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Imagine Canada plays a key role

Offers support for nonprofits and charities

When it comes to supporting Canada's charitable and nonprofit organizations, there is no question that Imagine Canada is a real leader. Providing tools, resources and networking opportunities are just a few of the many services offered.

Add in research, shaping public policy and public engagements, and it becomes clear how important Imagine Canada is to the well-being of the nation's nonprofit and charitable organizations.

"Imagine Canada offers a wealth of information and research that identifies emerging trends and issues within the sector that plays a vital role in how a nonprofit organization decides to operate," says Janice Bell, director of Volunteer Edmonton.

She adds that most nonprofits often lack time, resources and money required to generate the kinds of information that Imagine Canada freely provides.

"Take corporate volunteerism, for example. When Imagine Canada released its newest study on this issue, it gave nonprofits a glimpse into how and why corporations become involved in volunteering and donating."

For an organization interested in engaging corporations, this information is valuable," Bell explains.

The Imagine Canada website features news and updates on current projects they are involved in, along with an extensive "nonprofit library."

It is a place where visitors can search the catalogue for items related to the nonprofit sector.

A closer look at their programs and services reveals a wide range of resources that include ethical fundraising, awards programs and public engagement campaigns designed to heighten the awareness of the 161,000 charities and nonprofit organizations in Canada.

On the research and public policy side, Imagine Canada plays an important role in collecting, gathering and analyzing pertinent research and data to help provide insight into matters related to nonprofit and charitable groups, as well as share information with public officials to ensure government is aware of the sector's concerns and issues.

"The key thing here is the level of support," says Bell. "It's more than an information resource. Imagine Canada actively champions for nonprofits, and works to raise awareness about volunteerism and charitable giving."

Organizations can further benefit by signing up to become a member.

Access to additional research, expert speakers, discounts on publications and events, newsletters, and professional development opportunities are just a few of the perks included.

For more information on Imagine Canada, visit www.imaginecanada.ca.

For more information or suggestions for story ideas, please contact Evelyn Pham, communications coordinator at epham@volunteeredmonton.com, call 780-732-6655 or check out our website at www.volunteeredmonton.com. Volunteer Edmonton is a program of The Support Network.



You can wax the competition

For the 18th year in a row, the Canadian Birkebeiner Society is sponsoring the Learn To Loppet ski program, starting Saturday and running until Feb. 9.

The program is designed to improve the techniques of participants and get them ready for the Birkebeiner Ski Festival on Feb. 13 and 14.

Starting Saturday morning with a basic waxing and ski testing workshop, classes will run every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. Proper strides, race techniques and Birkie preparation will be all be covered in the six weeks leading up to the event.

Information on the Learn To Loppet program can be found on the Canadian Birkebeiner website (www.canadian-birkie.com) or at various ski and sports stores around the city.

The Birkebeiner Ski Festival is Canada's largest classic style skiing event. The festival utilizes 100 km of trails crossing through the Ukrainian Cultural Village, Elk Island Park and the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area.

This year, the event boasts five ski events of differing lengths and difficulties. But it's always about having fun.