



PROBUS Club of Central Edmonton Newsletter

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June 21 – Dr Bob Steadward

Dr Bob Steadward presented opportunities in sport for people living with disability. He shared a video with us, it can be seen by following this link www.youtube.com/watch?v=locLkk3aYlkhius. He started with a review of the history of organizations that foster sports for living with disabilities. He noted that 15% of the world's population are disabled seriously enough that they cannot participate in activities nondisabled people take for granted. That % has increased from 10% over the last 30 to 40 years. There are many reasons for this increase.

Bob spoke of the disability sports, these are:

1. Deaf sport: It has a separate world body. It was started in 1924.
2. Invictus games: This is a new initiative catering to injured military. Prince Harry was key to starting them. These games also include people who suffer from PTSD.
3. Special Olympics: These games are for people with intellectual disability. It was started by a Canadian.
4. Paralympic Sport: This is for physically disabled. They find their roots in the desire to provide activities to help injured veterans to live longer. It is generally felt to have started after WWII in England. In fact, games first occurred in Winnipeg around 4 to 6 years earlier than in England. These games were effective.

Initially only people with spinal cord injuries took part of the organized world games. Bob became concerned that there was no world body to oversee handicapped sports. Thus started the paralympic organization. He signed an MOU in the year 2000 with the head of the world Olympics which stated that every country that held Olympic games would hold a Paralympic game shortly thereafter.

The games cater to 4 disabilities, these are:

1. Wheelchair
2. Blind
3. Cerebral palsy
4. Amputee

The sports which form part of the winter or summer games are like sports in the main Olympics, with some differences, e.g., amputee skiers have outriggers on their poles, blind competitors have a guide, sled hockey participants ride on a sled with a single blade, etc.

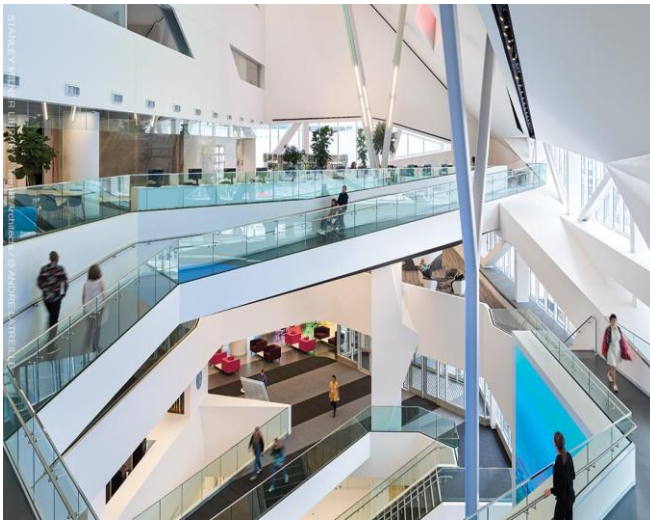
Over 20 sports are held in the summer games. Again, they have allowed unique tools for competitors to use, such as specially designed wheelchairs and metal extensions for amputees missing legs. He also explained that competitors are grouped based on a functional model rather than medical model.

He pointed out that Canada has been a major player in the initiation of Paralympics. Also, we have established a rehab center that did not have the stigma of a center for disabled people. The Steadward center is unique in the world. He has also carried out a research study on first nations disabilities. This has shown that up to 35% of people on reserves are disabled. Bob provided a remarkable presentation. He has a tremendous background which involved considerable service to the disabled community across the world. His extraordinary contribution is evidenced by the numerous honours conferred upon him.

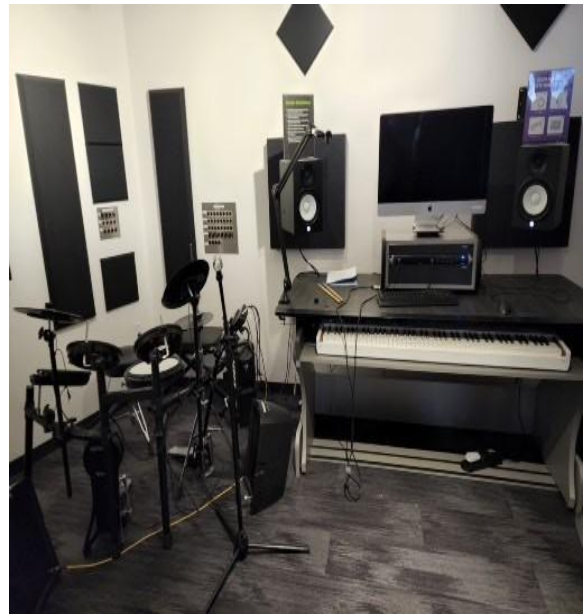
June 28 – Tour

We went on a tour...an actual tour. One more step back to normality. The tour was of the new Edmonton Public Library. I included a few photos from the tour for those who missed it. We were divided into groups each with our own guide. The following photos included are a sample of the many wonders in the new library. See more on www.epl.ca. It is truly a remarkable building. About 2,500 hundred people visit each day.

With respect to visitors, he did say that because of its location in downtown Edmonton, that they have many homeless people visit it. As a result, they have social services on site to provide services that mat be needed. In my view, one would not expect this kind of service at a library, what it does show is that EPL has well designed services based on clientele needs.







The Stanley Milner Library was opened in September 2020 after a complete rebuild. It replaced the previous library which opened in 1967. The first 2 pictures are of the building itself. Then next are of the video display referred to as the Wall. It is 2 stories tall and 40 feet wide. It is unlike any other in North America. When we were there it had an interactive living reef display. Next, we have 2 pictures of the kitchen classroom, that is right they give cooking classes.

The 7th picture is of the PÎYÊSÎW WÂSKÂHIKAN (Thunderbird House). This is dedicated indigenous space built for gatherings. Next is a seed library. In the spring, seed packages are available for free in this converted card cabinet. Finally, we have one of their many 3D printers and next is one of their sound studios. In fact, these are just a small sample of the many features in the library such as maker spaces, gaming areas, etc. and yes books. It was a great return to tours. Thanks Mel and Bob.

Stay Health sleep well and remember spring is actually on its way