

The Ripple

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

South Region
Self-Advocacy Network



A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER CREW

Happy New Year to all of our readers! All of us here at The Ripple would like to thank you for your continued support. For the past 11 years, we have tried our best to share important news that matters to self-advocates and their communities.

2016 was a busy year for us! We had some awesome chances to write about the power of advocacy. We did this by reporting on important changes to government policy including the SIS and Safety Standards; interviewing other self-advocates and community members, and celebrating success as much as possible.

As we get ready for another exciting year of reporting, The newsletter team would like to share its New Year's resolution for you, our readers:

In 2017, the Ripple promises to:

Share as much information about our community as possible, including events and learning opportunities.

Help self-advocates learn important skills to make life better and easier. This could include articles on how to handle money or how to use the bus to get around your community.

Show the community everything that self-advocates are capable of when we speak up and let our voices be heard!

We are honoured to be a voice in the community and a resource for self-advocates! We look forward to giving you articles that will provide help, hope, and happiness! Thanks for reading!



DO YOU HAVE A STORY IDEA FOR THE RIPPLE?

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW IDEAS!

CONTACT THE SAIPA OFFICE AT 403-320-1515!

What should accessible hotels look like in Alberta?



Self-advocates have the opportunity to share their ideas on how to make hotels across the province more accessible! The Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is an organization that works to promote full inclusion.

They are working on study called ***Hotel***

Accommodations for People with Disabilities. It will look at ways to create hotels that are accessible for anyone with any type of disability. They will use this information to:

Make it easier for people with disabilities to use hotels.

Create a plan to show what a barrier-free hotel room should look like.

Educate people who make policies and people who work in the hotel industry.

We thought this would be a great chance to share ideas on how to make hotels more accessible. These are our thoughts:

Parking/check-in:



Make sure there are enough handicapped parking spots close to the hotel entrance.

If guests need to park underground, there should be an elevator that goes from the parking lot to the hotel.

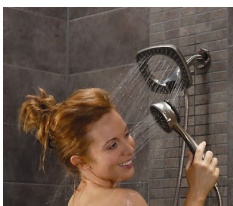


The check in desk should be able to lower for people with mobility issues.

There should be an elevator that goes to all floors of the hotel.

In the room

For people with mobility issues:



The bathroom needs to be large and have lots of space.

The sink and counters should be lowered to the right height.

A roll in shower should be available, along with a handheld shower head.

Accessible Hotels (Continued)

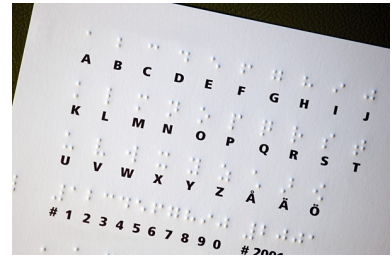
The bathtub or shower should be outfitted with non-slip grip.

For people with visual disabilities:

Braille labels for light switches.

A braille guest services guide and room service menu.

Large print guides for those with low vision.



For people with hearing disabilities:

A visual fire alarm and adaptable phone in case of an emergency.

Hotels should also consider having a supply of accessible equipment guests can sign out if they need it. This could include shower benches, extra wheelchairs and other adaptive equipment.



To share your ideas, use the internet to fill out a survey at this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2TCZFLB>.

S is for speaking up for myself and others.

E is for educating people with disabilities.

L is for learning opportunities.

F is for friendships being built.

A is for advocacy.

D is for dedicated.

V is for voices being heard.

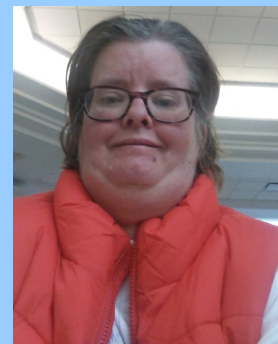
O is for overcoming fear of being rejected.

C is for courage.

A is for advocating for people with disabilities.

T is for teamwork.

E is for educating the community to let them know we want to be treated equally and with respect.



*What Self-Advocacy
Means To Me*

By Linda McDonald



The Ripple's Valentine

Your Valentine's Day date: *By Keelae Blackwood*

Valentine's Day is February 14. Whether you are already in a relationship, or just starting one, here are some tips to keep in mind when going on a date.

Cost: Are you doing something that will cost money? If yes, how much are you willing to spend? Who will pay for the date?



These are all important questions you should talk about with your date. Every couple is different. Sometimes, one date pays for the other, or both people pay for the date by splitting the cost 50/50. If you don't have a lot of money to spend, think about low-cost places like coffee shops. It's a quiet place that's great for getting to know someone!

Transportation: How are you getting to the place where the date will happen? Are you arriving separately or going together?



Getting ready for the date



Use proper hygiene: This includes showering, wearing clean clothes, and brushing your hair and teeth. For women, perfume is OK as long as your date is not allergic. Be sure to ask your date about this before putting any on.

The date:

Be on time.

Listen to the other person when they talk.



Things to do in Lethbridge:

Bowling: You can go to Holiday Bowl for 5-pin, or Galaxy Bowl for 10-pin. Keep in mind that you will need to pay for games and shoe rentals.

Movie: Lethbridge has two theatres: Galaxy Cinemas in Park Place Mall, and the Movie Mill on Mayor Magrath Drive. The Movie Mill is cheaper and has mini-golf in the same building.

Going for a walk: Lethbridge has many beautiful parks to enjoy that are free!

Whatever you decide, we wish you luck and love this Valentine's Day!



How Right 2 Love is helping self-advocates

Right 2 Love is a group that helps people with disabilities learn about love, sex and relationships. We interviewed Melody Scout to hear her thoughts on Right 2 Love.

The Ripple: How long have you been a part of Right 2 Love?

Mel: I have been part of Right 2 Love since it started in February 2016.

The Ripple: Why did you want to join Right 2 Love?

Mel: Everybody has the Right 2 Love and to learn how to be part of someone's life, as a friend and then more.

The Ripple: What are you learning in Right 2 Love?

Mel: How to deal with relationships and overcome obstacles.

The Ripple: Do you enjoy being part of Right 2 Love?

Mel: I enjoy it very much. I like learning and hearing new ideas.

The Ripple: Why is Right 2 Love important for people with disabilities?

Mel: To better understand relationships and how to be safe.



January/February



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The CMARD Conference: Building Inclusive Neighbourhoods



The CMARD Conference, “Building Inclusive Neighbourhoods In A Changing World” happened October 2 to 4, 2016. Self-advocates Nicole MacDonald and Sandy Layton made a special presentation on why self-advocacy is important in our community. This is our interview with them.

The Ripple: You were at the CMARD conference. What did you do there?

Sandy and Nicole: We did a presentation Monday afternoon sharing our life stories about inclusion in the

community when we were growing up.

The Ripple: What was it like presenting in front of a room full of people?

Nicole: It was fun. It gave me a new experience.

Sandy: It wasn't a problem for me. I've spoken to groups before.

The Ripple: How many people came to the session?

Nicole: 15 to 20 people attended our session.

The Ripple: Why are self-advocates important to neighbourhoods?

Nicole: We help to stand up for each other and help people to stand up for themselves.

The Ripple: What would make neighbourhoods more inclusive?

Nicole: People without disabilities including people with disabilities in community events more.

Sandy: More accessibility in community buildings.

The Ripple: What was your favourite part of the conference?

Nicole: Learning about ways to connect with your neighbours through SACLA.

Sandy: I had fun and learned a lot. I took part in a session on hate crimes to learn what they were. I also participated in an art session where we had to

The CMARD Conference (Continued)

communicate using art instead of speech.

Congratulations to Sandy and Nicole for being great representatives of SRSAN at the conference! Inclusive neighbourhoods are very important!

A Conversation with Bulldog MacBain



The Ripple interviewed Bulldog MacBain, former Pure Power wrestler and Access-a-ride driver. We talked to him about his last wrestling match and his relationship with self-advocates. This is what he had to say.

The Ripple: What's your real name?

Bulldog: Richard Rainey.

The Ripple: Where did the name Bulldog come from?

Bulldog: When I was younger, British Bulldogs were my favourite dog. When I grew up, I had a bulldog boxer mix. A year after I got out of rehab, my brother and sister gave me the nickname bulldog. I like it because it represents being steadfast, sticking to your guns and being loyal.

The Ripple: Does anyone call you Richard?

Bulldog: My mom!

A Conversation with Bulldog (Continued)

The Ripple: How did you become interested in wrestling?

Bulldog: I was 10 or 11 years old and I saw Stampede's wrestling on TV. That's all it took!

The Ripple: Why did you join Pure Power wrestling?

Bulldog: I didn't want to go to my grave knowing I didn't try. I would rather try and fail than not try at all. My job introduced me to people who wish they could have the physical ability to do what I do. Yet, people with disabilities push forward with all they have.

The Ripple: How do you train for wrestling?

Bulldog: Wrestling training is intense and painful, but I am always power lifting. To do well, you have to learn to fall flat on your back. I have trained in Lethbridge and Edmonton.

The Ripple: Are you still wrestling?

Bulldog: As of November 5, I retired. I wrestled for six years!

The Ripple: You work for Access-a-ride and see a lot of self-advocates at Pure Power Wrestling. How do you feel about your relationship with self-advocates?

Bulldog: When I'm in the ring I'm flattered because I'm in a position where I have influence. My goal is to do anything I can to encourage people to push as hard as they can and not give up.

The Ripple: What about your relationship with advocates as a driver for Access-a-ride?

Bulldog: I try to level the playing field. That means understanding that special needs doesn't mean special treatment. Self-advocates are just like everyone else. We are all human.

The Ripple: What have you learned from working with self-advocates?

This newsletter raises awareness about self-advocacy, inclusion and community. It also provides information on how to be a better self-advocate, how to speak up and how to help other advocacy groups and their friends. If you have information, events or ideas you would like to see in the newsletter, please contact us!