



The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

May 9, 2022

Just Roll With It! – Lawn Bowls, A Sport for Everyone

Interested in learning a new sport? Contact: office@bowlsalberta.com



What is lawn bowling?

Lawn bowling is an excellent way to spend a pleasant afternoon outside getting some gentle exercise. The sport is easy to learn but also provides lots of challenges to keep you interested. It is played with a bowl, ovoid in shape, on a flat surface planted with short-cut grass. The object is to get your bowl closest to a small white ball, called a jack, at the other end of a rink. The bowl has slightly more weight on one side which causes it to roll in a curved path as it goes down the rink. The ability to judge where your bowl will end up is the challenge! For an overview on how to play, check this link <https://bowlsalberta.com/en/programs-resources/para-bowls/> It's our favourite intro-bowling video from Australia.

Our Commitment to Inclusivity

Lawn Bowls has claimed for years that it is a sport for all. That is true in so far as it is open to young and old alike. It is a sport for life. Historically, Bowls Alberta has partnered with ASRAB, the Association for Blind Bowlers. These bowlers have gone as far as participating in the Commonwealth Games! But... we have realized that our sport is not inclusive enough. Our national organization, Bowls Canada, instigated a pilot project last year called "Just Roll With It". The goal was to develop programming and resources that could be implemented by any lawn bowls club wishing to offer bowlers with disabilities the opportunity to play in a safe and welcoming environment. Edmonton was fortunate to be part of that project. We learned a lot last summer thanks to the participation of Edmontonians with disabilities, both ambulatory and cognitive, who helped us experience and learn how we can welcome people with disabilities to our clubs. To end our sessions, we held a small tournament that included Para



athletes from Edmonton and Calgary. And our goal is to offer more opportunities in 2022!

Benefits

We lawn bowlers know the overall health and wellbeing benefits we receive from the sport we love. It is a very social game! Competition can be as friendly or fierce as you want. Is there anything better than being outside on a beautiful day and getting some gentle exercise? It's an easy sport to get started in and all equipment and is provided as well as coaching on how to play the game.



The Future

This summer we are planning to offer the para bowls program again. We would like to welcome participants from the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities community. If you live in Calgary, Medicine Hat, or Edmonton, we can put you in touch with clubs that are implementing the Just Roll With It program. Or you can contact our provincial office at office@bowlsalberta.com or check out our National Associations page of information, Bowls Canada Para Bowls page. <https://bowlsalberta.com/en/programs-resources/para-bowls/>

Bowls Canada Boulingrin will be hosting the first ever Canadian Para Bowls Championships early in September 2022. A squad of para bowlers will be identified at that event to work towards representing Canada at the World Bowls Championships scheduled to be held in 2023 in Australia. It's a great time to try lawn bowling and we would be excited to introduce you to our sport!

May is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

<https://www.foundcare.com/Insights/may-is-cf-awareness-month.html>

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a genetic disorder that affects the lungs and digestive system, causing cells that produce mucus, sweat and digestive juices to thicken and block passageways. CF affects nearly 35,000 people in the US and is characterized by several symptoms including cough, repeated lung infections, inability to gain weight



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and fatty stools. People with CF are also more likely to develop other health conditions including diabetes, liver disease, arthritis, reflux, hypersplenism and osteoporosis.

While there is currently no cure for CF, early diagnosis and effective treatments can help patients manage symptoms, improve functionality, and treat other health conditions that may develop. At Foundation Care, we recognize Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month in May as part of our ongoing effort to raise CF awareness.

Take care of yourself – you are in charge!
<https://www.cysticfibrosis.ca/about-cf/living-with-cystic-fibrosis/overall-health-and-wellness>

To start, there are many routines and daily activities that are very important factors in maintaining health and wellness such as:

- Attending your CF clinic approximately three to four times a year
- Taking all of your prescribed medication
- Ensuring your diet contains the elements to keep you healthy – a CF diet is high-calorie and high-fat. The Dietician at your CF clinic will help you work out a plan.
- Routinely completing your physiotherapy exercises and activities

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is an inherited disorder that causes severe damage to the lungs, digestive system and other organs in the body. Cystic fibrosis affects the cells that produce mucus, sweat and digestive juices.

May is cystic fibrosis (CF) awareness month!

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical activity helps everyone feel better. Your health-care team will recommend exercise and activities that suit you. Keep in mind that staying hydrated during vigorous exercise is important for everyone, but is even more important for people with cystic fibrosis. Hydration should include sports drinks, in addition to plain water.

Mental Health Awareness Month

May is a time to raise awareness of those living with mental or behavioral health issues and to help reduce the stigma so many experience.

This Mental Health Week is all about empathy.
<https://www.mentalhealthweek.ca/this-mental-health-week-is-all-about-empathy-may-2-8-2022/>

“I can relate.”

It’s a familiar expression and one you’ve likely used countless times throughout the pandemic. When someone has been sick or stressed, felt lonely or lost their job. You say it without having to think: “I get it. I’ve been there. I can relate.”

But did you know that, hiding in these very simple sentences, is a sophisticated skill you may not even realize you have? Psychologists and researchers call it empathy. And it’s not just for therapists or counsellors. Empathy is the ability to share someone



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else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in their situation. It's a simple concept, but it may be the very thing we humans need most.

As human beings, we share an ability to imagine what life is like for someone else. To see the world as others see it. To look through someone else's eyes. To climb inside and walk around in their skin.

When someone is struggling, they don't always need someone to swoop in and fix things for them. First, they need someone to understand where they're coming from.

During his time as president, Barack Obama suggested the biggest deficit in the world was an empathy deficit. He defined it as the ability to see the world through the eyes of those who are different from us.

But maybe that's shifted these past two years, as our world has faced a common problem: we've lived together through a long and grueling pandemic. The virus came for all of us. No exception. And while it left its mark on some more than others, it is clearer now that we're as much the same as we are different. Empathy might, in fact, be the silver lining to all of this: whatever our circumstances, it's clear that we all need to feel seen and heard.

If empathy doesn't come easily to you, the good news is that it can be learned and practiced. Empathy can help us know ourselves and our own feelings. It can help us lead, help us communicate and help us support and connect with others. At home. At work and at school.

For Mental Health Week this year – May 2-8, 2022 – #GetReal about

how to help. We may be different, but that doesn't make us rivals. Let's stop polarizing and start empathizing. Be there for each other when times are hard and be ready to listen. You don't have to agree to understand, and you don't have to fix it to help.

#GetReal. Before you weigh in, tune in.

VAD AGM Announcement

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities will be hosting it's Annual General Meeting on June 3, 2022 at 7pm.

Members may attend and vote on motions or send a proxy in their place according to VAD bylaws.

If you have not signed up to be a member of VAD but would like to participate, please fill out a membership form and send your payment for the year. Member-

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JUNE 03 2022

7 pm- 8:30 pm

RSVP
780-488-9099 or
Email:
vad@vadsociety.ca

REGISTER HERE:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8423805274>

SAVE THE DATE

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities - AGM



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ship forms are available on our website at: <https://vadsociety.ca/social-action/adf/become-a-member>. Your membership fees help offset the costs of our advocacy services, assessments, and a movement to full inclusion with individuals in the province of Alberta.

VAD's main services provide assistance to individuals requiring one to one support with filling out government and other application forms, hosting informational disability awareness presentations to schools and businesses, and providing accessibility coordination across the province. We conduct research into disability issues so we can speak provincially with a united and unified voice to improve the quality of life through educational, legislative, and social policy changes.

This past year VAD has had over 825 in office visits, over 1200 telephone calls and emails requesting support and referral assistance. We hosted over 1250 individuals in business and school presentations about disability awareness.

We are looking for board members!

In order to represent the entirety of the province, we are filling positions for the 2022-2024 time period with an option to renew for two more terms. If you have a passion for advocacy and want to learn how to make an impact in your community, please contact the office with any questions that you may have or send us your letter of interest and resume so that the nominating committee can arrange for an interview. This year we are focusing on the south-east and southwest of the province; however, should there be no interested candidates in those regions, we will open up the competition to anyone who applies.

Thank you for considering our organization for your volunteer hours. This is an excellent opportunity to liaise with others from the province in our effort to becoming a Barrier Free Alberta for everyone.

780-488-9088
vad@vadsociety.ca



We would like to express our sincerest gratitude for your year long support of

VOICE OF ALBERTANS WITH DISABILITIES

Celebrating National Volunteer Appreciation Week

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