



OPTIONS NEWSLETTER

Fall 2011

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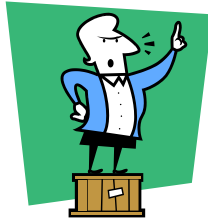
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Falling Skies

From the Soapbox

A John Young Perspective



How have we reached this point where a population is unappreciated? How is it that we can reach a point where the skill set of an entire community is ignored? What level of barrier or ignorance must be present in order that communities fail to understand marginalized populations or recognize their gifts regardless of living situation or origin? Why is there a focus on what a person *doesn't have* or *doesn't know*, rather than what they do?

Why does society view people as being 'less than' simply because they use a wheelchair? Why aren't disability issues at the top of government agendas and platforms?

In the disability community, there are often more questions than answers. Over the past two decades, one of the biggest systemic barriers to social change that has emerged is a lack of cohesiveness among varying communities. Communities refuse to acknowledge, for example, that accessible transportation is just as successful or barrier-laden in rural and urban settings. Instead of combining resources to combat inequality, we tend to divide and minimize our own resources and processes. This division is only a logical consequence of wanting to get our fair share of grants, media exposure, government and community participation but it doesn't work.

Imagine if we were all to stop for a moment and commit to combining our resources to reap the rewards? Consider for a moment the many supposed political debates taking place over the next few weeks before the impending

election. The disability community represents more than 15% of the general population and yet must attach themselves to other community agendas – housing, transportation, poverty – in order to receive an audience. We are still encumbered trying to sort these vital issues when life demands so much more than just these basics.

One of the first disabilities accepted in society as a whole was visual impairment. This acceptance came at the price of forgoing all support and going it "alone." We recognize that persons with visual impairments receive basic training for navigation but following this period the supports end. In the 21st Century, families are inundated with activity, stress and life changes – where will this lack of support leave those with visual impairments? They are falling drastically behind. To reclaim these lost supports for full participation will be nearly impossible. If this is to be the fate of one of the first mainstream and accepted disabilities, what is to be the fate of all others, those who are misunderstood and represent an entirely new demographic requiring societal education and awareness?

Imagine if all communities worked together in order to sustain their fair share of supports? We clearly need a new plan or strategy on educating the general public but with the old school ways of thinking still prevalent in the community, this task is made profoundly more difficult.

We need revitalized momentum in the Movement that will have recognizable and tangible impact to community and government. I am reminded of the British Columbia Coalition that rose up against the HST (Harmonized Sales tax). This coalition clearly demonstrated that political decisions and processes cannot be made without the support of the community. This was a direct strategy that reminded everyone who government works for – the people.

This is a direction that ILRC looks forward to seeing, a coalition of disability community groups demanding and receiving supports, policies and processes relevant to all. From past experience viewing the rising of Baby Boomers, women and equal rights movements, this momentum shift is inevitable. We will move as a single voice without needing to be a single entity. In time, we will do away with the questions and find the answers from a very credible and reliable source – us.

Board Corner

Sharon Olson



Let me share with you some of my doubts. I have been self-doubting myself most of my life. Can I do it? Will I fit in? Am I simply good enough?

I was not able to graduate from high school and, because of this education level, my employment opportunities have always been limited. I have never had a well-paid job. My disability is also a complication that interferes with education or employment. These are some of the reasons for my constant self-doubt and fear.

Things have begun to change this year. Rather than waiting for the skies to fall around me, I began to put my expertise in disability issues and Independent Living to good use. This is my first year on the ILRC Board of Directors and I am very excited to be here.

Just recently, I went into the Women's Resource Centre on Ellice Avenue in response to a job posting. I attended the interview and was told I would hear the results of my application in 3 days. It was on the second day that they called me – I got the

job. I have been there for over a week as Clothing Coordinator and I love it. I enjoy the thrill of meeting new people, interacting with a busy community agency and its members and making a difference in central Winnipeg. My journey to challenging and conquering my self doubts was simply a matter of challenging myself and making the commitment to remain involved in my community.

The Making of WAR

Doug Lockhart

It was a beautiful August day with 40 consumers and ILRC staff enjoying the surroundings of Assiniboine Park where the seeds of WAR were planted. No guns or tanks required just the willingness to keep up the fight for accessibility. That's right, this WAR (Winnipeg's Amazing Race) is a WAR for ensuring an accessible future for Winnipeggers with a disability.

The day started with an introduction to the concept of WAR where ILRC is planning to launch it's first offensive in June 2012 as the centerpiece to Manitoba Access Awareness Week (MAAW). The goal of the event is: "To create and implement a platform to introduce a realistic depiction of activities of daily living for people with disabilities that both, raise awareness and build community support in our efforts to create an accessible future for everyone." The event will take components of the "Amazing Race" and integrate them into our concept that highlights accessibility and the need for change.

To begin our planning we discussed key areas of the concept that included: methods for ensuring sustainability; a plan for how to best compliment MAAW; ideas for raising awareness, funds or fun, methods to

determine how to best demonstrate diversity and promote consumer control and brainstorm ideas for activities and locations that would make the ideal pilot setting for our first foray into WAR.

Fuelled by a gorgeous summer day, a great lunch and a shared passion for the topic we eagerly advanced the issue at hand compiling many insightful ideas setting the framework for the planning committee to take over. This committee will begin meeting in September and work together until the launch of this event in June. If you are interested in being a member of this committee please contact Doug at 947-0194 or email dougl@ilrc.mb.ca for more information. Help us in making WAR a beautiful thing where everybody can win!



Another Summer Come and Gone

Maria Lamsen

Summer truly is the time of year when everyone is out and about. Whether sitting on the backyard or going on a road trip, many people love to be outside and enjoy the sun. People may have the motivation to go outside and have fun but lack the resources to do so. At Independent Living Resource Centre, we host a variety of activities during summer time to encourage

interaction, participation and integration through different exciting events.

First on our list was the Walk and Concert Tour at the historical Exchange District. On this day, consumers enjoyed a day filled with jazz music and learned more about the history of Winnipeg, specifically about the movies that were filmed in the Downtown area. Second, the Annual First Steps to Camping Excursion which allowed consumers to learn more about what camping entails. This two day excursion was filled with fun activities such as sailing, canoeing and hiking. Of course, sunburns were inevitable but judging from the smiles and feedback, a little sunburn was worth it. Then there was the Adventure Day at Fort Whyte where consumers had the chance to explore the park and enjoy a BBQ lunch. The sailing was a big hit using the accessible Martin 16 boats, and everybody enjoyed their freedom in the water and an inclusive environment.

As the weather got warmer (and this was certainly a hot year!), the summer experience improved. The Kick Back at the Park was held at St. Vital Park on July 14th. Consumers enjoyed chicken kebobs – thanks to the cooks Doug and Jason- and hamburgers for lunch. Children and adults enjoyed kite flying and also a friendly but competitive scavenger hunt. Last but not the least, was the Winnipeg Amazing Race – WAR for Accessibility planning and discussion day. It was held on August 10th at Assiniboine Park. Consumers came down that day to participate in planning the details of the event that will be held during Manitoba Access Awareness Week 2012. The participation of the community in this discussion is essential and it turned out to be a success.

This was my first time coordinating summer events here at Independent Living Resource Centre and it has been a great pleasure. I would like to thank everyone that attended the

events and also the staff that gave me full support and encouragement. Now that winter is just around the corner (did I actually write that?), watch out for our exciting winter events and Symposium. Have fun, keep safe and things will fall in the right places.



understanding of the numbers and values associated with your business model.

These are some of the items an investor, bank or panel of investors will want to know. More importantly, these are items you need to know when presenting a business plan:

- **Valuation:** This is an estimation of what your business is worth. Essentially, if you add the value of all assets associated with the business to the dollar figures in sales or capital invested, you will reach a rough estimate of what your business is worth. A valuation that is set too high is just as damaging as one set too low.
- **Target market:** Too often, aspiring entrepreneurs quote industry figures with the confidence that they will capture a percentage of this whole market. This is not realistic. Focus on what your target market is. The television industry might be worth billions and billions of dollars in North America but your local market in Winnipeg is far less. Outlining the strategy of how you will capture this market is essential to a good plan.
- **Gross Profit = Sales – Cost of Goods Sold.** This is the dollar value your business retains after selling product.
- **Gross Margin = Gross Profit/Sales.** This is a percentage that allows your business to keep track of profitability trends and the likelihood of your business making money long-term. This is also the number an investor needs to answer the question: Can your business make money?
- **Check your assumptions at the door:** You must be realistic with estimates of margins and gross profits. Don't assume that by pricing your goods 10-15% less than your competitors you will guarantee success. You certainly

Know Your Numbers

Robert Mitchell

If you ever have the opportunity to present a business plan or model to an investor, financier or potential partner, your enthusiasm and passion are important factors. We understand that aspiring business leaders must be committed to their product and driven to make it succeed; however, your confidence must be matched by a thorough

don't want to price yourself too high, but at the same time, you want to provide sufficient margin to cover overhead and generate a profit.

- **Know your Strengths:** Clearly some of us are good with numbers, others not so much. The solution is to bring someone along with you who is strong at the financial side. UEDP (Urban Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program) can connect you with individuals well-equipped with the skills to analyze your plan from a numbers viewpoint.

Remember that a successful business starts with a good idea, grows with careful research and planning and truly flourishes when analytics kick in and raw numerical data becomes sales, sales and sales!

Need some help? Contact Gary for the UEDP program at 947-0194.

What do you think Tim Horton's corporate valuation is?



Voice your Choice

Joanne Legault

Accessibility legislation? When was it that you started to hear the buzz about accessibility legislation? Back in 2010, ILRC held a discussion as part of the IL skills Hot Topic Tuesdays to evoke discussion about the pros and cons of the potential accessibility legislation. This event was well attended and it demonstrated that people were interested in learning more about this legislation and having their voices heard.

There has been much discussion since from community groups, stakeholders, and government on the premise of accessible legislation.

Where are we now?

The following is a release from barrier Free Manitoba:

The Next Steps Forward are Now the Law: a Recap

When things happen at the Legislature, they can happen quickly. Bill 47: The Accessibility Advisory Council Act was introduced on June 1. It became law in the province in just over two weeks,

For those who may have struggled to keep up, the Bill passed Third Reading on June 16 with all-party support in a unanimous vote of the Legislature. The Bill came into force later that same day when it received Royal Assent.

The new law requires that the provincial government complete the following steps forward within set time lines.

Within the next 3 months (on or before September 16, 2011)

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- The Minister must make the first appointments to the Advisory Council.

Within the next 12 months (on or before June 16, 2012)

- The Advisory Council must make its initial recommendations to the Minister. These recommendations must be made public, followed by 45 days for public comment and feedback.

Within 90 days after the period for public comment ends (on or before November 1, 2012)

- The Minister must provide written comment to the Advisory Council on the Council's recommendations and the public feedback received.

These are the maximum times allowed for progress under the Act. But with all-party support and with so much of the work already done, developments can happen much more quickly. If appointments are made to the Advisory Council in the coming weeks and/or if the Advisory Council works with both focus and resolve, new accessibility-rights legislation could be introduced as early as the fall of 2012. Indeed, it could be introduced even earlier.

But at its longest (if all the time allowed for under the Act is taken) accessibility-rights legislation should be ready in time to be introduced in the spring 2013 sitting of the Legislature.

Stay connected! When the council releases its initial recommendations to the Minister, the community must take the time to review them and offer feedback. We applaud the forward thinking of our Provincial government; it is now up to the community to ensure that the

legislation carries significant impact for all and for years to come.



Did you Know?

Gary Dyson



During a concert performance in Sydney, Australia sometime in July of 2011, the singer Lady Gaga used a wheelchair as part of her on stage character performance, a mermaid. Now my favourite band is U2, and lead singer Bono often will “transform” himself into a character while on stage and performing specific songs. I am not opposed to the use of props.

But why does an able-bodied person need to move around in a wheelchair strictly for the performance? The smash television hit Glee has a young man in a wheelchair performing songs with the group; he is a regular cast member. And yet, the actor is an able-bodied individual. Can we not make better use of

promoting inclusion and the talents of persons with disabilities? Ms. Gaga, for example, could have done something else to depict a mermaid instead of using a wheelchair as an able-bodied performer. If you wanted to use a person in a mermaid outfit for this character then the more appropriate choice would have been to use a female singer who does rely on a wheelchair for her mobility. If she is making a statement of inclusion, it could have been delivered better.



The Sky Was Falling

Mildrate Matanga

As I begin settling into my new position with Independent Living Resource Centre by reviewing Peer/IL Skills workshop materials, something prompted me to reflect on an incident that took place in 2008.

Through no fault of my own, I was involved in a car accident: I was hit from behind by a drunk driver while stopped at a traffic light. At first, I did not feel the real impact of the accident on my body. It was only after twenty-four hours when I felt the real effects of the impact – I started to experience extreme pain in my body. I quickly went to emergency where I was told my C1 to C7 (Cervical) bones in my neck, upper shoulder and lower back had been damaged and that was affecting the

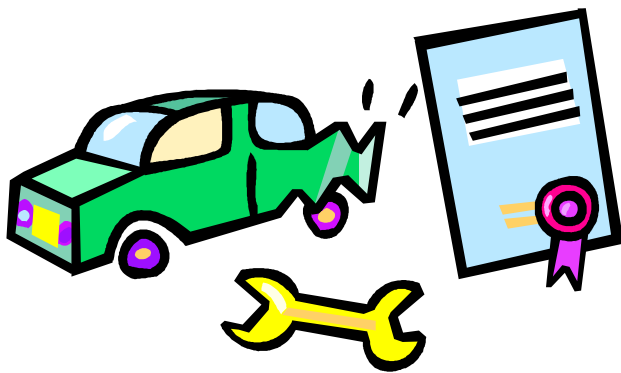
right side of my body. For that whole year I was unable to use my right hand (my dominant hand) and I had to deal with extreme pain in my back and could not bend my neck. As a result I was in and out of the doctors' office and physiotherapy for the whole year. Life had turned around from what it was before, and I had to adjust and depend on others for help which was extremely difficult.

My nightmare continued further when I was dealing with the bureaucratic insurance monster, Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI). I felt very powerless during the assessment process. What was very frustrating was that the doctors and other professionals hired by MPI did not believe what I was telling them about my disabling condition. One lady stated that she did not believe that I was in terrible pain since the dent on my car was small. Equating my body to the steel frame of a car? I felt very intimidated and objectified in this process. This is why, I think, Peer support is such an essential tool for empowerment. I believe we learn much from each other and that is why meeting other consumers and peers and discussing some of these issues which we all face daily is certainly important. We have much to learn from one another on how to cope with these issues.

This experience provides me deeper insight into the issues Peer Support/IL Skills hosts during workshop delivery. Because of the sensitive nature of some of these issues, the success of the enterprise depends critically on being able to develop trust and a commitment to collaboration among workshop participants. This in turn comes out of an ongoing participatory process that is essential to ensure that there is an accurate diagnosis of the problems and needs and that the solutions prescribed are relevant and practical.

In this particular case, the fact I have undergone a process often experienced by many members of the community increases the likelihood of achieving the desired level of trust. As I review workshop materials, I began to think of the strategies I would have used in overcoming this marginalization. Even just talking to someone who is willing to listen is a valuable start.

Certainly, during this incident, after narrowly escaping death, I felt powerless as I lost my abilities to engage in activities including home care, taking my children to school while experiencing chronic pain and fatigue. Although I felt as if the sky were falling, I persevered – a task made easier with the right supports in place.



Making Election 2011 Accessible to You

Gary Dyson

On October 4th 2011, we all head to the polls again to vote to see who will be the political party that will head up the next Provincial Government for the Province of Manitoba.

During the summer up until August 22nd Enumerators will be coming to your door to collect the names of eligible voters in your household, and place these names on the

voting list. This will make it easier when you head to your polling station to vote as you would already be registered. When you go down please bring ID with you to confirm your identity. If you have been missed by the enumerators, they will have left a card that explains how to get on the voters list.

Voting stations will be opened on October 4th starting at 7am until 8pm. If you can't vote on that day there will be advance polls that will be open from September 24th to October 1st. The hours of advance polls are 8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday and on Sunday noon to 6pm.

For accessible voting options, you may be eligible to vote from home. To see if you are eligible you need to contact your returning officer: please contact Elections Manitoba at 945-3225 or toll free 1-866-628-6837, or email at elections@elections.mb.ca.

If you are in the hospital or any type of care facilities on Election Day, voting will be available there. As well if you are going to be out of town on Election Day or during the week of the advance poll you can apply for an absentee voting. Absentee voters should apply to their returning officer of the Chief Electoral Officer as soon as possible before an election. If you have a disability Elections Manitoba has made the following accommodations for you. If you have a visual impairment all voting stations will have Braille ballot that will allow you to mark your own ballot. A Braille list of candidates will be available on Election Day and at some advance polling stations. Check with your returning officer for the location nearest you. As well magnifying lenses and large print of the candidates will also be available from the voting officer. You have the option of bringing an attendant with you to vote as long as they are 18 years or older; they will be required to sign an oath and help you mark your ballot. A voting official may also assist you.

As well if your disability prevents you from going inside the voting station then a voting official will bring the ballot box to your vehicle. This should provide you with the information regarding voting. I encourage you to take the time to vote in this Provincial Election. This process of democracy, so envied in other parts of the world, allows you to have a voice in the future of our province and communities.

When the World Changes, I Change Too

Margita Tobolkova

I was amused when our chief editor sent around the theme for the newsletter – about “what if the sky is falling” on current political, economical and environmental situations. I am not a *what-iffier*. If I were rich, I wouldn't be poor; if I were 45 years younger, I wouldn't be an old hag; if the sky were to fall, the Earth would be flat. And so it goes.

Some 30 years ago, it was fashionable for large corporations to speculate on “what if”. I don't remember if it brought any breakthroughs. To bring any changes in the world, one must be an innovator and a visionary like Steve Jobs or the late Jack Layton. They were not *what-iffers*, they were doers. I don't know how much of a doer am I, but I certainly don't spend time contemplating my navel.

I come from Slovakia, and we had a good saying about what-ifs. I'll try to be delicate for ladies' fine ears: “If we could evacuate sugar, we would evacuate into our coffee”. I often say it when someone is *what-iffing* to me. When I look back at events in my life, there are at least a million turns I could have taken. Each decision would have sent me into millions of different directions. And now, if I

what-iffed each decision or circumstance in my past life, I would go mad. After all, people should love me for what I am. I am, after all, a sum of all my experiences, good or bad. So, there.

The same goes for what-iffing the future. My life is, and will be, whatever I make of it under the circumstances. Right now, I am enjoying life in relatively good health. Mind you, I must go through life with prescription drugs, just like many of my fellow humans. But, I can still outpace my young nephew: I hike, I walk my dog, I tend to my garden, I work out in a gym, and I am mentally alert (so I think). I still wink at a handsome man. That's more than a lot in my generation can do. When my situation changes, then I will change with it.

Falling for a Compost ...

Tina Gledhill

Fall is here and to me this means putting the garden to rest. It means moving the compost, raking and general clean up of the flower gardens. At the beginning of the year I moved so much compost into the garden. It was so amazing and the best part, IT WAS FREE.

Compost is all organic that can be recycled into fertilizer or, as I like to call it, BLACK GOLD. I do this all year round. At ILRC some staff members call me the ECO-Cop and that's being nice. I take all the coffee grounds from the coffee machine. Thank you to the front end receptionist and the many staff and volunteers that take the time to save coffee grinds for me. I have an ice cream pail that I leave in the kitchen for all sorts of composting materials for me to take home. I know my garden appreciates the compost and I know I do. For all our functions we have here at the office or outside of the office I'm right in there: “Oh can you save those watermelon

rinds for me? Oh oh – the egg shells I'll take those too!" Staff members think twice now before throwing anything biodegradable out, at work that is.

Truth be told I'm often found hovering over the trash can in the kitchen at lunch time. Staff often come to me with banana peels, apple cores, crusts from loaves of bread. Other staff members have tossed things out and as they do so they think I bet Tina would have liked this. You don't need any fancy composting bins that cost money, just a corner in your yard or garden space will do. When you fall into a habit it is sometimes hard to break free. Everyone here is doing their piece to help me, my garden and the environment.



A Little Scary at First?

Terry McIntosh

I have been working at the ILRC for 26 years and I have never written an article for our newsletter. Call it avoidance or call it clever writing management, I thought it was now time to talk about one of our best kept secrets – Self and Family Managed Care.

The Self and Family Managed Care Program option presents a unique opportunity for Manitobans with disabilities to be in control of their own resources. Under the sponsorship of the Office of Home Care, Department of Health and in conjunction with the Advisory Committee, the program creates the opportunity for individuals to hire, supervise and direct their own non-professional attendant supports. This is based on an individual's assessed care hours.

I am a Self-Manager and have been on the program for 11 years. My first step to Independent Living was at Ten Ten Sinclair Housing for approximately a year. This was a great first step for me to see if it was possible for me to live on my own. After a year I then moved to Fokus Housing in St. James, where I lived there for 18 years. Fokus was great - I had input on the hiring of staff, my schedule, and I was fairly independent. I realized after 18 years of living in an apartment and paying rent with nothing to show, I wanted to buy a house. Also the module of shared staff was also becoming a challenge for me. I wanted more: I wanted staff to come and help me grocery shop (my parents were aging and I didn't want to rely on them all the time); I wanted support for vacations and just general support from my attendant when needed in the community.

With that goal in mind, I went house hunting, which had many challenges, but I found one. The final hurdle I had to jump over was my

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fear of going on to the Self and Family Managed Care Program. Could I hire, fire, payroll, manage files all by myself? It was very overwhelming! But sometimes you just have to take a leap of faith *in yourself*.

Through the years I have learned a lot and continue to learn, but it wasn't and isn't as scary as it seems. If you go on to the program, you will find great staff for yourself who will be a great support in helping you with all your hurdles. I have had one of my attendants with me for 11 years and she has been amazing. Traveling, grocery shopping, having a bath every night of the week is what I am doing now – the ultimate independent living. I may be biased but ILRC is also a great resource for assisting new Managers just going on to the project. Feel free to call me at 947-0194.

So if there is anyone out there who is thinking of going on Self and Family Managed Care, don't worry, it is a little scary at first but at the end you will feel total freedom.

PACE

Kelly Dagdick

What if someone you knew suddenly was hit with a physical change in life that left them with a disability? Would you know what to do to support them with their daily routine?

Do you think that supporting people would be a career that you would really enjoy?

Do you have the drive and commitment required to support persons with disabilities to be independent and in control of their life and choices?

If so maybe the PACE (Personal Attendant Community Education) Program is for you.

Pace is five weeks long. It incorporates classroom time and hands on experience to train you to become an ILA (Independent Living Attendant) in the community.

Our Sessions are quickly filling up, so come down to the Independent Living Resource Centre in Portage Place, 3rd floor across from IMAX, and fill out an application.

There are 2 sessions left for the 2011 year:
September 26th – October 28th 2011
November 7th – December 9th 2011
Get your applications in early.

We will be hosting six sessions throughout the 2012 year.

Session 39: Jan 16th – Feb 17th 2012
Session 40: Mar 5th – April 5th 2012
Session 41: Apr 23rd – May 25th 2012
Session 42: Aug 13th – Sept 14th 2012
Session 43: Sept 24th – Oct 26th 2012
Session 44: Nov 5th – Dec 7th 2012

Are you looking for a change in your daily routine? Maybe becoming a Community Trainer for PACE is something that might interest you.

If you can open your home to letting a PACE Student train by doing thing you cannot do for yourself than call 947-0195 and discuss your options with Kelly.

For more information go to www.ilrc.mb.ca and the click on PACE or call me directly.



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 provides a scent-free, safe space for everyone, so please don't wear fragrances when you come to the ILRC or any of our events.

Techie's Corner

Jason Hirose



When my parents purchased a Commodore 64 system back in the mid-eighties they did so to prepare their children for the rapidly advancing computer age. Given my current profession I can't help but think that it worked. Regardless, all I could see was a way to play

computer games. Thus began my journey as a gamer.

I know what you're thinking. "Wait, you have a job. You don't live in your parent's basement. You're over 30. How could you be a gamer?" I find it ironic that in this day and age of political correctness and social conscience we still have "acceptable" stereotypes, such as these. The reality today is that with the increase of approachable games (Think Farmville or Angry Birds) and the turbulent economic environment, more and more people are turning to video games as their entertainment format of choice. A result of this is that today's "gamer" is far more likely to be female, over the age of forty and gainfully employed.

Unfortunately for the disability community, approachable does not equate accessible. I want to stress a few specific issues that are still lacking in today's games and yet would be so simple for a developer to fix.

The first issue is that of captioning. While many modern games have captioning there are still many that do not. If there is dialog in a video game you can bet there was a script for that dialog. How much effort would it be to put that script on the screen? For those games that actually have captions why is there no ability to change the size of the font? I have near 20-20 vision but there are many games where I find myself squinting at the screen due to the size of the captions.

Another issue is that of control. I can understand that in many games the controls are so simple that there is no need perceived by the developers to make controls customizable. In some games with complex controls some developers take the step of offering us a few pre-set control options but nothing more. I understand that pre-sets can offer some good starting points for controller configuration but if a developer has bothered to include option of pre-sets why not give us

complete control and let us completely customize?

Lastly, if a developer has gone to the effort of placing accessible features in your game why not let people know? Similar to publishing system requirements and age recommendations, accessible features can and should be put on the box.

The ILRC is hosting a symposium on October 14th and there will be a break-out session on accessible gaming where these and other issues will be discussed. I hope to see you there. If you have comments on accessible gaming, be sure to let me know at 947-0194 or jasonh@ilrc.mb.ca



Dear Advocacy

Marie Lynn Hamilton

Dear Advocacy,
Until recently, I had been a cashier for over two years. About a year ago, I was diagnosed with M.S. About three months ago, I saw my doctor about some persistent pain in one of my legs. My doctor suggested that my job, which had me standing all day, might be aggravating the pain. He suggested that if I could alternate between sitting and

standing during my shift, that the pain and weakness in my leg might be better controlled.

I went to my employer and asked – after explaining the situation - if it would be possible for me to have a stool at my cash register. My employer said they'd think about it and get back to me. After not hearing anything for a week, I asked my employer again about the stool. They said that I couldn't have the stool because everyone stands at their cash register and it would "change the tone of the work environment" and that I had gone the week without the stool anyway, so why did I even need it. "Your MS is only going to get worse anyway. What are you going to want us to do next time?" Now I'm about to apply for EI and I can't help but feel that something wrong has happened here. What do you think?

You were discriminated against! When your employer denied your request to be able to sit at your workstation, you were discriminated against! When your employer commented on the future of your job against your disability, you were discriminated against! When your employer offered to lay you off, you were discriminated against!

By law, an employer has to provide "reasonable accommodation" for any medical condition, including anything disability related. There are different degrees of reasonable accommodation, but requesting a stool for your work station is, by far, within reasonable accommodation; it does not cause undue hardship. When your employer refused to let you sit at you cash register, they broke the law! An employer is not allowed to discriminate based on disability. When your employer commented on your disability, implying that it would only bring more challenges to the workplace, you were discriminated against. While an employer can terminate your employment for any reason, if

that reason is discriminatory, then they are breaking the law. When your employer laid you off because of your repeated request for an accommodation, they broke the law! If you would like to complain about your employer, you can go to the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and file a complaint. They will investigate the complaint and, if they feel that the complaint is valid, they will then negotiate a settlement.



New Faces; New Places

Natalie Pirson

As Fall approaches, as any new season upon us, change comes with it.

And with change, we say farewell to Allison Staff as our Leisure Education Coordinator. Allison did her practicum with us as a Social Work student and quickly transitioned into a full-time employee within Leisure Education. We enjoyed her as an always helpful member of our team, her keen sense of working with

consumers and wish her luck in her all future endeavours.

We've had the pleasure of working with 2 more wonderful Social Work students who chose to do their practicum at ILRC:

Maria Lamsen started with us in September 2010 and became our part-time summer events coordinator. With the various successful events she has coordinated for us such as our Adventure Day at Fort Whyte and our Annual First Steps to Camping, she has learned a great deal about the disability community and some issues that have arisen such as difficulties with accessible transportation and the sometimes limited options available for people with disabilities to participate in the community due to inaccessible locations. She emphasizes, though, despite any difficulties or challenges that have arisen she has learned a lot from interacting with the consumers and listening to their feedback on how activities can be improved. As she says, she has had a fun and enjoyable summer working at ILRC and thanks the staff as well for the ongoing support throughout her time.

Mildrate Matanga has also been doing her practicum with us and as she said, undertaking a practicum is one of the most terrifying yet exciting experiences for students – transitioning from the classroom to the work place. Throughout her time as a practicum student, though, she has learned many different principles based on our ILRC philosophy, some of which include the concept of consumer control while working in programs such as Leisure Education as well as learning how to develop workshop delivery techniques in our Peer Support/IL Skills Program which emphasizes how consumers should be responsible for the choices that they make and, thus, the consequences. We are now pleased to welcome Mildrate as a member of our team, through our Peer

Support/IL Skills program. She adds that her life experiences with family members who have disabilities and as a woman and a member of the visible minority have encouraged her within the centre and to increase awareness of ILRC to her peers. Lastly, there is myself, Natalie Pirson. I have been working with ILRC for close to three years, but have been away since May due to injury. I am very much looking forward to returning shortly and getting back into the swing of things!!

We Want You ... not Your Flu!

ILRC supports a stay healthy policy for staff, consumers and volunteers. If you are sick or are otherwise not feeling yourself, please refrain from visiting the Centre until you feel better. Some individuals with compromised immune systems can be affected severely by a seemingly routine cold and flu.



Did You Hear?

Have you been told you have “the gift of the gab” or are you someone interested in being involved in your community through the power of public speaking? ILRC’s Speakers Bureau is that perfect opportunity to express your hidden talents.

Training will begin September 14 and run on Wednesdays through September and then switch to once every two weeks from November until June. Training will feature a wide range of teaching tools and techniques that will support you in developing and fine tuning the speaker in you.

The first few sessions will include: an ILRC orientation, Personal Health Information Act (PHIA), Disability Awareness Resource Training (DART) and an introduction to presentation skills to name just a few of the many informative and exciting sessions that we will offer. Speakers Bureau graduates may obtain honorariums while representing ILRC in a variety of public speaking venues that promote awareness of the issues that impact people with disabilities. Tap into your hidden talents and register by September 12 to participate in this valuable opportunity. Call Doug or Terry at 947-0194 or email us at dougl@ilrc.mb.ca or terrym@ilrc.mb.ca





Beyond Bed & Bath

FYIndependence

Friday, October 14th

10:00am-3:00pm

Canad Inns, Polo Park

1405 St. Matthews Avenue

Break-out Sessions: Morning

- ✚ Options, Reality. A Better Way? *Self and Family Managed Care*
- ✚ Attendant Support in the 21st Century – *Personal Attendant Community Education*
 - ✚ Put Your Gameface On - *Accessible Gaming*
 - ✚ Are You Ready? *Disability Disaster Management*

Main Plenary: Afternoon

- ✚ Able Sail Manitoba – *Martin 16 Sail Boat*
- ✚ Ask the Experts – *Breakout Session Follow-up*

To register please contact:

register@ilrc.mb.ca

Independent Living Resource Centre

3rd Floor Portage Place Mall

(204)-947-0194

**Final Day for Registration is September 30th,
2011**

Fall 2011



TALENT SHOWCASE DECEMBER 2, 2011

NOW SEEKING PERFORMERS



Now Accepting Applications for Auditions

- Singer? Dancer? Performer?
 - All talents welcome
- Cash Prizes for Top Three Performers

Independent Living Resource Centre is auditioning talented performers to celebrate the United Nations International Day for People with Disabilities.

To audition, register now with Gary or Natalie: 947-0194

Now is Your Turn to Shine ...



2011 Fall/Winter Peer Support and Independent Living Skills Workshop

PLACE: ILRC 311A-393 Portage Ave. (3rd Floor of Portage Place)

TIME: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

For further information on the up-coming IL Skills workshops and to register, contact:

MILDRATE MATANGA 947-0194 or email workshops@ilrc.mb.ca

September

Wednesday, September 7th: Disability Emergency Management

Thursday, September 15th: Healthy living part one: Managing Stress

Thursday, September 29th: Healthy living part two: Planning your healthy life style

October

Wednesday, October 12th: Living with Systems Part One: What is EIA?

Wednesday, October 26th: Living with Systems Part Two: Canada Pension Plan Disability and Old Age Security

November

Wednesday November 9th: Living with Systems Part Three: Housing Issues and Options

Wednesday November 23rd: Living with Systems Part Four: Employment Readiness and Disclosure

December

Thursday December 14th: Surviving the Holidays: What are the holidays all about

All workshops will be held in the Allan Simpson boardroom: *Alternative formats and web casting are available upon request*

ILRC is a scent free environment

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: _____

I prefer to receive my newsletter in this
Format:

Org. Name: _____

Phone: _____

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Audio tape _____ | 4 Braille _____ |
| 2. Large print _____ | 5. Disk _____ |
| 3. Email text only _____ | 6 Print copy _____ |

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

ILRC STAFF

Executive Director: John Young
Senior Program Coordinator: Doug Lockhart
Controller/Accountant: Thom Lamont
**Assistant to the Executive Director and
Director of Operations:** Robert Mitchell
Reception: Penny Siemens/Volunteers
Payroll Coordinator: Michael Jimenez
Information & Referral: Gary Dyson, Natalie
Pirson, Terry McIntosh
Independent Living Skills/Peer Support:
Mildrate Matanga
Individual Self-Advocacy: Marie-Lynn Hamilton
Volunteer Consultant: Natalie Pirson

Senior Community Living Coordinator: Jodie
Jephcote
Community Living Coordinator: Tina Gledhill
Tenant Resource Coordinator: Krystal Polson
Community Living Staffing: Suzanne Foreman
Leisure Education: Joanne Legault, Sonya
Lockhart, Samareh Haji –Hamzeh, Christina
Buebos
Personal Attendant Community Education:
Kelly Dagdick
Urban Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Project:
Robert Mitchell, Gary Dyson
Community Outreach: Gary Dyson
Kids on the Block: Zöe Kogan
DART Training: Joanne Legault, Terry McIntosh

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.