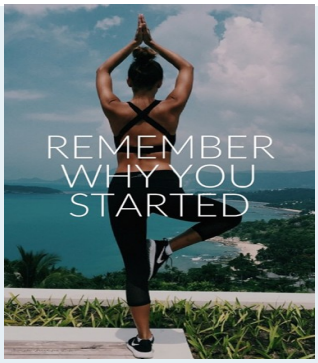
The Kamloops Self Advocate NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026 **FREE!** **TAKE ONE!**
Serving people since September of 2013.



Welcome to March!
We are glad you are here. This month is about healthy choices, fitness, and recreation. March is also Nutrition Month and Epilepsy Awareness Month. On March 26, we recognize Purple Day. This is a day to learn about epilepsy and show support for people who live with it.

In this issue, we share simple ways to take care of your body and mind. Small steps can make a big difference. Eating balanced meals, moving your body, and getting enough rest all help you feel better. These habits are important for everyone, including people living with diabetes.

Being active can boost your mood and give you more energy. Fitness does not have to be hard. You can try fun activities like bocce, bowling, basketball, or dancing to music at home. Listening to your favourite songs while you move can help time go by faster and keep you motivated.

Healthy eating is also important. Learning about food during Nutrition Month can help you make smart choices. Adding protein and choosing water more often are good places to start.

Remember, you do not have to do this alone. Friends, family, and support workers can help you reach your goals. One small step at a time can lead to a healthier, happier life.

Table of Contents

Krystian's Corner ———page 2
Recipe —— page 3
Kindness & Compassion —— page 4
Purple Day — page 5
People in Motion — page 6
Feedback for CLBC — page 6
Healthy Mind and Body —page 7
Ice Fishing — page 7
Buddy Up for Boogie — page 8
A Place Where I Belong — page 10
Accessible Arts — page 11

Celebrating Disability Awareness, success stories and inclusion for all! Written by people with Diverse Abilities **Do you have a story idea or an event you think would be good for our readers? Contact us at:**

thekamloopsselfadvocate@yahoo.com
c/o 521 Seymour St., Kamloops, BC V2C 2G8 Office phone: 250-828-1344.
Please subscribe! Be sure to check out our online newsletter for bonus stories! KSA Facebook page: The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter KSA website: ksanews.ca

The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter is a disability focused media platform promoting inclusion and sharing voices of people with diverse abilities.

NORAN
MADE IN KAMLOOPS 100% LOCAL
PRINTING • PROMOTIONAL • MARKETING
info@noran.ca • T. 250-372-1055
102 - 1139 12th Street, Kamloops, BC
• Printing & Die Cutting • Business Forms & Booklets • Banners, Feather Flags & Retractables
• Mugs & Water Bottles • Indoor & Outdoor Signage & Sandwich Boards
• Embroidery, Direct to Garment & Heat Press • and so much more ...

The KSA has created a program to recognize and promote local businesses that are accessible and supportive of all members of the community. The businesses listed here are friendly, accessible, and great to deal with.

Ability Friendly Accessible Business Program

Horizon Dental Clinic
5 Bean Brewbar & Café
The Vic Downtown
Kamloops Film society
People in Motion
New Horizons Professional Support Services Inc.
Our Footprints Eco Store
Kamloops Art Party
Valhalla Smoke House
All Around Gamerz
Western Canada Theatre

Krystian's Corner: Staying Healthy, Active, and Doing What I Love

Welcome to March! This month's newsletter focuses on fitness, recreation, and diabetes management. I want to begin by sharing why this matters to me.

Diabetes affects how the body manages blood sugar. When levels stay too high over time, it can lead to serious health problems, including nerve damage and poor healing. Learning about these risks helped me understand why taking care of my health now is so important. Staying active and making balanced food choices help keep blood sugar steady and protect my long-term health.

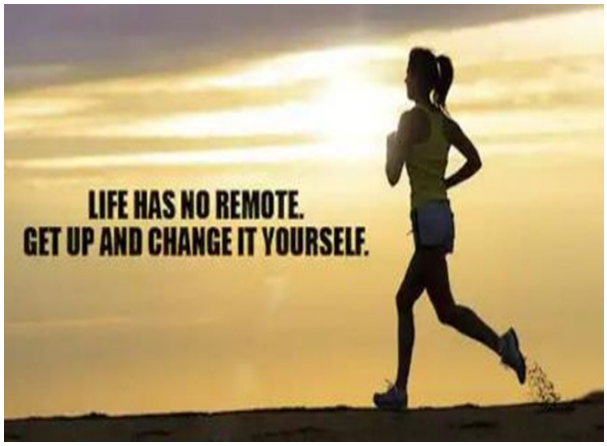
When I was younger, I didn't enjoy exercise. It didn't feel fun, and I didn't always see the point. Over time, I realized that moving my body helps me feel stronger, more confident, and more independent. I live with diabetes, and I want to stay mobile, energetic, and able to do the things I love. Activities like yoga, meditation, Zumba, and bowling help both my physical and mental health. Recreation is also social—I enjoy being active with friends and support workers.

Whether it's bocce, bowling, or community programs, having people alongside me makes it more enjoyable and motivating.

Healthy eating is another important piece. I aim for balance—choosing nutritious foods most of the time while still enjoying occasional treats. Being healthy doesn't mean being perfect; it means making thoughtful choices that support my goals.

I also want to thank support workers. Even if they are not recreation specialists, they play a big role in helping people stay active and confident. Your encouragement, planning, and positive attitude make participation easier and more fun.

Taking care of my health gives me the energy to work on the Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter and update KSANews.ca. Staying active helps me remain independent, involved, and connected to my community.



Getting Healthy With Friends in Kamloops

By Krystian

This March, I will be going to the Tournament Capital Centre (TCC) on Thursdays with the Buddy Up group to work out together. I am very excited. Exercising with friends makes it fun and doesn't feel like hard work. When we laugh, talk, and move together, time goes by quickly. Kamloops is called the Tournament Capital of Canada for a reason—we have amazing places like TCC where people of all abilities can stay active and healthy.

I also joined the iMove program through People in Motion in Kamloops. Thanks to donors, the membership is only $10 per year, which makes it affordable. I am very grateful they welcomed me, even when the program was full, because I shared my goals and how important my health and friendships are to me. We recently visited the YMCA, learned about the human skeleton, and did adapted exercises like chair yoga. I also enjoy swimming, riding the exercise bikes, and listening to upbeat pop music like Taylor Swift while I work out. Music keeps me motivated.
I attended a support worker meeting with my mom to learn how to eat better while living with diabetes. I learned that protein helps balance blood sugar and that healthy choices are about balance, not perfection. I can still enjoy treats sometimes, but not all the time. Choosing smaller drinks, adding protein to meals, and saving sugary drinks for special occasions helps me stay on track.

I'm also excited to try bocce, walk in the park, and play basketball when the weather warms up. I'm thankful for my support workers and the Kamloops Society for Community Inclusion for helping me work toward my goals. Being healthy means making balanced choices, enjoying life, and having fun along the way.

The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter would like to send our care, love, and support to the people of Tumbler Ridge and to families across British Columbia during this very sad and difficult time.

We stand with the families who have lost loved ones. Grief is painful and overwhelming, and while words cannot take that pain away, please know you are not alone. Many people are holding you in their hearts. Every family affected deserves compassion and respect.

This is also a reminder that mental health care matters. Everyone deserves timely, local, and affordable support—especially in rural and remote communities where services can be limited. Talking openly about mental health reduces stigma and encourages people to seek help.
We send our thoughts and strength to all who are hurting and hope for healing and better supports for every community.

Strawberry Protein Smoothie
Taken from
https://www.diabetes.ca/nutrition-fitness/recipes/strawberry-protein-smoothie

This filling smoothie is quick, easy and nourishing, ideal for busy mornings. Smoothies are a great option for busy morning but making sure they provide key nutrients is important. The Greek yogurt and milk provide key nutrients and protein while the fruit adds flavour and fibre.

Ingredients

1/2 cup (125 mL) skim or 1% milk
½ cup (125 mL) frozen unsweetened strawberries
3/4 cup (175 mL) plain 0% Greek yogurt
1 tsp (5 mL) ground flax seed
1 Tbsp (15 mL) hemp seed
Non-nutritive sweetener (optional)

Instructions

In blender, combine milk, strawberries, yogurt, ground flax and hemp seed.
Blend on high speed for 1 minute or until smooth.
Sweeten to taste with sweetener, if desired.

Kindness and Compassion Interview with Ian Cowie

By Lisa Coriale

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
I live in Helsinki with my wife and three boys. In our free time we enjoy going for hikes, snowboarding and mountain biking.

What do you do for a living?
I sell automation technology to the mining industry.

What does kindness and compassion mean to you?
Kindness and compassion to me means doing nice things for others while no one is looking and expecting nothing in return.

Why is it important to show kindness and compassion to others?
What goes around comes around.

How do you show kindness and compassion to others?
I like to cook, so one way I show kindness and compassion is cooking for my friends and family.

How can people show compassion when they are in community?
People can show compassion by listening to others, even when they don't agree with them.
What are some ways people can show kindness and compassion to people with diverse abilities?
First step is to listen. Second step is to repeat step one.

What does being kind to yourself look like? Sometimes I take a day off work to recharge my batteries. I sleep in, go for a long walk in the forest and eat my favorite foods.

What would you say to those people who have negative views or attitude towards people with diverse abilities? Have you met my friend Lisa? She's the best!

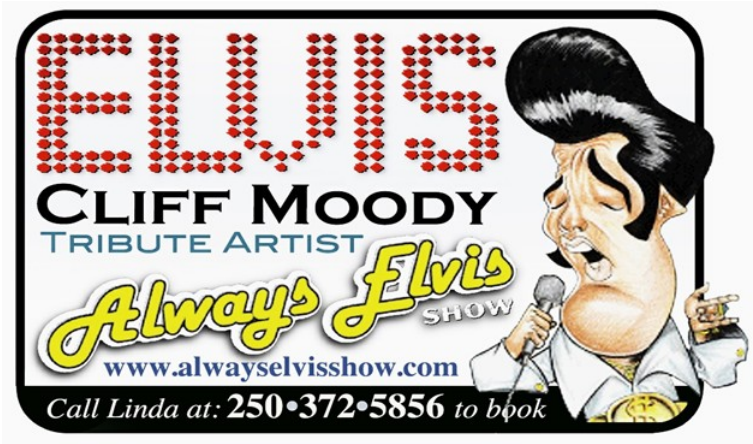
Kamloops: A City Full of Sports, Fun, and Community

By Krystian

Kamloops is a wonderful city with many exciting attractions for people of all ages. **Kamloops** is known for its friendly community, beautiful scenery, and active lifestyle. With great weather, fun festivals, and many sports events, Kamloops is a place people are proud to call home.

One of the biggest attractions in the city is the **Tournament Capital Centre**. This large recreation and sports facility is used for swimming, fitness programs, and major sport tournaments. Teams from across Canada travel to Kamloops to compete. Because the city hosts so many tournaments each year, it is proudly known as *Canada's Tournament Capital*. Sports play a big role in the community and bring people together.

Kamloops is located in a semi-desert, which means it gets lots of sunshine. With sports, festivals, parks, and free community events, Kamloops truly is a special city with something for everyone.



Purple Day 2026: The History and Why It Matters

Purple Day is on **March 26, 2026**. It is a special day when people wear purple to show support for people who live with epilepsy. Purple Day is about learning, kindness, and making sure everyone feels included.

Purple Day is celebrated in many countries around the world. Schools, families, organizations, and communities all take part by wearing purple and sharing information about epilepsy.

The History of Purple Day
Purple Day started in 2008. It was created by a young girl named Cassidy Megan from Canada. Cassidy lives with epilepsy. When she was younger, she felt scared and alone because many people did not understand epilepsy.

Cassidy wanted others to learn the truth about epilepsy so people would not be afraid or unkind. She chose the colour purple because it is linked to the brain and awareness. Her idea quickly grew, and soon people around the world began celebrating Purple Day every year on March 26.

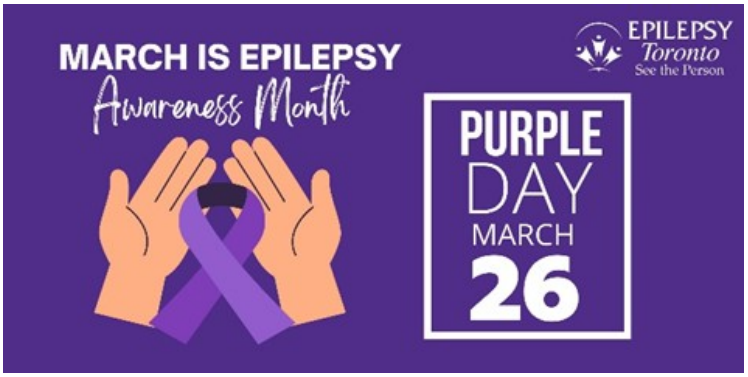
Today, Purple Day helps millions of people learn that epilepsy is a medical condition and that people with epilepsy can live full and happy lives.

What Is Epilepsy?
Epilepsy is a condition that affects the brain. Some people with epilepsy have seizures. Seizures can look different for each person. They are not dangerous by themselves, and they are not something to fear.

People with epilepsy go to school, have jobs, enjoy music, play sports, and spend time with friends—just like everyone else.

Why Purple Day Is Important
Purple Day helps:
Stop bullying and fear
Teach people the facts about epilepsy
Support inclusion and understanding
Remind people they are not alone

When people understand epilepsy, they are kinder and more supportive.



How You Can Help
You can take part in Purple Day by:
Wearing purple on March 26
Sharing kind words and facts
Supporting friends or family with epilepsy
Organizations like Epilepsy Canada help provide education and support for people living with epilepsy and their families.

A Message of Hope
Purple Day 2026 reminds us that everyone deserves respect, safety, and kindness. By learning and standing together, we can make our communities more welcoming for people with epilepsy.

One small action can make a big difference.

Hoppers
Taken from https://www.pixar.com/hoppers
Only In Theaters. March 6, 2026

What if you could talk to animals and understand what they're saying? In Disney and Pixar's all-new feature film "Hoppers," scientists have discovered how to "hop" human consciousness into lifelike robotic animals, allowing people to communicate with animals as animals!

The adventure introduces Mabel, an animal lover who seizes an opportunity to use the technology, uncovering mysteries within the animal world that are beyond anything she could have imagined

Community Spotlight: People in Motion – Supporting Recreation, Health, and Inclusion
By Krystian

This month, we are proud to shine a spotlight on People in Motion, a membership-based non-profit organization in Kamloops that supports people with diverse abilities through recreation, connection, and wellness.

People in Motion believes that recreation is more than just fun—it is an important part of physical health, confidence, and community inclusion. They actively support members in exploring activities that match their interests and goals. Recently, they generously donated a disc golf set to Krystian so he can start playing with his support team. This thoughtful gesture reflects their commitment to encouraging active, healthy lifestyles in practical and meaningful ways.

What stands out most about People in Motion is their culture of kindness and encouragement. Staff take the time to listen, understand individual goals, and provide support that feels respectful and welcoming. By helping members try new activities and stay engaged in the community, they reduce barriers and create opportunities for inclusion.

As spring and summer approach, many members look forward to spending more time outdoors and participating in recreational activities. Organizations like People in Motion make this possible by ensuring people of all abilities have access to supportive, inclusive spaces.

People in Motion is more than a non-profit—it is a community where people are empowered to grow, connect, and thrive. Their dedication helps build a stronger, healthier, and more inclusive Kamloops for everyone.

Mind, Body & Mental Health at KSANews.ca

KSANews.ca (https://ksanews.ca) is a community-focused resource hub that supports the whole person—mental, physical, emotional, and social well-being. Our content is accessible, inclusive, and easy to understand for children, teens, adults, families, and people with diverse abilities. We also provide helpful information for caregivers, educators, and support workers.

Our health news and self-care section shares practical, realistic tips on stress management, healthy routines, diabetes awareness, and overall wellness. We focus on small, achievable steps that respect different abilities and life circumstances. Healthy living articles highlight adapted physical activity, emotional regulation, and community participation, always emphasizing encouragement over pressure.

We also explore how music and creative expression support mental health, and we provide resources on bullying, cyberbullying, and internet safety. Educational tools, including discussions about films like *Cyberbully*, help start meaningful conversations at home and in classrooms about empathy and accountability.

KSANews.ca promotes confidence, kindness, and inclusion in schools while offering disability supports, accessible health information, and personal stories that build understanding of chronic and invisible illnesses. We also share diabetes-friendly recipes, family wellness ideas, and guidance for healthy screen use.

Recently, Ability Online and the Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter spoke with Rogers TV about internet safety for people with developmental disabilities. We shared tips on protecting personal information, recognizing online risks, and using safe platforms.

KSANews.ca is proud to combine health education, inclusion, and community values to help people live healthier, more connected lives.

Blazers Report

By Andrew

With about a month and a week left of the WHL Regular Season, the Kamloops Blazers are going to the playoffs but have yet to wait for an opponent to be determined. Other than that, they also look to grab a spot in the 2026 Memorial Cup Tournament in Kelowna in May, including winning the Memorial Cup itself.

My Experience with Ice Fishing

By **Nada Abdelghaffar**

The first time I stood on a frozen lake, I did not see the endless white stretching around me, but I felt it. I felt the cold air brushing my face, the solid, icy ground beneath my boots, and the quiet nature around me. This is how I would describe the first time I went ice fishing. As a blind person, it was not just a new activity; it was a time to relax, discover, enjoy nature, and get away from my fears.

For many people, a frozen lake is peaceful. But for me—especially the first time—ice fishing felt risky. Since frozen lakes can sometimes be dangerous, I was a little afraid at the start. I felt real excitement when I began drilling into the ice. Using the auger to make a hole was tiring at first because it required a lot of muscle, but afterward I enjoyed it very much—especially when I tried the electric auger and felt it vibrating in my hands.

Holding the fishing rod and trying to catch a fish was also an amazing experience. Even though I did not catch a fish that day, I still loved the experience and relaxing on the lake. I encourage everyone to spend time outdoors and enjoy life. Disabilities do not have to prevent you from trying new things—just be yourself.

Cars and Evolution

By Riley

I think it's so cool to look at evolution and cars and how we got from here

to here

With cars and how much we evolved as humanity - from climbing the first tree to building the first house, to the cities we have now - I'm excited for the times ahead and seeing what is next for humanity.

St. Patrick's Day – A Full Lucky Cauldron

By Tami

St. Patrick's Day is a fun time to play with colour, imagination, and a bit of magic. This month's craft is all about creating your own full St. Patrick's Day cauldron — bright, cheerful, and ready to bring a little luck into your day.

Crafting is good for the mind. It helps lower stress, anxiety, and depression because it keeps our hands busy and our thoughts focused on something we choose. Having choice matters. It gives us control, comfort, and a sense of accomplishment.

This activity is simple, hands-on, and open to your own style. You can make your cauldron as colourful, sparkly, or playful as you want. And of course… keep an eye out for the leprechauns. They love shiny things.

Supplies

- Small Cauldron (dollar store)
- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Glue
- Coloured Markers
- Medium–large gold flake sparkles or glitter

Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/fi3acaWhpco

Buddy Up for Boogie

By Tony

When I was part of a diabetes workshop, we talked about how important exercise is. We also talked about how nice it would be to exercise as a group. I thought about this and had an idea. I decided it would be fun to train for Boogie the Bridge together.

We chose to meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We walk on the track at the TCC. This has been a great place to walk during the winter. There are lots of people around, which makes it feel safe and welcoming.

We stay motivated by having exercise partners. Walking with others helps us keep going. We also keep track of how many laps we walk and how much water we drink. We walk and talk, meet new people, and encourage each other.

We started training in January. We are on track to do the 5 km walk at Boogie the Bridge. Some of us are even thinking about trying the 10 km.

I am feeling really good. After walking, I notice that I have worked up a sweat. I am also starting to lose weight. I think more about what I eat and try to choose healthier snacks.

I like to celebrate my successes. One way I did that was by getting a new water bottle.

Ticket Information

Film Trailer

Location: Kia lounge

Doors Open: 6:00 PM

Drag Performance: 6:30 PM

Film Begins: 7:00 PM

Please register for this free documentary film screening. Everyone is welcome, no one will be turned away. There will be an audience Q&A discussion with local experts and film team. This event is brought to you by Kamloops Society for Community Inclusion, Speak-Up Self-Advocacy Awareness Society, and Story Money Impact.

A Place Where I Belong

By Krystian

Meet Rheanna Toy, a filmmaker and the director of Cloudstreet Media, a company that creates films, videos, and designs. Rheanna took some time to talk about her latest project, which is being screened in Kamloops on March 19th!

How did you come up with the film about disability and LGBTQ intersectionality? My company, Cloudstreet Media, makes the videos for Real Talk, a program that educates people with IDD (Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities) on relationships and sexuality. You can learn more about them at Real-Talk.org. I was talking to them, when they told me they were applying for money to create a social group for 2SLGBTQIA+ people with IDD. They told me about the challenges 2SLGBTQIA+ people with IDD face accessing the queer community, such as lacking a way to get to events, lack of support, and poor accessibility. I thought this was an important issue that might make a good film. I kept in touch with them as they developed the social group that is now called "CQC: Connecting Queer Communities" (HelloCQC.org). I started attending the group, got to know the people in it, and eventually made the documentary film "A Place Where I Belong."

How did you find the subjects for your film? I spent almost a whole year getting to know the people in the group, "Connecting Queer Communities (CQC)". There were a handful of people who I wanted to be in the film. I wanted to choose people who had different perspectives and life stories. I asked them if they were interested. One person was not interested, which was ok. Another interested person, Colin Darge, was sick on the day we filmed, so we didn't feature him. The people who are featured are Alison Klein, Brian Brown, Lyle Lexier, Noah Wang, Amyn Gillani, and Peter Lam Nyugen.

What is happening in Kamloops with the film?
We are holding two screenings of the film in Kamloops in partnership with Kamloops Society For Community Inclusion, Speak-Up Self-Advocacy Awareness Society, and Story Money Impact. The first screening is at 2pm on March 19 and is for self-advocates and their support workers (*if* the self-advocates want their supporters to attend). After the screening, we will discuss the film's topics. The second screening is at 6pm on March 19 and is open to everyone. It will include a drag performance with Miss Mousse and a talkback. I will attend both screenings. They will be at the Sandman Centre Kia Lounge, 300 Lorne ST, Kamloops. They are free. There will be closed captions. If anyone has other access needs they can email Anthony@StoryMoneyImpact.com and/or me at Rheanna@CloudstreetMedia.com and we will try to help.

What did you enjoy about filming this subject?
I enjoyed getting to know the film's subjects better and witnessing their bravery in sharing personal stories that included both difficult and wonderful experiences.

How can we reduce stigma around diverse ability and LGBTQ?
One way to reduce stigma is to educate people about diverse abilities and being 2SLGBTQIA+. I hope this film is a part of doing that. If you have people in your life whom you hope will understand this better, you can invite them to the film screening as a first step.

How can society improve their knowledge on this subject?
Again, it's about education, and it's about getting to know each other. We need to see more people with IDD in queer spaces to normalize diverse abilities within the queer community. More neurotypical people need to meet people with diverse abilities, talk with them, make friends, and get to know each other in welcoming spaces where we can try to understand each other better.

How can society treat people with diverse needs?
It is up to each one of us to decide how we will treat each other. It is a choice. Sometimes society treats people with diverse needs poorly, as if they are a burden. They don't take the time to get to know them or consider how to help them access the things neurotypical people take for granted. At other times, they try their best to understand and provide access. We need more people to try and understand. I think we all need to listen to and support each other better.

What else would you like to add? How can people find you online?
You can learn more about the film at www.APlaceWhereIBelong.com. There is a list of educational resources there, as well as information on all of our upcoming screenings. On instagram you can follow me @CloudstreetMedia or @RheannaToy.

PuSh Festival: Accessible Arts in the Vancouver Community

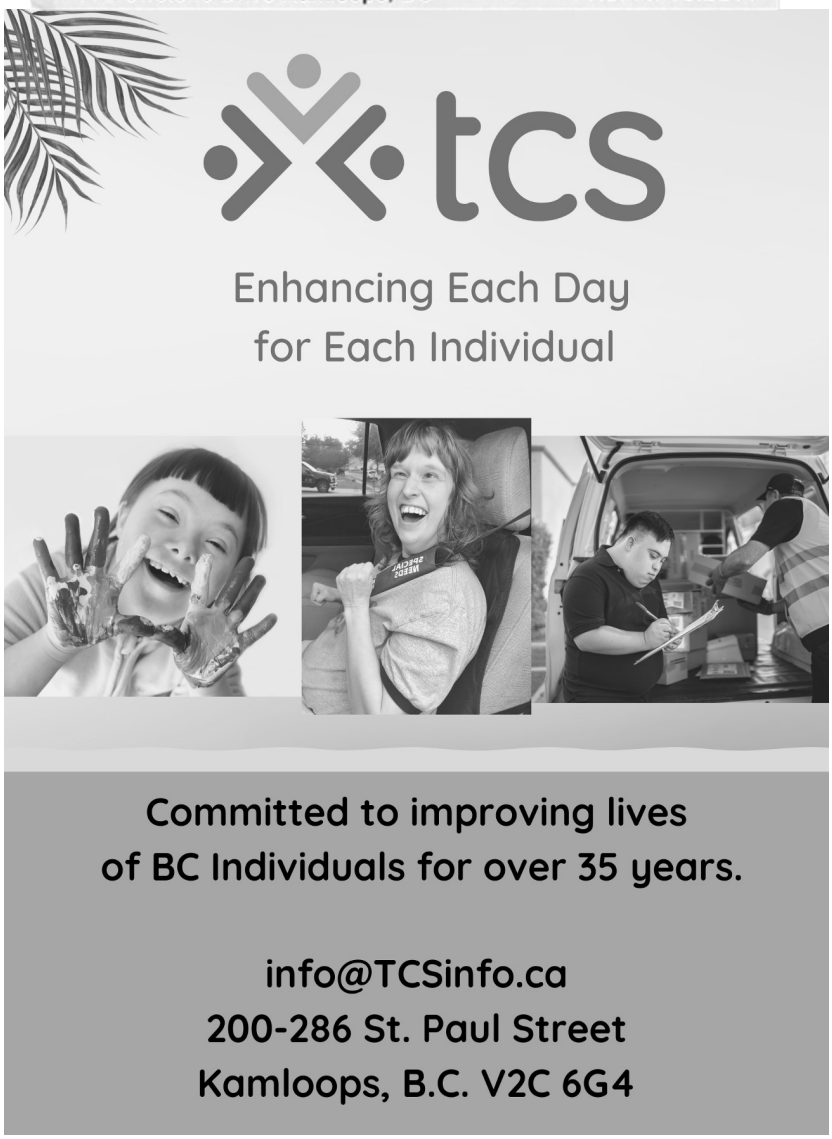
By Ben

The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival has just wrapped up, and it was an exciting experience for the Vancouver arts community.

One highlight of the festival was the work of Andrea, the Accessibility Coordinator, who helped make sure the arts were welcoming and inclusive for everyone. Andrea played an important role in supporting accessible performances and ensuring community members could fully take part in the festival.

The festival showcased a wide range of creative performances and demonstrated how accessibility and the arts can work together. Events like this help create space for people of all abilities to enjoy theatre, music, and performance.

The cost to attend accessible programming was $59, and many participants felt the experience was well worth it. The events were well-organized, engaging, and thoughtfully designed with accessibility in mind.

Overall, PuSh Festival continues to show leadership in accessible arts and community inclusion in Vancouver.

To learn more, visit the PuSh Festival website and explore future accessible arts opportunities.
https://pushfestival.ca/