

Monthly Recap and Upcoming BBQs



YEG Peer Dinner

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer, it always seems to fly by!

Thanks to everyone who came out to the peer dinners, the Edmonton Riverhawks baseball game, and the peer pretzel afternoon last month!



Riverhawks Game

Huge thank you to Rocky Mountain Adaptive for coming up to Edmonton to showcase their wide range of adaptive bikes and equipment!



RMA Demo Days at the Glenrose



Bowhead Adaptive Bike

Be sure to reserve your tickets to the Calgary BBQ on August 19th and the Edmonton BBQ on August 20th! Tickets are free, and include your lunch choice -there are 5 different options to choose from!



Calgary Peer
SUMMER BBQ
Food sponsored by Hollister

Music - Games - Entertainment - Free Food and More

Saturday, August 19th | **11AM-3PM**
Contact Terry for more info | Merlin Picnic Site N Glenmore
terry.tenove@sci-ab.ca | Park Rd



SUMMER BBQ Party

Join us for a day filled with laughter, fun, and the unmistakable aroma of summer- BBQ!

AUGUST 20TH, 2023 | 10AM - 2 PM
Emily Murphy Park, Site #1

There will be food, snacks, beverages, music, entertainment, adaptive try-it opportunities, outdoor lawn games, door prizes and more!
Enjoy an afternoon of summer time fun with your loved ones!

Spinal Cord Injury Alberta
Lésions Médullaires Alberta

Get full event details and tickets for the Calgary Event

Get full event details and tickets for the Edmonton Event



SCI-AB Updates | Introduction to our New CEO Brenda Kinnie

Brenda Kinnie has been working with non-profit organizations in the capacity of Executive Director since 2012. These organizations have included Education, the Arts, and Social Services. Brenda is passionate about leading high-functioning teams, analyzing processes, and confidently establishing appropriate steps to move organizations forward. Bringing strengths in strategic leadership, organizational management, governance, process improvement, problem-solving, and interpersonal management, Brenda leads with courage, boldness, and empathy based in a team mindset.

Brenda has a Master of Business Administration in Executive Management (Royal Roads University, Victoria BC) and credits this experience for locking in her business acumen, developing her inquiry-based approach to work, and for increasing her capacity for managing consecutive projects.

Prior to receiving her MBA, she graduated from the education program at the University of Calgary. Brenda is a lifelong learner and continually seeks ways to enrich her knowledge and skills. In 2022, her second-oldest daughter was in an accident that resulted in a T4 fracture. This changed the trajectory of life's journey for the entire family. Brenda is honoured to be representing SCI-AB as Chief Executive Officer.

With an openness and desire to learn about each person's lived experience, Brenda is ready to champion and support resources for individuals with a SCI and other physical disabilities. Outside of work, Brenda enjoys spending time available with loved ones, especially her four adult daughters and her precious pup, Louie. She loves to walk, read, cook, travel, work in her garden, and play word games.

Upcoming SCI-AB Events:

Aug 1- Virtual Ladies Chat

Aug 7- Online Peer Chat

Aug 9- Calgary Coffee Group

Aug 15- Virtual Ladies Chat

Aug 19- Calgary BBQ

Aug 20- Edmonton BBQ

Aug 23- Calgary Peer Dinner at Gus's Pizza

Aug 30- Edmonton Peer Dinner at Rebel Food and Drink



Check out the [events calendar on our website](#) to catch any last minute event editions!

Accessible Activities in the Community for August

There are multiple adaptive water-ski try it sessions available throughout Alberta (with more dates to be finalized soon). There are opportunities both for first time participants, as well as sessions for those who have tried before and want to progress their skills (Give It A Go 2.0). For more information or to register, visit www.wswa.ca!

Waterskiing Nationals will be held at Shalom Ski Park in Leduc (across the road from the Rabbit Hill Ski Club, south of Edmonton) on August 8-11! Each day will be a specific event, with familiarization on the 8th, trick on the 9th, slalom on the 10th and jump on the 11th! Come and watch the best able bodied and adaptive water-skiers in the country battle it out! With the national adaptive team members competing against each other to represent their provinces before they come together to train for the Worlds competition in California in September, it is sure to be an exciting few days! Check out the event website for details!

Come and give sledge hockey a try! There is also a try it opportunity through the Edmonton Sledge Hockey Club (ESHC) at Meadows Rec Centre on August 12th from 12:45- 2:45pm, contact eshcboard@gmail.com to register or for more info!

In Sherwood Park, east of Edmonton, there are ice times at Millennium Place on August 21 and 28th, no experience is necessary, and family/friends are welcome to try as well! In addition, EASA is also looking for a hockey coach for the upcoming season, no sledge experience is needed, just a love for hockey and a willingness to learn! Contact Sharon Veeneman at (780.721.7071) if you or anyone you know would be a good fit for the role!

If you are looking to try a variety of different adaptive sports, WSA hosts a rotating try it event in the gym at the Glenrose Rehab Hospital in Edmonton Thursdays from 2-3pm. Contact jen@wheelchairsportsalberta.com for more information.

For those in Calgary, there is Powerchair Soccer, Sundays 3pm at MRU, summer season dates: Aug 13, and Aug 27.

Another fun accessible summer activity in Calgary is lawn bowling at Stanley Park! There are drop in try is sessions on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm and Thursday afternoon from 1:30pm to 2:30 pm during the month of August!

If you are looking for a zen way to wind down, Ultimate Para Sports offers free guided meditation classes on Sunday from 12:30-1:30pm, these are held over zoom and are accessible to all in the comfort of their home. Ultimate Para Sports also offers a variety of adaptive cycling programs in Calgary throughout the summer, check them out here.

The Poundmaker's Lodge 50th Annual Pow Wow in St. Albert, northwest of Edmonton from August 18th-20th, be sure to check out their website for the full schedule and event details!



Adaptive Waterskiing



Canadian Adaptive Waterksi Team



Sledge Hockey



Lawn Bowling

Peer Mentor of the Month - Gerry Kress

It was February 13th, 1983 when my life changed course. He took a shot on net and as I slid on the ice to stop the goal, the boards and I met head on. Five seconds later I woke up and could not feel or move a thing below my chin. That was the day I learned the definition of “quadriplegic”.

I ended up in the Edmonton Aberhart Rehabilitation Centre thinking my life was over. That is where I met Larry Pempeit. He was all decked out in a suit and rolled into the rehab centre on his fancy power chair with a briefcase on his lap. That’s when I realized; life goes on and it will be as good as I make it. You see, Larry was a mentor with the Canadian Paraplegic Association, now known as Spinal Cord Injury Alberta. He was the image of success; not on two feet but on 4 wheels.

Larry, Guy Coulombe, and others from the CPA became my “go to people” whenever I needed information or resources. However, living in Fort McMurray at the time had its challenges and the CPA was 5 or 6 hours away. Lack of resources and peer mentorship in and around Fort McMurray motivated me to gather the troops and form the Fort McMurray Physically Handicapped Association. Our goal was to provide disabled people a sense of belonging and equipment that they needed to make their lives better. The Association continued to provide this service even after I moved to Edmonton in 1994.

In ‘99 I was attending a CPA conference and trade show in Edmonton when I met two rough looking characters that had a booth in the trade show. They had a cool looking wheelchair that looked like it came out of a Mad Max movie. They convinced me to come out and try wheelchair rugby. I was hooked; this is what I was looking for and didn’t even know it.

We played in the gym at the Glenrose once a week in chairs that were falling apart. This wouldn’t do; I needed to do something to help get this sport off the ground. Drawing on my experience from Fort McMurray, I got busy and formed the Steel Wheels Quad Rugby Club. We raised money for chairs, gym rentals and travel. Here is where I played the sport, learned from my peers, and made life-long friendships. I’ve been with the Club for a couple of decades now but retired from active play several years ago.

In 2022 I moved to Red Deer and soon realized that there was a void when it came to wheelchair sports. I went to work and sought out people that could help me get something going. One of these people was Wanda Seifried with SCI Alberta in Red Deer. She was a godsend; not only did she hook me up with key people, she helped me form the Red Deer Reapers Wheelchair Rugby Club. The Club is going strong and continues to attract athletes that are “looking for something and don’t even know it”.

Thanks CPA and SCI Alberta; you continue to influence my life and the lives of others.

-Gerald Kress



"That’s when I realized; life goes on and it will be as good as I make it "

Rocky Mountain Adaptive | Creating Experiences

Equipment Showcase and Programming Recap

Huge thank you to Rocky Mountain Adaptive for coming up to Edmonton to showcase their wide range of adaptive bikes and equipment!

The smoke put a little bit of a damper on the RMA demo days in Edmonton, but it was still an amazing opportunity to see all the cool equipment they have available!

From a variety of different bikes with special hand controls for those with limited dexterity. As well as a variety of e-assist and hand-cycle style bikes for those looking to get some cardio in.

If you enjoy getting out on the water there is a variety of kayaks and a wheelchair accessible stand up paddle board!

They also have a Trailrider which allows for a group of guides to maneuver and allow everyone to enjoy the views from the top of a summit. Not to mention the adventure along the way!

No matter what your ideal adventure looks like, Rocky Mountain Adaptive can work with you to build the perfect adaptive experience!

For those with barriers to transportation and getting down to the Canmore/Bow Valley region, with their recently acquired 6 seat wheelchair accessible van, they can provide transportation to and from experiences!

Finally, if financial barriers are preventing you from accessing the adaptive adventure of your dreams, you can apply for a subsidy and RMA will work with you to provide the highest quality experience, at the lowest cost to you.

No matter what you are seeking, the mountains are calling!

[Explore the full list of Rocky Mountain Adaptive adventures here](#)



"Not-a-Wheelchair"



Trailrider



Handcycle



Adaptive Kayak

We will be co-hosting a [SCI Wellness Retreat from Sept 29-Oct 1 with RMA](#), the cost will be \$150-\$200 and will include all activities, transportation from Edmonton, accommodation and food! There are limited spaces available, email kendra.erhardt@sci-ab.ca to reserve your spot!

Community Advocacy | Edmonton Civida Barrier Free Housing Update

Civida is making the shift to becoming more client centred by making changes to their application process. They have adjusted their points system to prioritize vulnerable and at-risk populations, including physical disabilities and those at risk to health and safety.

Firstly, there is a new mixed-income building in Edmonton called Lendrum which has 120 units (houses and apartments) becoming available for move in August 1st (west half of the building) and November 1 (east half of building). Of those units 12% are adapted. They currently have 4 two bed barrier free units and 4 one bed barrier free units.

Also, a reminder that the Rental Assistance Benefit is increasing, and more individuals are becoming eligible as the guidelines shift. The benefit can be used on your current rentals, whether they are Civida owned properties or not. This must be reapplied for every year- something to note and mark in calendars.

Although, Civida doesn't have as many adapted units as we have clients in need of housing; if you find an adapted rental it may qualify to be subsidized! There are clients currently in the process of moving into a non-Civida owned adapted rental, and Civida is working with us to provide a supplement to cover the rent. Good to know this is an option out there for those looking for accessible housing!

While there is still a unit scarcity, it is definitely a step in the right direction. We will continue working with Civida to potentially create bylaws that designate adapted units are not to be filled by individuals without mobility needs.

For more information about Civida, [check out their website.](#)

Julia Burton | Client Services Coordinator

Did You Know? | Keeping Cool in the Heat

Spinal cord injuries may result in a diminished, or lack of perspiration below level of injury. In addition, lack of sensation can result in the body overheating and not realizing until it is too late. It can be easy to quickly overheat, which may start with feeling faint, or dizzy, sweating excessively, feeling nauseous, increased spasms, red hot skin, increased heart-rate or other feelings of discomfort. This may lead to spikes in blood pressure, a pounding headache, blurred vision, or unconsciousness, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke.

Everyone has their own preferred method of cooling down. Whether it be using a clip-on fan, misting fan, pump mister, folding pocket fan, or even a simple spray bottle from the dollar store, there are a lot of portable options out there! Other more extreme options include ice packs, or full ice vests to bring the core temperature of the body down (just be sure not to place directly on exposed skin). Cooling towels are also a great lightweight portable item to keep on hand and can be activated by adding water.

For those struggling with the heat in the evening and finding it harder to get a good night's sleep, a portable A/C unit for your bedroom, or cooling sheets and/or pillows for your bed can make a huge difference!

When outdoors, creating your own shade can help from overheating as well. Whether this means using an umbrella, or hat to block out the rays, or just finding a shady spot to park your chair. Spray parks are generally accessible, and can be a fun way to cool down, assuming you don't mind getting your wheelchair a little bit wet. There is also a new accessible water-park in [Red Deer at the G.H. Dawe Community Centre.](#)

When in doubt head somewhere to enjoy air conditioning. Malls are generally a good bet for accessibility, parking, and activities/window shopping to keep you occupied. Always remember to stay hydrated (and remember electrolytes to replenish minerals on hot days as well!). And it's always a good excuse to have a cold beverage or ice cream to help cool the body as well!

Research Studies Available to Participate In

[Details can be found on the research study section of the SCI-AB website](#)

Client Spotlights | Dave Sagal

Huge shoutout to Dave Sagal from Rocky Mountain Adaptive for taking the time to showcase the range of adaptive equipment available to use, as well as the program outreach and expansion. It was awesome to be able to see all the equipment hands on and learn about the commitment to creating top notch adaptive experiences for everyone!



See you at the BBQs!

- Kendra + Terry

