

# CILT's Peer Links

**Volume 8 Issue 2**  
**February 2007**

## **Moscoe Wants to Eliminate Current Disabled Parking Program**

*by Nancy Barry*

**H**oward Moscoe, says the Handicapped Parking Permit system needs to be revamped and replaced by one that is “free of abuse”. But are his intentions punishing the wrong people?

Moscoe says he’s trying to eliminate the fraud that has been committed by thousands of Canadians who are accessing these permits who don’t even need them. According to a recent article in the Toronto Star, “more than 470,000 permits are in circulation just in Ontario alone.” He says that this is unfair to people with disabilities who actually require those parking spaces designated to those displaying a permit. His suggestion is that we scrap the current program and replace it with something that works.

However, are his ideas really helping the right people? Currently, those with disabled permits are allowed to park on side streets, in “no parking” zones and meter parking areas, free of charge, as long as their permit is displayed. Moscoe is trying to say that people with disabilities should have to pay by putting money in parking meters just like everyone else. That by not expecting us to pay, we are being treated “differently” than everyone else. That just because we are disabled, doesn’t mean we are poor.

I think this is bogus. I think this is just another “money making tactic” for the city. How is someone with a disability, who drives their own vehicle, but has difficulty with fine motor skills, supposed to put coins into a parking meter? This is one of the most absurd ideas I have ever heard. Instead of going after those who really need the parking permits, Moscoe should be asking himself “how can we prevent those who are not disabled from accessing these permits?.

Sandra Carpenter, CILT’s Independent Living Program Manager, was interviewed extensively by the media about this topic. She raises the point that many people with disabilities are on fixed incomes and can’t afford to pay parking.

Moscoe says that if people can afford to drive their own modified vehicle, then they can afford to pay parking. He is making the assumption, as many non disabled people do, that because a person with a disability has access to a

modified vehicle that they have money. This is not necessarily true. It doesn't mean that the person with the disability is driving the van; perhaps it is owned and being driven by a family member to transport the person with the disability to where they have to go. Moscoe doesn't seem to have thought the whole issue through before making his comments to the press.

As Sandra commented to a Toronto Star reporter, "Until we have a comprehensive plan (for dealing with the entire issue), I don't think we want any ad-hoc solutions. We don't want to make a bad situation worse."

### **Important Notice About the Diner's Club**

**A**s most of you may be aware, there was no Diner's Club event scheduled for February. I received phone calls from Diner's Club members asking why they had not received a flyer for February. The answer is simple. **NO ONE VOLUNTEERED TO HOST AN EVENT.** Remember, "if there is no host, there can't be an event."

The Diner's Club is your group, which means that you are responsible for running it. Instead of waiting to see if someone else volunteers to be a host, it would be great if you could call CILT to find out when you can host a Diner's Club event. Thanks to Dawn Luke, who has hosted many events, there has been an event almost every month. There are 234 other Diner's Club members out there, many of whom we never hear from. We would love to hear from you as well. Please call.

The Independent Living philosophy states that "people with disabilities are capable of making their own choices and decisions", which includes where to go for dinner. You may want to consider volunteering to be a host. It can be a lot of fun, and there's really not that much to do. As a matter of fact, it's quite simple. And you'll always have support from CILT's Peer Support Coordinator and your fellow diners.

So, let's recap:

#### **What does a Host have to do?**

- Choose an accessible restaurant.
- Choose a date and time.
- Call Nancy at CILT to give her the details:
  - name of restaurant
  - address and closest main intersection
  - price range
  - date and time

- Make the reservations with the restaurant.

It's as simple as that! Currently, we are looking for hosts from April 2007 and on. Call now!

### **New Coffee Club for Adults with a Disability**

**T**he Coffee Club concept was inspired by a Prime Timer, Carmen McGee. He wanted to create an opportunity for people to come together in an informal environment and chat over coffee. The group has already met a couple of times in the food court at Dufferin Mall. Both times have been a great success!

We hope to meet on a regular basis. Carmen chose Dufferin Mall because he felt that it was a very accessible environment, and that if people wanted to go off and do some shopping, they would have that option.

The next meeting will take place on Saturday April 14, 2007 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. For more information or to RSVP, call Nancy at (416) 599-2458, extension 27, by TTY at (416) 599-5077 or by email to [peervolunteer@cilt.ca](mailto:peervolunteer@cilt.ca). Attendant services will be provided. However, as with the Diner's Club, transportation and food costs are your responsibility.

### **Gateway to Cancer Screening: Project Update**

**P**lease welcome Tara Geraghty as the official Coordinator for the Gateway to Cancer Screening Project. Tara is a consumer with a Masters degree in Social Work, and has also had a lot of experience working in participatory research, the very foundation of the Gateway Project, along with experiential knowledge in group facilitation. Tara will be working out of the office of the Canadian Cancer Society, CILT's partner in this exciting new project. Tara will be the primary contact for the project.

The working group is currently putting together, piece by piece, the needs assessment which will be the primary data collection tool when we hold the focus groups. We will be speaking with women with mobility disabilities in order to find out what their experiences have been with regards to accessing the healthcare system, particularly cancer screening. Tara, in conjunction with the working group, has put together a brief synopsis of the project:

### **Gateways to Cancer Screening: A Participatory Needs Assessment of Women with Mobility Disabilities**

Women with disabilities have the same biological risks as other women for developing breast, cervical and colorectal cancer, yet these women are routinely

under screened. The current research indicates that barriers to effective screening for women with disabilities include lack of knowledge among these women of the need for preventive screening, neglect on the part of healthcare providers, and physical access barriers (Nosek, Young and Rintala, 1995; Welner, 1998).

The prior research, while providing convincing testimonials as to the experiences of women with disabilities, has failed to capture the diversity that exists, nor reflect the experiences of women with disabilities from diverse backgrounds. The goal of this project is to determine the cancer screening needs of women with mobility disabilities and determine the gaps and barriers associated with accessing these services.

As we know, women with mobility disabilities are a diverse group. Therefore, with this in mind, we will be conducting focus groups with women who have mobility disabilities, and will be outreaching to diverse groups of women living with mobility disabilities, including women who identify as ethno-racial, aboriginal, lesbian/bisexual, may be living on fixed incomes We will be holding the focus groups in the spring of 2007.

We invite your participation in this exciting project. If you would like to be a focus group participant, or would like more information on the project, please feel free to call Tara Geraghty, Community Outreach and Research Coordinator for the project at (416) 440-3330 ext. 241. or by e-mail at [tgeraghty@ontario.cancer.ca](mailto:tgeraghty@ontario.cancer.ca).

Call for Research Participants:

**Gateways to Cancer Screening:  
A Participatory Needs Assessment of  
Women with Mobility Disabilities**

If you are a woman living with a mobility disability who has experiences or views of what is needed to increase your access to preventive screenings for cancer, we would love to hear from YOU.

We are conducting focus groups with women with mobility disabilities in Toronto to determine their cancer screening needs and examine the gaps and barriers associated with accessing these services. Based on the focus groups, a series of recommendations will be developed and shared with key people involved in the delivery of screening services to enhance the cancer screening experience of present and future Toronto women with disabilities.

The focus groups will take place in early spring. Each participant will take part in one focus group, which will last for 2 hours. Refreshments will be served at the

focus group, and each participant will receive an honorarium for their time and participation. Attendant services will be provided and transportation costs (equivalent to TTC costs) will be covered. Other accommodations may be provided upon request.

If you are interested in joining a focus group, or would like more information, please contact Tara Geraghty, Community Outreach and Research Coordinator for the project at (416) 440-3330 ext. 241 or by email at [tgeraghty@ontario.cancer.ca](mailto:tgeraghty@ontario.cancer.ca)

The Gateway to Screening Project is a partnership between CILT and the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS), with funding being provided through CCS. The working group for the project consists of CILT, CCS, Mount Sinai's Breast Health Clinic, University of Toronto's Faculty of Nursing, St. Michael's Hospital, Anne Johnston Health Station, Springtide Resources and consumers.

### **Breast Health Awareness Workshop for Women With Disabilities**

CILT, as part of our Gateways to Screening Project, proudly presents a free workshop on "***Breast Health Awareness for Women with Disabilities***".

Breast Health starts with you knowing your own breasts, just like you know your face or hands. Most breast problems can be treated if they are discovered early enough. This workshop will dispel some of the common myths about breast cancer, and provide you with the information you need to take control of your health!

Please welcome Linda Muraca, from the Breast Health Program at Mount Sinai Hospital who will be facilitating the workshop, held on Saturday March 24, 2007 1:00pm to 3:30pm at CILT, 205 Richmond Street West, Suite 605 (Richmond & Duncan). Attendant services and light refreshments will be provided, and other accommodations may be provided upon request.

To register, call (416) 599-2458 and ask to speak to Nancy at extension 27 or Kimberly at extension 34 before March 14, 2006.

**[www.SoulfulEncounters.com](http://www.SoulfulEncounters.com)**

*by Louise Maxwell*

**M**y name is Louise Maxwell and less than a year ago I launched a website called Soulful Encounters ([www.SoulfulEncounters.com](http://www.SoulfulEncounters.com)). It is an online dating community for the medically disabled and differently abled. The website is FREE to peruse profiles, search for potential mates and connect through the use of message boards and personal blogs.

Soulful Encounters also features monthly tips from various experts on topics that relate specifically to disabled dating. In addition, our experts are available to answer pertinent questions that are posed by disabled members.

I, myself, am disabled and have found that my ability to handle this website has been enhanced by having experienced what it is like to be disabled first-hand. Having a disability helps me to bring a unique perspective to the website that other online dating communities might lack.

My website was advertised in the London Centre and members would like to see me get other members close to their living area since travel is usually difficult with some of the disabled.

### **Mid Winter Gathering 2007**

**O**n Saturday February 17th, the Prime Timers and the PDN teamed up once again for our annual Mid-Winter Gathering. It was awesome! We had a fantastic turn out of folks from both groups. Great food, great fun, a variety of games including cards, checkers, and Trivia Pursuit. But the big highlights were the Bingo games and the raffles. Lots of fun was had by everyone.

Congratulations to all the winners, and thanks to everyone for making the Mid Winter Gathering 2007 another successful event!

### **NEWS RELEASE**

*by Toronto Central LHIN*

### **TORONTO CENTRAL LHIN INCREASING COMMUNITY-BASED CARE IN AREA \$3Million Investment To Help Ease Hospital Overcrowding**

The Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) is increasing access to community health services in its service area for patients who no longer need acute hospital care but instead need long-term or community-based care, Board Member Barbara Everett announced on behalf of LHIN Board Chair Michael O'Keefe.

"We want people to receive appropriate care at home or in other community-based settings, so they are more comfortable and are closer to family and loved ones," said Everett. "We're also creating more alternatives to acute care hospital beds, so hospitals can better use their acute care resources for patients who

need them the most.”

The Toronto Central LHIN has worked collaboratively with local health care partners and the provincial government to develop the local solutions announced today as part of measures to alleviate alternative level of care pressures in hospitals. These investments include:

- \$308,600 to assign CCAC case managers to hospital emergency departments to assess and divert clients to more appropriate community services
- \$336,800 for a geriatric emergency management program to increase emergency department nursing services for seniors with complex functional and/or psycho-logical challenges

“We believe quality care for patients is best delivered with input from local health care partners,” said Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, George Smitherman. “These innovative and collaborative partnerships will help local patients get the care they need that’s appropriate and provide them with a higher level of comfort.”

Everett also announced allocations for the following investments under the government’s Emergency Department Action Plan, announced last October: \$2,362,250 to the University Health Network to improve access to emergency care as part of the \$10-million Emergency Department (ED) Support Fund to which local health care providers applied with initiatives that support emergency departments (such as rapid response teams to provide urgent care to residents in long term care homes rather than sending them to the local ED)

This announcement is just the latest example of the steps the government has taken to improve access to community care and reduce pressures on hospitals in Toronto Central LHIN. Other recent initiatives include:

- 3 new community health centre satellites
- 21 convalescent care beds announced in the last two years.

### **Sex Education and Physical Disability Interview Project**

*by Jenny Scott*

Project Title: **Parents as a source of sex education for their children  
a with physical disability**

Researcher: Jenny Scott ( [jennyscott@trentu.ca](mailto:jennyscott@trentu.ca) )

Duration: approximately one hour

Location: Your choice

## **Background**

Young people with physical disabilities often do not get the kind of sex education that they would like to get. This may be because a lot of people assume that having a physical disability means that someone cannot have sex or does not want to.

One of the places young people get information about sex is from their parents. However, many parents do not feel that they know enough about sex themselves to teach their children about it, and there are often few resources available to them.

## **Project**

I am Jenny Scott, a psychology student at Trent University, and I am working on a research project that I hope will contribute to a better understanding of these issues, and possibly some solutions.

I am looking for **adults** willing to take part in an interview with me (approximately one hour) about their expectations, concerns, and experiences with sex education. All participants' identities will be kept strictly confidential.

## **Compensation**

Participants' names will be entered in a draw for a \$25 Chapters gift card. The winner will be selected and contacted in April, 2007.

If you are an adult with a physical disability, OR a parent of someone with a physical disability, and you would like to participate or find out more, please contact me:

Email: [jennyscott@trentu.ca](mailto:jennyscott@trentu.ca)

Phone: (705) 750-0197

## **Toronto Sledge Hockey**

**T**he City of Toronto and Bloorview Kids Rehab have teamed up to bring Sledge Hockey to Toronto! This project is sponsored by Bloorview Kids Rehab and the City of Toronto, with support from Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment Limited, all of whom are very excited to offer a variety of sledge hockey opportunities for Torontonians of all ages and abilities.

## **Learn to Sledge**

Skill development is at the core of all of our programs. Our goal is to give you the individual attention you need to make sure you have a positive and productive sledge experience. Every week, our instructors will teach you the skills you need to take your game to the next level. Whether you're new to the game, a seasoned veteran, or somewhere in the middle, our experienced instructors will work with you to achieve your sledge hockey goals!

## **Community Outreach**

Healthy and active living are priorities for us, and we want to see everyone in the community come out and play. Toronto Sledge Hockey in the Neighbourhood has offered community organizations and agencies serving people with disabilities the opportunity to bring a group of 10 to 25 participants down for a free, fun-filled afternoon of Sledge Hockey. *Have fun, Be active, Play Sledge!*

## **Donations**

Toronto Sledge Hockey is funded by the City of Toronto and Bloorview Kids Rehab, with strong support from the Leafs Fund, and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment. We are always looking for donations to help our program grow on our home ice and across the City. There are several ways that you can support sledge hockey in Toronto. We appreciate every donation and offer of support!

## **Volunteer Program**

Toronto sledge hockey is committed to meeting the needs of the community. As such, we highly value the input and commitment of volunteers at every level of programming. No matter what your interest in sledge hockey, we have something for you. Our volunteers help with everything from sport development and program planning, to hands on facilitation on the ice and at the rink.

## **House League and Traveling Team**

Toronto Sledge Hockey in the Neighbourhood is a proud member of the Ontario Sledge Hockey Association. Participants from our skill development program have the opportunity to represent Toronto Sledge Hockey in a five game exhibition series against teams from throughout Ontario. In future years, we hope to develop a house league and a competitive traveling team. For more information, check out their website at [www.TorontoSledgeHockey.com](http://www.TorontoSledgeHockey.com) or call them at (416) 392-6826, or email to [info@TorontoSledgeHockey.com](mailto:info@TorontoSledgeHockey.com).

## The Mix Community Club

### Our History:

The Community Club was established in May 2004 and was formerly known as "The Sharing Group". On February 24, 2005 we incorporated as a registered nonprofit organization. The Mix Community Club was created from the unique vision of several staff from Community Living Toronto who wanted to fulfill the need for an organization that would specialize in supporting people with disabilities in the facilitation of organizing their own social club; that would offer community entertainment for the purpose of socially integrating the mainstream society with the disabled community. The Mix Community Club has become the first social club where individuals with disabilities provide first class social entertainment for the community. This revolutionary community organization is inspired and organized by people with disabilities.

### Our Vision:

People with disabilities have the right to experience social inclusion, integration and enjoyment with the whole community. We exist to bring individuals with disabilities to the social forefront of our society by giving them the equal opportunity of socially participating and contributing towards the social entertainment of the mainstream community. We believe there are no disabilities but only people with different abilities.

### Our Mission is 3 Fold:

**Supporting** people with varying disabilities in the operation of their own social club for the **participation** and enjoyment of the entire community. Promoting awareness towards, "social inclusion/integration for people with disabilities" and **Providing** dynamic and diverse social entertainment for the whole community to share and enjoy together.

### Our Unique Social Approach:

We have developed a revolutionary, inspirational and unique approach to social interaction which we have called, "*Community Social Integration*". Traditionally there have been two methods for social integration; **Straight integration** and **Reverse integration**. The Mix Community Club has combined both these methods together to form what we call **Mutual integration**. This method encourages both people with disabilities and without disabilities to socially integrate together at the same time. This revolutionary social approach is:

1. Providing social integration for people of different ages, cultures, backgrounds and abilities.
2. Cultivating awareness towards social accessibility for people with varying disabilities.
3. Encouraging community and family participation in an unique, diverse, inclusive, meaningful inspirational, exciting and personally rewarding social environment for the whole community.

**Our Affiliations & Partnerships:** *The Mix Community Club is affiliated with Community Living Toronto (this organization provides support to people with intellectual disabilities). We are also affiliated with and have partnered together with, The Toronto International Deaf Film Arts Festival, Drama Way, Right 2 Express Magazine, Maytree Foundation and The Community Head injury Resource services of Toronto.*

**Our Participants & Events:** Our participants come from over 30 different community organizations throughout the Greater Toronto area that provide services for people with physical and/or intellectual disabilities, along with the many community people with and without disabilities that participate with us every month. We organize special community events by bringing in the best bands, musicians and entertainers our community has to offer to perform at The Mix on a charity basis. We organize annual Elvis, Multicultural and Gospel Fests. We also organize an annual, "Community Idol" event every August that is a big hit with the community. Special community events are organized around annual holidays, like Valentine's Day, Halloween, Christmas and New Years. We are currently averaging between 250-300 people.

**Community Recognition:** The Premier of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty along with his Minister of Community and Social Services, Sandra Pupatello have applauded our innovative organization and the positive impact it is making in our community and abroad. The Honorable Minister Sandra Pupatello was our special guest on Friday February 24, 2006 at The Mix Community Club. The Mayor's, Premier's and Prime Minister's offices have also contacted us expressing their interest in setting up a visit to one of our upcoming events. Stories and interviews on The Mix Community Club have been featured on City TV, The Toronto Star, The Metro News, The Scarborough Mirror, The Toronto Sun, The Abilities Magazine and Omni TV's show Agenda with Paul Cook. Media and press interest in the United States has also been expressed.

**Revolutionary Organization:** The Mix Community Club is revolutionizing the way people socialize. Most social environments are segregated by age, culture, special interest, music and abilities but The Mix Community Club is breaking down all social barriers for participation. We have taken social integration from theory into practice for individuals with disabilities. We have talked about

integration for the disabled community for many years, always expecting them to integrate into their own communities, but we have failed ourselves as a community to socially integrate with them.

Community Integration has already been realized for most individuals that were institutionalized due to their disability, but social integration has not yet been fully developed for them. The Mix Community Club is leading the way in providing community programs and events that are socially integrating the mainstream society with the disabled community. Traditionally people with disabilities have socialized within their own segregated social environments, but now for the first time in our history they are experiencing regular social inclusion, integration and enjoyment with the entire community at The Mix! This is what makes us unique and the first social experience and organization of its kind!

We are the social entertainment equivalent to Variety Village's recreational program for children and adults with disabilities. Our social club is making a positive impact and transforming difference in our entire community by providing many of the socially neglected and forgotten people of our society with social integration, diversity and enjoyment. Seeing ourselves through the eyes of other people and realizing that we could easily find ourselves in their circumstances is creating lasting community compassion and understanding towards those that are physically and/or intellectually disabled. Anyone of us could, through any unforeseen accident or illness, become a person with disabilities, therefore it should be everyone's social/human responsibility to help those that depend on us to provide them with the community social integration that they deserve and that means so much to them. Will you help us bring social awareness and participation towards *Social Inclusion and Integration for people with disabilities?* The social diversity that we are bringing to our community is evident in the wide range of participants that are a part of our monthly community social events. A representation from almost every group of people in our society is always present at our events.

Come and join this exciting social experience for yourself. **Social integration involves the whole community and it begins with you!** Bring all your family and friends out to our next dynamic event and experience an exciting, family-friendly, transforming and personally rewarding social experience. Come and socially mix it up! Join us at The *Mix*!

**Over 30 participating organizations, including:**

Community Living Toronto  
CHIRS  
Participation House  
St. Vincent de Paul  
The Salvation Army

Montage  
Durham Support Group  
Variety Village  
Pickering, Ajax & Whitby  
Pace Independent Living  
Community Living  
The Down Syndrome Association  
Surex Support Services  
The Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf  
META  
East York Support Services  
Bloorview MacMillan Centre  
Christian Horizons  
East Metro Youth Services  
Surrey Place  
Vita Community Services  
Community participants  
Mary Center  
Participants from schools & churches  
Reena Foundation

**Diverse and dynamic community programming:**

- \* Monthly Concerts and Dances
- \* Annual & Holiday events
- \* Community Idol
- \* Registered Social Programs
- \* Free Community Workshops
- \* Abilities Awareness Concerts
- \* Mobile and Regional Events
- \* Mix Entertainment Services

"There are many organizations that provide recreational, therapeutic, occupational, vocational and residential services/support to people with disabilities but **The Mix Community Club is the only organization** providing social accessibility through the means of integrated community social entertainment. The Mix Community Club is the unique contribution of people with disabilities towards the social participation and development of the integrated social entertainment scene of the community".

For more information, log on to [www.mixcommunityclub.com](http://www.mixcommunityclub.com).

## Women's Connection

Women's Connection is offering a free "Lunch and Learn" workshop; the first of their spring session on Employment.

### **Brampton Session:**

Wednesday April 4, 2007 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Terry Miller Recreation Centre, Room #1, 1295 Williams Parkway.

### **Mississauga Session:**

Wednesday April 18, 2007 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Mississauga Valley Community Centre, Frank Bean Lounge, 1275 Mississauga Valley Blvd.

Attendant services will be provided. Support is available for transportation and childcare upon request.

Space is limited! R.S.V.P. early by calling (905) 890-0140, extension 29; by TTY at (905) 890-2239 or by email to [france.tolhurst@sympatico.ca](mailto:france.tolhurst@sympatico.ca). Book your specific accommodations and dietary needs when you call.

Organized in partnership by:

- Coalition for Persons with Disabilities
- Erinoak
- Interim Place
- Trillium Health Centre
- Sexual Assault Centre of Peel
- Ontario March of Dimes.

Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation!

**Peer Links** is a quarterly publication of the Peer Support Program.

To become a member of the Peer Support Program, or to receive **Peer Links** on a regular basis, please contact Nancy at:

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Email: [peervolunteer@cilt.ca](mailto:peervolunteer@cilt.ca)

Website: [www.cilt.ca](http://www.cilt.ca)

Peer Links is also available on audiotape.

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and may not reflect the views of CILT.

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