

Affordable Housing Task Force Prepares to Make Recommendations

During the Alberta conservative party leadership campaign last fall, ACCD met with Ed Stelmach to talk about disability issues. At that time he told us that more affordable housing options, including adapted housing, must be created for people with disabilities who live in the community on fixed incomes. A significant number of people with disabilities are spending a large percentage (up to 60% or greater) on housing. This is often in addition to other increased costs associated with having a disability.

ACCD president, Margot Brunner-Campbell, noted just how important housing issues are for people with disabilities. She said, "Lack of affordable accessible housing for people with disabilities in these economic times is pushing people with disabilities further and further into poverty as rental rates continue to rise." Now, as the province's premier, Ed Stelmach has taken the first steps in fulfilling his commitment to low income and homeless Albertans.

On Feb. 1, a provincial government press release announced the formation of the Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force, a committee charged with finding "innovative and practical ways to make affordable housing more accessible and available to Albertans." Throughout February, the task force traveled to nine communities across the province, seeking input and feedback regarding "solutions for homelessness and affordable housing."

ACCD took part in task force meetings in Edmonton and other members of ACCD attended meetings in other locations in the province. Executive director, Bev Matthiessen, commented on the process: "Although we were given very

little time to prepare for the presentation, we were able to bring forward our perspective on how critical the situation is for many people with disabilities who face challenges of finding housing. Too often individuals with disabilities live in inaccessible, unsafe, and inappropriate housing because they do not have any other options."

ACCD looks forward to reading the task force report and its recommendations. Premier Stelmach has asked the committee to submit its report by March 19, 2007. If you'd like to find out more about the task force, its membership, or its mandate, visit the Municipal Affairs and Housing website at www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca.

Hockey - the BEST GAME!

As Stompin' Tom Connors says, hockey is "the best game you can name." And he'd get no argument from the close to 700 fans who came out to ACCD's annual All Star Hockey Fun-Raiser on February 19.

The afternoon started with player introductions and two magnificent renditions of O Canada sung by Danielle Lowe and Akina Shirt (in Cree). Then emcee Mark Sholtz took over and led everyone through an afternoon of fun.

Edmonton Eskimo's J.R. Larose and Edmonton Oilers representative Bryan Ryder of the Copper Jackets dropped the ceremonial puck—and then the on-ice action began. There were many thrilling moments as the Oilers' alumni and the Eskimos alumni and friends strove to dominate the action. The Edmonton Eskimos alumni were helped by players from the University of Alberta Pandas—five time winners of the CIAU women's hockey

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championship. (Some might even say the teams were helped, at various points, by the referees)

The game was all but sewn up by the Oilers when the Eskimos broke through with a “field goal” to tie the game with only one second left. Eventually the Oilers’ alumni won in a shootout. Don Charnaw, Resource Development Coordinator at ACCD, noted that, “The big winner, of course, is ACCD who, through this fundraiser, now has the means to continue to offer programs that promote accessibility for persons with disabilities throughout Alberta.”



game itself. Door prizes, a kids’ puck pull, the Al Shamal Shriners’ Clown Unit, and plenty of excellent silent auction items ensured that everyone had lots to do between periods and before the game. This year’s auction items—especially the ride on the police helicopter and

signed hockey sticks—had the crowd buzzing with anticipation!

ACCD would like to thank the players, volunteers, and attendees for supporting this annual fund-raising endeavour. Through your commitment, we’re able to offer programs that help make Alberta a more

accessible and equitable place to live for citizens with disabilities. Thank you!

Off-ice activity was just as exciting as the

ACCD Annual General Meeting

You are invited to
ACCD’s Annual General Meeting
Date May 25, 2007
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Providence Renewal Centre,
Edmonton

If you have questions about the AGM, please contact Charleen at 488-9088 (in Edmonton) or toll free at 1-800-387-2514. Or you can email her at charleen@accd.net.

If you are looking for a rewarding and educational volunteer experience and want to contribute to the disability community, consider becoming an ACCD board member. We are looking for board members to represent Calgary, southern Alberta, and northern Alberta. For details, contact Charleen at 488-9088 (in Edmonton) or 1-800-387-2514 (outside of Edmonton).



Together, We Hold The Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity