



HELMUTH RITTER

**NOMINATION
FOR THE
City of Fort Saskatchewan
Naming Registry**

Helmuth Ritter

Helmuth Ritter was born in 1939 in Golden Spike, just outside of Spruce Grove, Alberta. He was one of 8 children; he had 3 brothers and 3 sisters. In 1965 he married a lovely woman named Donna and they had two children together, Karen and Kevin. After moving his family to Fort Saskatchewan in 1966, he was hired by the Town where he was given the opportunity as a Town Employee to join the Fort Saskatchewan Fire Department as a volunteer. At that time, the population of Fort Saskatchewan was approximately 1,000 people. It is now a thriving community of 25533 and Helmuth has grown not only with the community but helped the Fire Department to progress through the years to become a very professional, respected and admired Fire Department in the Capital Region.

In October 1990, Helmuth was quoted in the local paper, the Fort Record, as saying, “I have dedicated 24 years of service to the Fort Saskatchewan Fire Department. As a volunteer of the Department, I feel hard work and experience is my greatest contributions to my Community.” Today, Helmuth has given 50 plus years of service to the community. Any organization that Helmuth belongs to knows he is dedicated and will volunteer for any tasks that need to be completed. If there is a job to be done, Helmuth is there to do it no matter what. And for Helmuth no matter what meant even occasionally sacrificing time that could be spent with his family. His wife, Donna remembers having to make sure her on call schedule at the hospital did not coincide with Helmuth’s week on call with the Fire Department and his children remember that if they wanted to spend time with their father it would have to be at the Fire Hall. Together they would polish the trucks and roll hoses and he used this time to teach his children the importance of volunteering. Today both his children are very active volunteers in their respective communities and attribute this to their father being such an exemplary role model. His community involvement is not limited to the Fort Saskatchewan Fire Department. Helmuth is also involved in the Royal Canadian Legion, Strathcona Tractor Association and was active in the Fort Saskatchewan Snowmobile Club and Fish and Game Association.

There are many words you could use to describe Helmuth Ritter, selfless, humble, respected and motivated just to name a few. He is not a man who requires great accolades for what he is doing, he does it because he wants to and that’s that. He is someone who motivates others through his words and actions and makes sure he is always learning new things himself. He is greatly respected throughout the community. As a matter of fact if you mention the name Helmuth Ritter when you are out and about in Fort Saskatchewan, there are not many people who do not know who you are talking about or don’t have something nice to say about him. It is easy to see why he was nominated for and given the title of Ambassador for the City of Fort Saskatchewan in 2010.

Throughout Helmuth’s time in the Fire Service he has witnessed a lot of change:

- When he first started only a couple of fire phones, and the first member to firehall would set off siren. The Department progressed to fire phones in all Fire Department Officer’s homes including the Ritter home in 1976 and they were not removed until mid 1990’s. Today, we are dispatched by a central dispatch and he receives information on his portable. But the dedication has not changed with technology. Helmuth is still leaving family functions and special occasion for his duty to the Department. When the call comes in, he is usually first to the hall.
- Three years after he started the department received their first set of SCBA – Canister type with water. Today, Fort Saskatchewan has state of the art equipment, from apparatus to Personal Protective Equipment. Helmuth has worked with each Chief throughout the years, determining the needs and staying current with technologies.
- Helmuth was instrumental as a member of the Officer Core for working with the Fire Chiefs on Standard Operating Guidelines, Policy and administrative guidance for the continual progress of the Department.

Helmuth is still a very active individual during an emergency response. Through the years, he has worked his way up through the ranks from a Firefighter, Captain, Battalion Chief, Assistant Chief, and today, our Deputy Chief / Logistics Officer. He is still responding from home to the hall; opening the hall, pulling out pumper and organizing / recording activities at the hall. He is in constant radio communication with Incident Command and assists wherever with whatever is needed.

As Deputy Chief – Logistics, Helmuth is accountable for:

- assuming a speciality portfolio which may include:
 - quality management of safety programs,
 - quality management of training programs,
 - research and review of Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines,
 - effective leadership and direction of Officers and fire fighters, and
 - quality management of equipment and facilities.

Being a part-time department made up of community individuals, there is a diverse age making up the membership. Helmuth can communicate with the very youngest member all the way up to our Historian and has the respect of every member of the Department. Helmuth is very proud that he has been able to contribute to how the department has grown; quality of equipment, extensive training program and professionalism that is synonymous with the Fort Saskatchewan Fire Department.

Please accept our nomination for Helmuth Ritter to the City of Fort Saskatchewan Naming Registry to be used in the naming of the second fire station once built.

Volunteer Efforts

Name of Organization	Period (YYY/MD/DD – YYYY/MM/DD)	Position Held
Fort Saskatchewan Fire Department	1966 to Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighter • Captain • Assistant Fire Chief • Battalion Chief • Deputy Chief / Logistics Officer
Fort Saskatchewan Snowmobile Club	1970 – 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader in making safe family environment for events
Fish and Game Association	1970 – 1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader – Children’s’ Fishing and Hunting Events
Fort Saskatchewan Legion	1987 – Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Membership
City of Fort Saskatchewan Ambassador	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Membership; promotion of City and Special Events
Strathcona Tractor Association	2007 – Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Membership

Awards and Honours

Name of Award	Year	Sponsor
Alberta Emergency Services Medal	2004	Alberta Government
Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal 20 Years	1987	Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations in Ottawa
Fire Services Exemplary Service 1 st Bar 30 Years	1996	Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations in Ottawa
Fire Services Exemplary Service 2 nd Bar 40 Years	2008	Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations of Ottawa
Fire Services Exemplary Service 3 rd Bar 50 Years	2017	Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations of Ottawa
Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal	2013	Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations of Ottawa