

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - MAY 12, 2009

2009 NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK (MAY 31 – JUNE 6, 2009)

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture and the Area Recreation Managers, recommends approval of the following Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) recommendation:

1. That the 2009 National Access Awareness Week - Activities Schedule (*Attachment 1*), outlining the inclusive activities and events scheduled to be held during National Access Awareness Week (May 31 – June 6, 2009) across the City of Vaughan, be received.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact related to this report. Funding for the accessibility initiatives indicated in this report has been incorporated into the 2009 Recreation and Culture base operating budget

Communications Plan

In cooperation with the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Recreation and Culture Department will continue to communicate and inform the community as it relates to its programs, initiatives, and the celebration of both the National Access Awareness Week and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This will be done through the City website, media, advertising, distribution of flyers to community centres, and Vaughan Public Libraries and the Council Calendar

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on the observance of National Access Awareness Week and to present an overview of the accessibility based activities and events scheduled to be held at community centres across the city.

Background – Analysis and Options

The concept of National Access Awareness Week (NAAW) was originally developed by Rick Hansen after his Man-In-Motion World Tour. The focus is to bring together in a spirit of partnership voluntary organizations of persons with disabilities, business, labour and governments to affect meaningful changes in the daily living of persons with disabilities.

“Access” means more than just removing physical barriers; it means changes in attitudes and support that allows all people with visible or invisible disabilities to be part of community life. People with learning, developmental, and psychiatric disabilities or other invisible impairments should not be forgotten when we strive for equal access. NAAW promotes access for all people with disabilities, including people with mobility, sensory, non-visible, and intellectual disabilities.

Since 2006 the Recreation and Culture Department, in collaboration with the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee, has participated in NAAW to further promote the services that are offered throughout the City of Vaughan to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities.

In 2009, the Recreation and Culture Department will celebrate National Access Awareness Week from May 31 – June 6, 2009 with a variety activities including:

- Workshops at our community centres provided by community service partners;
- Sport activities and games demonstrations, in partnership with Parasport Ontario, the Ontario Wheelchair Sports Association, the Ontario Blind Sports Association, York Region Soccer Association, Vaughan Special Olympics Ontario, York Region Board of Education;
- Ability Story and Expressing Friendship art projects, in partnership with VITA Mens Sana Day Programme, St Jean de Brebeuf and Vellore Woods Public School;
- A photography display of Sophie Oulette, a Woodbridge artist afflicted with cerebral palsy; and
- An exhibit of photographs of Natalie Schonfeld Howard titled “Legally Deafblind” at the City Playhouse Theatre created to raise awareness of the reality of having dual sensory disability.

A complete list of activities can be found on the attached 2009 National Access Awareness Week - Activities Schedule.

All of the events are focused on engaging people with disabilities and raising awareness for accessible services. Note: Additional activities/displays will also be hosted by Vaughan Public Libraries.

Through collaboration with individuals with disabilities, community service provider agencies, schools and seniors groups the City of Vaughan is able to increase the number of venues and opportunities to achieve a greater degree of success. National Access Awareness Week will highlight the City of Vaughan as a city committed to accessibility that will continue, with community partners, to provide opportunities that support people with disabilities in the Vaughan community.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

Reference specific initiative report relates to:

- STRATEGIC GOAL
Service Excellence – Pursue Excellence in Service Delivery; and Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health and Wellness – To deliver high quality services and promote health and wellness through design and program.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications.

Conclusion

Vaughan Vision 2020 commits to an inclusive community. In 2009, both the annual Accessibility Plan (revised 2009), and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy were received by Council. It is appropriate to highlight the City’s commitment publicly in ways that capture the public’s imagination and engage citizens in understanding disabilities and the importance of accessibility in municipal government.

National Access Awareness Week will help to increase the community’s awareness to the range, impact and nature of disabilities and how the City is responding to persons with those disabilities.

Attachments

1. 2009 National Access Awareness Week - Activities Schedule

Report Prepared By

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Respectfully submitted,

Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services

National Access Awareness Week

MAY 31 - JUNE 6, 2009

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

Date	Community Centre	Time	Activity/Display
June 3-4	Al Palladini	10am-2pm	"Ability Story" quilt project & display
June 4	Al Palladini	12-12:30pm 12:30-1pm	"Active Aging" workshop Lower body & balance exercises
May 31-June 6	City Playhouse Theatre		"Legally Deafblind" photography display
June 1	Chancellor	11-11:30am 11:30am-12pm 12-12:30pm	"Improve Capabilities Through Assistive Technology" presentation "Active Aging" workshop Lower body & balance exercises Photography display
June 1-5	Chancellor		
June 4	Dufferin Clark	10-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm 12:30-1pm	"ParaSport Ontario" presentation Bocce; Wheelchair Basketball; Judo; and Wrestling demonstrations Inclusive basketball game
June 3	Fr. Ermanno Bulfon	6-8pm 8-8:30pm	"Understanding Your Options" presentation Lower body & balance exercises
June 1	Garnet A. Williams		Lake Ontario Swim Challenge
June 4	Garnet A. Williams	7:30-8:30pm 11am-12pm 11am-12pm	Social Club Lower body & balance exercises Senior's Muscle Conditioning class
June 3	Maple	10:30-11am 11am-12pm 12-12:30pm	"Bridging the Gap", OWSA presentation Wheelchair Basketball demonstration "Fun Fitness"
June 2-4	Vellore Village	11am-12:30pm & 1-2:30pm	"Expressing Friendship" art project and display
June 3	Vellore Village	7-8:30pm 11:06am-12:26pm	"Respect Disability Through Ability" workshop Inclusive basketball game:
June 4	Vellore Village	1-2pm	"Halo Hoops" vs "Best Buddies" Lower body & balance exercises
June 4	Via Campanile Park	6:30-7:15pm	Inclusive soccer game: "Woodbridge Azzurri" vs "Vaughan Special Olympics Ontario"



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES/DISPLAYS WILL BE HOSTED BY VAUGHAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee

www.vaughan.ca

