

In the Stream

Winter 2006

Music as a Profound Journey

by Liana Di Marco

In order to understand the connection between music and spirituality, we would need to define both terms; this task of course, could be quite daunting. Let's begin with spirituality. Over the centuries many philosophers struggled with understanding their own souls in order to seek out a missing void in their lives or better yet, search for a higher being. They did so by approaching different religions. Some went as far as the mountains of Tibet. In modern times many turned to other earthly venues in their quest – soul searching through food, drugs, sex, rock n' roll. In this search, many found alleged refuge. So then we must ask ourselves, what exactly do we mean by the term 'spirituality' and what does it have to do with music?

Most folks think of music as a source of entertainment, including everything from children's tales to seniors' wails. Music in effect, is a form of expression, rebellion and can be downright nasty and immoral. How in the world then, does music relate to spirituality?

Now if we define music as a spiritual path, then the question remains: 'Where will it lead?' The path that led me to who I am today began in 1966. Now you all know how old I am. In my teens, I began to search for some kind of spirituality. Unlike most teens, I turned to religion and the Bible. I had no idea what spirituality meant. I turned to religion to seek what I so desired. I was raised as a fundamentalist and was taught that spirituality could only be found in the 'true' religion. The irony in this is that I personally, had to leave all religious institutions in order to really find my spirituality, my music, and my soul.

I struggled with this concept for most of the past 15 years. Two years ago however, my life changed drastically. I discovered that the same parts of me that sought my musical creativity also serve to seek spirituality, and since they come from the same place, then perhaps the treasure is still at the base of my rainbow.

Speaking of rainbows, I almost forgot what a rainbow looked like. In 2002, I went blind. My friends and family were angry and afraid for me. I, on the other hand, remained ever so calm. Somehow, my adrenaline kept me in check. Perhaps it was an inner sense of peace knowing that my life had really only just begun. I realized that my life was a work in progress. This I noticed even more so months after my eye surgery and long after I regained my sight and sifted through my many sheets of music.

Most of my lyrics and music are reflective of the various stages I travel: falling in love, out of love, politics of poverty, inequality, pain, struggles, soul searching, and the list goes on. One of the songs I was working on just prior to this nightmarish experience of losing my sight is a song I hadn't even titled yet. I wrote a verse a year earlier and then another verse a month or so before going blind. I could not finish it. It was supposed to be a very symbolic song about going blind. I guess my body knew something that my conscience had not yet fully acknowledged. I put the lyrics away and decided that the song just didn't want to be written.

Not long after, while working out at the gym, I felt a pull in my one eye. Within days I went blind and ended up in emergency surgery. After a week in the hospital I came home, and in my limited visual sightedness, I finished the song. My body ached with the desire to write. I entitled it, 'Wouldn't it Be Nice.' And although it still feels like a work in progress, I occasionally perform it at gigs.

Amazingly, blindness set in before I even completed the song. And yet, I saw more while I was blind than I ever could before. I decided to actively pursue my God during that time of crisis, as many do when a crisis hits. I found myself having a crisis of spirituality. As my eyes physically healed from the reattachment of my retina, I slowly reviewed all my music that I'd written over the years. I was spiritually blind. Surgery could only fix the physical sight.

I wrote and completed seven new songs that summer. Looking back, I was able to acknowledge how much my lyrics have changed and matured. I also then began to make peace with my self as I realized how much of my health has been intertwined with my physical and spiritual soul search.

During that search, I came across the November/December 2001 issue of U.U. World magazine (the Unitarian Universalist Association Publication). I found myself at a crossroad in terms of what it means to be me. The article titled, "Unfinished Houses," by Philip Simmons, begins with a descriptive journey consisting of a drive in a neighborhood of old houses. I could see my past in this visionary voyage; travels through my past experiences, journeys through the seasons and a swift return to the present.

I spent more than six months under strict medical orders of absolutely no physical activities while my eyes recuperated. And yet, my body ached to pick up the guitar and write. With my eyes closed, I wrote new words, new notes. Somehow, the music led me to the spirituality. Somehow, my health forced my music to reach my soul.

At the one year mark, the summer of 2003, I was blessed with 'Zen', my service guide dog. Many people take their pets for granted. Zen, however, is more than a pet. She is my guide, my soul. She keeps me in check when I forget to be at

peace. She reminds me to value the simple things in life, to love unconditionally, to say thank you, to trust, to rebuild love, faith and peace.

In the book, "Sound Health: the Music and Sounds that Make Us Whole," Steven Halpern writes, "one of the simplest ways to get in touch with your own ability to release spiritual energy in music involves making music with the human voice, a musical instrument we all have. The voice has been used as a vehicle for spiritual uplifting and healing in every culture throughout history. Its functions are to heal, inspire, console, and establish contact with cosmic forces."

Thank you for the opportunity to share my soul with you all. I hope that my spiritual musical path meets with your souls.

Changes to Disabled Person Parking Permit Program

by Lana Kerzner, Staff Lawyer at ARCH, Reprinted with permission, from "ARCH Alert", December 19, 2005.

The program which issues parking permits for some persons with disabilities in Ontario will undergo substantial changes. As of January 16, 2005, what has been known as the "Disabled Person Parking Permit program" will be renamed the "Accessible Parking Permit program". Changes to the program include the following:

- There will be a more detailed and expanded definition of persons with disabilities who are eligible for the permits;
- Persons with permanent disabilities will no longer be required to obtain a regulated health practitioner's signature to renew their permit every five years;
- New permit security features have been added; and
- New Traveller Permits will be issued that can be left on cars parked at Ontario airports, so that travellers can take their regular permit with them to use at their destination.

Some features of the new program are summarized in a December 1st, 2005 statement by Minister of Transportation, Harinder Takhar, and in a Ministry of Transportation press release. The Ministry's backgrounder states that "improvements to the application and production processes and updated technology have cut permit processing time in half", to one month.

The Minister's statement and the press release and backgrounder are available on the Ministry's web site at www.mto.gov.on.ca. Members of the public who want more information can call the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Call Centre at 416-235-2999 or 1-800-387-3445. A further article on the new program will be in a future issue of ARCH Alert, as ARCH obtains further details.

United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons, December 3rd, aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and generate support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of the benefits that come from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The theme of the day is based on the goal of full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in society by persons with disabilities, established by the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in 1982.

The theme of this year's International Day focused on the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities that is currently being negotiated, and on getting action to involve persons with disabilities in the development process. There can be no development unless everyone is included. By denying persons with disabilities their human rights prevents them from actively participating in the development process and in sharing the benefits.

Persons with disabilities in the past have remained marginalized and have been known to be disproportionately poorer; frequently unemployed; have higher rates of mortality; largely excluded from the civil and political processes; and overwhelmingly voiceless in matters that affect them and their society.

For the last few decades, slow and uneven progress has been made to address these issues within a human rights framework. Continuing action at all levels of society is needed to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy full and equal participation. Efforts need to address among other things: environmental and social barriers, policies, laws, services, as well as ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal access to jobs, education, health, information and other services.

Two hundred people, including persons with disabilities and those representing disability organizations gathered in Ottawa to celebrate the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons at an event hosted by the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC), while thousands of others nationally and internationally watched the day's events unfold via a live web cast. The agenda included remarks from prominent speakers from the disability and human rights communities that reflected on the social, political, cultural, and economic contributions of Canadians with disabilities as well as the need for real action and leadership in eliminating remaining barriers.

A news release distributed by CAILC on this year's events stated:

"Canadians with disabilities continue to experience poverty, exclusion and lack of access to disability related supports. All political parties must during this election campaign commit to the creation of an Inclusive and Accessible Canada - a country where people with disabilities have the income, aids and devices, personal supports and accommodations needed to make social, economic, cultural and political citizenship accessible to all," stated Laurie Beachell, National Coordinator of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD).

With the upcoming election quickly approaching, the event gave Canadians with disabilities the opportunity to call on electoral candidates to no longer ignore the needs of persons living with disabilities in Canada, and also acknowledge that we deserve to have our rights respected; those same rights that other Canadian citizens take for granted, particularly protection of our human rights.

Did You Remember to Cast Your Ballot?

by Nancy Barry

Conservatives rule a minority government! Canadian voters have decided it's time for a change, as they elected Stephen Harper as their new federal leader. The final standings: the Tories gained 124 seats, the Liberals 103, the Bloc 51, and the N.D.P. gained 29. A majority requires 155 seats (Pulse24.com, January 24, 2006). The Conservatives, having expected to win a majority government, campaigned on a platform of government accountability, tax cuts, and a crack down on gun crime.

But what does this mean for people with disabilities? In the section of its platform called "Stand Up for Families", the Conservative Party promises to "introduce a National Disability Act to promote reasonable access to medical care, medical equipment, education, employment, transportation and housing for Canadians with disabilities."

What Accommodations Are Made Available Through Elections Canada for Citizens with Disabilities? Although the Federal election has come and gone, you may want to keep the following points of interest in mind for future reference: Elections Canada publishes documents in alternative formats, including large print, Braille, audio-cassette and diskette. They also have information on open- and closed- captioned videotapes, and have a toll-free TTY number: 1.800.361.8935.

Polling stations have a template (a card with holes in it that is placed over the ballot so that it can be marked accurately) that persons can use when marking their ballots. If you need other help in marking your ballot, a member of the election staff or a relative can help you. If you want Elections Canada to provide

a sign language interpreter at your polling station, you must inform your local returning officer with sufficient notice (at least one to two business days prior to the election).

Voting by Special Ballot:

You can inform Elections Canada that you want to mail in your vote rather than vote at a polling place. You can vote by special ballot even if you will be at your home on Election Day. However, to meet the deadline, you will have to fax the form for a special ballot to your local returning officer at least one week prior to the election. You can download a copy of the form at www.elections.ca. After you fill out the form, fax it to the returning officer for the electoral district where you live. Along with the form, you also will need to fax a copy of a document that has your name, address and signature on it, or copies of two documents, one with your name and address and the other with your name and signature. Fax copies of both sides of the document unless the back is blank.

Who Is My Local Returning Officer? To find out the name, office address, and toll-free telephone and fax numbers of the returning officer for your riding, go to the Elections Canada home page at www.elections.ca/home and enter your postal code number in the section for "Voter Information Service". You will get a web page with a list of "frequently asked questions". Select "Where is my local returning office?"

How to Get More Information: Elections Canada has an automated toll-free telephone service that you can call 24 hours a day. If you want to talk to a person, you can call the same number between 7:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. eastern time at 1-800-463-6868. You also can contact Elections Canada by TTY at 1-800-361-8935, or in writing to 257 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M6. Or you can go to their website at <http://www.elections.ca>

Independent Living Impact Book

by Anna Quon

Hi there! My name is Anna Quon, and I am the consumer writer on CAILC's IL (Independent Living) Impact book team. The book will document the history of the IL movement in Canada and its impact on individuals, their communities and Canadian society.

As the consumer writer, I will be collecting the stories of how the lives of individuals with disabilities have been impacted by the IL movement. My hope is to collect the stories that represent the diversity of consumers (including diversity of disability, ethnicity, age and gender) from across the country. I am particularly interested in stories that illustrate the IL themes of consumer control, peer support, empowerment and skills development, and citizenship and inclusion.

I would like to hear from consumers and consumer-leaders of the IL movement who might be interested in sharing their stories for possible inclusion in the IL Impact book. I can interview these consumers or they can submit their stories to me. I can also help consumers who want my assistance with writing their own stories, by phone, fax and email. We will not be able to include all the stories we collect in the book, but will do our best to include as many as possible. For more information about the Independent Living Impact project, go to http://www.cailc.ca/CAILC/text/projects/ilimpact/intro_e.html.

And now, a little about me. I am a mental health consumer and member of the Halifax Independent Living Resource Centre. I have been a freelance writer since 1998, and telling people's stories is a passion of mine. To find out more about me and my writing please check out my website at <http://www.annaquon.ca>.

Anna Quon,
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IL Impact Book team
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Reliable Independent Living Services receives approval by the Ontario March of Dimes' for barrier free renovation services

by Ronny Wisikin

People often take simple day-to-day activities like having a shower, walking up stairs or putting away dishes for granted. But for seniors, simple actions become new challenges as they face difficulties with physical changes brought on by ageing.

Local municipal building codes don't require residential buildings to have built-in accessible features for occupants using mobility aids such as canes, rollators/walkers, wheelchairs and scooters. Because of this, too many people are forced to seek alternative living arrangements when their home becomes an obstacle course. The good news for everyone including seniors is that by making certain changes within their homes, life becomes easier and they are well prepared to stay at home when long term care is needed.

Reliable Independent Living Services currently provides services for senior, elderly and disabled residents within the Greater Toronto Area and Simcoe County, to help them achieve greater independence and safety in the comfort of their own homes.

Ontario March of Dimes' Home & Vehicle Modification program provides up to \$15,000 towards the cost of home modifications for Ontarians living with

disabilities/impairments that restrict mobility.

About Reliable Independent Living Services

Founded in 2003, Reliable Independent Living Services is the creator of the innovative EuroMax Shower™ which is the most visually appealing and versatile barrier free entry shower available today. The unique EuroMax Shower™ was designed to integrate with the existing bathroom plumbing in both homes and apartment buildings, without the need for costly and messy relocation of pipes. The company's mission is to "Help people stay in the home they love". For more information about Reliable Independent Living Services, visit its website at <http://www.reliableliving.com> or call Ronny Wiskin at 416-502-9200.

**“Helping you stay in the home you love
for as long as you want.”**

Workplace Essential Skills Partnership (WESP)

The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), in collaboration with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), is pleased and excited to present the Workplace Essential Skills Partnership (WESP). The WESP is an employment program designed to provide job seekers with disabilities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) the opportunity to enhance their employability in preparation for a variety of labour market sectors.

The WESP includes a continuous intake and assessment process along with an intensive eight-week employment enhancement program offered three times during the year. The WESP is designed using the model of the highly successful Skills Training Partnership (STP) Program, a pre-employment program for persons with disabilities that has a proven track record of success in other parts of Canada. For more information, please visit www.ccrw.org.

The WESP is available in the Greater Toronto Area to job seekers with cross-disabilities. Features of the program include professional intake, assessment and return to work action plans, three eight-week employability enhancement sessions (one of which has already taken place), in depth vocational evaluations, a full time job developer, connections to employers and professional workplace accommodation and consultation.

The ideal candidate should have English language proficiency skills, be self-motivated, and possess the necessary mobility skills to be successful in the workplace. Some previous employment history is an asset but not necessary. He/She will have some transferable skills based on the Nine Essential Skills, such as strong reading and writing skills, numeracy, problem solving, customer

service skills, basic computer skills and some understanding of his/her own personal accommodation needs. Because this person will already have some of these skills, the Workplace Essentials Skills Partnership Program will enhance these abilities and strengths.

Employability skills development is a prerequisite to obtaining employment. The WESP will give participants the necessary tools to be competitive in the job market and the confidence to find, retain, and succeed at any job. Each of the eight-week sessions is customized to prepare participants for all aspects of employment, ranging from effective communication and in-office etiquette, to decision-making and problem solving. With a highly interactive course curriculum all participants will have an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with a team approach that models the real work environment. WESP staff arrange job shadowing, in which participants will have the opportunity to get first-hand insight into a profession. Participants will also benefit from a full-time Job Developer who conducts continuous marketing and outreach to employers.

The next session will begin April 10, 2006 through to June 2, 2006. For further information regarding intake and sessions, please contact Wendy Pulton, WESP Vocational Coordinator, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, 1929 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4G 3E8; Phone: (416) 486-2500 ext. 8237; Email:wpulton@ccrw.org. You may also find out more by visiting their website at www.ccrw.org.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance: A New Beginning *“The end of one era and the beginning of another.”*

From David Lepofsky’s lips, to the ears of hundreds of Ontarians with disabilities, he formally announced that what was formerly known as the ODA (Ontarians with Disabilities Act) ceased to exist as of August 31, 2005, and that he would relinquish his leadership role at that time.

A transitional working group has been meeting to develop plans for a successor organization. The group decided that it would be called the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance, or AODA Alliance. The role of the AODA Alliance will be quite different from that of the ODA Committee. The ODA Committee was focussed on getting strong and effective legislation. The AODA Alliance will concentrate its efforts on ensuring that the statute that has now been passed into law will be clearly understood by the disability community, and that citizens who care about the removal of barriers are encouraged to participate in the standards development process. It will, of course, also have a role in communicating with the government, both at the political and the staff level, to make sure the legislation is implemented in ways that will bring about the changes that it was intended for.

The Mission Statement of the new Alliance is: “To achieve a barrier-free Ontario

for all persons with disabilities by promoting and supporting the timely, effective and comprehensive implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act”. The transition team, in preparation for the new AODA, has been working hard to make decisions regarding membership, structure and leader of the AODA Alliance. All members of the formal **The vision of the AODA is to develop an “accessible” Ontario in 20 years or less:**

- Improve accessibility to workplaces and goods, services, facilities, buildings and premises for persons with disabilities.
- Strengthen Ontario’s economy by expanding opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Improve access to key areas such as employment, customer service, communications and transportation.
- Inform and change attitudes, values and behaviour towards accessibility.
- Permit Ontarians with disabilities to contribute and participate fully in community and economic life.

Examples of Accessibility Initiatives:

Customer Service Projects

“May I Help You” - Welcoming customers with disabilities - 2005. A training package which provides all the materials for delivering a workshop on providing services to customers with disabilities.

Employment-Related Projects

Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario Division - 2004. Development of “Mental Health Works” educational resources for employers to reduce the incidence and effects of mental health problems in the workplace.

Universal Design Project

Design Exchange - Professional Development Series (resources, tools, on-line material(s) on universal design by architects, engineers, designers, to foster a stronger understanding of universal design and its benefits for all, including people with disabilities and the aging population (in progress).

ODA have been invited to join the Alliance. If you wish to become a member of the AODA Alliance please respond to Mary Lumgair at mlumgair@chs.ca or c/o The Canadian Hearing Society, 271 Spadina Road, Toronto, Ontario, M5R 2V3 or to fax number 416-928-2517. In your response, please provide your name, contact information (including address, phone/TTY number, fax number, email

address), and whether your membership is individual or organizational. If it is organizational, please provide the name of the organization, contact information, and one contact person.

Links of Interest:

Accessibility Directorate of Ontario - Tel: (416) 328-0207 or 1-888-520-5828 TTY: (416) 328-0148 or 1-888-335-6611 or email to accessibility@mci.gov.on.ca.

Resources/tools are available at the following websites:

- **Accessibility Ontario**, www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index/html
- **Paths to Equal Opportunity**, www.equalopportunity.on.ca
- **Coalition of Ontario Accessibility Advisory Committees**, www.contaac.ca/

News Tidbits

Government of Canada Provides \$1,000,000+ to Nine Projects

On August 22, Ken Dryden, Minister of Social Development, announced funding for nine projects with disability organizations to help persons with disabilities become employed through services such as skills enhancement, work experience and career counseling. The government supports these projects through the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities, which supports a broad array of employment projects for people with disabilities who are unemployed and who are not normally eligible for employment benefits under the Employment Insurance Act.

Respiteservices.com, which coordinates a network of agencies and organizations providing respite services to individuals with all kinds of disabilities and their families, will now be available across Ontario. Building on the success of the Toronto model of www.respiteservices.com, this expansion will take place over the next three years.

PLAN was founded 16 years ago to help parents answer the question, "What will happen to our son or daughter with a disability when we die?" It has assisted many families since. PLAN's informative new website has been designed to assist people as they plan for the safety, security and well-being of a relative with a disability. For more information, visit <http://www.plan.ca>.

Aging and Developmental Disabilities Project- Transition Guide Now Online

The Transition Guide developed by the OPADD Transition Task Group is now available online at www.opadd.on.ca. Go to the home page and click on the link to the right of the screen. The guide contains information to help caregivers plan with the person who is aging with a developmental disability. Developing a personal history, health care issues, substitute decision-making, finances and principles for transition planning are some of the topics covered.

COMMUNITY EVENTS: What's Happening in Your Community?

Activate your Winter at Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre

Birchmount's Active and Able program offers access to a broad range of inclusive programs and services for persons of diverse abilities and backgrounds.

Active Living Programs:

Chair Tai Chi: enjoy the practice of low impact movements in this gentle class, January 9th to March 27th, Mondays 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Cost is \$12.00.

Subsidies are available.

Barrier Free Access to Swimming Project: this program offers 9 weeks of attendant-supported access to an integrated lane swim. It runs from January 10th to the end of May, Tuesdays 12 noon to 3 p.m. For information, call Constantine at (416) 690-8804. There is no cost to join.

Fitness and Wellness Classes: access to integrated and adapted fitness/wellness classes, including Aqua Fitness, yoga in the hot tub and low impact fitness classes that can be enjoyed while seated. Subsidies are available.

Workshops: enjoy monthly workshops/presentations on topics related to health/wellness, self advocacy, community services, etc. Every third Tuesday of the month, 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Future workshop topics include:

- Information and Referral Services
- Informal Counseling and Advocacy
- Community Consultation Events
Annual Abilities Fair (April, 2006).

Annual membership is \$5.00 and they offer full subsidies to offset program fees for those who face financial barriers.

All programs are held at Birchmount Community Centre, 93 Birchmount Road, Scarborough (at Kingston Road).

For more information and to register, please contact David at (416) 396-7606 or email david@bbnc.ca.

Youth Weekend Retreat

A Life Skills Weekend Retreat Program offered in partnership with the Ontario March of Dimes, Recreation and Integration Services, York Region Brain Injury Services, and Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre.

The retreat takes place at the Salvation Army Jackson's Point Conference (in Jackson's Point near Lake Simcoe), from Friday March 3rd to Sunday March 5th, 2006. The weekend is for youth with physical disabilities and/or acquired brain injuries, ages 16 to 25 years. The cost to attend is \$150.00 per person. For more information, please contact one of the following people:

Julie Osbelt, Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre, (416) 425-6220, ext. 3298

Susan Jones, Ontario March of Dimes, (905) 773-7758, ext. 225

Donna MacKay, Ontario March of Dimes, (416) 425-3463, ext. 298

Laser Eagles ... The Art of Inclusion

What is Laser Eagles? Laser Eagles Art Guild is a program that provides an opportunity for people with limited or no speech and with restricted use of their limbs to partner with others in their community in the production of visual art. Partners in art use a variety of communication techniques to collaborate in their work. Laser Eagles draws its name from the Art Realization Technology (A.R.T.) where the artist uses a laser pointer on a head or arm band to direct the Tracker, who follows the light beam and executes the Artist's vision.

On January 25, 2006 the Laser Eagles held an art exhibition, 'Everybody's Excellent Art', at the Assembly Hall, home of the Laser Eagles weekly classes. The exhibition included many art works on display and a demonstration of the artists at work.

Do you want to get involved? Laser Eagles has many opportunities for people to get involved in their amazing program. They need volunteers to participate as trackers and assist in ongoing fundraising and promotional efforts. For more information, please call Judith Snow at (416) 538-9344 or Al Page at (416) 234-0996.

The Laser Eagles receive support and administrative resources from the Marsha Forest Learning Institute, Toronto Culture Division: The Assembly Hall and LAMP Community Health Centre.

17th Annual People in Motion 2006

People in Motion is for people with disabilities, seniors with special needs, family members and friends, therapists, home care providers, facility managers, special educators and insurance representatives.

Everyone is welcome to this fun and enlightening event which features mobility aids, adapted vehicles, rehabilitation, home healthcare products, travel and leisure activities, corporate and government services, employment opportunities, computer aids, disability publications, associations and more.

See and compare everything under one roof at one time. **More than 120 exhibits!** If you have attended before, see it again! There are always new exhibitors with exciting new products and it is important to be aware of changes to existing technology.

**MARK THE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW AND
PLAN TO ATTEND PEOPLE IN MOTION 2006**

**Canada's Largest Exhibition for Disabilities
More than 120 exhibits including 16 new displays!**

**Friday June 2, 2006 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday June 3, 2006 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Queen Elizabeth Building, Exhibition Place

FREE ADMISSION!

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- * Attendant Services Available
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- * Ample Parking

For more information call 1-800-745-6555 or fax (705) 538-1988. Visit their website at www.people-in-motion.com

CILT Members Have Their Say

CILT is always interested in hearing member feedback about our organization and the programs that we offer. Your input is valuable to us because it helps us to determine where and how we can improve in our future program planning.

This past fall a Consumer survey was distributed to all CILT members and we had a 14% response rate. Given that, 38% of respondents have been a CILT member for more than ten years. The most popular programs among respondents were (in order of preference) Direct Funding, Project Information Centre (PIC), the Diner's Club and the Parenting With a Disability Network (PDN). Seventy-six percent of respondents were satisfied with CILT's programs and would like to see them continue.

When asked what members liked most about 'In the Stream', respondents said:

- A lot of information;
- news, personal stories, classifieds, poems;
- opportunities for involvement;
- changes in government programs; and
- list of social events.

When asked what they liked least about 'In the Stream', respondents said:

- Personal stories;
- difficult to turn pages; and
- not enough poems and articles.

We encourage members to submit articles and personal stories because it is important that consumers hear each others' experiences. Sometimes problems that seem insurmountable seem less so when we hear from others who are experiencing similar situations, and learn what techniques they have used to solve a problem. We can also learn new tips and information on topics that we may have never even thought of. CILT is always accepting submissions from consumers for our newsletter. If you would like to make a submission, please contact Nancy.

It is obvious from your comments, that many of you have been accessing CILT's new website. Members stated that they tend to visit our website anywhere from once a month to once a week. According to survey responses, the most popular reason members visit our website is to find out about current events happening in the community. Other reasons included:

- program information;
- to view newsletters;
- to access information on CILT publications; and
- to find general information about CILT.

Most respondents said they liked the new look of CILT's website. What they liked best about it was:

- the section on peer support;
- it is easy to access;
- there is a lot of information;
- better look;
- the font; and
- the different colors.

Of course, there is always room for improvement. And our members gave some good suggestions on how we can do that. Some suggested that the website should be a little less cluttered, that we should have more specific information on types of disabilities, that a search engine would be needed in the future and that it sometimes takes too long for people to access links because there are too many graphics.

When asked, 42% of members have required the support of CILT staff at one point in time and the majority of respondents said that they were moderately to very satisfied to the support they received.

Rest assured that all of your feedback is important to us and we will continue to work hard to implement that feedback into the work that we do at CILT. Thank you again to those of you who took the time to respond to our survey.

Bloorview MacMillan's New Look

In February 2006, Bloorview MacMillan (formerly known as The Ontario Crippled Children's Centre – O.C.C.C.) will open the doors to a state-of-the-art facility at 150 Kilgour Road in Toronto, Ontario, and we will be renamed 'Bloorview Kids Rehab'.

The new six-floor, 353,000 sq. ft. building, located in Toronto's Leaside neighbourhood has been designed to become their new home. It overlooks a beautiful ravine where children can explore, interact and learn in an exhilarating environment. Programs and services at the MacMillan site (Bayview and Eglinton) and the Bloorview site (Leslie and Sheppard) will come together under one roof. The Bloorview Research Institute, Canada's only hospital-based children's rehabilitation research operation, will work alongside the Bloorview

School and a 24-hour hospital service that includes family accommodation suites.

On January 21, 2006 Bloorview MacMillan held an Open House at their current MacMillan site, providing past friends and clients of the centre with the chance to take one last look at what has been home to many people for many years, and also the opportunity to find out more about the new site. For more information about Bloorview MacMillan's new and exciting adventure, log on to www.bloorviewmacmillan.on.ca.

CILT NEWS

United Fundraising Campaign 2005

This past year's United Way Fundraising Campaign, chaired by Rolita Siu, joined by her fellow committee members: Sandra Carpenter, Susan DeLaurier and Andrea Murray, was an absolute success. Our bake sale, comprised of delicious and delectable treats baked by our own staff, raised \$370 towards this year's goal which we were able to surpass by twenty-two percent. Through the bake sale and staff pledge donations, CILT raised a grand total of \$2,870.

Congratulations to this year's fundraising committee for a job well done!

Peer Support Program Update

by Nancy Barry

CILT has a great lineup of peer activities this winter. We hope that you will come and join us and get the scoop on what other neat things are happening in the community. The following is a list of events that are being planned for your enjoyment:

Mid Winter Get Together:

Got the winter blues? Come join us for an afternoon of refreshments and live music by the dynamic duo "Melody Mist". The Prime Timers and PDN meet every February for their annual Mid Winter Gathering. If you are a member of the Prime Timers or the PDN and would like to come and join us, please call (416) 599-2458, and ask to speak to Nancy (x27) or Kimberly (x34). If you are not a member of either group, but would like to be, please call us. We would love to hear from you.

Breast Health Workshop for Women with Disabilities:

On Thursday March 23, 2006, CILT is hosting a workshop for women with

disabilities on breast health awareness. We are very pleased to be able to welcome, once again, Linda Muraca, from the Breast Health Program at Mount Sinai Hospital. Linda facilitated a similar workshop for us last year and it was very successful. 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 expect a flyer in your mailboxes toward the end of February with more details.

Aging with a Disability:

In the spring CILT is planning to host a workshop on the effects that the ageing process has on people with disabilities. As much as we don't want to admit it, aging is a natural human process that we all have to go through. However, when you already have a disability, the process can be more difficult. We would like to bring in a speaker in the field who can offer us some advice and tips on how to make the process a little easier on all of us. Stay tuned for more details!

Yoga in High Park:

In July the Prime Timers will join the PDN for their annual picnic in High Park. This year we will be learning how to relax and be kind to ourselves by practicing yoga. Details to come!

Diner's Club:

The Diner's Club continues to meet monthly, enjoying the enticing cuisines of different restaurants in Toronto. Each month, a different member volunteers to host the event. The host is responsible for choosing a restaurant that they know to be accessible, providing details to the coordinator so that a flyer may be circulated to all Diner's Club members, and also making the reservations with the restaurant. It's that simple! We would like to be able to plan Diner's Club events at least three months in advance so that we may be able to save on mailing costs. We need hosts for February, March and April. If you are at all interested in hosting an event for either of those months, please call Nancy as soon as possible—remember, if there's no host, there can't be an event.

WEB SITES

www.door2adulthood.com

"D.O.O.R. 2 Adulthood" is a project that was started by a group of consumers (including youth and young adults with disabilities and parents) and service

providers in Ontario. The goal of "D.O.O.R. 2 Adulthood" is to improve the process of transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities and their families in Ontario by providing information about services and resources related to transition and the opportunity to network and share ideas. Youth, parents, and service providers have participated in the development of the project to make sure that it meets their needs.

www.diversityworld.com

Diversity World focuses on employment issues for people with disabilities! Whether you are a person with a disability, an employer, or an employment services professional, you are likely to find some exciting information, concepts and ideas. Diversity World believes that people with disabilities have a rightful place in our workplaces and that they have valuable contributions to make to our economy, that their participation rate in the workforce has been restricted by erroneous information, discriminatory practices, limited resources, and a resulting lack of opportunities. The resources they have gathered are intended to help people with disabilities to improve their job search strategies and career development. They are intended to also help employers improve their outreach recruiting, job accommodation, and employment practices at supporting people with disabilities in job and career development.

www.cleonet.com

Do you need information about what happens when a person with a disability reports abuse to the police? Do you want to know more about the new Special Diet Allowance regulations, which affect people on Ontario Works ("OW") and the Ontario Disability Support Program ("ODSP")? Or, would you like a ready-made presentation on the extra benefits available under OW and ODSP that many people don't know about? Then check out www.cleonet.ca.

Unique in Canada, CLEONet is an easily searchable collection of hundreds of resources, news items, and events on a wide range of legal topics, and in a number of languages. Community legal education materials are produced by organizations and legal clinics across Ontario, such as ARCH Disability Law Centre, Education Wife Assault, and the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation. Through CLEONet, these and dozens of other organizations will share their materials and find out about each other's work.

If you'd like more information, please contact Fiona MacCool, the CLEONet Project Manager, at cleonet@cleonet.ca or 416-408-4420.

CLASSIFIEDS

Items for Sale:

Sascapoles (2 available) \$125.00 each

Scooter (Fortress 2000) \$1425.00

Walker (NEW – origin. \$450) \$175.00

DVD player \$ 45.00

For information on any of the above items, please call 416-434-8294 (leave message).

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For useful recorded information, call the CILT Newline at (416)599-4898.
Visit our Web site at www.cilt.ca.