN SCOTT
FOR THE FEDERATION OF
CALGARY COMMUNITIES

To borrow a line from a popular song of yesteryear, Mahmood Jafari has looked at life from both sides now.

Jafari, 41, a resident of Calgary, has experienced both the hardships of battle and the dividends of peacetime. And with an unwavering desire for world peace in mind, Jafari is not content waiting for armies or politicians to take the next step; he's encouraging everyone to get involved.

A native of Gonbad, Iran, Jafari served in his country's military during the latter part of the 1980s Iran-Iraq war. By the age of 20, he'd already participated in a number of community action programs in the Tehran.

Fate dealt Jafari a cruel blow when he was shot during a civilian incident in 1989. He spent the next two years in a Tehran hospital, bedridden with a severed spinal cord and paralysis from the chest down. He's been confined to a wheelchair ever since.

Jafari says the two years of relative isolation gave him ample time to think about how he could encourage

others to focus on their own unique abilities, rather than any disabilities.

"When I was in the hospital, it made me realize I had a big challenge ahead of me," Jafari says. "During the first year, I was unsure of whether I would live at all. Once I understood I would survive, I had to accept using

Medical Equipment Loan Service, where he still volunteers weekly. Rather than consider his own wheelchair as a burden, Jafari has used it as a tool in building towards his end goal. He's taken part in fundraising wheelchair journeys between Calgary and Banff in 2001 and to Edmonton in

those facing physical challenges still had the power to facilitate change."

Jafari's efforts have garnered support from the business community. Currently, Calgary's House of Persian Rugs has agreed to donate between five to ten per cent of a purchase price if a customer merely mentions Jafari's name. The donation will go towards projects of the Federation of Calgary Communities, to overseas projects or to a charity of the customer's choice.

Jafari, a Shiite Muslim, has also reached out to the leaders of numerous religious groups across Western Canada in his quest for an interfaith push towards global peace. And while his ambitious plans for a fundraising hand-bike trip between Calgary and Vancouver have yet to materialize, the wheels in his head haven't stopped turning in the search for new ideas.

One thing is certain, circumstances may have forced him to sit, but they can't force him to sit still.



Mahmood Jafari uses his personal experiences to help others focus on their own unique abilities.

Photo courtesy FCC

dreams and get on with my life."

After immigrating to Canada in 1997, Jafari began volunteering with the Red Cross and has continuously done so in a number of capacities, ranging from community housing and disaster relief to violence and abuse prevention. Ironically, Jafari initially offered his services to the Red Cross's

it's Medal of Peace for his involvement in the Journey for Peace project.

"It occurred to me that people in wheelchairs may have felt they were moving around but not accomplishing anything," he said. "I decided that by traveling in my wheelchair to raise funds it would help to change the views of some people, to say that

See the Oct. 9 issue of Calgary Real Estate News for part two: *The road to peace leads home.*

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Copperfield

Copperfield is a neighbourhood in the southeast quadrant of Calgary, bounded by 52nd St. to the west, The Marquis of Lorne Trail to the south, and the neighbourhood of New Brighton to the north. Copperfield is served by the Marquis de Lorne Community Association (MDLCA).

The MDLCA encourages residents to join the community association. It is through membership and newsletter ad revenues that we can provide services to the community.

Here are some examples of how membership benefits you and what the MDLCA does for the community:

- 15 per cent Family Membership Discount with our Key Partner Family Leisure Centre;
- Many other discounts with community business partners;
- Brings members up-to-date information and becomes a voice for the community on important

planning and development issues with the City of Calgary;

- Meets with Alderman and MLA to bring community issues to light;
- Distributes *Pathways*, a monthly community newsletter across SE Calgary;
- Develops and maintains MDLCA website with community & event information.
- Helps create a more active involved community presence
- Entitles you to a vote at the MDLCA AGM
- Qualifies you to join the MDLCA Board of Directors and make a difference in how the community association is managed .

Demographics

Located in Ward 12, Copperfield has a population of 4,672 (2006 Civic Census) with approximately 12.5% comprising the immigrant popula-

tion (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada). A total of 395 families accounted for 650 children still living at home with 30% of these being 6-14 years old. According to Stats Canada, 2005 Census of Canada the median household income for Copperfield in 2005 was \$80,407. In addition, 49.3% of the population over 20 completed college, attended university or graduated university with a degree - an additional 12.1% graduated from Trade Schools (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada).

There are a total of 1,075 occupied private dwellings in Copperfield with 84.7% being single detached dwellings (Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada).

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