

# Prime Timer Focus

January 2009 Winter Issue

## CILT's New Location

*By Nancy Barry*

We have finally settled in to our new home at 365 Bloor Street East, Suite 902. It's a lovely place and everyone seems very happy. We are looking forward to showing you all of our new home in the New Year. We will be having a 'formal' open house in the early spring and we are hoping to see many of you at our new space.

Please note that aside from the address, most contact information has remained the same. However, staff telephone extensions now have a "2" in front of them. For example, my extension has always been 27, but it is now 227. Please feel free to contact us at any time. Carling Barry, the Peer Support Program Assistant, can be reached at extension 270.

## We are looking for Volunteers!

CILT is currently recruiting volunteers. If you know of anyone who would like to volunteer at CILT, have them call Nancy at 416-599-2458, extension 227. A volunteer orientation has been set for Thursday January 29, 2009 1:00 – 4:00pm. For more information, please contact Nancy. CILT's volunteers play a vital role in our organization. Their support to staff is indispensable. Volunteers help staff with the day-to-day administrative tasks needed to effectively run our programs. These tasks including helping with mailings, filing, updating resource material, photocopying, assembling information packages, and so much more.

If you would like to help out or would like to add some new skills to your resume, then please think seriously of attending our Volunteer Orientation on Thursday January 29th. We really need your help!

## Active and Able Programs at Birchmount Bluffs Neighborhood Centre

Check out the Winter session of our Active and Able Program designed for persons with disabilities or health barriers:

- **Accessible Youth Programs:** youth enjoy inclusive activities at our accessible Youth Centre. Include pre-employment services,

workshops/skills training, Peer Support Art Group, social drop-in.  
Some attendant services provided. Free.

- **Chair Tai Chi Class:** practice gentle movements that improve flexibility, energy, relaxation. Thursdays Jan. 8-Mar. 26. 11am-Noon (\$12 for 12 weeks).
- **Barrier Free Access to Swimming:** enjoy attendant-supported leisure swimming. Tuesdays Jan.13-Mar.31. Noon-3pm. Free. Info: call 416 690-8804
- **Staff-Assisted Hot Tub & Pool Program:** enjoy attendant-supported access to hot tub and pool. Fridays Jan 9-Mar. 27. Noon-3pm. Free with \$5 annual membership.
- **Gentle Motions 1-Water Movements:** practice low-impact exercises in accessible Hot Tub. Lift chair or stair access. Thursdays Jan.8-Mar. 26. 10-10:40am. (\$20, 12 wks).
- **Bluffers Peer Support Group:** Adults share ideas and peer support in this self-directed club. Activities include workshops, discussions and outings. Every other Friday: 2-4pm. Free with \$5 annual membership.

#### **OTHER SERVICES:**

- Advocacy & Counselling
- Wellness/fitness Programs
- Information & Referral
- Free Workshops

Winter session starts the week of Jan. 5 and runs for 12 weeks. Registration is ongoing and can be done at the centre's reception. Program subsidies are offered. Annual Membership: \$5. Attendant services are provided for some programs. For information, please call David Meyers at 416 396-7606 or email at david@bbnc.ca Location: Birchmount Bluff's Neighbourhood Centre, 93 Birchmount Rd. Scarborough (at Kingston Rd).

## Nutrition and Healthy Living Workshops for People with Disabilities

- Want to get rid of those Holiday Left over pounds?
- Having trouble sticking to your New Year's resolutions?
- Want to get back into the healthy swing of things?

You can sign up to one of two interactive workshops providing information, strategies and resources from Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

Dates: Wednesday February 25, 2009 OR

Wednesday March 25, 2009

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Place: CILT Board Room, Suite 902  
365 Bloor St. East (at Sherbourne St )

Cost: FREE !

R.S.V.P by Feb 18, 2009 to John Mossa at 416-599-2458 ext. 238 or Nancy Barry at ext. 227 or by TTY at 416-599-5077.

Light refreshments will be served. Attendant Services & Childcare will be provided. Other accommodations may be available upon request before February 18, 2009.

## United Nation's International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

December 3rd was the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This year's international theme was the "Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities: Dignity and Justice for All of Us". "Dignity and Justice for All of Us" is the theme for this day as well as the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **Did you Know?**

- A United Nations' (UN) Convention is a legally binding document between two or more countries.
- The international Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) is a comprehensive Human Rights treaty which promotes and protects all human rights of people with disabilities, typically divided

into five categories: economic, cultural, civic, political and social.

- The CRPD and its Optional Protocol were adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 13, 2006.
- On March 30, 2007, this Convention was opened for signature with 82 UN member states signing the treaty, the highest number ever to sign on an opening day. Canada was a signatory (agrees with the main idea of the convention but is not legally required to comply); however, the second step, “ratification” has not yet taken place in Canada.
- Ratification is where a country officially decides that it wants to join a convention and when it does we say that it has “ratified” a convention.
- An Optional Protocol is an addition to an existing convention which addresses additional issues not covered by the original convention. This current Optional Protocol to the CRPD includes individual complaint procedures and countries can decide whether they want to agree to this Optional Protocol.
- On May 2, 2008, all federal political parties supported a NDP motion in the House of Commons to ratify the UN Convention in the House of Commons.
- On November 3, 2008 a committee of experts was elected in New York, their job will be to review reports on how countries that have ratified the Convention are meeting their obligations.

### **Solutions:**

- Become informed and learn more about this international convention and how it will provide a framework which will link disability issues to human rights. The UN has a very good website with more information. Go to [www.un.org/disabilities/](http://www.un.org/disabilities/)
- Educate your local Members of Parliament (MPs), other people with disabilities, mainstream and disability organizations, businesses and the general public on the importance of our country ratifying the Convention (including the signing of the Optional Protocol). Canada just had a federal election and there are new MPs that will benefit from this information and others that may need an update.
- Tell others that this Convention was the fastest negotiated human rights law in the history of international law, and it is also the first convention to have been drafted with such extensive participation by stakeholders. This means that this UN Convention is a human rights convention written both by and for persons with disabilities. Spread

the news! An accessible and inclusive country will benefit everyone!  
For more information to [www.ccdonline.ca](http://www.ccdonline.ca)

- Let politicians know that organizations run by and for people with disabilities are excited and enthusiastic about helping them to create pro-active programs, policies and other measures that demonstrate and facilitate the intent of the Convention.
- This ratification has yet to be obtained - ask your Member of Parliament to support and encourage the ratification! Go to Disabled People's International to see their amazing ratification toolkit at <http://www.icrpd.net/implementation/en/toolkit/>.

2008 Access, Equity and Human Rights Awards:  
November 27, 2008  
*By Nancy Barry*

### **Access Award for Disability Issues:**

The Access Award for Disability Issues is intended to honour people or organizations that have made or are making a significant or ongoing contribution, beyond legislated requirements, to the well-being and advancement of people with disabilities. Examples of contributions include consideration of access requirements in the design of a new or renovated building, a job training or creation program, a transportation service, a recreational program . . . virtually anything that permits people with disabilities to lead more independent, fulfilling and productive lives.

CILT was nominated for its work on the "Gateways to Cancer Screening Project", and we won. I was the lucky one to accept the award on behalf of CILT. I feel extremely fortunate to have been asked to accept, because as many of you already know, this project is near and dear to my heart. Sandra Carpenter, our Executive Director, accepted the award with me. It was definitely a night to remember.

**Sandra asked me to formally accept the award and give the acceptance speech**

As we all know, cancer is one of the leading causes of death in Canada. Through my work at the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto, I was hearing many dark stories from women with disabilities about their experiences in attempting to access cancer screening services within our health care system. These stories, coupled with my own personal experiences, made me fear that we weren't alone; that there were others facing similar experiences, or even worse, not being screened at all.

With the support of our Executive Director, Sandra Carpenter, we were able to form partnerships with other key agencies and acquire enough funding from the Canadian Cancer Society in order to hold five focus groups in Toronto, through which we were able to hear the experiences and explore the needs of women with mobility disabilities when accessing breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening.

This award does not belong to me alone, nor is it solely derived through the efforts of the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto. We couldn't have done it without the help and support of the following people:

- Sharmini Fernando, Canadian Cancer Society
- Linda Muraca, Breast Clinic, Mount Sinai Hospital
- Dr. Jan Angus, Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto
- Lynn Penberthy-Ritchie, St. Michael's Hospital
- Fran Odette, Springtide Resources
- Samira Chandani, Ismaili Cancer Support Network
- Lucy Costa Nyman, Anne Johnston Health Station
- Julie Devaney, Project Coordinator
- Lisa Seto, PhD Student, University of Toronto
- Kimberly McKennitt, Centre for Independent Living in Toronto
- Tara Geraghty
- Catherine Girard

AND ....

... to all of the focus group participants who entrusted us with their personal stories, that provided the very foundation of the Gateways to Cancer Screening Project. Their insights and expertise is what led us to so many positive recommendations for improving screening access.

There is still much work to be done in the days and months ahead. We have many exciting plans in the works for implementing recommendations made by focus group participants, but I couldn't ask for a more supportive team to do that work with.

Thank you.

### Canadians With Disabilities Win Another Historic Transportation Access Battle

© Information taken from ILC's (*Independent Living Canada*) website  
[www.cailc.ca](http://www.cailc.ca)

On November 8, 2008 the Supreme Court of Canada denied Air Canada and WestJet's request to appeal the decision of the Canadian Transportation Agency which requires the airlines to accommodate persons who need additional seating space because of their disability.

The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) launched this action in 2002 to remove a long-standing barrier to the travel of persons with disabilities. People with disabilities who required an attendant in flight to assist them with services not provided by flight attendants and persons with disabilities who required additional seats were having to pay for two airfares. This decision now brings planes into line with other modes of transportation such as rail, bus and marine who do not charge for additional seats.

"We celebrate this decision and are thrilled to see the removal of another long-standing barrier to our mobility and travel," said Pat Danforth, Chair of CCD's Transportation Committee. "What continues to be a concern, however, is that we are being forced to pursue legal action to ensure accessibility of our national transportation system. Where is the federal government's leadership on this issue? We urge the Government of Canada to regulate access standards for persons with disabilities on all federally regulated transportation systems," said Danforth.

"We have been victorious in two major transportation access battles in the past 8 years," said Marie White, Chairperson of CCD. "First we fought VIA Rail's

purchase of inaccessible passenger rail cars all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada and now we have made the airlines more accessible as well,” said White. “These victories are to be celebrated but they could have been more appropriately handled through the development of access regulations by Transport Canada,” said White.

CCD urges the Government of Canada to move away from voluntary codes of practice and regulate the industry to ensure that the equality guarantees of the Charter are made real and that Canadians with disabilities have equal access to the goods and services of Canada. CCD urges the airlines to speedily implement this decision. Access for Canadians with disabilities has been denied long enough. Canadians with disabilities take heart that the Courts have upheld, and continue to uphold, the equality rights of persons with disabilities.

### Upcoming Workshops on Nutrition and Healthy Living

The Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) recognized the need for further exploration of how an Independent Living (IL) lens could be applied to community based programs that aim to increase the level of physical activity for people with a disability. Physical Activities & Healthy Lifestyles Project: A PowerPoint Training Tool, Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability (ALACD) and Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) July 2006. They developed a series of 14 PowerPoint presentations in order to educate consumers, recreational facilities, other agencies and the general public on the importance of healthy lifestyle choices and universal design for people with disabilities.

### **Recreation & Leisure: Healthy Lifestyle Choices**

The Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) is pleased to announce an initiative that will enhance the capacity of its member Independent Living Resource Centres to develop healthy lifestyle programming for persons with disabilities. Working in partnership with the Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability, CAILC has built the resources and knowledge base of the national network and design a model program for physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

CAILC and its network supports approximately 200,000 people each year. ‘Canadians with disabilities need to learn about and have options to developing healthier lifestyle choices just like everyone else,’ stated Traci Walters, CAILCs National Director.

“Given the wide-reaching networks that CAILC has across the country and the number of consumers that they work with, we are very excited about the opportunity to help CAILC develop program ideas and models that will provide information about healthy, active living to their consumers and stakeholders,” acknowledged Chris Bourne, Partnerships Manager with ALACD.

This project, supported by Physical Activity Contributions Program of the Public Health Agency of Canada provided training to CAILC personnel and volunteers across the country, furnished each of its 26 Independent Living Resource Centres with a variety of resources for their libraries, and established a program delivery model that would develop the capacity at the community level, ensuring this initiative is sustainable and relevant to diverse stakeholders. It will also provide a mechanism by which people with disabilities across Canada can learn about and become involved with appropriate active living programs within their communities.

Through provincial and territorial representatives, the ALACD is already quite connected at the community level and aware of active living opportunities across the country that cater to every interest and every level of ability. This program will be a great way for us to share this information with the CAILC network, added Bourne.

The ALACD promotes, supports and enables Canadians with disabilities to lead active, healthy lives. Through a nationally coordinated network, the ALACD provides leadership, support, encouragement, promotion and information that facilitates healthy, active living opportunities for Canadians of all abilities across all settings and environments. For more information visit [www.ala.ca](http://www.ala.ca).

Founded in 1986, by the Independent Living movement, the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) is the national umbrella organizations, representing and coordinating the network of Independent Living Resource Centres (ILRCs) at the national level. Both CAILC and ILRCs are organizations run by and for persons with disabilities that provide information on disability and mainstream supports and programs, skills development, peer support, research and community development.

In keeping with this theme, CILT will be hosting two afternoon workshops on nutrition and healthy living in the very near future, one in February, the other in March. Watch your mail for more information.

## Raise Your Voice 2009!

Voices from the Street, a collective of individuals who use their personal experiences with homelessness and poverty to educate the public and push for change, is looking to recruit new members.

### YOU GET:

- 12 weeks of intensive training in public speaking, leadership, conflict resolution, diversity issues, and facilitation
- A small cash honorarium of \$60 per week for participating
- A TTC Metropass
- A hearty lunch on the days you are training
- A connection to others who have similar experiences and a desire for change.

### YOU GIVE:

- Your time (every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm from March 31st to June 18th)
- A desire to speak openly and publicly about your personal experiences with homelessness and poverty
- An ability to work well with others and a respect for diversity
- A passion for social justice and a desire for change
- Your leadership skills back to your community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of Voices from the Street, please submit a letter (legibly written or typed) detailing why you would like to join, what you feel you would bring to the group, any leadership experience you have, and details about your previous or current involvement in the community. Letters should be submitted by February 27th, 2009 to:

VOICES FROM THE STREET  
C/O ONTARIO COUNCIL OF ALTERNATIVE BUSINESSES  
1499 QUEEN STREET WEST, Suite #203  
TORONTO, ON M6R 1A3  
FAX: 416 504-8063  
E-MAIL: [speakersbureau@bellnet.ca](mailto:speakersbureau@bellnet.ca)

For those interested in more information, Information Sessions will be held on February 18th at 1:30 pm at the Gerstein Centre (100 Charles Street East) and on February 10th at 1:30 pm at the Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses

(1499 Queen Street West, Suite 203). Attendance at these sessions is encouraged, but not mandatory. TTC tokens will be available.

## Bell Canada's Disability Initiative

Bell is pleased to announce that over the course of the next few months, it will undertake a variety of studies among people with different disabilities.

### **What is the objective of this research?**

The objective of the studies is to gain insight into the way people with disabilities use various telecommunication technologies, in order to better serve their needs. This research may help improve the design of new products and services in terms of usability and functionality.

### **What form will the research take?**

The studies will be carried out by Ad Hoc Research, a market research firm, in the form of surveys, focus groups or individual interviews.

You will be asked to participate in at least three studies in the coming months. You will have the opportunity to express your opinions and points of view on a variety of subjects. More importantly, you will play a critical role in influencing the technology of tomorrow.

Monetary incentives will be offered: \$20 for completing a Web or telephone survey; \$50 for participating in a 30-minute in-depth telephone interview; \$100 for participating in a 1½ hour interview in your home; and \$125 for attending a 1½ hour focus group downtown. Whenever necessary, we will handle arrangements and pay for accessible transportation. Please note that no incentive will be offered for the questionnaire that you will complete for registering to our research panel.

If you are interested in participating, please call us at 514-937-4040, extension 136, or visit our Web site at [www.adhoc-opinion.com/Bell\\_standard](http://www.adhoc-opinion.com/Bell_standard) (or [www.adhoc-opinion.com/Bell\\_simplified](http://www.adhoc-opinion.com/Bell_simplified) for a simplified version).

Bell is very committed to making this project a success but cannot do so without your help and cooperation. We thank you in advance for your support of this initiative.