



## Marlin Ernie Styner

February 25, 1963 - February 28, 2014

With great sadness, we announce that Marlin passed away peacefully at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre in Calgary at the age of 51. His health had taken a turn 3 years ago and he had been in hospital since Spring 2011. He was born in Edmonton February 25, 1963, to Roy & Nora Styner. He was raised in Red Deer, graduating from Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School in 1981. With visions of entering college in fall '81, Marlin was in a car crash and sustained a serious spinal cord injury. Through the gracious support of family, friends & the community, he persevered and received his Business Administration diploma from Red Deer College.

Marlin was not one to accept charity without giving back, so as a quadriplegic, he became an avid volunteer, and through encouragement from his mentors, embarked on a career in public speaking. He has spoken to close to 1,000,000 youth about Injury Prevention on behalf of the PARTY Program (Prevent Alcohol & Risk Related Trauma in Youth), Junior PARTY, and SMARTRISK Heroes. Other passions Marlin spoke on to adult audiences were: Universal Design; Motivation; Overcoming Personal and Physical Barriers; Transition; Empowerment; and Traveling with a Disability. He served on numerous boards of directors, task forces, advisory boards and committees -- locally in Red Deer, provincially, and nationally, including: City of Red Deer; Red Deer College; Traffic Safety Board, Alberta Ministry of Infrastructure; Alberta Paraplegic Foundation; Human Resources &

Development Canada; Neurotrauma Connections 99; Alberta Disabilities Forum; Red Deer Safety City; Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT); Canadian Transport Agency (CTA); Provincial Barrier Free Transportation Committee; Spinal Cord Injury Collaboration Initiative; Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities; Red Deer South Provincial Progressive Conservative Association.

After volunteering a number of years on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Paraplegic Association, he was offered a staff position and worked for the organization in Community Development, Government Relations and Advocacy until September 2008. A council member since 2005, he was appointed Chair of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in July 2008. He was also a consultant for Universal Design & Barrier Free Access.

He was chairman of his 10 & 20-year Reunions for High School. In 1995, he was inducted into The Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School Hall of Fame. In August of 2004 he was appointed as 1 of 100 Alberta Centennial Ambassadors for the province's Centennial Celebrations in 2005. In May of 2005, Toastmasters International presented him with their "Communication and Leadership Award", the highest award presented to a non-Toastmaster. That same year he was also awarded the Alberta Centennial Medal for Service to the Community, and he became an Ambassador for the Rick Hansen Foundation. In 2006, he was a co-founder and the spokesperson for the Alberta Disability Coalition, a grassroots movement to mobilize the disability community to become active politically, and to elevate the status of disability issues with the leadership candidates of the Alberta PC Party and ultimately, the next Premier. In June 2007, he was awarded the highest honor bestowed by the City of Red Deer, the Mayor's Special Recognition Award for Humanitarianism. In 2012, the Council of Canadians with Disabilities presented their National Award "In recognition of Marlin's valued contribution

to the Disability Rights Movement in Canada". That same year, Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities created an award upon conclusion of his Council Chair position. "The Marlin Styner Achievement Award recognizes Marlin's passion and commitment that he would bring to all his endeavors." In December 2013, Rick Hansen presented the 25th Anniversary Relay Medal to Marlin for being a Difference Maker.

Marlin was a sports fan, enjoyed spending time with family & friends, playing cards & games, travel, reading, music, singing, dancing, sailing, writing, and public speaking. He took an extreme interest in promoting the message that "90% of all injuries are predictable and preventable". He always told people, "A person in a wheelchair is just that -- a person -- they're just in a wheelchair. We have the same hopes, dreams, fears, drives, and desires as everyone else."

Marlin's life was very fulfilling and he always took time to "smell the roses". He will be lovingly remembered by his devoted wife of 11 years and best friend, Diane Gramlich; his parents, Roy & Nora Styner; brothers Leland (Ellen) Styner & Parker (Carina) Styner; nieces Ellysa & Jenny Styner; his in-law family; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, and a wealth of friends. Marlin was predeceased by his grandparents (Ernie & Emma Wudel and Louis & Blanche Styner), as well as several aunts & uncles.

The family wishes to thank the caring medical staff, nurses, doctors, & volunteers of Foothills Medical Centre, Calgary General Hospital, Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre (ICU & Unit 31) Peter Lougheed Centre, and Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre (Chronic Complex Care Program) for assisting Marlin through his medical journey over the past 32 years.

A celebration of Marlin's life will take place on Monday, March 10, 2014 at

Sheraton Red Deer Hotel, 3310 – 50 Ave, Red Deer, AB T4N 3X9, at 2:00pm  
(Linda Ervin, United Church Minister, officiating).

In lieu of flowers, those wishing to make memorial contributions may do so to  
the Canadian Paraplegic Association (Alberta), #103, 4719 – 48 Ave, Red  
Deer, AB T4N 3T1.

# Tribute Wall

JR

“ Dear Diane, Nora, Roy, family and friends... I didn't learn of Marlin's death until today, February 6/15. I saw a news clip this morning on Facebook regarding the Supreme Court decision about assisted suicide and there was Marlin speaking his mind (I think in Ottawa being that he "had the back" of the Prime Minister in the photo!). A couple further "clicks" brought me to this link with his Obituary and Service details. As the anniversary of his death nears, I pray you've been making peace with his passing and taking good care of each other... holding fast to that which death cannot destroy... for there where your treasure is, will your heart be as well. May all be well for you this day and always. Tender thoughts from Jan & Bob Richardson here @ Stettler United Church

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**Jan Richardson** - February 06, 2015 at 11:13 AM

DE

“ Marlin was such a great friend to me. I enjoyed his company at his home when he would have one of his awesome gathering of friends and heartfelt conversations. We moved to Red Deer, around the corner from Marlin's parents and was invited to their home Christmas Day back in 1996 and was a joy to meet Marlin's family. Whenever my thoughts included Marlin a smile would always come to my face with the thoughts of the uplifting and engaging exchanges I was blessed to be included in. My thoughts and prayers are with his friends and family as the loss they must feel from his passing. Thank you for letting me know.

Sincerely,  
Denise Humphrey

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**Denise** - December 10, 2014 at 04:57 PM

RW

“ *To Diane and your extended families  
On Behalf of the Alberta Abilities Lodges Society members and the thousands of Alberta citizens with a disability, I wish to extend our condolences. It is because of people like you and Marlin that so many continue to work toward a more inclusive Alberta. As for our society, we will continue to push for a William Watson Lodge North where persons with a disability can gather strength.*

*Sincerely,  
Ross W. Wein*

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**Ross Wein** - March 19, 2014 at 11:06 AM

BM

“ *Diane  
My sincerest condolences, the world has lost a great man, Marlin Styner. I enjoyed our short conversations in the Handibus, I will miss them, the smiles and the kind wisdom you both provided me over the years.*

*Sincerely,  
Bruce McGinnis*

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**Bruce McGinnis** - March 18, 2014 at 06:00 PM

JD

“ Dear Diane and family, our deepest condolences go out to you on the passing of Marlin. Marlin was a dear friend and an inspiration to all who knew him. He was always so positive and happy and we enjoyed the years you both welcomed us into your home for an annual celebration with friends and family. Marlin's kindness, warm smile, laughter and generous hospitality was always so refreshing and uplifting and we will always remember those moments. As someone dedicated to his community, Marlin was an outstanding advocate for people with disabilities. He made change happen to improve the lives of people with disabilities in our province and around the country, and did so with a sense of humility and camaraderie. May the fond memories help you through the difficult days ahead and heal your hearts. Sincerely,  
Cal and Jackie Dallas

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**Jackie Dallas** - March 13, 2014 at 02:47 PM

DD

“ Dear Roy and Nora;  
Our hearts go out to you this day with Marlin's passing. Certainly life has not been easy for him these past several years. However, there is a sense of peace for him now, and a sense of a life lived that has had a great impact on all who knew Marlin, and the lives he has touched since the accident. The example he has set is a lasting one and his influence has benefited a host of individuals, both in this community and other locations. He will long be remembered.  
  
May God bless and keep you this day and in the days to come.  
  
Love and sympathy; Dick and Marette Duffin.

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**Dick & Marette Duffin** - March 10, 2014 at 05:49 PM

CA

“ Hi Diane,  
This is Carol from Studio Blue. It was a pleasure to serve you - God  
bless.  
Carol

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**Carol** - March 10, 2014 at 12:58 PM

MP

“ Reflecting on the many times our paths have crossed from the CPA  
tournament, the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame Induction Banquet to  
the famous Jimmy Buffet Parrot Head Party. Marlin, my friend, you  
have made a difference in many lives and thank you for being part  
of mine. You will be missed.

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**Margaret Phelan** - March 10, 2014 at 11:28 AM

JM

“ Aunty Nora, Uncle Roy, Diane, Leland, Ellen, Parker and Carina my  
heart is heavy today with sadness. I have great memories of Marlin  
at the family reunions we had when growing up we had so much fun  
as kids and I will cherish those memories, and knowing all what  
Marlin achieved in his life must make you so proud. He was truly a  
great man and he will be missed and remembered forever.

*Joanne Mitton (cousin)*

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**Joanne Mitton** - March 10, 2014 at 09:03 AM

 Tony  
Wozny

“ So sincere...so real...he loved life & always saw the glass half full!  
God bless you my friend! Thoughts & prayers to the family!

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**Tony Wozny** - March 10, 2014 at 12:07 AM

LB

“ Dear Diane and family: I am so sad to hear about Marlin's passing. I think of him often with great fondness. He was an inspiration to me and I know many others. Do take care of yourselves. I believe he was a lucky man to have such love in his life. (Louise Butler)

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**Louise Butler** - March 08, 2014 at 09:22 PM

ME

“ Dear Diane and family. We are so sorry for your loss and grief that you must be going through. Marlin was such a positive happy man and welcomed everyone with open arms.  
Love Marie and Shawn  
(Gregory)

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**Marie eltom** - March 08, 2014 at 03:48 PM

KK

Nora, Roy and family,  
Our hearts go out to you on the loss of Marlin, and for all the incredible struggles and challenges that you've experienced through life above and beyond yours and Marlin's control.  
Please take comfort in knowing that we dearly feel for you in your son's loss  
We are sorry to not be able to be at the celebration of Marlin's life as we have illness.  
We'll be with you in thought .  
Sincerely,  
Jean and Keith Kline

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**Keith Kline** - March 10, 2014 at 02:11 PM

OG

“ Dear Diane & Family, Our thoughts are with you. It was a pleasure to have known Marlin. He was an incredible, very upbeat person. He made a difference in MANY lives.  
Bob & Barbara Gregory, Red Deer.

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**obert Gregory** - March 08, 2014 at 11:21 AM

LS

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you my friend; Marlin was such a dynamic and dedicated person that his presence will be with us forever.*

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**Lynne Schellenberg** - March 07, 2014 at 08:28 PM

PC

“ *Dear Diane and Family,*

*We are so sorry for your loss. It was a great honor to work with Marlin and he certainly will not be forgotten. We look forward to continuing to remember Marlin with the Marlin Styner Achievement Award. Marlin touched many lives and will be remembered most for his passion and dedication to advocating for the rights of people with disabilities.*

*Our thoughts are with you and all the family at this time.*

*Sincerely, Premier's Council Members*

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**Premier's Council** - March 07, 2014 at 03:22 PM

DS

“ *Dear Diane,*

*I was sad to hear the news....I know that no words can help ease the pain and loss that you are feeling right now. Sending prayers for all of you and Marlin's family.*

*Cousin Darlene*

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**Darlene Schiebelbein** - March 07, 2014 at 12:35 PM

SM

“ Dear Diane, Roy and Nora I was saddened to hear of Marlin's passing. My heart goes out to you and your family.

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**Scott MacIsaac** - March 07, 2014 at 09:05 AM

MM

“ Dear Diane, Roy and Nora

*My condolences. Marlin was an inspiration. He leaves behind a legacy of hope to all quadriplegics. He made us all proud.*

*Mattie McCartney*

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**mattie mccartney** - March 07, 2014 at 08:46 AM

CE

“ We are so very saddened to hear of Marlin's passing. I met Marlin, Roy and Nora when Marlin was first in the Red Deer Hospital, and visited with them many times, as I worked there, and could slip in and out. Grant is on the PC Board, and knew Marlin through his many involvements in this community and afar. Marlin will be remembered as the "Great Person" that he was- his quick wit, personality, and, especially, his positive attitude and great smile. We send our love and best wishes to Diane and all the family.

*Carole and Grant Edmonds*

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**Carole and Grant Edmonds** - March 06, 2014 at 09:01 PM

CA

“ Dear Diane, Roy and Nora, and family,  
*My condolences to you all. Marlin was a special person who impacted all who met him. The world is poorer for his absence.*  
*Craig Albrecht and family*

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**Craig Albrecht** - March 06, 2014 at 04:33 PM

KB

“ Dear Diane and family, So very sorry for your loss. The earth has lost a great man. Someone has other plans for him and he will continue to do great things. He will be missed beyond words. Love Karen and Bob Bond and Family

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**karen bond** - March 06, 2014 at 11:39 AM

GG

“ Diane and Family

*Our sincerest condolences on the loss of Marlin. He was very much a leader and strong advocate for people living with a disadvantage. His strength and determination serves as a lesson to those of us who live without limitations, but still complain about every minor setback and pothole that life has to offer.*

*As we are in Winnipeg, Lorna & I will not be available to be with you for Marlin's Celebration of Life. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.*

*Love,  
Greg & Lorna Gramlich  
Barrhead, AB*

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**Greg Gramlich** - March 05, 2014 at 03:28 PM

KE

“ Sorry to hear about Marlin Passing I only met Marlin a few times at conference in Edmonton and found him a kind generous person and a great advocate for persons who live with disabilities.  
Keen Thomas

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**Ken** - March 05, 2014 at 12:39 PM

CH

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Marlin was such a dear friend to my sister Erin and I. So many fond memories that will never be forgotten. Marlin will be dearly missed by all.*

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**Cathy Harrington** - March 05, 2014 at 02:45 AM

RW

“ *We join with the many people who mourn the loss of Marlin in remembering the amazing contributions he made to enrich the lives of all people, especially those with disabilities. We also remember Marlin...the friend who shared his life with contagious enthusiasm and energy, the friend who was always so positive and uplifting, the friend who opened his home and his heart, the friend who provided wise counsel, the friend who made our lives more complete by being our friend. We grieve and will miss you but we find solace and strength through your friendship. Rest well our friend*

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**Ron and Donna Woodward** - March 04, 2014 at 09:31 PM

KT

“ *My dear life long friend Marlin, I will miss you and your warm heart and smile. You were one to always make an effort to stay intouch no matter the miles between us. I remember when you got your first van for you to be able to tour the night clubs with your friends. One night I drove and we collected a few others and headed to the dance floors in town ! Nothing stopped us ever from having a blast together! I always admired and respected you my friend and I am going to miss your wonderful sence of humour and gratitude that you shared with so many of us as your friends! Run free my friend and we will know you are heavens newest angel watching out for us here.*

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**Kathy Townsend** - March 04, 2014 at 07:13 PM

JM

“ *Marlin was among the most engaged, high-functioning and optimistic individuals I've ever known. His life was a testament to contribution, service and personal agency and understandably, he inspired and motivated the same in others. I don't imagine there is anyone he partnered or worked with that didn't gain from the experience. I feel privileged to have been one of them.*

*Jamie McCamus*

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**Jamie McCamus** - March 04, 2014 at 05:03 PM

MN

*With the support and caring of so many, Marlin lived such an amazing life and did indeed remind us all that ' A person in a wheelchair is just that - a person in a wheelchair. . . '*

*Molly Nesom  
Your Sunnybrook United Church Family*

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**Molly Nesom** - March 06, 2014 at 11:45 AM

SG

“ *I only got to serve marlin and Diane when they stayed in edmonton at my hotel but he was such a great man I always felt good when they came in to the hotel knowing that nothing was stopping this man from living a full life and being such a positive soul the world has lost someone special and more importantly his family has lost that someone special my prayers are with the family and I hope that you can remember only the happiest of times and can forget the sadness one day know he will always be with you and with all who knew him*

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**scott greenwood** - March 04, 2014 at 04:12 PM

DS

“ Dear Diane and families, our deepest sympathy to you. We both knew Marlin and were very fond of him and very much enjoyed our conversations with him. Doug very much enjoyed his time with Marlin on the College Board. Sincerely Doug & Val Sandall

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**Doug & Val Sandall** - March 04, 2014 at 03:08 PM

KH

“ I've know Marlin for many years. He was one of the most uplifting and couragious people i've ever known. More than that, he was a good man, He will most surely be missed...

*Ken Hoskin*

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**Ken Hoskin** - March 04, 2014 at 02:53 PM