



Alberta Sports and Recreation
Association for the Blind

Proud Past ... Proud Future

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 2014 AGM

2013 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Mission Statement

The Alberta Sports and Recreation Association for the Blind (ASRAB) supports Albertans who are blind or visually impaired to live physically active lives and participate in competitive sports programs. We do this by:

- providing development and competitive sport programs, and
- supporting and encouraging the blind or visually impaired to actively participate in a broad spectrum of sport and recreation programs.

ASRAB identified 5 strategic priorities which form the foundation of the Association's planning and development, to meet the mission of the Association.

1. EDUCATION / AWARENESS

Goal Statement: To increase ASRAB's profile across the province as the one provincial sport and recreation association that is focused on providing quality sport and physical activity opportunities for the blind and visually impaired.

- Sight Night
 - ASRAB held promotional **sight night** events: "a fun run after dark - vision optional", in Calgary and Edmonton.
 - The fourth **sight night** Calgary fun run was held November 16, 2013. There were 850 registrants, and over 110 volunteers supporting the event planning and implementation.
 - Many thanks are extended to the Presenting Sponsor of the event – Flaman Fitness; as well as the Elite Sponsors: Accessible Media Incorporated, PetroTech Printing Ltd., BURSCO Rock Products, Papa John's Pizza, The Running Room, Black Diamond Equipment and The Flaman Foundation. Thanks are also extended to the Chair of the event, Katie Kaminiski and her Steering Committee.
 - the second **sight night** Edmonton fun run was held September 28, 2013. There were 350 registrants and an enthusiastic crowd of volunteers.
 - Many thanks are extended to the Presenting Sponsor of the event – Flaman Fitness; as well as the Elite Sponsors: Accessible Media Incorporated, BURSCO Rock Products, The Running Room, Black Diamond Equipment, The Metro News, Atco Gas, Corus Entertainment, Edmonton Oilers, Global Edmonton and The Flaman Foundation. Thanks are also extended to the Chair of this event, Dean Kozak and his Steering Committee.

- Communication
 - ASRAB utilizes 'Constant Contact', to allow the Association to communicate to the Members easily through email notices. Approximately 60 notices were sent to distribution lists throughout the Province. The notices alert Members and Participants of upcoming sport and recreational activities, as well as notifying of important sport and recreational items of interest.
- Presentations to outside agencies
 - Overall, there were ~1280 participants in goalball demonstrations (and other sports), comprising 10 school demonstrations and 1 sport day demonstration; representing an increase of 2.5 times from 2013 numbers. This was largely achieved through enhanced promotion to the Calgary Vision Educators.
 - ASRAB partnered with Courage Canada (Blind Hockey and Learn to Skate) for programs to school children in Calgary, Red Deer and Edmonton; in March and November.
 - ASRAB presented to a Parent Night function in Calgary November 14.
 - ASRAB presented a series of seminars on Physical Literacy in Calgary, Red Deer and Edmonton; to Vision Strategists, Physical Educators and parents and caregivers November 20-22.

2. OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

Goal Statement: Through a strong organizational infrastructure ASRAB has the resources and capacity to promote the participation of blind or visually impaired to live healthy active lifestyle. The Association's capacity supports participation in both competitive and recreational sports programs and physical activity programs.

- Governance
 - The AGM was held Sunday April 14, 2013; at the Calgary CNIB.
 - There were 12 Board Meetings held.
 - A Planning Meeting was held November 30, engaging the services of the facilitator that has worked with ASRAB since the initiation of Strategic Review (fall 2010). The discussion built on the previous sessions including Strategic Planning Meeting (in fall 2010) and Governance Review (in June 2012); with the goal to complete the final step to operationalize the governance structure (approved in April) and plan to meet our strategic goals. A key outcome of the session was to develop a committee structure for ASRAB, which will be implemented in the very near future.
- Office / Staff:
 - ASRAB continues to have its head office in Calgary, and acquired an Edmonton office as of December 2012.
 - The ASRAB office is staffed by several part-time positions: Executive Director (28 hours / week), Financial Administrator (~ 10 hours / week); Program Coordinator(s) (~ 10 hour / week) – with staff in both Calgary and Edmonton. New additions are project staff in regard to **sight night** in both Calgary and Edmonton.

3. COMPETITIVE SPORT STRATEGY

Goal Statement: A strong and comprehensive provincial sport development strategy is in place that has resulted in increased level of participation for all ages and all levels of participation across the province. The programs and services will continue to expand as the need and priorities are identified. Goalball is ASRAB's signature program and has the financial support in place to ensure the athletes can compete at the local, provincial and national level.

- Goalball
 - Introductory and competitive programming was continued for Children (ages ~ 5-9) and Youth (ages ~ 10-14), in Calgary.
 - Provincial practices were held over the season (Jan–May and Oct–Dec) in Calgary, for men and women.
 - An ongoing recreational program was continued in Edmonton in Jan-Apr and Oct to Dec. The program serviced both adults and children / youth. New goalball goals were purchased for Edmonton, to assist in the training and development of Edmonton participants; with thanks to CPC for support.
 - Through a partnership with Alberta Sport Development Centres Calgary - fitness programming was held at the U of C involving 4 senior goalball athletes under the supervision of a trainer. Additionally, ASRAB worked with ASDC Calgary to initiate training for goalball youth. ASRAB also engaged ASDC Capital (4 Edmonton area athletes) and ASDC NW (1 Grande Prairie athlete).
 - ASRAB Senior Teams attended tournaments in Montreal and Detroit to enhance competitive play.
 - Canadian Blind Sports Junior Goalball Championships – ASRAB teamed up with SK women and BC men to create 'West' teams for competition. The women won gold and the men won bronze.
 - Aron Ghebreyohannes was awarded a Sport Canada AAP development card through CBSA.
 - 2013 Canadian Blind Sports Goalball Championships (Halifax) - Alberta women finished 5th, and Alberta men finished 3rd.
 - Coaches were engaged for all Provincial teams and training groups. Many thanks to our volunteer coaches: Senior - Trent Farebrother, Darren Hamilton and Todd Liebig; and Youth / Children - Lorna Snow and Cathie Hossack.
- Lawn Bowls
 - Ongoing training was held in Calgary (6 participants), and Edmonton (2 participants). All bowlers attended 2 Provincial lawn bowls practice sessions culminating in trials.
 - ASRAB sent 5 bowlers and 5 directors to compete at the Blind Bowlers of Canada Nationals in Ontario, to strong results: Heather Hannett - Women's Gold in B2, Vivian Kwan – Women's Gold in B3 and Bob Smith - Men's Gold in B2.
 - Sincere thanks to the volunteer Directors: Sue Acorn, Stuart Barton, Marvin Kwan, Yvonne McIvor, Joe Kilgore and Barb Canning.

4. ACTIVE LIVING SPORT STRATEGY

Goal Statement: A continuum of programs and services will be in place that supports participation and engagement of the blind and visually impaired in a broad range of recreational and physical activity programs in their local community.

- Winter sports: cross country skiing, snow-shoeing, skating, blind hockey (including collaboration with Courage Canada)
- Indoor sports: rock climbing, yoga, gymnastics, hip hop adult dance, bowling, self defense, and kick boxing
- Summer sports: soccer, sailing, dragon boat, tandem cycling, camping trip with activities
- Running and walking programs: **sight night** Flaman Training Program, walking, urban hiking and running (in collaboration with Achilles).
- Communities serviced included: Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton and Grande Prairie.

5. SPONSORSHIP AND FUNDING

Goal Statement: Through a comprehensive planning process ASRAB has a sponsorship development fund.

- **sight night** - While **sight night** was envisioned to meet many mandates of the Association, the creation of an alternative revenue stream has been a primary outcome. The net income of the 2013 Calgary and Edmonton events was ~ \$92,000.
- Engage Interactive - ASRAB continued the agreement with Engage Interactive, with the contract obligations due to conclude in 2014.

I would extend sincere thanks to the Board of Directors for their efforts on behalf of ASRAB: Lorna Snow, Bill Koch, Len Wolstenholme and Shelley Goldbeck; as well as our staff: Linda MacPhail (Executive Director), Evelyn Golby (Program Coordinator – Edmonton), Keely McCabe (Program Coordinator – Calgary), and Doris Wyss (Financial Administrator).

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Wettlaufer,
President