Recreation and Parks Programming for Newcomers

An AUMA ‘Good Municipal Practices in Immigration’ Webinar
Background of Brooks

- Population of approx. 14,000 people
- Over 87 different spoken languages
- Come to Canada as a refugee, temporary foreign worker or immigrant
- Settled in Brooks due to the high availability of jobs and the welcoming, inclusive nature
Our commitment

- In 2010, Brooks became one of the first municipalities to adopt and approve a “Welcoming and Inclusive Community Plan”
- In 2011, Brooks formed a “Welcoming and Inclusive Communities” committee and hired an Inclusion Coordinator on contract
- In 2012, council supported the decision for the Inclusion Coordinator to become a permanent position
Recreation

• Why is it a natural fit?

• Why did we start?

• Why are we so committed?
Initiatives: successes and failures

- Demo Days
- Women only swims
- Dance Fitness
- PIBA
- Hardship Program
- Newcomer orientation
- ChooseWell
- Jumpstart
- Canada Day
What’s Next?

• Return of demo days
• Cultural celebrations
• Constantly growing
Learning a Language, Learning the Land:

Newcomers, Parks, Language Learning and a Sense of Belonging
Learning Language, Learning Land

- Project was a joint effort between Alberta Parks, City of Edmonton Parks, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers and funded by ECALA – Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association.
- Purpose of project was a pilot educational process created for immigrant newcomers combining language literacy and environmental literacy in outdoor park setting.
Project Goals

1. Integrate language literacy with environmental literacy in outdoor setting
2. Remove barriers to park access, ensure safe engagement and foster future park stewardship
3. Generate best practices for parks educators
4. Nurture understanding of and appreciation for Canadian ecosystems among newcomers
5. Assist newcomers in building a sense of competence and sense of belonging in Alberta
Three Part Program

- In the classroom - completion of Camping Unit 2 – 3 weeks before camping experience.
- A one-day Introduction to “nearby nature” at Rainbow Valley Campground in city.
- Camping at Miquelon Lake Provincial Park outside city.
Part 1: ESL Camping Unit
Part 2: Rainbow Valley Campground
Part 3: Camping at Miquelon
Participants
Research Team

- Elizabeth Lange PhD (Department of Adult Education, St. Francis Xavier University)
- Peter Vogels PhD (Social Work Program, Grant MacEwan University)
- Zenobia Jamal M.Ed (Zenev Educational Consultants)
General Findings

- Unique and Successful Program
- Program Enhances Access
- Intergenerational Learning
General Findings

- Culturally Constructed Preferences
- Enhanced Literacy
- Transformative Learning for Parks Educators
General Findings

- Healing experience for some newcomers
- Integration through conversation learning and other forms of informal learning
- Becoming friends and allies
ACE “Diversity Friendly” Communities
The **Active, Creative, Engaged Communities (ACE)** initiative, spearheaded by Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) was initiated as a community development project designed to:

- enhance quality of life in rural Alberta
- by strengthening community leadership, collaboration, and innovation
- through recreation, parks, arts, culture, and heritage.
ACE Communities Top 10

1. Citizen engagement
2. Collective responsibility for community building
3. Integrated delivery systems
4. Diversity
5. Creativity
6. Sustainability
7. Recreation, parks, arts, culture and heritage are seen as important to quality of life
8. Community brand/personality
9. Strong communication
10. Status quo is not okay
The initiative has resulted in a clearer understanding of a “process” for community change that can be applied to other issues and challenges.

For this particular project, ACE Communities focused on supporting communities wanting to become more diversity friendly.
The goal of the *Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund* is "full participation of all Albertans."

In the context of the fund, "full civic participation" means that all Albertans have the opportunity to be involved in, and benefit from, all aspects of society...
Without encountering discrimination because of:

- their race,
- religious beliefs,
- colour,
- gender,
- disability,
- age,
- ancestry,
- sexual orientation,
- or the other characteristics protected in the Alberta Human Rights Act.
Specifically, this means that Albertans have the opportunity to participate in the social, cultural, political, and economic life of the province without discrimination.

The goal of the ACE Communities Diversity Friendly Communities (DFC) project is to increase community capacity, using recreation, parks, arts, culture, and heritage as a catalyst:

- to foster equality,
- reduce discrimination and racism, and
- remove organizational barriers that exclude some Albertans.
Over 25 communities applied (in May 2011) and the four rural Alberta communities chosen to be the ACE “Diversity Friendly” Communities (DFC) were:

**Carstairs, Grande Cache, Jasper, and Rocky Mountain House**
Three kinds of support, influenced by a community's identified needs, are being provided over a **two year period**:

1) Seed Funding of $10,000

1) In-kind support estimated at $45,000 in value. *Including: teleconferences, retreats, training opportunities, and the support of a community development coach.*

3) A community of practise.
Three Paths on the Journey to Becoming an ACE Community
Outcomes

- Increased citizen participation in the social, cultural, political, and economic life of a community without discrimination

- Greater awareness of a community’s potential as a diversity friendly community

- Enhanced community leadership capacity and sustainability

- Shared decision making and collective action

- Enhanced quality of life for all!
Final Bits

Susa Creek

If you have any further questions contact Janet Naclia, Creative Cultural Liaison at:

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t: 403-237-9722
Welcome to Trochu
Trochu is an ACE Community

Trochu has been accepted as one of ten Alberta communities to be designated an ACE Community by the Alberta Parks and Recreation Association.

ACE stands for Active, Creative, Engaged and the program is supported by the Rural Alberta’s Development Fund, EnCana, and Canwest. Its purpose is to enhance quality of life in rural Alberta by strengthening community leadership, collaboration, and innovation through recreation, parks, arts, culture and heritage. Over a two-year period, Trochu will receive $10,000 in seed funding for yet-to-be determined projects and in-kind support valued at $45,000 for training and in-service activities.

A small group including Elizabeth Hoppins, Christine Vokins, Bill Cunningham, and Val Warnock assisted by Town Office staff Sharon Wesgate and Blaine Peterson, filled out and submitted an application that was supported by 14 letters from various Trochu groups. The groups included: Trochu Town Council, Big Country Primary Care Network, Trochu Municipal Library, Pontmain School, Trochu Lions Club, Trochu Valley Historical Society, Trochu Chamber of Commerce, Alberta Health Services, Trochu and District Ministerial, Trochu Valley School, Neighbourhood Place, Communities In Bloom, Friends of TroVal and Sunterra Meats.

Word of their successful application was received on June 16. Trochu joins neighbouring towns like Olds, Didsbury and Irricana which participated in the two previous years. You may have seen the commercials on TV. The program starts with a retreat for local leaders in September.

Trochu ACE committee consists of
(l-r): Bill Cunningham, Elizabeth Hoppins, Chris Vokins, Val Warnock
Please join us:

- Celebrate what makes Trochu special as we receive our provincial ACE Award
- Listen to award winning philanthropist and community leader Ian Hill
- Learn about the Alberta Active Creative Engaged Communities (ACE) and what it means to Trochu

**Celebrate, Imagine, Create ....Trochu**

**December 1, 2009**

**Tues. Dec. 1, 2009**

Trochu & District Community Centre
7:00 p.m.

Refreshments and dessert will be served!

RSVP to Val Warnock
by November 26, 2009
(403)442-2839
Thanks For Allowing Us To Be A Part Of The CURE
Happy Trails