



Recreation for Life

News Release

Wednesday, June 01, 2005

Celebrate an Investment in a Healthy Future!

June Is Recreation & Parks Month In Alberta

Edmonton, AB - Recreation and Parks Month draws public attention to the benefits quality public, voluntary and private recreation and parks services have on the health of individual Albertans, their communities and our province. The official month follows the proclamation of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Benefits Charter in 2001 (see attached).

Recreation and parks opportunities are an integral part of the health and quality of life for Albertans, and a key component of the "Alberta Advantage". June as Recreation and Parks Month provides a foundation from which to launch events and activities to increase Albertans' awareness of the benefits of participation in recreational activities. Increasing citizen participation in recreation and leisure activities is one of the best ways that health care costs can be reduced.

"We continue to see significant increases in obesity rates, most alarmingly in children and youth, which is resulting in increased health care costs and decreased quality of life. This issue is costing us now and in the future," says Kay Kenny, President of ARPA. "As a key part of the solution, Albertans of all ages need to get active and stay active".

Participation in recreational activities, which encompass play, fitness, sports and other leisure activities, such as gardening, walking, biking, arts and culture assists individuals to develop and maintain social, emotional and physical well-being.

In June ARPA is featuring a free events calendar on the ARPA website (www.arpaonline.ca). This calendar lists a variety of events being held throughout the province over the duration of the month. The special attribute of this calendar is that municipalities and agencies across the province can add their events to the calendar and the calendar can be linked to other web sites free of charge to increase the accessibility to other users.

To add to the spirit of June, ARPA is hosting a "Choose the June Bug Contest". By visiting the ARPA website anyone can vote for their favorite bug. The contest closes June 29 and the winning bug from the two choices will become the official mascot for future 'June is Recreation and Parks Month' initiatives.

The ARPA is a provincial, not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to improving the health, quality of life and well being of Albertans through recreation, sport, arts, culture and parks. ARPA members include community and public recreation agencies along with corporate recreation sector representatives, individual professionals, educators, recreation volunteers and students. The Association has been providing quality recreation and parks leadership in Alberta since 1951.

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Backgrounder



**Live it
everyday!**
June is Recreation & Parks Month

**ARPA
PROVINCIAL RECREATION AND PARKS**

BENEFITS CHARTER

WHEREAS, in Alberta, we are fortunate to have a variety of recreation and parks systems providing countless recreational opportunities for residents and visitors from around the world; and

WHEREAS, recreation enhances quality of life, balanced living and lifelong learning; helps people live happier and longer; develops skills and positive self image in children and youth; develops creativity; and builds healthy bodies and positive lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, recreation participation builds family unity and social capital; strengthens volunteer and community development; enhances social interaction; creates community pride and vitality; and promotes sensitivity and understanding to cultural diversity; and

WHEREAS, recreation, therapeutic recreation and leisure education are essential to the rehabilitation of individuals who have become ill or disabled, or disadvantaged, or who have demonstrated antisocial behavior; and

WHEREAS, the benefits provided by recreation and parks programs and service reduce healthcare and social service costs; serve to boost the economy, economic renewal and sustainability; enhance property values; attract new business; increase tourism; and curb employee absenteeism; and

WHEREAS, our parks, open space and trails ensure ecological beauty; provide space to enjoy nature; help maintain clean air and water; and preserve plant and animal wildlife; and

WHEREAS, all levels of government, the voluntary sector and private enterprise throughout the Province participate in the planning, development and operation of recreation and parks programs, services and facilities;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association does hereby proclaim that June, which witnesses the greening of Alberta and serves as a significant gateway to family activities, has been designated as Recreation and Parks Month which will annually recognize and celebrate the benefits derived year round from quality public and private recreation and parks resources at the local, regional and provincial levels and generally contributes to the "Alberta Advantage".