

In Honour of Troy Many Fingers
A tribute from Dr. Terri-Lynn Fox, former director of the BTDH Wellness Program

There are people whose presence quietly changes the shape of our lives.

Troy was one of those people.

Over these past few days, I have found myself returning to memories of Troy. I have smiled. I have cried. I have struggled to make sense of losing someone who still had so much life to live. As I reflect, I remember not only the athlete so many admired, but the man who encouraged others simply by being himself. His determination, his humour, his kindness, and his unwavering belief that healing was possible touched many of us.

I had the privilege of knowing Troy as both a colleague and a friend. He loved reminding people that years ago I had been a runner, and that even after years of living with rheumatoid arthritis, I was still moving, still showing up, and still giving my best. He had a gift for reflecting back to people the strengths they sometimes forgot they carried.

One Halloween, Troy and I were paired together for a "Name That Tune" competition. Between him and I, we knew every song. We laughed so much that day, and we won so convincingly they never paired us together again. Every time I think of that memory, I smile.

I also remember Troy's motivation, initiative, and dedication to the Fun Runs hosted by the Wellness Program. He believed that movement was healing. Community was healing. Encouraging one another was healing. He didn't simply organize the runs—he participated alongside everyone who chose to join. Troy didn't just believe those values; he lived them.

Yet, even in our grief, I find comfort knowing that Troy left this world doing something he genuinely loved—with purpose, determination, and heart.

As a Blackfoot woman, I was taught that our relationships do not end when someone leaves the physical world; they change. We continue to carry one another through stories, memories, laughter, and the teachings left behind. We bear witness to one another's lives, and through that witnessing, they continue to walk with us.

While writing my dissertation, I was drawn to a teaching shared by Rupert Ross in *Dancing with a Ghost*. He describes life as an endless relay race, where generations run side by side, carefully passing the baton before one slows and another continues. The race never truly ends because the track itself is sacred. It has carried those who came before us, it carries us today, and one day it will carry those who follow.

That teaching has stayed with me because it reminds me that none of us walks alone. We are connected to those who came before us, to those who walk beside us today, and to those who are still waiting for their turn on the track.

As I reflect on Troy's life, I keep returning to one thought.

He carried his baton with courage.

He carried it through recovery.

He carried it through his commitment to wellness.

He carried it through his athleticism, his humour, and his unwavering belief in people.

Perhaps Troy's greatest legacy was not the races he completed or the Fun Runs he organized, but the courage he awakened in others to begin their own journey toward healing.

Now, with deep sadness and profound gratitude, we continue to carry that baton.

Not to become Troy, because no one could.

But to continue what he believed in.

To encourage someone who is struggling.

To celebrate every step toward healing.

To remind another person of their strength, just as Troy reminded so many of us.

One day, each of us will gently place our own baton into the hands of those who follow.

Until then, may we carry it with humility, compassion, and love.

That is how Troy's journey continues.

That is how we honour him.

For me, Troy's life reminds us that we are all connected—to those who walked before us, to those who walk beside us, and to those who will follow after us. Past, present, and future. That is the sacredness of the baton. That is the sacredness of community.

Troy leaves behind his beloved wife, children, grandchildren, and extended family, whom he cherished deeply. He also leaves behind countless friends, colleagues, and community members whose lives were touched by his kindness, encouragement, and unwavering belief in healing.

His legacy lives on in his family, in the Wellness Team, in our community, and in all those who had the privilege of knowing him. May we honour his life by carrying forward the compassion, strength, and hope he shared so freely with others.

Thank you, Troy.

Thank you for every mile.

Thank you for every story.

Thank you for every word of encouragement.

Your race on this earth is complete, but your footsteps continue to guide us.

Until we meet again, rest well, my friend.