

SPIRIT OF OLIVER NOMINATION: COMMUNITY BUILDER OLIVER CURLING CLUB

For over 50 years, the Oliver Curling Club has shown what a dedicated group of volunteers can build together. The curling centre opened in October 1970 thanks to volunteers who contributed countless hours, took out debentures and memberships, and secured community support. Their efforts built the facility without public tax dollars, and it has served generations in Oliver ever since — including one founding member who still curls today!

This spirit of volunteerism has never faded. Volunteers provide the leadership and hands-on work that keep the curling centre running year after year, ensuring the sport remains accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

Today, the club's more than 250 members contribute over 5,000 volunteer hours every year. Only two positions — the icemaker and the janitor — are paid, and even then volunteers still pitch in with ice preparation and post-event cleanup. Everything else — league coordination, youth programming, major events, facility maintenance, curling instruction, community outreach, fundraising, kitchen and lounge work, day-to-day operations of the organization, and more — is carried out entirely by volunteers who simply love curling and the community. All these volunteer efforts support strong community participation and deliver real benefits — promoting physical activity, social connection, healthy aging, and a sense of belonging. Each week from October through March, more than 325 participants play in 10 leagues, including leagues for adults, youth, stick curlers, Special Olympians, and teams from local businesses out for fun and bonding. Volunteers also run the school program that introduces curling to hundreds of local students each year, take floor curling to schools and community events, provide Learn to Curl courses, and mentor new curlers. Plus they organize several bonspiels and events each season, including hosting the 2025 Mixed Provincial Championships that brought

teams and families from across B.C. to enjoy both the competition and the community.

Oliver Curling Club volunteers have continued to improve the facility, including planning and fundraising for the recent expansion that added modern accessible washrooms and an elevator. The curling centre is now fully accessible on both levels for on- and off-ice activities, and it has become a year-round community hub. It supports a wide range of community uses — from rentals for meetings, parties, and special events to winter ice rentals — and it is home to a baseball camp in August and the Oliver Community Arts Council's fall art show, several pieces from which now brighten the main entrance for all to enjoy.

The Oliver Curling Club is a non-profit society committed to inclusivity, fun, and community connection. Open to everyone and powered by volunteers who care, the curling centre continues to be a place that brings people together on and off the ice. For more than 50 years, volunteers have not only sustained the club but helped strengthen the community around it. Their efforts have supported inclusive activities for all ages and abilities; welcomed people new to curling and new to the community; and kept the centre vibrant, accessible, and well maintained. What these volunteers have built together is more than a sports facility — it's a gathering place that has become an enduring and familiar part of community life in greater Oliver.