



Accessible Holiday Destination: William Watson Lodge

This summer, many Albertans will travel to holiday destinations across the province, Albertans with disabilities included. But finding accessible holiday accommodations is a persistent challenge, especially if one hopes to spend time in a wilderness setting. Fortunately, Alberta has an affordable solution.

On the east side of Lower Lake, in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, stands the William Watson Lodge, one of Alberta's most accessible holiday destinations. Built and maintained by the Alberta Government, the William Watson Lodge opened its doors in September of 1981, thanks to the efforts of former Premier Peter Lougheed and his wife, Jeanne. Their vision was to create a facility where Albertans with disabilities could stay and enjoy the outdoors, for a reasonable price.

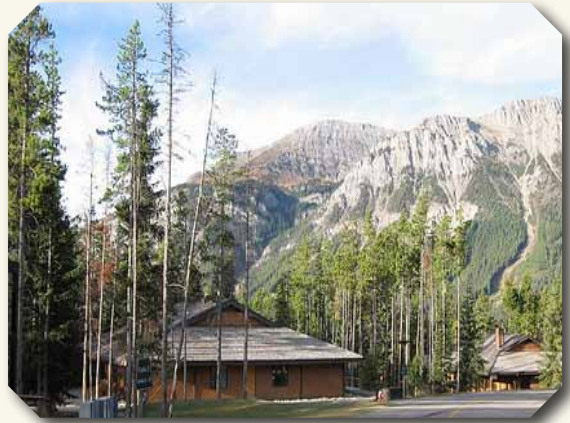
Open year round, the lodge has 22 fully accessible units, to which clients bring their own food and bedding. There are also 13 fully serviced RV sites (open from the May long weekend until Thanksgiving), a playground, picnic sites, and 20 kilometres of wheelchair-accessible trails that wind through gorgeous pine forest with mountain views. The main lodge and the first four cabins were opened in 1981; more cabins were built in 1985 and opened to guests in 1986.

Cabin reservations are based on a system that gives priority to people whose disabilities require a high degree of accessible accommodations, including those who are profoundly deaf, legally blind, or cognitively disabled. Second priority is given to people who are semi-mobile or medically fragile. And third priority is given to seniors. The lodge does fill up quickly, so people are asked to book well in advance of their intended stay.

The facility is an on-going memorial to William (Bill) Watson (1904 – 1965) who devoted his adult

years to changing the social climate for people with disabilities. Although his arms were paralyzed at birth, Watson's mother encouraged him to be independent, and he learned to swim, skate, ski, and write using his mouth. This independence inspired Watson to continually challenge negative attitudes about people with disabilities. In 1928, Watson graduated from the University of Alberta with a law degree but was told he could not articulate because of his disability. Instead, he decided to travel, conduct research, and lecture to change attitudes. Even after he was totally paralyzed 16 years prior to his death, Watson never gave up his fight to promote better understanding and opportunities for people with disabilities.

For more information on William Watson Lodge visit http://tpr.alberta.ca/parks/kananaskis/facilities_wwlodge.asp, or phone 403-591-7372.



Education for Life Bursary: Apply Now!

June 30, 2011, is the application deadline for ACCD's 2011-2012 Education for Life Bursary. Individuals with disabilities seeking to continue their education as post-secondary students are eligible to receive bursaries ranging from \$300 to \$800. Preference is given to students entering their first year. Details and an application form can be found on our web site at www.accd.net, or you can contact the ACCD office at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.

Update: Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta

The report from our year-long research project, *Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta*, has been released, and ACCD is now focused on sharing the results. We have been busy meeting with elected officials and other decision makers to discuss our findings and to determine ways in which health and medical services can be made more accessible to Albertan's with disabilities. The full report is now available online at www.accd.net.



The ACCD Annual General Meeting

When: May 27, 2011, at 7:00 pm
 Where: Holiday Inn Express, Calgary Trail and 23 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

Please join us to find out more about ACCD's projects and services. If you have any questions about the Annual General Meeting, contact Trudy in Edmonton at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.

It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

ACCD programs and activities are supported by our fundraising efforts, by private and corporate donations, by core and project funding dollars, and, most importantly, by members like you.

If you haven't renewed your membership, please take the time to fill out our membership renewal form. We thank you for your continued support!

Research Update

ACCD is set to move forward with our newest research project, *Inclusive Education Supports and Programs for Our Children with Disabilities*. Our research proposes to determine gaps in access to educational programs and supports, and how these gaps affect children with disabilities. This research project was made possible by a grant from Telus' Edmonton community board, which works to provide funding for initiatives that improve community life in the city. More of the project's details are coming soon!



Call for Nominations for ACCD's Board of Directors!

Do you have a disability and would like to make a difference in your community? We are currently looking for board members from northern Alberta and Calgary and area to represent their regions on our board of directors.

- Are you 18 years of age or older and can commit to a 2-year term?
- Do you have ready access to email and are available for face-to-face board meetings three times a year?
- Are you familiar with the activities of non-profit organizations, including projects, programs, and resource development?

Why not put your name forward as a potential board member to serve on the board of directors of the Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities, a consumer-directed, grassroots organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of Albertans with disabilities?

Please call the ACCD office at 1-800-387-2514 or e-mail us at accd@accd.net



Together. We Hold The Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity