<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Committee and Task Group Chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ARPA Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2010-2013 Strategic Plan Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>President’s Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>National Recreation Summit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Normie Kwong Centre for Community Recreation Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tripartite Partnership Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Education and Professional Development Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Parks and Open Space Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ARPA Conference Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Awards and Scholarship Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Children &amp; Youth Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>After School Recreation Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Everybody gets to play™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Sogo Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>HIGH FIVE® Task Force Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Kids at Hope Task Force Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Youth Development through Recreation Services Symposium Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Community Sport Development Committee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Communities ChooseWell Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Communities in Bloom Alberta Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>ACE Communities Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Active Community Strategy Initiative Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>ACE ‘Diversity Friendly Communities’ Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Service Excellence Program (SEP) Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Children in Nature Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Treasurer’s Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Financial Statements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who We Are:
The Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) is a provincial, non-profit charitable organization with a volunteer board of directors, and a dedicated staff. Its 1,600-plus members include community and public recreation and parks agencies as well as individual practitioners, academics, corporate representatives, political leaders, volunteers and students. They, in turn, represent thousands more across Alberta who contribute to Alberta’s quality of life though recreation and parks.

Our Vision:
We envision a province, and communities within, that embrace and proactively use recreation and parks as essential means for enhancing individual well-being and community vitality, economic sustainability and natural resource protection and conservation.

Our Mission:
ARPA builds healthy citizens, communities, and environments throughout Alberta.
Board of Directors

President
Terry Welsh

Vice-President (Internal)
Judi Frank

Vice-President (External)
Dan Pagely

Treasurer
Susan Laurin

Regional Board Members:

Region 1 Member (North)
Adam Clarkson

Region 2 Member (Central)
June Larson

Region 3 Member (South)
Heather Cowie

Directors-at-large:

Paul Fereday
Glenn Jensen
Darrell Melvie
Mike Roma

Student Representative - Lindsay Romanic

Ex-Officio Board Members:

Alberta Community Development
Chris Szabo

Recreation Facility Personnel
Kim Snell

Committees & Task Groups

Education & Professional Development Committee
Deb Comfort

Foundation for Action Vision 2015 Committee
Inactive

Children & Youth Committee
Heather Wicksted

Parks & Open Space Committee
Paul Feser

Infrastructure & Utilities Committee
Darrell Melvie

2011 Conference Hosting Committee
Judi Frank

Awards & Scholarships Committee
Barbara Hill

Community Sport Development Task Group
Rob Meckling
ARPA Staff

Director, Finance and Operations
Steve Allan

Administrative Coordinator
Lori Simmonds

CEO
Bill Wells

Programs Manager
Damien Traverse

Program Officer, Communities ChooseWell
Lisa McLaughlin

Event Planner, Communities ChooseWell
Patrick MacQuarrie

Provincial Coordinator, Communities in Bloom
Dan Chambers

Communications Coordinator
Laryssa Szmihelsky

Graphic Designer
Sarah Coates

Manager, Children and Youth Programs
Lisa Tink

Coordinator, Children and Youth Programs
Allison Pratley

Recreation Research Liaison
Lara Fenton

Senior Recreation Liaison
Craig Cameron

Program Manager, Active Community Strategy
Janet Naclia

E-learning Coordinator, Active Community Strategy
Lyle Schulz

Community Liaison, Active Community Strategy
Rose Carmichael

Fiona Bell
Special Projects Assistant
1. **Sector Leadership, Positioning and Advocacy**
   
a) The recreation and parks sector will be widely recognized and supported for its vital contribution to enhancing overall quality of life, individual wellness, and building healthy communities and environments.

b) ARPA will be recognized as a respected, forward thinking leader in recreation and parks development, advocacy, and innovation and for being a primary voice for recreation and parks.

2. **Community Building and Enhancing Public Awareness**
   
a) Alberta communities will be enriched, engaged and supported through priority ARPA programs, services and initiatives.

b) Albertans will have heightened awareness, appreciation and experience of the significant benefits associated with enhanced participation in recreation and parks activities.

3. **Advancing the Quality of Life Sector and Strategic Alliances**
   
a) The quality of life of Albertans will be enhanced through strategic and collaborative involvements of allied Quality of Life stakeholder agencies.

b) Enhanced social inclusion and reduced barriers for citizen participation through improved accessibility of recreation and parks services and facilities.

4. **Member Services, Professional Development, and Communications**
   
a) Association members will experience continuous career development and have increased capacity to network and contribute to the advancement and growth of the recreation and parks sector.

b) Alberta’s recreation and parks workforce will be acknowledged and embraced for their professional, ethical and technical standards and their credibility and trustworthiness in contributing to enhanced quality of life outcomes.

c) The Association will garner increased memberships through effective, efficient and economical member benefits, programs and services.

5. **Association Excellence and Sustainability**
   
a) ARPA will operate with a sound, effective and sustainable governance structure and within the conditions of the Alberta Societies Act and the Canadian Revenue Agency.

b) ARPA will deliver maximum value to its members and stakeholders by being a well managed, entrepreneurial and fiscally sound association.
What a year it has been! 2012 has demonstrated the strength of our Association, and we should take pride in our nimbleness and entrepreneurial spirit. This has been a year of transition as we gave Rick Curtis, our previous CEO, a fond and well deserved send-off into retirement. We’ve also welcomed Bill Wells as our new CEO.

We continue to increase our efficiency and effectiveness of ARPA’s operations, pursue long term sustainability of ARPA, and strengthen ongoing and new partnerships. Indeed, one of our core strengths is our ability to form partnerships and work collaboratively with allied stakeholders.

One of our most important and valued partnerships is with the Recreation for Life Foundation, a dedicated group of volunteers who work diligently on ARPA’s behalf to secure financial support for our programs. They will also be instrumental in the fundraising campaign for the Normie Kwong Centre for Community Recreation Excellence. The Centre will be a key piece for us in terms of advancing the development and service delivery of recreation and parks in Alberta.

We continue to strengthen our relationship with the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, and Recreation, and look forward to working collaboratively with our new Minister, the Honourable Christine Cusanelli, Deputy Minister, Brad Pickering, and their staff. We have renewed strong partnerships with the Tripartite Agreement, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, and the Alberta Recreation Facility Personnel Association.

This year, we have been able to secure partnerships with the following organizations:

- Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
- Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies
- Alberta Community & Co-operative Association
- Alberta School Boards Association
- Alberta School Councils’ Association
- Breakfast for Learning, Alberta

Each of these new partnerships reflect the Board’s realization that we not only share common goals with a wide range of organizations, but also are more successful when we find common causes with allied stakeholders. We see our field as key for them in advancing quality of life in Alberta. Their willingness to engage with us is a key indicator of our Association’s success and strength.

One of the biggest challenges we faced was the conclusion of the ACE (Active, Creative, Engaged) Communities project. While this worthy project ended due to the loss of funding, there is no question that ACE was a success in terms of demonstrating the impact that a grass-roots-community-development approach can have in our communities. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Brenda Herchmer and Carol Petersen, along with all of the staff and consultants who lead us through that amazing process.

An exciting development is that ARPA is partnering with Alberta Health Services to deliver an Active Community Strategy project supported with 1.5 million dollars from the Cancer Legacy Fund. This project will use many of the community development strategies employed by ACE.

Community Choosewell, Communities In Bloom, and Service Excellence continue as flagship programs for us and we continue to advance the Afterschool Recreation agenda through our advocacy efforts.
On the national scene, ARPA can take pride in the leadership role it has taken. We continue to work diligently to support the reconstituted Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, and advance the National Recreation Agenda and outcomes of the National Recreation Summit.

Members, I have greatly appreciated your support and comments as we met at numerous local and national events. On behalf of the ARPA Board and staff, I wish to acknowledge how appreciative we are of the volunteers who give their time and talents to the various standing committees and task forces that move us forward. ARPA is and will remain a member based organization truly strengthened by your unwavering support.

As I complete my term as President, I would like to extend a personal thank you to all of you for allowing me to serve as your President for the past two years. I can certainly say it has been my distinct honour and privilege to serve ARPA. During my tenure on the Board, I’ve marveled at the tremendous impact we have across Alberta and the opportunity we have as an Association and as professionals to improve the quality of life for Alberta’s citizens. Our work collectively strengthens our communities.

To my colleagues on the Executive and Board, I thank you for your support and wise counsel through this time of transition. I especially want to recognize Dr. Tim Burton whose energy and commitment to ARPA over many years has been truly inspiring. Finally, I can never say enough about the tremendous support the Board and I have received from all of our Staff throughout the year. They have demonstrated incredible enthusiasm and dedication and I’m continually amazed at how much they accomplish.

Our Association is only as strong as its members make it. Members, I encourage you to engage with us as we continue to move forward.

Terry Welsh
President
National Recreation Summit

With the aid of a National Advisory Committee, the ARPA, along with the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation Ministry, organized the National Recreation Summit in October 2011. The Summit focused on recreation, community and quality of life, and provided an opportunity to examine current and anticipated strategic challenges. Challenges include public recreation and parks, and the range and types of opportunities that could enhance the growth and impact of recreation services at national, provincial/territorial, and municipal levels. Specific attention was given to identification and assessment of ways in which community engagement strategies and actions can improve the delivery and quality of public relation services at local levels.

**Summit over-arching goals and objectives:**

1. To examine and discuss trends, information, research, retrospectives and promising practices in the recreation and parks field and the wider quality of life sector to which it belongs.

2. To clarify, describe and prioritize the strategic challenges that lie ahead for the recreation and parks field and related stakeholders in the quality of life sector.

3. To explore novel pan-Canadian approaches for recreation and parks development that would respond to these strategic challenges – particularly those that have promise for increased physical literacy and activity among Canadians (especially children and youth) and enhanced community building, social inclusion, and improved quality of life.

4. To examine and design innovative ways whereby federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments can engage in partnered recreation and parks development strategies.

5. To discuss and amplify ways in which corporate, not-for-profit, and other public agencies in the quality of life sector - such as health, social services, and education authorities and associations – can contribute to these priorities through collaborative strategies and actions.

6. To examine the feasibility and practicality of establishing a multi-year dialogue (a National Recreation Summit series, perhaps) to improve intra- and inter-governmental and inter-sector collaboration.

7. All of the above, then, contributing to the development of a national agenda for recreation. Work on this agenda is now underway.
IN BRIEF

The Centre will strategically undertake:

- Applied research and innovative program development,
- Information generation and dissemination
- Policy analysis, and
- Training, evaluation, and service excellence.

Turn to the Centre for insight and tools to:

- Build communities
- Advance wellness, and
- Protect local ecologies.

Alberta will benefit from

- Healthy, active individuals and families,
- Flourishing, vibrant and resilient communities,
- A diversified economy, and
- A sustainable environment.

As a result, community recreation will

- Excel,
- Evolve, and
- Advance.
FIVE CRITICAL AREAS OF FOCUS

1. Healthy and Resilient Children and Youth

Our vision: Reduce and ideally eliminate childhood obesity, sedentary life starts and children’s nature deficit disorder.

How? Reconnect children with nature and unstructured play; and improve the quality and reach of afterschool recreation, community sport and youth development initiatives.

2. Social Growth and Community Wellbeing

Our vision: Building strong, active and caring communities where all citizens feel included, take pride in the place they live and pitch in to help making it even better.

How? Create settings and happenings that invite everyone to get involved in leisure activities that knit neighbors together, build capacity and make the community sustainable.

3. Leisure Literacy and Education

Our vision: Shift attitudes about the balance needed for meaningful, happy lives and equip citizens to be physically active and socially engaged.

How? Teach fundamental leisure skills and offer training and counseling in leisure awareness and work/life balance.


Our vision: Reduce our impact on land, air and water; pay attention to climate change while developing parks, trails, green spaces, and facilities that entice people and communities to be engaged and healthy.

How? Put high priority on ecological stewardship and community health when developing land, designing parks/trails, building facilities and running community recreation operations.

5. Service Excellence In Community Recreation

Our vision: Build an excellent innovative community recreation sector that supports social transformation, human betterment and preservation of resources.

How? Ensure that all community recreation professionals as well as delivery agencies have core competencies, including the ability to engage citizens in creating outstanding recreation experiences.
2012 marks the end of the first three-year commitment for Tripartite Partnership between the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA), the Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation (ATPR), and the University of Alberta, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation (FPER). Since 2009, the Tripartite Partnership has made a number of advances towards its mandate of maximizing the benefits to be derived from closer collaboration.

The most exciting Tripartite initiative continues to be the advancement of the Normie Kwong Centre for Community Recreation Excellence. During 2012, the Centre has taken significant steps to transition from an idea to a reality.

2012 also marks important transitions in Tripartite personnel and focus. Past CEO Rick Curtis was instrumental in establishing the Tripartite Partnership. Although he is officially retired from the recreation field, Rick has continued his commitment to the partnership through his leadership on the Normie Kwong Centre for Community Recreation Excellence. In June, 2012 Doug Brimacombe returned to White Rock, B.C., marking the end of his three-year tenure as the Tripartite Liaison. Doug’s experience in and passion for recreation were essential to ensuring Tripartite success. He, too, remains a part of the partnership through his commitment to the Centre.

The Tripartite Liaison Group is actively engaged in charting the Partnership’s next three years. The second phase of the partnership continues to build on the positive tripartite relationship. Moving forward, the focus will be on increasing the number of collaborative efforts between ARPA, ATPR and FPER. Some possible areas of collaboration include professional development, student engagement with the field of practice, and strengthening a place for recreation with respect to improving the quality of life for all Albertans.

Craig Cameron
Senior Recreation Liaison

Tripartite initiatives have:

- Supported increased student participation and interest in the ARPA annual conference,
- Strengthened communication between senior partnership staff, and
- Delivered a highly praised National Recreation Summit.
The ARPA Education and Professional Development Committee had the opportunity to come together only a few times over the past year. The Committee has started developing a framework for integrating professional development-related initiatives, which include:

- Continuous Professional Learning System (CPLS)
- Annual Conferences and Symposiums
- Service Excellence Program
- ARPA’s Vocational Competencies
- Leadership Development Workshops
- Emerging Leaders
- Normie Kwong Centre for Community Recreation Excellence

In addition, some of the existing professional development opportunities, being provided by partner agencies such as the Alberta Association of Recreation Facility Personnel, learning institutions, and training providers, may also play key roles in the development of a comprehensive, relevant professional development program for the Association. While the progress of the Committee’s vision has admittedly been less than dramatic, the alignment and timing of several key elements appears to be positioning the Committee for some very positive and exciting changes in the near future.

Deb Comfort  
Education and Professional Development Committee Chair
The Parks and Open Space Committee is made up of a core group of 12 to 15 active members, plus an additional 20-30 participants that receive email updates from the Committee. The Open Space Committee exists to provide comment and recommendations to the Board on issues relating to parks and open spaces and to bring forward emerging parks and open space issues that exist on a provincial/regional level. In addition to the formal responsibilities of the Committee, members actively use the Committee as a networking and information sharing platform.

In 2012, the Parks and Open Space Committee had a very exciting and active year. A number of profile tasks include a review and comment on a number of AUMA resolutions, development of conference sessions themes for both the ARPA conference and the parks forum, and ongoing discussions on performance measures and the Yardstick program.

Members also received regular updates from affiliated parks and open space initiatives including Children in Nature, Communities in Bloom, and ARPA projects such as Service Excellence and ACE Communities.

Through discussions and presentations with parks professionals from across the province, members actively shared information on topics such as wetland conservation and management, urban forestry management and local challenges and trends affecting other communities.

Anyone interested in joining the Open Space Committee can contact me at pleser@sprucegrove.org.

Paul Feser
Parks and Open Space Committee Chair
The 2011 ARPA Conference & Energize Workshop was themed Recreation and Parks—Bringing Quality to Life. It was a milestone event for the Association as it served to celebrate the Association’s 60th Anniversary. The Conference, held at the majestic Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, was very successful and the highest attended Conference to date with over 475 delegates.

Due to the facts that it was the 60th Anniversary of the Association, and immediately following the ARPA’s hosting of the National Recreation Summit, the Association Board of Directors felt that it was their turn to take on the task of organizing this flagship educational and networking event. The Board did not disappoint. They put together a fantastic program that included several speakers from the National Recreation Summit, including keynote speaker Carl Honoré.

To help celebrate the diamond anniversary, over 20 of ARPA’s Past Presidents representing nearly every decade since its inception in 1961 attended the President’s Banquet. The Conference was capped off by celebrating the retirement of ARPA’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Rick Curtis, who received the prestigious Wild Rose Award at the end of the evening.

Judi Frank
2011 Conference Committee Chair

Steve Allan
Director, Finance and Operations, ARPA
2011 Award Recipients:

**AABRD Undergraduate:**
Blake Goehring

**AABRD Legacy:**
Village Square Leisure Centre, City of Calgary

**Halliday Memorial Scholarship:**
Sarah Howe

**Youth Development Award:**
YES! Program, Chinook’s Edge School Division

**Parks Excellence:**
City of Calgary, Memorial Park

**ARPA Merit Award:**
Heather Cowie

**Wild Rose Award:**
Rick Curtis

**AV Pettigrew Award:**
Village of Thorsby

The 2011 Awards presentation took place in conjunction with the ARPA Conference and Energize Workshop at Chateau Lake Louise in October.

Following the 2011 Awards, the Committee promoted nominations for the 2012 awards program, participated in the adjudication of the Recreation Industry Excellence Awards, and evaluated and made recommendations on the 2012 award recipients.

The Committee is committed to helping peers recognize and acknowledge excellence in service to our communities.

Barbara Hill

*Awards and Scholarships Committee Chair*
“As a Committee we have seen enormous growth in our children and youth initiatives over the past 12 months. The dedication of the Committee members and the children and youth staff has resulted in record numbers of HIGH FIVE® trainings, a 40% increase in attendance at YDRS, advancement of the After School Recreation Strategy and research examining and repositioning Everybody gets to play™. The members of the Committee value and recognize the importance of quality recreation for children and youth and will continue to guide and support ARPA’s children and youth initiatives.”

-Heather Wicksted, Children and Youth Committee Chair
Children and Youth Programs & Initiatives:

The implementation of ARPA’s Children and Youth Programs and Initiatives are guided by a Children and Youth Committee whose mandate is to focus and advance the role that recreation please in the positive development of children and youth across Alberta.

In addition to guiding the implementation of the Children and Youth Programs and Initiatives, the Committee has recently developed a comprehensive Children and Youth Model that:

1. Encompasses a philosophy based on the belief that all children and youth across Alberta should have access to quality recreation, sport, and physical activity programs,
2. Undertakes relevant research and provides sectoral leadership, and
3. Ensures professional development opportunities are available across Alberta.

Using this model, ARPA has, and will continue to, identify industry standards and assist communities in the design and implementation of programs for children and youth.
After School Recreation Strategy

In addition to continued efforts for advancing an Alberta After School Recreation Strategy, ARPA has been a contributing member of the Canadian Active After School Partnership. The Partnership is a comprehensive, collaborative and multi-dimensional initiative funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

As a member of the Canadian Active After School Partnership, ARPA has identified and supported five demonstration sites across the country. Based on data collected from these demonstration sites, ARPA has produced three documents that:

- Support the development, implementation, and evaluation of blended after school programs,
- Create a practical resource tool/guide to inform the development of community partnerships and the ability of local groups to develop, deliver, and evaluate high quality after school programs, and
- Develop recommendations for an effective longer term human resource strategy to support and sustain high quality recreation-based after school programs.

Everybody gets to play™

As the provincial provider of Everybody gets to play™, ARPA partnered with the University of Alberta and Strathcona County to examine Everybody gets to play™ in Alberta. This community-university partnership, which started in March 2011, has resulted in an Alberta specific Everybody gets to play™ tool titled “Playing It Forward...The Case for Accessible Recreation in Alberta.” It highlights the need for accessible recreation in Alberta and provides a grassroots perspective on the removal of barriers. This document is intended to guide the implementation of Everybody gets to play™ at local and provincial levels.
Play

Building on the discussion paper “PLAY: It’s Serious Business,” an interagency team lead by ARPA and the University of Alberta has begun working on a three-phase project that will develop an Alberta PLAY Training Curriculum. The interagency team has been coordinating the work by defining the project scope, conducting an environmental scan of recreational PLAY oriented training opportunities, and securing the necessary funding.

The outcome of the project will eventually result in a training program for recreation staff and volunteers highlighting the importance of free play and providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to re-integrate PLAY into their programs.

“Often staff and volunteers lack the experience and skills necessary to facilitate free PLAY in recreation programs. By re-introducing the PLAY Leadership Training Curriculum we hope to equip recreation staff with the knowledge and skills to support child development through free, creative and unstructured PLAY.”

-Lisa Tink, Manager, Children and Youth Programs

Sogo Active

As the provincial coordinator for Sogo Active in Alberta, ARPA acts as a liaison between provincial community hosts and ParticipACTION approving community grant applications and assisting with promotion across the province. Over the past 12 months, ARPA has funded over $36,549 to assist in 60 physical activity events across the province. Examples of events that have been funded include Discover Snorkeling, Get Active Everywhere, Drop’n Beats Break-Dance Challenge, Fun Swims and many more.

“The students loved the game! Their school now has their own basketballs that the students can sign out so they can play after school. It’s been great seeing more of the youth playing ball on the weekend rather than wondering around town.”

–Teacher, Calgary School

“To put this achievement into perspective, of the 7 years we have had the Go for Your Goal incentive program, this is the first time such a high proportion of the youth received 20 stamps which would not have been possible without funding from Sogo Active!”

–Administrative Assistant, Town of Vauxhall

Lisa Tink,
Manager, Children and Youth Programs

Heather Wicksted
Children and Youth Committee Chair
HIGH FIVE® Task Force Members:

Jennifer Gristwood, Chair
Jennifer Coyne
Karen Cramer
Karina Damgaard
Ashley Jensen
Graham Thomson
Kristin Walsh
Heather Wicksted
Keely Willment

HIGH FIVE® Task Force Report

HIGH FIVE® Task Force Members:

Jennifer Gristwood, Chair
Jennifer Coyne
Karen Cramer
Karina Damgaard
Ashley Jensen
Graham Thomson
Kristin Walsh
Heather Wicksted
Keely Willment

Numbers

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<td>Principles of Healthy Childhood Development</td>
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HIGH FIVE® is Canada’s only comprehensive quality standard for children’s sport and recreation programs. As the authorized provider in Alberta, ARPA has hosted a number of trainings for recreation programmers, coaches, supervisors, and managers ensuring they have tools and knowledge necessary to create positive experiences for children. Over the past 12 months ARPA has seen record numbers in the workshop requests.

“The feedback we have received from HIGH FIVE® workshop participants has been nothing but positive. Participants love the HIGH FIVE® trainers and feel the information presented in the workshops is very valuable to their work. The most common feedback we receive is how fun and enjoyable the workshops are.”

– Allison Pratley, Children and Youth Programs Coordinator

ARPA has also developed a HIGH FIVE® Task Force to help strategically position and implement HIGH FIVE® across the province.

“HIGH FIVE® is a great tool that ensures that every participant that walks through the doors of a recreation centre for day camp, jumps into their local pool for swimming lessons or laces up their skates at their community rink is having a positive experience!”

– Jennifer Gristwood, HIGH FIVE® Task Force Chair

Jennifer Gristwood
HIGH FIVE® Task Force Chair
ARPA continues to advance Kids at Hope across the province, by using recreation as the vehicle, and blending the Kids at Hope beliefs with those of our community recreation directors, service providers and providers. The Association has worked closely with Rick Miller, the founder of Kids at Hope, over the last year. This collaboration has resulted in the Association to provide a variety of Hopeology and Train-the-Trainers workshops, two Kids at Hope webinars, two Kids at Hope Provincial Forums, and the 2012 Cenovus Tour of Hope. Additionally, ARPA sent 4 individuals to the 2012 International Youth Development Master’s Institute in Phoenix, Arizona.

ARPA is looking to the future of Kids at Hope Alberta by examining new opportunities and potential partnerships for its continued success in the province.

Kids at Hope Alberta is sponsored by Cenovus Energy.

### Kids at Hope September 2011-2012

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Individuals trained in Hopeology</td>
<td>241</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals who completed Train the Trainer</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td>Individuals who attended the 2012 International Youth Development Master’s Institute</td>
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<td>Individuals who attended the Provincial Forums</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>Kids at Hope Webinar Participants</td>
<td>71</td>
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<td>Communities visited on the Tour of Hope</td>
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Doray Veno
Kids at Hope Task Force Chair
The Youth Development Through Recreation Services (YDRS) Symposium is an biannual forum for advancing knowledge about the contributions of recreation programs and services as they relate to children and youth development. The 2012 Symposium took place from March 11-13 in Edmonton. This year’s symposium was the largest to date, attracting over 110 delegates from municipal recreation, not-for-profit groups, community sports groups, public health, and education.

“I would like to say that I thought the conference was very well organized and flowed very well. The two different streams allowed individuals to make choices that were relevant to their background and interests.”

–YDRS Participant

“I participated in the Youth Stream and found it beneficial to my position as an elected official who sits on two different community services committees.”

–YDRS Participant

Lisa Tink
Manager, Children and Youth Programs

Shelley Kwong
YDRS Committee Chair
Recognizing the need for a more collaborative approach to physical literacy development in Alberta, the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association formed a Community Sport Development Task Group in December of 2008. The purpose of the task force was to translate Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) concepts and policies into a made-in-Alberta physical literacy movement at the community level. By engaging individuals working in both sport and recreation, a number of quality resources and promising practices have been developed.

Specifically, over the past 12 months, the group has been working on a Parent Education Kit. This kit includes a physical literacy video, CS4L messenger training, a parent handout, and a list of resources. Work has also begun on developing a physical literacy assessment tool for community use. The tool will eventually be used in multisport programs and will identify clear progressions of the Fundamental Movement Skills.

“We have worked hard to help communities remove finish lines to create a new way of thinking about children and youth programming. Collaboration amongst recreation, sport, health and education (among others) is proving to be a powerful strategy. Each of these sectors believes that building physical literacy in young Albertans results in confidence to enjoy sport and recreation and be active for life.”

– Rob Meckling, Chair, Community Sport Development Task Group

The number of individuals interested in the Community Sport Development Task Group continues to grow. As a result, ARPA is examining ways in which to mobilize action at the community level and engage relevant stakeholders to increase physical literacy development across the province.

Lisa Tink
Manager, Children and Youth Programs

Rob Meckling
Community Sport Development Task Group Chair
The 2012 year for Communities ChooseWell has been an exciting one, building off the momentum created in 2011. Now in the second of a 3-year funding agreement between ARPA and Alberta Health, ChooseWell supported, empowered, and recognized over 160 registered communities during 2012.

The year was launched in March with a kick-off event in Claresholm, Alberta. Shortly thereafter, the biggest toolkit production in ChooseWell history took place, as the team sent out more than 4,620lbs of resources – heavier than a Honda Civic!

In April, Communities ChooseWell provided a seed funding opportunity to registered communities – 15 grants worth $2,000 each were awarded to communities looking to reduce barriers to healthy living.

One of the highlights of the year was the regional forums, where the ChooseWell team hosted 4 professionally facilitated sessions across Alberta, attended by ChooseWell leaders and other committed professionals from nearby communities. Forums were held in the Spring in Vegreville, Lacombe, Bassano and Grande Prairie.
ChooseWell also launched an extensive series of webinars, to better help community leaders in their efforts to make their communities healthier. After hosting 4 webinars in 2011, ChooseWell put on 13 webinars in 2012. Topics included Physical Literacy and Healthy Living in Rural Communities.

Communities ChooseWell also held 3 ‘Challenges’ throughout the year: The Acts of Random Physical Activity Challenge in June, encouraging people to find little ways to be active throughout the day; the Sobeys 21 Days to Healthy Eating Challenge in September, challenging families to eat together more regularly; and the Iron Chef Challenge in October, where teams compete to prepare a dish with a secret ingredient for a panel of celebrity judges.

Communities ChooseWell wraps up their year in late November with Recognition Ceremonies in both Northern and Southern Alberta. At this elegant awards banquet, high achieving communities will be recognized for their achievements in promoting healthy living.

Damien Traverse
Programs Manager
Communities are evaluated on the following six criteria:

- Tidiness
- Environmental Action
- Heritage Conservation
- Urban Forestry
- Landscape
- Floral Display

Numbers:

- **22** Volunteer Judges
- **34** Communities at the provincial level
- **37** Alberta communities at the national level

This was the sixth year that the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association has successfully coordinated Communities in Bloom (CiB) Alberta, the provincial edition of the national Communities in Bloom program. The CiB program fits under the ARPA mission of “building healthier citizens, their communities and their environments.” The pride, sense of community and feeling of accomplishment generated through participation are visible in communities throughout the province.

During July and August, trained volunteer judges travelled across the province to evaluate the efforts and achievements of participating communities. Community involvement is viewed as the most important underlying principle of the CiB Alberta program.

The 2011 provincial participants were celebrated at an awards event and banquet held in Forestburg.

2012 marks the third year for Encana Corporation as the official Provincial Presenting Partner for the CiB Alberta program. ARPA and Encana share strong interests in making Alberta’s communities the best they can be, and that they truly inspire local leadership, volunteerism, capacity building, and enhancing quality of life.

Dan Chambers
Communities in Bloom Provincial Coordinator
In 2008, the Active, Creative, Engaged (ACE) Communities, spearheaded by the ARPA, obtained funding of $5.5 million from diverse sources including: Rural Alberta Development Fund, Cenovus, Encana, and Canwest Media. This funding made possible a wide variety of programs, services, research, and resource development.

Using these resources, ACE not only contributed to increased visibility and utilization of ARPA programs and services, but also enhanced its credibility by serving new markets. ACE allowed ARPA to create a significant legacy of assets and knowledge by making a significant impact in 50+ rural communities in Alberta. It built a provincial network that will be conducive to rolling out any future province-wide initiative and positioned ARPA as an organization that can assist communities in being “future-ready” by using recreation and parks as a catalyst for “comprehensive community transformation.”

While recreation and parks were used as a catalyst for the community building and the broader community transformation that became the focus of ACE Communities, it was also the impetus for the development of frameworks, tools, and resources that were of benefit to such sectors as agriculture, social services, health, arts and culture, education, elected officials, government, and business.

“What made ACE Communities sing was the approach to community and the people. The ‘Soul of ACE’ may take a different form, but that it lives beyond the boundaries of the program can’t be denied. What was accomplished in a few short years is going to continue to influence professionals and communities for generations.”

– ACE Communities Coach

Janet Naclia
Programs Manager
From 2007-09, ARPA partnered with 10 communities to design, develop and demonstrate a community based approach to get “more people, more active, more often.” Partner communities in this original Alberta Active Communities initiative made progress in both developing local leadership and engaging community members in planning and projects to get the community more active.

From Alberta Active Communities evolved two successful initiatives: 1) ACE Communities (2008 – 2011) that focused on building community capacity, and 2) the development of the Active Community Strategy (2010-11) pilot project which was a more focused community process creating community owned strategies to become more physically active communities.

This year, ARPA launched another opportunity for 10 new communities wanting to get more people, more active, more often! We all know that an physically active community is a more healthy community so ARPA is now working in partnership with Alberta Health Services to deliver the 2nd phase of the Active Community Strategy (ACS) initiative. This initiative is funded by the Alberta Cancer Prevention Legacy Fund and will support the creation of comprehensive ‘active community’ strategies that connect and articulate local assets.

A call for participation went out to communities across Alberta in the spring of 2012 resulting in the first round of ACS communities that include: Airdrie, Calling Lake, Cardel Place (Calgary), Grande Prairie, High River, Leduc, Longview, Okotoks, Pincher Creek, and Sylvan Lake.

These communities will work with ARPA on their active community strategies from September 2012 - September 2013. The goal is to continue this work with a 2nd group of 15 communities in 2013.

Janet Naclia
Programs Manager
The Active, Creative, Engaged Communities (ACE) initiative has resulted in a clearer understanding of a “process” for community change that can be applied to other issues and challenges.

Interested in this change process, the Alberta Justice’s Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund (HREM) has funded ARPA to work with four rural Alberta communities from 2011 - 2013. For this particular project, the focus has been supporting communities who were interested in becoming more diversity friendly.

Through an extensive application procedure, Carstairs, Grande Cache, Jasper, and Rocky Mountain House were chosen as the four ACE ‘Diversity Friendly’ Communities (DFC).

Reflecting the mission of the HREM, the goal of the ACE Communities ‘Diversity Friendly’ Communities (DFC) project is to increase community capacity, using recreation, parks, arts, culture, and heritage as a catalyst, to foster equality, reduce discrimination and racism, and remove organizational barriers that exclude some Albertans. Specifically, this means that all Albertans will have the opportunity to participate in the social, cultural, political, and economic life of their community without discrimination.

As part of this process, our group of DFC communities have completed their community scans (these scans, facilitated by ACE coaches, are citizen-driven conversations about the assets and challenges within their communities) and are now working towards specific projects aimed at improving the quality of life in their respective areas and fostering inclusion for all citizens.

Janet Naclia
Programs Manager
Growth and evolution are the guiding themes of 2012. Based on the strong assessment tool and processes piloted, critiqued and improved by several communities and 120 recreation professionals, Service Excellence launched into its second iteration in January 2012. Moving away from 5 modules to 10 core competencies and 88 practice guidelines, the program evolved to become more universal in nature.

Six diverse communities in Alberta, from Calgary to Hinton, piloted the updated version. SEP even grew beyond the scope of municipal community services to expand into recreation facilities with the addition of Cardel Place in Calgary.

Growth was not confined by the boundaries of Alberta as the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association developed an agreement to pilot Service Excellence. This is an excellent opportunity for the program to grow, evolve and be tested on an interprovincial basis.

Utilizing the invaluable feedback from 2012 communities, Service Excellence will continue to grow and evolve. Utilizing a developmental model, SEP is dynamic, impactful and adaptive to the diverse nature of community.

Starting in 2013 Service Excellence will have the benefit of an intensive four year development process. Through assessment, quality assurance and the setting of industry standards, the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, is incredibly optimistic about what Service Excellence will mean to the future of recreation and parks in this province.
Examples of Use:

The Town of Hinton developed a project plan for the completion of the SEP Assessment Tool. They presented SEP to supervisors at management levels and to front-line staff and received a strong and enthusiastic response about the value of the Tool. Hinton plans to have front-line staff complete components of the Tool.

The Town of Canmore is using the SEP Assessment Tool to help plan a “partnership process” for the Multiplex Facility being constructed.

Testimonials:

“We like the comprehensive nature of the Assessment Tool and the cross-reference of items throughout it.”

-Town of Hinton

“We looked at the Core Competency of Partnerships and Strategic Alliances and worked backwards to ask ourselves how can we plan for partners and strategic alliances that will end up with a high rating in these Quality Indicators.”

-Town of Canmore

What people are saying about Service Excellence:

“I am a believer in this tool which makes it fun to apply.”

“Everyone who reads SEP, learns from it.”

“The Service Excellence Program is a great assessment tool for defining standards of operational excellence in recreation. Together, our team worked through this process as a commitment to continuous improvement in providing quality healthy active living programs, services and amenities for the community. We strengthened our confidence in what we do well, recognized opportunity areas to develop further, broadened our understanding of the work we do and gave the team exposure to different areas of our organization.”

-Cardel Place

Damien Traverse
Programs Manager
The Children in Nature initiative continues to be a fairly low key part of ARPA. An eNews bulletin is circulated quarterly with updates on events, research and discoveries of note to a listserv of about 400 interested individuals spanning across the country. As a result of this work, our lone volunteer, Cliff Lacey, was invited to the Robert Bateman "Get to Know Unconference" in Jasper in October 2011. This event featured children as young as 12, creating art in the outdoors. It was very motivational for all of the adults and children attending.

The resulting contacts made at this event are serving to foster the growth of a modest “My Nature” movement. The goal of this effort is to offer disadvantaged kids an opportunity to spend time in nature. Alienation to nature and childhood obesity continue to be significant areas of concern for professionals in the recreation and parks field.

Cliff Lacey
Children in Nature Specialist
The 2011 fiscal year was a very busy one as two of the Association’s largest projects, ACE Communities and Communities ChooseWell, were in full operation and ARPA co-hosted the successful National Recreation Summit. This is in addition to the number of other programs that ARPA continues to run while balancing the normal activities of the Association including membership services and advocacy.

Highlights from the 2011 year include:

- Membership revenue surpassed the $100,000 mark for the first time,
- Conference revenue surpassed $70,000,
- The Association co-hosted the National Recreation Summit in partnership with the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation Ministry,
- The Association partnered with Canadian Parks Recreation Association (CPRA) on the Canadian Active After School Project, and
- No Casino revenue was received in 2011 but ARPA held a casino in 2012 and will do so again in 2013.

It is a reality of doing business that project revenues do not always line up with project expenses and was the case in our 2011 statements. The short explanation is that the Association incurred only a small loss of roughly $2,400 in the 2011 fiscal year even know the statements reflect a $90,366 loss. The agreement with the Rural Alberta Development Fund for the ACE Communities initiative included a hold back on funds until the completion of the project. The ACE Communities initiative incurred roughly $88,000 in expenses over revenue received in the 2011 fiscal year and due to this holdback ARPA will not receive the funds until the 2012 fiscal year. This holdback will also have an offsetting positive revenue impact on the 2012 statements reflecting roughly $88,000 in revenues to offset these expenses.

Overall, the 2011 economic environment continued to remain fragile and economic recovery rates uncertain. All levels of government continued to reduce their expenditures and the corporate sector took a more cautious approach to marketing and philanthropic support.
The Board has undertaken a renewed commitment to provide the Association with a stronger foundation of financial sustainability. Presently, approximately 60% of ARPA’s 2011 revenue was derived from grants dedicated towards specific projects and another 15% of revenues were realized through general grant/donations revenues. The new fiscal reality of uncertain revenue streams from government and corporate sectors challenges ARPA to initiate creative and diversified revenue sources to ensure the sustainability of its valuable programs and core services. To this effect in 2012 the Board is exploring the following new avenues of sustainability:

- An investment in member services including Service Excellence and benchmarking tools,
- A focused effort on providing expanded professional development opportunities to members, and
- Re-energizing the relationship with the Recreation for Life Foundation (RFLF) to secure corporate support for programs and services.

A sincere thank you to all of ARPA’s funders for their continued support, especially the ongoing support of the Government of Alberta including support from the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation (ASRPWF) and the Tourism, Parks and Recreation Ministry.

Another key partnership is the support provided by the RFLF. The RFLF continues to build relationships and raise funds and, as such, is integral to ARPA’s future sustainability.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the incredible support of Steve Allan, ARPA Director of Finance and Operations, for his constant support and financial leadership.

Susan Laurin
ARPA Treasurer
# Summarized Statement of Financial Operations

## Revenue

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contracts</td>
<td>2,202,478</td>
<td>1,848,031</td>
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<td>Memberships</td>
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<td>Conference and Symposia</td>
<td>464,610</td>
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<td>Projects</td>
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<td>Casino</td>
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<td>Administration</td>
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<td>Donations</td>
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<td>Interest Income</td>
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<td>1,859</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,032,259</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,650,162</strong></td>
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## Expenses

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration – General</td>
<td>64,753</td>
<td>70,042</td>
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<tr>
<td>GST Expenses</td>
<td>12,110</td>
<td>10,950</td>
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<td>Salaries and Benefits</td>
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<td>248,928</td>
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<td>Board and Executive</td>
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<td>Liaisons</td>
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<td>CPRA/Memberships</td>
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<td>Conference and Symposia</td>
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<td>Casino</td>
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<td>Committee and Network Activity</td>
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<td>39,103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,122,625</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,647,985</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Net Gain (Loss) for the Year

|                  | (90,366) | 2,177 |

## Net Assets, Beginning of the Year

|                  | 222,082 | 219,905 |

## Net Assets, End of the Year

|                  | 131,716 | 222,082 |

Full Unaudited Financial Statements are available from the ARPA office 1-877-544-1747
# Summarized Statement of Financial Position

## Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>658,074</td>
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<td>Short-term investments</td>
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<td>81,655</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>354,662</td>
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<td>GST receivable</td>
<td>23,058</td>
<td>19,130</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
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<td>Advances receivable</td>
<td>45,526</td>
<td>145,536</td>
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<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
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<td>1,055,985</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>72,003</td>
<td>70,736</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>30,568</td>
<td>30,568</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>102,571</td>
<td>101,304</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less accumulated amortization</td>
<td>84,910</td>
<td>72,765</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Equipment</strong></td>
<td>17,661</td>
<td>28,539</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>1,181,762</td>
<td>1,084,524</td>
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</table>

## Liabilities

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued liabilities</td>
<td>28,319</td>
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<td>Deferred Contributions</td>
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<td>823,719</td>
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<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>1,050,046</td>
<td>862,441</td>
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## Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internally Restricted Funds</td>
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<td>140,565</td>
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<tr>
<td>Externally Restricted Funds</td>
<td>84,805</td>
<td>84,805</td>
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<td>Unrestricted Funds</td>
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<td>Equipment Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>131,716</td>
<td>222,082</td>
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## Total Liabilities and Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>1,181,762</td>
<td>1,084,524</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Full Unaudited Financial Statements are available from the ARPA office 1-877-544-1747
ARPA gratefully appreciates the funding support received from the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation/Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation in the development of this paper.