



OPTIONS NEWSLETTER

Fall 2010

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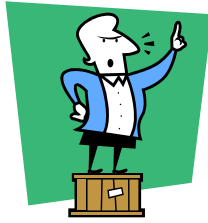


Created/Edited through the ILRC Options Newsletter Committee. The content of this newsletter is not necessarily a reflection of ILRC alone, it is a reflection of our consumer population.

***Comfortability:
Falling Forward in
a Good Way!***

From the Soapbox

A John Young Perspective



For many, the fall is traditionally a transitional season: students are headed back to school, people are wearing sweaters and jackets again and there can be a newness approaching. The holiday season isn't so far away, after all, from blending Thanksgiving into the rising excitement of an approaching Christmas.

For the disability community, there can be a certain apprehension, even trepidation, with the emerging fall. The reality for many is that fall represents the closing of accessibility. Winter draws near and summer fades away. There is a sedentary process in fall – stay inside where it is warm and limit your outings. This is not voluntary. Some don't want to be bothered with arranging transportation due to the persistent uncertainties associated with inclement weather, transit availability, late night pick-ups and the cold (although Manitobans with disabilities are just as resilient as any other, cold weather is a concern for anyone in this province). The days seem shorter and the nights longer. The disability community, during the colder darker months, can be stationed indoors for a great deal of time, simply due to a lack of accessibility to daily activity and a lack of knowledge on how to circumvent such barriers. This may be a reason why our Self-Advocacy program is always filled with new consumer intakes throughout the winter. With that said, what I am really looking for are any suggestions and ideas on how people are getting past these barriers to community involvement, how you are avoiding the lock down post-summer, and how we can share these ideas in some forum.

It is ILRC's desire to fortify techniques in the summer to prevent people *battering down the hatches* in darker months. This is the 21st Century – one of the major pieces missing in the disability community is focused community effort. As a single unified voice, agencies would be better prepared to support consumers from all walks of life. We all seek the same desire of accessibility, participation and inclusion. Without focused group discussion on how to deal with these issues holistically, we are left with patchwork methods of self-advocacy. ILRC is well poised to support an inter-agency coalition to facilitate real change for individual community members. There is a real need to sustain the vigor of summer to lend vitality through the cold. The exploration for consumers to find new strategies and programming for improving or maintaining physical and mental well-being is ongoing.

Many years ago, when I first came to this community, one of the most interesting forums available at that time, either as a person with a disability or as a program facilitator, was an ongoing Executive Director's forum. Several directors from community agencies gathered monthly to discuss certain issues prevalent in the community. These issues were addressed as a unified group and subsequently placed in the lap of government representatives. The government in turn was made aware of specific issues and requests represented by a large segment of the cross-disability community. This made a difference for the community as a whole in the late 80s and early 90s. This could have tremendous impact, especially when you think of the processes developing in disaster management, community living models, the erosion of wages for consistent and quality attendant care, lack of affordable and accessible housing for the disability community and the inadequate pensions

people are forced to live on when they are not supported by private agencies. We may have made some small gains but the *claw-backs* witnessed today are beginning to outweigh our gains.

A strong coalition would propel us forward. Any takers?

The Board Corner

Ken Shachtay

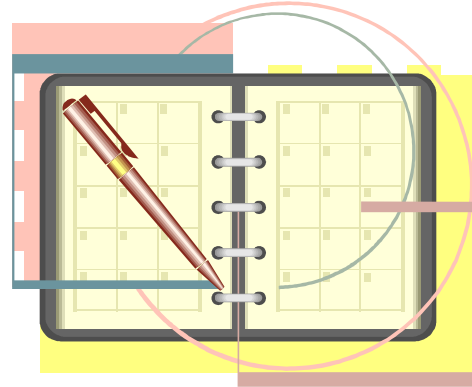


I have the privilege of being the new Chairperson for the Independent Living Resource Centre Board of Directors. I have been active and involved with the ILRC on a number of levels for many years and I hope to contribute in positive ways during my tenure.

Some of my unique experiences through ILRC include operating as a Self-manager through the SFMC program. This was actually my introduction to ILRC and one of the key reasons I left Brandon for Winnipeg. That is another story, of course. My involvement has extended from the PACE (Personal Attendant Community Education) Steering Committee to the City of Winnipeg's Access Advisory Committee and the ILRC-supported Accessible Transportation Committee.

I hope to continue to contribute to the ILRC in different ways. This is a good opportunity given the strong position ILRC is in and the number of new programs and initiatives on the way. The platform for ILRC delivery will enter a national and international arena of recognition as other provinces have caught on to the enormous benefits of PACE and Disability Awareness Resource Training

(DART). Above all this, ILRC remains committed to serving consumers wishing to tap into the enormous potential of Independent Living itself. This will be an exciting year!



Did you Know?

By Natalie Pirson



Check out the following pieces of information:

Banks are plowing ahead into the 21st Century, in more ways than one! Financial Institutions across Canada will Provide Audio ATM's.

Access for Sight-Impaired Consumers (ASIC) has been working closely with several banks and BC-based Credit Unions to address consumer requests for installations of audio-equipped automated teller machines. Details of accessible Audio ATM's across Canada can be found at:

<http://www.asic.bc.cx/releases>

Trust Me – I Will Catch You!

Doug Lockhart

Have you ever played trust games in summer camp where a partner asks you to climb up on a bleacher, turn around, close your eyes and fall backwards? Several years ago consumers of ILRC consolidated a mutual trust to work together at providing creative solutions to issues facing the disability community in the area of attendant care. With that trust came a training program that has been viewed as cutting edge thinking and the true application of the Independent Living Philosophy. PACE was born and has become established as a program model that our community can count on. The Province of Alberta saw the impact PACE is having and has invited ILRC Winnipeg into a process where they are willing to be the person(s) on the bleachers trusting that we have the safety net to prevent them from falling any further in their plight to solve their issues around attendant care.

Early this Spring our phone rang with the Alberta Spinal Cord Injury Task Team Coordinator calling to ask numerous questions about ILRC's PACE program. They had heard about the reputation of our attendant training program and were excited to learn more about how this model of training might be employed to solve some of the issues Albertans are facing around attendant supports. She went on to say how training programs in attendant care were being taken out of colleges in Alberta and that there is already a shortage of attendant support for people with disabilities in their Province. I assured her that we had lived that story and came to the realization that our community had to create our own solutions to this matter and have gained the expertise to lead them through a similar process.

That phone call was followed by several more calls, emails and a couple of teleconferences. The Alberta team came to trust ILRC and our model of PACE, a program that has received accolades from community partners, participants, consumers, politicians, and leaders in the disability community. With a sound understanding of PACE and how ILRC Winnipeg can train Alberta agencies to duplicate our process we entered the planning stages of delivering the PACE Concept, Administrative components and Training Modules to selected Alberta agencies.

At this point the Task Team Coordinator and the Executive Director for the Canadian Paraplegic Association (Alberta) will be visiting Winnipeg in October to finalize the plans and agreement trusting ILRC Winnipeg to deliver a proven concept and product that will have lasting impact on the disability community of Alberta. This will be followed by delivery of the 3 phases of this project over the period of one year to one selected agency. This process highlights the accomplishments and expertise of our disability community in Manitoba and demonstrates the strength of our network in providing that safety net for partners in Alberta and across Canada. As the value of this pilot project is realized the impact that PACE has on Canadians will resound for a long time to come. This is due in large part to establishing a mutual trust in our community to **lead the way**.

On a Steel Chair I Ride ...

Natalie Pirson

“I’ve seen a million faces and I’ve rocked them all.” Such is a lyric from one of the rock band Bon Jovi’s hit songs, ‘Wanted Dead or Alive.’

I’ve been an avid Bon Jovi fan for the past 16 years. Since 1995, I’ve seen the band live 14 times, in various cities in Canada and in the United States. Of course, the number 1 question people always ask, “Isn’t it the same show every time?” For me, every show is a different experience; different city, different people. I have met so many people and made so many wonderful friends because of this band and seen several cities that I would not have otherwise traveled to.

I started using a wheelchair five years ago. Obviously, this wasn’t going to have any effect on my Jovi hobby; I just had to figure out seating a little differently. No big deal, right? Well.... It was a shock to my system to learn that dealing with accessible seating rather than non-accessible seating is an entirely different ball of wax. From varying issues of having to deal with individuals telling me I could not sit up front on the floor because I use a wheelchair to being told I could not sit in the seat that I had purchased because it’s not the “wheelchair section,” I learned how to be my own advocate; how to better educate myself and other individuals to realize that, hey, people who have disabilities have choices like everyone else and have a right to access the same systems (i.e. I paid for a front row seat on the floor so I expect a seat in the front row on the floor!). Not to be told I can’t access that area and have to sit further back in a designated accessible seating section.

I have come in contact with several individuals with disabilities who have faced the same issues -- we all just want to enjoy some rocking live music, am I right? Nonetheless, these issues aren’t a hindrance for fanatics (or whatever word one chooses to describe fans like myself,) and I’m looking forward to show #15 sometime next year... and 16... and 17.... and 18....



Looking Back on a Summertime Dip

Mel Graham

I wonder how many Options readers heard about this summer’s program on Friday evenings at the North Central (Centennial) Pool. Did you know that this Pool has recently undergone major renovations to make it about as accessible as any such facility can get? Well if you didn’t and you’re

any kind of a swimmer—or even whether you’re no kind at all—you missed a great experience, especially because it was absolutely free!

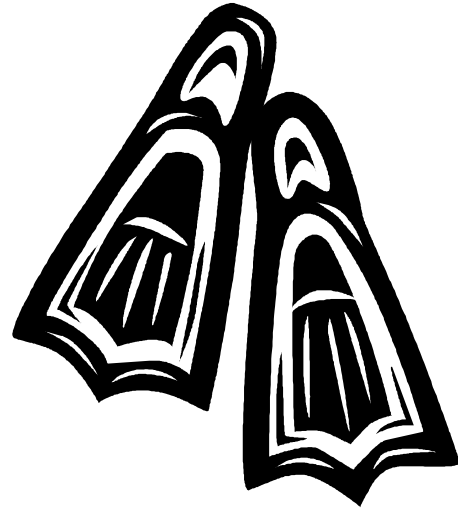
The program ran through the month of August so I attended on the 20th to see how it was doing. As I had kind of figured, less than a half-dozen people showed up, which might not be all that bad, given the evening time slot and the fact it was a Friday night. Let’s all hope this is the first of several such promotional initiatives because the Centennial’s accessible features are extensive enough to make it well worth the trouble.

I assume there’s a Hoyer lift somewhere but you can also use a “Wet Chair” and, via the ramp, you can get into the water that way. Holding the rail and walking down this long ramp is how I made my entrance. It was closest to the change-room and there are steps with a railing as well as on the other side of the shallow end.

The lane markers, technically known as Turbos, are everything a wandering blind swimmer could wish for. In pools like the Pan-Am where competitions regularly take place, angular, propeller-shaped Turbos now in use are designed to minimize wave action, thereby reducing the interference that adds fractions of seconds to swim times. But being recreational, the Centennial uses disk-shaped markers which, though no fun to strike with hands or feet either, are still much kinder than those propeller-shaped devils whose blades are, take it from me, just plain *nasty*. Mind you, the Pan-Am, where I swim once a week (when it’s not under repairs), can accommodate blind swimmers nicely who want to use that pool instead of its older, imperial measurement one.

The water temperature was on the warm side for me and the shallow end really is *shallow*

but apart from those minor quibbles, I strongly recommend the North Central to swimmers with all kinds of disabilities, whether you’re looking for a dip of several minutes’ duration, wanting a few hours of strenuous exercise, or anything in between. I happen to be old enough to still be in awe at the extent to which, in my lifetime, generic recreational facilities are now being designed to incorporate such a wide range of physical and perceptual requirements (the old idea of “normal” is getting chased off to the sidelines, as it were). But no matter your age, I think you’ll be quite impressed by the accessible features at the Centennial Pool, located, I should mention, at 90 Sinclair Street on the corner of Sinclair and Dufferin.



Voice your Choice!

Joanne Legault

Waking up in the morning to the sounds of my dogs getting restless lets me know it's time to let them out. Proceeding downstairs I find myself thinking about my day ahead: what are the things I need to accomplish today? Like most people, life gets busy –planning transportation, school arrangements, preparing the house and yard for winter, balancing work and social activities.

Like many people with a disability going through the processes of life's activities, how often do we actually think about our disability in daily processes? Of course I plan around ensuring that I can participate but it is no more than a thought. It becomes a very natural process; it's just part of you.

For the most part I completely forget the fact that I am blind or, simpler put, that the rest of the world can see. This can create some awkward moments!! I remember the time I had some issues with my nylons rolling down on me as I was walking, so I decided to take care of it by leaning against a wall while removing my shoe and taking them off one at a time. When my task was completed I felt relieved that I would not be walking around trying to pull up a nylon that was rolling down on me only to be startled by a gentleman introducing himself to me!

I was so consumed with fixing my problem that I forgot that **yes** other people can see!

I have caught myself more than once walking down the outside stairs clear across the front lawn, the whole time in thought about my day ahead at work only to suddenly realize that I am clearly walking blindly and that I left my stick in the house. It's only at that moment of realization that I become paralyzed and

struggle to find my way back to the house to get my stick.

So I ask: are people with disabilities really that different from anyone else? Clearly there is still a need for disability awareness otherwise there would be no need for awareness and education models.

Is it the mindset that needs to change as it refers to people with disabilities? We are just like everyone else. We act on our wants and needs. We are working together to include people with disabilities. We are seeing progress in environments, products and services. Communities are starting to realize the basic human right of inclusion by incorporating people with disabilities.

For more information on Disability Awareness Resource Awareness Training (DART), don't hesitate to ask for a DART brochure the next time you are at the centre or simply call Joanne at 947-0194.



A Day in the Life ...

Ana Gschwend

This was my second summer as a full-time receptionist at the Independent Living Resource Centre. Once again, the experience was a very rewarding one. My duties included liaising with consumers, filing and logging the staff sign-in sheet, directing calls and inquiries and attending to other duties as required in a busy community organization.

I found the staff here to be warm and friendly, and always willing to help whenever I needed it. When people would come in, I liked to ask who they were and what they needed, and made sure that they were supported accordingly. When I'd get lost in the mall, which happened a few times as the mall is quite large, the mall staff were more than willing to help, as was the occasional passerby. It felt good to be independent from the time I arrived at the mall to the time I left it.

But if you were to come into the centre on days when I was here, you might have seen my face behind the desk, but I would not be able to see yours. You may notice, if you asked for an application or a form of some sort to be handed to you by me, that there would be a funny-looking label on the spine of the file folder I'd be getting your requested papers from—the label would have oddly shaped raised bumps on it, and you might wonder, 'what is that?' If you came into the centre, and didn't tell me who you were within a short amount of time, you might notice that I would patiently, but persistently, inquire as to who you were, as I am very safety-conscious and strive to protect the other occupants in the centre. If ever you saw me walking around in the centre, you might notice that I carried a stick-like object with me, moving it back and forth a few inches in front of me, as if I had

trouble walking unassisted. Why would I bring up these possible sightings, you may ask? What does this have to do with my job?

I am totally blind. That's right, I am blind, and I do all of the things that the other receptionists that work at the front desk do, to the best of my ability and as quickly, and neatly, as I can. I answer the phone, use the computer, come and go on my own, come to work and go home using Handi-Transit, which is connected to Winnipeg's public transit service, and generally do the same things that any other employee at the centre does in terms of managing myself and my time.

Along with being just like everyone else at the centre, comes the perk of being treated, as well, like everyone else at the centre. I've gotten gentle criticism from my superiors—which I take to heart and use to help me improve on my work performance, been asked to do different things for different staff members, and have been teased—in a good way, of course!—mercilessly by the other staff members, particularly about my love of chips, fast food, and salt intake! The staff, when they approach me, let me know who they are, but I've been able to remember their voices within a short amount of time, so after a while, all they'd need to say was, "hi, Ana," or make another comment (like a dig about my love of salt), and I'd know who they were. (Only a few staff members come down on me about my fondness of salt, and they, and I, know who they are!) The people who come into the centre can usually tell that I'm blind, and treat me like they'd treat any other of the centre's receptionists—I've had nice and not-so-nice people walk in and speak to me in a manner they deemed fit for the circumstances. I have enjoyed my two summers working at the ILRC, and I hope to work here again in the future, be that on a short or long-term basis.

In conclusion, I feel that anyone could do the job I did at the ILRC. They just need training,

support, and to work with fellow employees who had high, but reasonable expectations of them—just as the ILRC’s staff had of me, and a willingness to work hard and accept the feedback that is given to them and use it to their advantage. I am not sure yet if going to university is going to be a part of my future plans, but I would like to be a receptionist for an organization when I leave school, or work at a job that helps either people with disabilities or children, particularly infants or small children. I know that I may encounter barriers and negative opinions out there from the uninformed and uneducated, but I feel that I, and others with disabilities, can change those opinions to positive ones and knock down those barriers one step at a time.

If we demonstrate to our employers that we are just as capable of doing things as our able-bodied peers, then hopefully, one day, the employment of a person with a disability in any work setting will be something that won’t even be given a second thought. That worker will be met with support, encouragement and opportunities for learning and personal growth, just as my employment at the ILRC was a chance for me to learn, grow, and do the best that I could at the great job I was given.



Scent Free Environment

Many people have severe allergies, asthma, and environmental sensitivities to such things as hair spray, scented deodorant, perfume, aftershave, scented fabric softeners, etc. The ILRC believes it’s really important to provide a scent-free, safe space for everyone, so please don’t wear fragrances when you come to the ILRC or any of our events.

Falling for PACE ...

Kelly Dagdick

PACE is once again into its second last session for the 2010 year. Session 31 had many people apply. The successful applicants were raring to get started on Monday August 23rd. Many had the feelings of excitement mixed with apprehension and curiosity as to what they would learn. According to the students, week one flew by very quickly.

So far this year we have had over 175 applicants for 4 sessions of PACE. I look forward to seeing twice as many more applicants through the winter and into the New Year.

PACE has one more session that will take place from October 4th – November 5th

Our PACE Session for 2011 are as follows:
Session 33: January 17th –February 18th 2011
Application Deadline January 3rd 2011
Session 34: March 7th - April 8th 2011
Application Deadline February 18th 2011
Session 35: April 25th – May 27th 2011
Application Deadline April 8th 2011
Session 36: August 15th –Sept 16th 2011
Application Deadline July 29th 2011
Session 37: Sept 26th – October 28th 2011
Application Deadline September 9th 2011
Session 38: November 7th –December 9th 2011
Application Deadline October 21st 2011

If anyone is interested in taking the PACE program please feel free to contact our ILRC website at www.ilrc.mb.ca and look under PACE or contact Kelly at 947-0194 ext 319 to find answers to questions you might have.

Summer Event Flashback!

Lisa Timmerman

Summer is a time for fun, getting together and enjoying the (sometimes) nice weather. Summer events at the ILRC encompassed all of these things and more. The summer started off with the 3rd Annual Danny Smith Camping Trip. This two day excursion at Fort Whyte Centre was packed with sailing, hiking, canoeing, learning the essentials to camping and can't forget; the mosquitoes. Luckily, the weather was good, the bug bites faded and a great time was had by all.

Next up was the Concert and Walking Tour in the Exchange District. Everyone enjoyed a very entertaining jazz concert and then went on an eerie guided walking tour called "Death and Debauchery." This tour took us through the Exchange District where we were informed of the more sinister history of the area.

With the passing of June came warmer weather and more summer events. On a blustery July 14th we had the Sailing Adventure Day at Fort Whyte. Consumers were able to fish, hike and enjoy a BBQ lunch. The wind and the Martin 16 boats, which cannot tip, provided us with great sailing on the lake.

The last event that occurred in the month of July was the ILRC Picnic which was held at St. Vital Park and the weather could not have been better! On a beautiful, sunny day over 60 people attended this event, which included a very competitive scavenger hunt. Even though it was competitive, all who participated received prizes. Kites were flown,

or in my case, attempted to be flown and a BBQ lunch was gobbled up.

Last, but certainly not least was Wheelchair Baseball. On August 12th at Gordon Bell High School, ILRC met up with SMD to play a baseball game. With lots of people to cheer on the players it was a great atmosphere and with a close game SMD proved to be victorious.

The summer was a fun one and I want to thank everyone who attended the events. I'm signing off for now as it is time for me to hit the books yet again. Have a fantastic winter and keep your eyes open for next year's summer events!

New Faces; New Places

Natalie Pirson

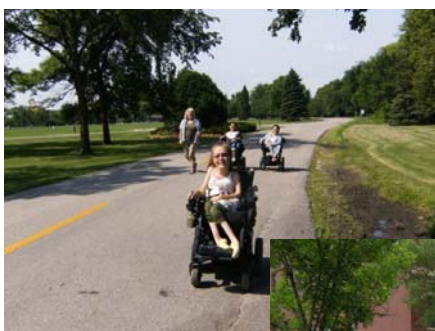
Summer is coming to an end and with it we say goodbye to a few people.

Lisa Timmerman has been coordinating our summer events for the last two summers. Lisa's high energy and upbeat attitude have made her a valuable addition to our team in supporting another summer with successful events. As she says, she had a lot of fun planning and coordinating the events and, of course, once again interacting with consumers. Lisa is entering her 3rd year in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Manitoba. We thank her for all her contributions to the centre and hope to see her back here next summer.

Marcia Matanga has been employed with us for the past 3 summers and as Fall is approaching, she too leaves us to return to school full-time. Marcia has been working within the Disabled Sail Manitoba program since she began in June and providing support where needed.

For the second summer in a row, Ana Gschwend comes to us as front desk relief. She has been working full days, Thursdays and Fridays every week, fulfilling the receptionist duties since the end of June. She is in her last year of high school this year and is undecided about a plan after high school but is leaning towards finding a job in the receptionist/administrative assistant capacity as she really enjoyed her duties in this role at the Centre.

Also leaving us is Lori Timmerman. Lori has been with ILRC for the past 3 years as our Leisure Education Coordinator. In Lori's words, she has enjoyed the past 3 years and



learned so much. She will be taking the Independent Living philosophy with her and sharing it with many others along her continued journey. Her bubbly, energetic personality and interpersonal skills coupled with her implementation of the IL Philosophy has made her a great fit for the work she has done. Lori graduated from the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba this past June. We thank her for all her hard work and wish her all the best in her future endeavors. She will be missed!

So as we say good bye to Lori, we say hello to our new Leisure Education Coordinator! Her name is Jessie Turner and she has just begun her employment with us. She will split her time between Leisure Education here at ILRC and staffing coordinator over at Qu'Appelle housing. Jessie has just completed her degree in Conflict Resolution at the University of Winnipeg. She has participated in past IL Skills workshops and ILRC events which has made her want to work for ILRC for quite a while so she is very eager to be brought into the fold.

Terry McIntosh, who is a familiar face to everyone as she has been with the centre for over 25 years, is transferring back over to ILRC from her position of Staffing Coordinator at Qu'Appelle Housing. She will be working within a couple of different programs, one being within Information & Referral. Her vast knowledge, experience and insight will continue to provide ILRC with a wealth of information to tap into. Welcome back, Terry!

Disability Health and Wellness Conference 2010

A network of disability, seniors and community organizations in Manitoba is hosting a Disability Health and Wellness conference on October 18 and 19 and would like to invite the nation to participate. With the theme "Independence Your Way" there are several segments of the conference that are applicable and of interest to all Canadians and will be available via the web.

Location: Victoria Inn, 1808 Wellington Ave. - Winnipeg

Independence YOUR WAY – builds on the momentum from the last two conferences, providing an opportunity to all persons with disabilities, including those who are aging into a disability, to come together and have their voices heard.

October 18 Keynote Speaker:

Propeller Dance Troupe is a unique, inspirational, and professional dance troupe that provides dance programming to people with and without a disability.

October 19 Keynote Speaker:

John Melnick, in the midst of a deep depression, attempted suicide for the third time. He swam, fully clothed, into the middle of the Red River. Then, John made the choice to live a different life. Today, he encourages others to speak about their own mental health issues and break free of social stigma.

Who Should Attend?

- *All persons with disabilities, including those who are aging into a disability
- *Persons living with chronic conditions
- *Supporters and caregivers

*Healthcare providers

*Policy-makers

For More Information, contact the Centre at 947-0194

Manitoba Hydro – Working with the Community

Robert Mitchell

Independent Living Resource Centre responds to the needs and directives of the disability community. It remains a substantial part of our mandate to remain at the cutting edge of service delivery models for persons with disabilities and to integrate new programs or committees as required. One such example is the Accessible Transportation Committee (ATC). The ATC, a community initiative hosted by the ILRC, is a solutions-focused committee to integrate more effective policy inclusion for accessible transportation in Winnipeg. The ATC was very pleased to receive sponsorship from Manitoba Hydro.

Manitoba Hydro also remains committed to responding to the needs of the community. It is always refreshing to see a Crown Corporation and major corporate power direct resources into enhancing and building community relations. The Power Smart Program is designed to provide eco-friendly energy avenues and rebate/loan programs for an inclusive community. No one is excluded from quality resources. Manitoba Hydro has demonstrated their commitment to an inclusive community not only through the provision of dynamic programs but also through recognizing programs and committees at the grassroots level.

For more information on Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart program, feel free to visit their website at: <http://www.hydro.mb.ca>

By the way, have you been to the new Hydro Building? The Winnipeg city skyline is becoming an interesting place, indeed ...



Does Winnipeg Need Light Rail Transit?

Gary Dyson

For the last few years it has been pretty hard to pick up a newspaper, turn on the radio or TV and not hear about Rapid Transit for Winnipeg. I will admit I have never been on a BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) system anywhere, although I have been on a few LRT (Light Rail Transit) systems in the past. The first one was back in 1986. I was fortunate enough to catch the Calgary Flames host the Winnipeg Jets. Calgary's C-trains were the LRT of the day and I remember

thinking, “too bad Winnipeg doesn’t have anything like this.”

In the year 2010, much discussion at the City Council level is what kind of system we should set in place. Winnipeg’s population as of the 2006 census is 633,451 people. In 1980 when Calgary started building their LRT system their population was just over 560,000. Calgary city leaders realized then that their city was destined to grow and in order to meet the transportation needs of the future something had to be done.

How big Winnipeg is going to grow in the future is difficult to say. Conservative estimates put growth at 100,000 new people in the next 20 years. Most of this new growth will be from new immigrants to Canada. This equates to new citizens that need a reliable public transit system, quick and efficient. Building an LRT system now in anticipation of the growth of our city and surrounding areas also makes economic sense. Why wait until you need it and then you are waiting more years until it is complete? Just look at the Waverly West housing division being built in the South West end of the city. All of these houses going up and people moving in, but they really haven’t built a lot of new roadways to accommodate the extra traffic flow. So once the development is done we will have to sit in traffic jams until something is built to take care of that. Build it now when the cost is lower! We all know that each year the cost goes up. If governments are finding it hard to find all the cash to pay for this now, just think what the cost will be in 5, 10 or 15 years from now. I do believe LRT is coming but the longer we wait, it is just going to cost more in the long run.

Whatever we choose, let’s make sure the stations are accessible. Making sure that the door widths getting in and out of the stations are at least 32-36 inches wide is simply better for everyone, not just those who have wider

wheelchairs. We need to make sure there is plenty of accessible parking at the stations as well as a large drop off and pick up area for accessible riders. Easy and accessible signage (larger font and Braille) is important. From my own experience I would strongly urge that the flooring on the platform have a grip type material so your wheels on your scooter or power chair don’t keep spinning if they can’t grip the floor, while you are trying to quickly get into the train car before the door closes.

Visual display boards should be low enough that people in wheelchairs don’t have to kink their neck bending it backwards to see when the next train is coming and where it is going. As well the station will need to have speakers saying how many more minutes until the next train is expected to arrive and where it is going. These are just a few of the considerations.

Keep in mind folks that we are still a few years away from an LRT being fully operational and as new technology is developed and new accessibility standards are implemented we need to make sure the city’s rapid transit system is at the forefront of accessibility for all. Future plans must make economical sense but they must also make good people sense: accessibility benefits everyone, from the mother and stroller to the senior citizen on the way to a grandchild’s ball game.

By the way in case you were wondering about that hockey game, the Jets lost 6 – 3 to the Flames. Brian Hayward came in to relieve Marc Behrend after John Ferguson pulled him. Some things never change ...



Call for Writers!

Options is a consumer-controlled quarterly newsletter. We rely on fresh viewpoints from community members to ensure that Options is vital, relevant and addresses the topics the community wants!

If you are interested in contributing to future Options newsletter or in sitting on the newsletter committee, feel free to call us at 947-0194 or email thecentre@ilrc.mb.ca

Keeping Healthy this Winter

Marie Lynn Hamilton

As winter approaches, the inevitable cold and flu season does too. However, there are a number of really easy things that you can do to go longer without a cold or flu this season. Here are a few tips on things that you can do to strengthen your immune system and lessen your exposure to infection:

5. When in public, avoid touching your face, mouth, eyes and nose. Surfaces in public places almost always have some level of germs and touching your mouth, nose or eyes gives those infections easy entry into your body.

4. Reduce stress. Sleep well and exercise. Periods of heightened stress are known to weaken the immune system. Sleep is your body's natural period for reducing stress and fighting infection. Exercise is known to reduce stress and strengthen the immune system. Making choices which reduce and manage stress in your life will increase your immune system.

3. Get the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is an effective way to strengthen your immune system's ability to defend itself against the particular strain of flu in the vaccine. Although usually available later in the year, you can call Health Links at 788-8200 to find out where and when you can get this season's flu vaccine.

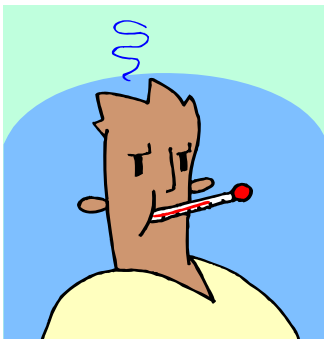
2. Improve your diet. Whole grain, fresh juices, fruits and vegetables, yogurt, garlic – as well as other foods - and many vitamins and minerals are known to strengthen the immune system. Include these options in your diet as much as possible. Consider a supplement. Rancid fats (like the fat found in deep fried food), sugar, coffee and alcohol are known to weaken the immune system. Reduce your consumption of these things if possible.

1. Wash your hands. Washing your hands with soap and water is the single most effective way to reduce infection. Wash your hands frequently throughout the day and encourage those that come into your home to do the same. An alcohol-based hand rub is a good substitute if there is no way to wash your hands with soap and water.

Finally, if you get a cold or flu this season, stay home! Rest and focus on giving your immune system the chance to fight back. Eat well, drink plenty of fluids (non-caffeinated) and take any medication prescribed by your doctor, making sure to follow and finish the prescription. Cough and sneeze into your elbow (not your hand) or a tissue (disposing of it right away). Wash your hands frequently with soap and water! Minimizing the risk of exposing other people will help to decrease the spread of infection this year. Hopefully, some of these tips and tricks will help you spend more time enjoying the fall and winter season and less time sniffing through it!

*The ILRC practices a healthy workplace policy.

If you suspect you have a cold or flu, please wait to visit us when you are sure you are healthy again.*



A Poem on the Spot

From Larry Klippenstein

This is a centre dedicated to the purpose
To help people achieve their mission/*Who
are less independent.*

Due to physical or other ailments/*The
consequences of not having the resources
for living.*

Are not just a lack of independence/*But of
life itself.*

Not just the danger to physical health/*But
the very real chance of expiring oneself.*

Without the resources to care for basic
needs/*What has anyone to do while living
in the community?*

For as long as you are able to live in such
conditions/*And the more severe your
condition,*

The less likelihood of your surviving at
all/*Let alone being independent in the
community.*

And what are the considerations for the
disability community?

How do they affect Independent Living
everywhere?

I encourage you as you support our
Charter Rights.

From every level of the community ...

What a Summer!



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Your membership helps us in programs, production and mailing costs of this newsletter. Being a member has its benefits in that you can vote at our next annual meeting, you receive our quarterly newsletter, and most of all you support the Centre and what we do. If you have not renewed your membership, please do so. The cost is **\$5.00**.

Please inform us about the following:

New Member

Renewal

I prefer not to receive any mailings from ILRC.

Name: _____

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Interested in being a member with a delayed membership fee? Send us your name and address – receive the Options newsletter and simply pay the membership later on.