

GET ACTIVE PASSPORT

Alongside the Step Program, Active Salmon Arm is promoting the Get Active Passport Program. Participants record their activities in passports to enter for a chance to win prizes. The two-phased program, funded through a \$34,500 Union of BC Municipalities Community Health Promotion Fund grant, ran from April to June 2007 in the elementary schools and September to November in the community.

Active Salmon Arm hired David Knight to coordinate the program. Without dedicated PE teacher positions in elementary schools, the teachers embraced Knight's suggestions for PE class activities and opportunities for students to fill in their passports.

"For me to come in with a recreation background to suggest five or six games to them, they were really appreciative of it," Knight said.

The reluctance of one school's teachers to get involved with the program because of the additional work it could create was alleviated once they recognized the support and suggestions Knight provided.

"I offered to come in and do after-school programs and lunch-hour programs for them and they jumped on it and had me in as many days as they could," he said. *"For them, it was a great bonus."*

Each school that participated received a gift certificate for a school sports supplier to purchase equipment for the school for the upcoming year. Active Salmon Arm also bought about \$1,000 worth of athletic equipment to provide incentive prizes to the students.



"The students are walking extra laps around the halls and school grounds to increase their steps,"

- Donna Flatman

"Sometimes just to give them that prize was enough to light them up for a day and get them excited and keep them going," he observed. *"Walking into the classroom and handing them a new Nerf football or soccer ball—they were thrilled. Every time I came back to the school they always wanted to show me they had it with them and they were playing with it."*

More than 800 elementary students participated in the program across three schools, for an average of 88 minutes per week of structured activity during school time. Many of the schools are also registered with Action Schools! BC and have been doing morning dance warm-ups and afternoon stretches.

In fall 2007, two classes (60 students) were given pedometers and passwords to the Active Salmon Arm Step Program's virtual walk, logging their progress each week.

"The students are walking extra laps around the halls and school grounds to increase their steps," Flatman said. In conjunction with the Get Active Passport Program in the community this fall, Active Salmon Arm also approached local businesses to offer Try it, you'll like it opportunities for people to try a facility or program for free.

"We had one couple come in with their kids saying that the one time they could try ice-skating was during our free skate day," Knight said. *"It was the first time they had ever been ice-skating and the kids enjoyed it thoroughly. Now they want to come and do it more, whereas before they really hadn't noticed it or known about it."*

Knight has observed the Step and Passport programs leading to an increase in physical activity.

"It's definitely having a greater impact on the community," he said. When Active Salmon Arm first started its free 5 Walks/5 Weeks group walks in September, only a few people showed up, but by October more than 15 people were attending.

Armstrong/Spallumcheen Discovers its Routes

January 2008

Hardware store employees, mayor and council, and a radio personality in Armstrong and Spallumcheen have jumped on the bandwagon to join a virtual trek along the route travelled by the area's early European settlers.

Armstrong/Spallumcheen's Active Communities committee is bringing local history into its version of the Steps Out online activity tracker program. The website (www.overlanderwalkthewalk.com) tells the story of Catherine O'Hare Schubert – the first European woman to enter British Columbia overland from eastern Canada in 1862 during the gold rush, before eventually settling in Spallumcheen (the area between Vernon and Enderby). While pregnant, she travelled with her three children, her husband and more than a hundred men by foot, Red River cart, river raft and horseback from Fort Garry (now Winnipeg).

Tara Shantz, who leads the Armstrong/Spallumcheen Active Communities committee of 20-plus partners, heard about Steps Out from neighbouring communities at the BC Recreation and Parks Association's Active Communities regional roundtable in Summerland in October 2007. Now, groups and individuals are clipping on their pedometers, walking around town and challenging each other, tracking their steps across the online map in memory of the Schuberts.

"A lot of people around here know about [Catherine]," Shantz said. And her descendants, including her great-great-granddaughter are still living in Armstrong.

This summer, participants in the walking program will join the Schubert family reunion at a community picnic in the park (where there is a monument to Catherine) to celebrate their progress along the route and remember their heritage.



Nearly 250 people had registered for the Steps Out program by mid-January. Among them are workplaces and other groups who have been staying motivated by tracking their collective progress across the map. Shantz says this impressive group includes 18 individuals who had logged over a million steps each.

"It's been very good for the workplace," Shantz noted. *"Business owners have said to me that it's really boosted morale, and people are looking at their pedometers and seeing who's got the most [steps] every day. And Sandy Melvin who owns Shepherd's [Hardware] gets on the PA in the morning before they open up and says, 'Have you logged in, have you got your steps.'"*

- Launched a Steps Out website with a historical map
- Workplace walking groups logging steps on the website
- Grants from BCRPA through Active Communities (\$5,000 & \$300)
- Hosting active events: "Lets Get Physical" Dance and Dance Marathon, Great Pumpkin Relay, First Night
- Awarded pedometers through ActNow BC Activity Challenge in 2007
- Active Communities committee with 20-plus community partners
- Gained support from both mayors and councils
- Hosting Communities in Bloom walk tours
- Swapping sporting equipment

Populations: 4,526 Armstrong; 5,707 Spallumcheen (BC Stats 2005)

- Strong agricultural roots
- Armstrong hosts the Interior Provincial Exhibition and Stampede
- The name Spallumcheen, meaning beautiful valley, derives from the Splots'in First Nation
- Facilities include a skateboard park, ice arena, playing fields, outdoor pool, hiking & biking trails, golf course

(Sources: www.cityofarmstrong.bc.ca, www.spallumcheentwp.bc.ca, www.hellobc.com)



A sponsor radio station is also hitting the airwaves with encouraging messages. An announcer from Sun FM in Vernon challenged the mayors from the City of Armstrong and Township of Spallumcheen to a walk-off in January.

"They come on the radio and talk about how far they are," Shantz said. The station's website encourages people to *"slip on those shoes and get going with the station who takes the stairs."*

The two mayors and councils have shown their support for Active Communities in other ways after Shantz made presentations to them. Both councils passed resolutions supporting the 20% increase in physical activity by 2010. They also both funded the Active Communities committee to print a banner with the Active Communities Armstrong/Spallumcheen logo to raise awareness of the initiative at active events.

"We take that everywhere with us," Shantz said. Since getting started in the fall, the committee has put on a Great Pumpkin Relay and a First Night Active Event. Coming up will be a dance marathon for Spirit of BC Week on February 9 (with a \$300 grant from the BC Recreation and Parks Association through Active Communities). This is targeted for the whole family, with free admission and 6 hours of local DJ sounds. Other exciting events, Shantz noted, will be a Move for Health Day event in May, a mini-triathlon in the summer, a fun day at the ranch and a bike safety rodeo next fall. The committee has also reached out to the community at a seniors' health fair and through the Rotary Club.

Armstrong and Spallumcheen were awarded pedometers through the ActNow BC Activity Challenge's pedometer grants program in 2007. Proceeds from the pedometers' sales, along with a \$5,000 grant from BCRPA through Active Communities provided funding for the website and their other active initiatives and events.

One senior in particular is avidly tracking his steps with his pedometer. The 79-year-old stops in at Shantz's gym, Fitness Matters, every day so she can enter his steps onto the website for him.

"He walks every day; he walks all around town. He stops in at every business to say hi to everybody,"

- Shantz said.

The walking program is a key part of Armstrong/Spallumcheen's Active Community plan. To gather community feedback for the plan, the committee surveyed people at a fair last summer. Respondents' perceived barriers to getting active were mainly a lack of motivation and lack of time. Walking can be done anywhere independently at flexible times so the local Steps Out program was developed.

To create more opportunities to walk, the Active Communities committee is seeking funding to maintain trails (in partnership with local youth groups) and to do a feasibility study for a rails-to-trails project along the railway running through town. Shantz's long-term hope is to connect with rails-to-trails projects in the Okanagan region.

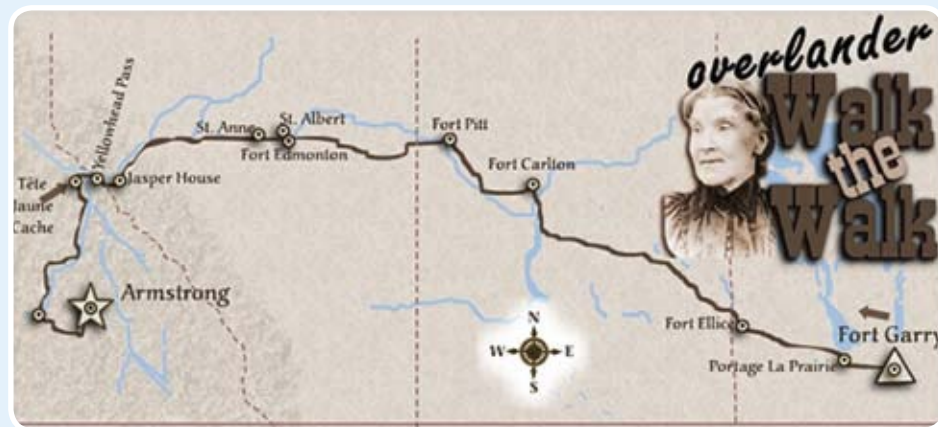


Photo illustration courtesy of stepsout.com, Catherine Schubert photo courtesy of Trevor Schubert



City of Trail Gets Going for Life

February 2007



Through Trail Parks and Recreation's community-wide initiative Go 4 Your Life – students and seniors in particular are finding new ways to get active.

The City's \$35,000 grant from the Union of BC Municipalities Community Health Promotion Fund got Go 4 Your Life up and running in 2007. The grant funded a part-time coordinator who developed an Active Community plan on top of coordinating programs.

Newly-offered Osteofit classes at the Trail Aquatic and Leisure Centre are improving older women's balance and boosting their confidence to walk outside. Go 4 Your Life Project Coordinator Sarah McAuley and another woman are certified to run the classes. Developed out of BC Women's Hospital, Osteofit offers safe exercise and education for people with osteoporosis and those at risk of falling.

"With just my class, seeing the progress of the ladies has been huge," McAuley observed. *"They've been saying that it's a great program and they love coming to it twice a week. It's nice for them to be able to go somewhere and have a bit of social time as well as getting exercise at the same time."* The women in her class range in age from 60 to 78.

Meanwhile, the younger generation has been dancing its way to an active lifestyle since the Go 4 Your Life committee brought dance instructors into an elementary school.

"[The teachers] said the instructor was phenomenal and the students really enjoyed it. It was a big help for them to have somebody pay for the instruction so they were able to offer a little bit more to their classes," McAuley said. The teachers have told her how beneficial it's been for the students to have the opportunity to try different types of physical activity, other than sports, that they can then integrate into their lives.

Go 4 Your Life is also looking into renting the curling rink for PE classes. *"They can go and do it during school to learn a different sport that they wouldn't have the opportunity to do on their own."*

In addition, two school classes got sets of pedometers to start a walking program, as part of Trail's pedometer grant through the ActNow BC Activity Challenge. Trail has launched its Steps Out online walking/pedometer program, based on the Penticton model (www.stepsout.com/trail).

"They can go and do it during school to learn a different sport that they wouldn't have the opportunity to do on their own."

- Sarah McAuley

- Launched the Go 4 Your Life initiative
- Held a sport, recreation, tourism & health fair bringing together sports associations
- Launched the Trail Steps Out website at www.stepsout.com/trail
- New Osteofit program for older women
- Dance classes, curling offered to school PE classes
- Received grants from UBCM (\$35,000), BCRPA Active Communities (\$2,500 and \$5,000), True Sport, Field Hockey BC (\$500)
- Awarded pedometers from the ActNow BC Activity Challenge in 2007
- BCRPA funded a baseline measurement survey of activity levels in 2006
- Developed an Active Communities Go 4 Your Life Plan
- Students designed the Go 4 Your Life logo through a logo contest
- Teck Cominco workplace wellness committee offering wellness and health education programs to employees and their families

Trail Info

- **Population:** 7,889 in Trail (BC Stats, 2005)
- Aquatic & Leisure Center with swimming, weight room, tennis courts, and multipurpose room
- Memorial Arena with a large rink, kids rink, gymnasium, 2 fitness studios, curling rink, squash & racquetball courts, and walking around concourse of arena
- Soccer and baseball fields
- Hayley Field Track
- Skiing, hiking and biking trails
- Teck Cominco is one of the world's largest fully integrated zinc and lead smelting and refining operations

(Sources: www.hellobc.com, Go 4 Your Life! plan)