

In the Stream

Fall 2007

David Onley: Ontario's 28th Lieutenant-Governor

David C. Onley, born in Ontario June 12, 1950, has recently been appointed the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Onley is a former television personality: as a science and technology reporter for a Toronto television station, CityTV, and an anchor for the 24-hour news station CablePulse24.

Born in Midland, Ontario, Onley was raised in Scarborough, and was educated at the University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus, graduating with a degree in political science. Beginning at the age of three, Onley developed polio, resulting in full paralysis. However, through extensive physical therapy he regained the use of his hands, though not his arms.

Onley began his career in radio, hosting a weekly science show for Toronto radio station CFRB, subsequently joining the CKO network in 1983. He then joined Citytv in 1984, as weather specialist, a position he held until 1989.

From 1989 to 1995 he was the first news anchor on the Breakfast Television, Citytv's morning show. He served as education specialist for Citytv and CablePulse 24 from 1994 to 1999. Onley became an anchor on CP24, when the station launched in 1999, and both hosted and produced Home Page on CP24. He was one of Canada's first on-air television personalities with a visible disability; David uses a scooter to get around. In honour of his contributions to the advancement of disability issues in Canada, he has received awards from the Terry Fox Hall of Fame in 1997, and the Clark Institute's 'Courage to Come Back' award. He was appointed Chair of the Accessibility Standards Advisory Council to the Minister of Community and Social Services in 2005. Onley was most recently inducted into the Scarborough Walk of Fame in 2006.

Onley wrote *Shuttle: A Shattering Novel of Disaster in Space*, a best-selling novel about space travel, published in 1981. It was nominated by the Periodical Distributors of Canada as book of the year. He was founding president of the Aerospace Heritage Foundation of Canada.

He was sworn in as Lieutenant Governor on September 5, 2007 at Queen's Park in Toronto. As the province's first lieutenant governor with a disability, Onley said he would use his vice-regal position to help remove physical barriers to Ontario's 1.5 million people with disabilities, as well as focus on other issues affecting the disabled, including obstacles to employment and housing. Onley also stated, in his installation speech, that he would expand on his immediate predecessor's aboriginal literacy initiative, his aim being to see computers on every student's desk in northern schools.

Onley and his wife, Ruth Ann, and their three sons, Jonathan, Robert and Michael continue to reside in their Scarborough home, as Ontario is one of three provinces that does not have an official vice-regal residence.

Congratulations David! Way to go!

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- [Editorial; Toronto Star: Vice-regal role model; September 6, 2007](#)
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Lieutenant Governor David Onley Requesting Your Help

Lieutenant-Governor David Onley needs your help with a project he is working on. He wants people to email him their stories to david@rogers.com of how they are afraid to show their abilities while being on limited incomes from sources such as ODSP and welfare. Even if you don't fit in this category if you know someone who does, you can email them with the Lieutenant Governor's request.

McGuinty Promises an Extra Stat Holiday: Family Day will Create a Long Weekend in February

© CBC News, Thursday October 11, 2007

Premier Dalton McGuinty rewarded Ontario voters for electing Liberals to their second consecutive majority by renewing a campaign pledge to give them an extra annual holiday — Family Day, on the third Monday of every February, starting next year.

In a post-election news conference in Ottawa Thursday, he also promised, as he had during his campaign, "to move forward in our schools, in our health care, in better protection for our environment, and in strengthening our economy."

But, he said, the best way for his government to get down to work is "to give families a little more of what they value above all else — time together."

Adding Family Day to the calendar will give Ontario families a total of nine statutory holidays a year, putting the province on par with Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

In addition, although not recognized as statutory holidays under the Employment Standards Act, the first Monday in August is observed as a civic holiday in many Ontario municipalities, and many employees receive a holiday on Easter Monday.

2007-2008 Toronto Public Health's Flu Vaccination Clinics

It's that time of year again. Summer has passed, autumn has arrived, and unfortunately, so has the flu season.

Toronto Public Health's flu vaccination clinics for the 2007-2008 influenza season will open on Tuesday October 30, 2007. For more details about clinic schedules, please visit <http://www.toronto.ca/health/flu/index.htm>.

And the 2007 Founder's Award Goes To...

Article taken from Sandra Carpenter's speech from CILT's 2007 AGM.

Each year CILT recognizes the significant contributions of an individual who both exemplifies and has advanced the Independent Living philosophy in the spirit of its founders. This year the Award went to Marcia Rioux.

Dr. Marcia Rioux is a Professor and the Chair of the School of Health Policy at York University in Toronto, Canada, as well as Graduate Director of the Master of Arts (Critical Disability Studies). Dr. Rioux received her PhD from the Law School at the University of California, Berkeley.

Marcia has worked extensively with disability organizations in Canada and internationally. Before taking up her full-time appointment at York University, she served for 12 years as President of the Roeher Institute, a national research think tank. During this time, the Roeher Institute completed the final evaluation study for the Direct Funding Pilot, responsible for helping us turn DF from a pilot, to a full fledged program.

Marcia has published and consulted widely on disability and human rights and

disability policy issues, both nationally and internationally. She works with scholars in human rights and in disability rights in Canada, with non-governmental organizations, with governments in Canada and internationally to develop policy directions, and with international bodies such as U.N specialized agencies (e.g. WHO, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Social Development Commission, UN Disability Office in New York). Her numerous publications include a Canadian atlas of literacy and disability and recent articles on the rights and freedoms of people with intellectual disabilities in Ontario, the Canadian political landscape of disability, and the connection between disability, human rights, and public policy.

It is hard to believe one woman can do so much! When I got copies of her CV's and various bio's I was surprised at the sheer quantity of publications, presentations and other activities she leads. I know her mostly through the Summer Institutes she held at Roeher, a study she did on the Americans with Disabilities Act when I worked at Government, the 1997 evaluation of Direct Funding and as a fellow Board Member of the Canadian Abilities Foundation.

I can't remember when I first met Marcia. I feel like I've always known her and love our discussions, when we have a chance to have one. Please join me in thanking and acknowledging all that Marcia has done to advance the cause of people with disabilities over the years.

CILT's Board of Directors 2007-2008

It is CILT's pleasure to welcome Heather Willis back to the Board this year. Heather spent some time abroad, studying in England and has returned home, ready and willing to serve as a Director once again.

At the same time we must bid farewell to Ron McInnes, former President, and thank him for his dedication and hard work that he has contributed towards CILT's interests over the past six years. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

The current members of the Board of Directors for 2007-2008 are:

Beverley Elliott, President
Sheila Keogh, Treasurer
Nancy Christie
Mary Louise Dickson
Kevin Rogers
John Suchon

Audrey King, Vice President
Shannon Hill, Secretary
Alessia Di Virgilio
Heather Willis
Jane Staub
David Wallace

CILT Members Have Their Say: Results from our Consumer Satisfaction Survey 2007

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 summer a Consumer Survey was distributed to all CILT Members and we had a 20.41% response rate.

Below is a summary of the results:

Ninety percent of respondents are a CILT Member. Of those individuals, approximately 25% have been a member for more than 10 years.

Eighty-seven percent of respondents are familiar with the programs that CILT offers. The three most frequently accessed programs tend to be the Direct Funding Program, PIC and the Peer Support Program (particularly peer support workshops).

Seventy-six percent of respondents have accessed the newslines, and 33% have found the information on the newslines useful. Seventy percent of respondents are generally satisfied with "In the Stream".

What respondents like best about "In the Stream":

- The articles and information.
- Information on taxes
- Articles are well written and easy to understand.
- Some very positive material for persons with a disability (i.e. dealing with anger, Diner's Club activities).
- The "For Sale" section.
- Great range of issues covered.

What respondents like least about "In the Stream":

- Sometimes it's too long.
- The book review.
- Too many reprinted stories – would like to see more original content.

What respondents would you like to see more of in the newsletter:

- Personal stories
- More employment opportunities
- More links about other organizations
- CILT's take on government releases
- More about the Direct Funding Program
- Articles on aging with a disability
- Fashion and disability

Seventy-seven percent of respondents have accessed CILT's website, of which 41% of respondents have accessed CILT's website at least once a month. The most common reasons that respondents visit CILT's website is for general information about CILT and our programs.

What respondents like best about CILT's website:

- The visual images
- Variety of information
- It's accessible to screen-reading software for the blind.
- Clarity and easy access.

What respondents like least about CILT's website:

- Too complex and print is too small.
- The attendant services database is too confusing.
- It's difficult to find some things without the help of a CILT staff member.
- The menus could be more intuitive (i.e. finding out how to connect with the peer self managers' network).

SECTION F: CILT Staff

Thirty-three percent of respondents were generally satisfied with the support and responsiveness received from CILT staff.

SECTION G: CILT Events

Fifty-four percent of respondents have attended a CILT event. The most popular events among CILT Members are Diner's Club outings, the AGM and Prime Timer Workshops.

Thank you to everyone who responded to this year's Consumer Survey. 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.

Human Rights Commission Settles Claim with Respect to the Exhibition of Closed Captioned Movies

© Ontario Human Rights Commission, October 4, 2007

On July 24, 2007 the Ontario Human Rights Commission announced a settlement in the complaints between Nancy Barker, Gary Malkowski and Scott Simser, and movie exhibitors Alliance Atlantis Cinemas partnership, AMC Entertainment International Inc., Cineplex Entertainment LP and Rainbow Centre Cinemas Inc.

The settlement includes the installation of new closed captioning systems in multiple Ontario theatres. These installations will occur on a phased-in basis following a comprehensive selection and testing period of new commercially available closed captioning systems by the exhibitors. Most of the exhibitors have also agreed to add a closed captioning system to all new theatres opened in the province of Ontario. The agreement also includes the appointment of a monitor to oversee settlement obligations.

“We are pleased to have reached an agreement that increases the number of theatres with closed captioning systems so that more members of the deaf, deafened and profoundly hard of hearing communities can experience movies,” said Mr. Simser, an Ottawa lawyer, Mr. Malkowski, a former Member of Provincial Parliament and Ms. Barker, a Masters student.

“This is a win-win settlement for all,” said Allison Taylor, speaking on behalf of the exhibitors. “Assuming the technological developments continue as we predict they will, the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing communities will be getting a new closed captioning system that will offer a better movie going experience.”

“Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, everyone has the right to equal treatment with regard to services. I am pleased that this settlement will enable the deaf, deafened and profoundly hard of hearing communities to fully enjoy theatre-going experiences in the same way as everyone else,” said Chief Commissioner Barbara Hall.

COMMUNITY NEWS

LHINS Consumer Advisory Panel

© Toronto Central LHIN, September 2007

At the **Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)**, we know that local residents are the ones who best understand the needs of their communities.

That's why we set up our Advisory Panels, so people like you – who live, work, and use health services in our LHIN – can give us advice on how to put our three-year Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP) into action.

In May, we launched four advisory panels: Seniors (65 years and over); Rehabilitation; Mental Health and Addictions – Consumers/Survivors; and Mental Health and Addictions Families/Caregivers.

Membership on any of the Toronto Central LHIN Advisory Panels is for one year, with an option for renewal. Although the majority of our panelists have been selected for this year, we continue to recruit members who reflect the diversity in our community (i.e. ethno-cultural groups, Aboriginal, and Francophone).

It's easy to apply! The invitation to participate on the Advisory Panels remains open to all. If you are interested, call (416) 921-7453 or visit our website at http://www.torontocentrallhin.on.ca/ihsp/ihsp_mn.html and look for the application form at the bottom of the page. With your help, we're putting our plan into action!

TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT): Invitation for Application

© Taken from "Wheel-trans Community Link", September 2007.

To facilitate community input into the planning, development, and implementation of accessible transit, the Toronto Transit Commission has established the TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT).

ACAT reports directly to the Toronto Transit Commission. Its role is to represent the needs and concerns of people with disabilities and seniors who use the TTC and to provide guidance and policy advice to the Commission on issues pertaining to the ways and means of improving conventional, Wheel-Trans and community bus services.

Positions on the committee are open to residents of the City of Toronto who have disabilities, as well as seniors or others who have a knowledge of, and an interest in, accessible transportation issues and who are willing to make a

commitment of a minimum of 15 to 25 hours per month, during business hours, to attend and participate.

Interested applicants are invited to attend an information session at Toronto City Hall. For more information, call Wheel-Trans, weekdays 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at (416) 393-2462, by TTY at (416) 393-4555 or by email to acat@ttc.ca.

Traveling in the GTA?

Call Wheel-Trans Customer Service at (416) 393-4111 to request assistance with planning your future trips to Mississauga, Brampton, Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill, or Ajax Pickering.

In Mississauga and Brampton:

Call Transhelp at (905) 791-1015. Traveling to Mississauga, transferring at Queensway (Trillium) Hospital at 150 Sherway Drive, or if you're traveling to Brampton, you'll be transferring at the International Plaza Hotel at 655 Dixon Road.

In Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill:

Call York Regional Transit, Mobility Plus at (905) 762-2112. Transfer points include the following:

- Tim Hortons – 3310 Steeles Avenue West (west of Jane)
- Centre Point Mall, Picklebarrel – 6300 Yonge Street
- Shops at Steeles and 404, Food Basics – 2900 Steeles Avenue East
- Tim Hortons – 4228 Midland Avenue (at Steeles)

In Ajax and Pickering:

Call Durham Region Transit at (905) 683-4414, transferring at McDonald's at Port Union Road, Hwy 2/Hwy 401, at 7431 Kingston Road.

A Ten-Day-long celebration of Disability Arts and Culture:
October 25 – November 4, 2007

"The more inclusive the arts can be ...
The more powerful the arts will be"

Abilities Arts Festival is proud to present a ten-day long multidisciplinary arts celebration showcasing artistic excellence and the talent, artistic vision, passion and creativity of artists with disabilities. Using the power of art both as a unifying and as a transformational media, Abilities Arts Festival seeks to engage people in the arts, while facilitating diversity, inclusiveness and participation in the arts by people with and without disabilities.

A host of workshops, panels and "meet the artist opportunities" will be presented all designed to engage the general public in disability arts and culture, and to promote and stimulate dialogue and linkages between artists/emerging artists with disabilities and the general public along. Professional development opportunities, as well as opportunities for linking with broadcast/ cultural and arts/cultural representatives with artists and emerging artists with disabilities are all a part of this unique celebration.

**PLAN NOW TO CELEBRATE, EXPERIENCE AND PARTICIPATE
JOIN US OCTOBER 25 – NOVEMBER 4, 2007**

For more information, visit www.abilitiesartsfestival.org.

Future Visions Consulting

By Gwen Reid, Career Specialist

Future Visions Consulting is aiming to empower people to see their own freedoms. This is accomplished by providing individuals with a resume and cover letter within two days, via e-mail as well as three free revisions. This enables them to market themselves to potential employers as quickly as possible. The career specialist will help clients access the hidden job market and assist them with interview skills and other networking strategies. Each client will be assisted individually while focusing on their unique needs, values, goals and abilities. Clients will receive follow-up once every three months for an entire year after the initial consult.

Unlike other agencies that place clients on waiting lists, there is no waiting list to become a client of Future Visions Consulting. The career specialist will focus on client abilities that help them reach their potential, versus the barriers that are usually faced in the job market by people with disabilities. Alternate work options such as small business, working partially from home, and job sharing could also be explored.

Future Visions Consulting will network with existing organizational contacts through orientation sessions and regular contact with program coordinators, to create potential contacts which will assist clients in finding job placements.

Gwen Reid, owner of Future Visions Consulting, has extensive experience in career counselling and group facilitation. She has worked in career facilitation, as an advocate for more than 10 years, and also has extensive knowledge working with diverse populations.

As a woman with a physical disability who has been employed in a variety of fields, and is now a small-business owner herself, Gwen can help clients to identify barriers and to overcome challenges within the workplace.

For more information, please contact Gwen Reid, Career Specialist at Future Visions Consulting, at 416-873-6893 or by email at futurevisionsconsulting@hotmail.com.

Just Believe www.justbelieve.ca

Just Believe is a website for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities. On the website you will find:

- Tips on Being Independent
- Personal Stories about Independence
- Info on the Dream BIG! Workshop Series
- And much, much more

I believe that Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities can learn from those of us who have traveled down the road towards Independence.

For more information, please visit the Just Believe website at www.justbelieve.ca or contact Rena at rena@justbelieve.ca. It is Possible, if you Just Believe!

CILT NEWS

Disability and Your Child's School

By Kimberly McKennitt, PDN Coordinator

Every year you know that it's 'Back to School' time when our children return home from that first day of class with more in their backpacks than the new binder, lunch box, markers and pencils that they packed the day before. That's right, parents: with so much reading material and paperwork for you to sort through, your own homework has just begun!

This year I was surprised to see a new and very welcome piece of paper. In addition to the annual assortment of emergency contact forms, staff-changes notifications, insurance policy applications, lunch information and the school year calendar, the Toronto District School Board sent my daughter home with a copy of 2007-2008 TDSB Days of Significance: Religious Holy Days.

A list of significant days (many of which are not approved school holidays) from around the world and within the diverse city of Toronto, notes the dates and origins of events such as Eid-ul-Fitr (Islam, October 13th), the birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i, November 12th), Losar (the Tibetan New Year, February 8th), Guru Gobind Singh's birthday (Sikhism, January 31st), Holi (Hinduism, March 22nd), Magha Puja Day (Buddhism, March 25th) and others.

Part of the TDSB's Equitable Schools initiative to recognize and celebrate that not all students come from a Judeo-Christian background (although all of those dates are included in the calendar too), Days of Significance is just one tool in a larger package of resources for teaching and learning about ethno-religious diversity. The calendar and, presumably, the resource package, also includes First Nation's Day/National Aboriginal Day (June 21st) and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Two-Spirited Pride Week (June 18th – 25th).

While it's a little curious as to why these two important events found their way on to a list of religious holy days, their inclusion in the Equitable Schools initiative does point to a greater awareness of the need for across-the-board inclusion in the Board. Regardless of ethnicity, national origin, religion or sexual orientation, every student (and teacher and parent) should feel that they are part of – and welcome in – the school community.

Where, then, is the 'United Nation's International Day of Disabled Persons'? In recognizing and celebrating the diversity of our school populations, the important date of December 3rd is missing from Days of Significance. Is that because it's not significant enough?

Schools across the province have been mandated to meet the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) by modifying their communication technologies, policies, procedures and physical barriers. Including this day on the calendar would present the TDSB and all boards with a timely and exciting opportunity not only to recognize and celebrate the students, staff and parents who will most benefit from such modifications, but also to bring all students, staff and parents into the process of making their schools more equitable.

Imagine a disability session in the Days of Significance curriculum. Depending on the ages and abilities of the students being taught, it could cover a range of issues related to the lives of people with physical, intellectual and hidden disabilities. Or imagine teachers discussing the ODA with their students. That

could lead to projects where students themselves survey the technology, communications, design and/or architecture of their school to study its progress in complying with the ODA, and to make recommendations for further modifications. Well, if you can imagine that, maybe you can be a part of making it happen.

How? By getting as involved in your child's education and school community as you possibly can. Whether you're concerned about your child's education, your level of access to their school, your access to participation in school events or activities, or the degree to which your child's school incorporates disability into the curriculum, you can make a difference if you connect with the people who can help you make a difference.

GET CONNECTED

Meet and talk with the teacher (s). Express your concerns. Describe your situation. Let them know who you are, because if teachers don't know who you are they won't fully understand your child and their needs as a student. And don't wait for the first report card to set up a meeting; if you have concerns, there's no better time than the present to make them heard. Meet and talk with your child's principal. Express the same concerns. Describe the same situations. Let them know who you are, for the very same reasons.

If verbal communication is a barrier for you, bring a friend, family member, nurturing assistant or attendant with you to help make the meeting easier for you, the teacher (s) and/or the principal. It's as much your job to communicate as effectively and politely as possible, as it is their job. So ask yourself an important question before you go into any meeting: Do you know if the teacher (s) or principal has dealt with a parent with a disability or a parent with your disability before?

If they have, maybe they're comfortable with people with disabilities. Maybe they're familiar with some of the challenges you face. If they haven't, maybe they're not. This could be as much a new and potentially awkward experience for them as it might be for you. You should expect a level of professionalism and politeness from them, but be prepared to accommodate them as much as you hope they will accommodate you.

GET REAL

Remember that teachers and principals are overworked and that schools are under-staffed and under-funded. When you go into any meeting, bring along a list of the main points you want to address so you don't forget anything important (especially if you're nervous about being in the principal's office!). But don't treat this like a list of demands. Teachers and principals can only do so much with

what they have to work with; if you want to be successful communicating your concerns, issues, ideas and suggestions and making progress on them, please recognize and appreciate the limits on their time and resources.

GET RESULTS

If, after meeting (and meeting again) with the teacher(s) and principal, you feel like you or your concerns, issues, ideas and suggestions are being ignored, contact your local school Superintendent. Their job is to listen to you, advocate and mediate for you when all else has failed.

GET INVOLVED

If you can, be a part of your child's school experience. If you can't do the Parent-Teacher Council, fundraisers or other events, consider approaching your child, their teacher (s) and principal about bringing disability into the classroom. For one CILT employee and his daughter, it was a very rewarding experience. Talking about his wheelchair, his van, his modified house, his hobbies and his job, Ian discovered that twenty-five grade one students were excited, intrigued and full of questions like, 'How do you go on stairs?'; 'Do you get stuck in sand?'; 'How do you sleep?'; 'How do you go to the bathroom?'; 'How do you get married if you're in a wheelchair?'; and, 'What's that button on your wheelchair do?' In addition to teaching the students a little bit about living with a disability (and giving every one of them a chance at wheelchair tug-of-war), the experience also allowed Ian's daughter to show off her dad to all of her friends.

GET THE PROFESSIONALS

Looking for someone else to come into your child's school to raise awareness about disability issues and the people living with them? If you have a younger child, consider approaching your child's teacher(s) and principal about Kids on the Block, an organization with over 40 programs addressing various disabilities, educational and medical differences, and social concerns. In a nutshell, Kids on the Block comes into schools to put on puppet shows. Not only are they fun – they get young students talking and thinking, too! In the 'Links' section of their website, www.kotb.com (or if you're in Toronto, www.kidsontheblocktoronto.com), is a list of associated organizations in Vancouver, Waterloo, London, Peterborough, Windsor, Ottawa and other regions in Canada that offer the service.

PDN Peer Support and Networking Group

Are you a parent with a disability? Thinking about becoming a parent? If so, then join the Peer Support and Networking Group, where people with disabilities are invited to discuss parenting issues in a supportive environment. New participants are welcome! Our next meeting is taking place:

Date: **Saturday November 17, 2007**

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Place: The Anne Johnston Health Station, 2398 Yonge Street (at Montgomery)

To register contact Kimberly at (416) 599-2458, extension 34 or by e-mail at pdn@cilt.ca by no later than November 9, 2007.

Attendant services will be provided. Childcare is available but must be requested by registration deadline. This peer support group is sponsored by CILT and the Anne Johnston Health Station.

A Message from the PDN Coordinator

Just a short note to inform everyone that after more than five years as the Coordinator of the PDN at CILT, I will be taking some leave this Fall. Starting on October 18th, I'll be out, about and away from the office. I expect to return on November 12th. In the meantime, Nancy Barry, the Peer Support and Volunteer Coordinator, will be taking my calls. If you need to get in touch with me, please leave a message on my voice mail at (416) 599-2458, extension 34, as Nancy will be checking this regularly. I look forward to hearing from you all when I return.

IL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

2007 International Day of People with Disabilities: Call for Unsung Heroes And Poets

By John Mossa

The City of Toronto, in partnership with CILT, other community and business organizations, will celebrate the International Day of People with Disabilities on Monday December 3, 2007 at Variety Village. The event will take place from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

This celebration is a local expression of the International Day of Disabled Persons as declared by the United Nations. The day is held to promote an understanding of disability and to increase awareness of the contributions that people with disabilities offer in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

The celebration will include reflections on the UN theme for 2007 — "Decent work for Persons with Disabilities" — and will celebrate Unsung Heroes of the disability movement and feature our first-ever "Invitation to Poetry" event.

Details about nominating an 'Unsung Hero' and/or participating in the 'Invitation to Poetry' can be found at www.toronto.ca/diversity/intl_day_disabilities.htm. Watch this website for future updates about the December 3rd event.

INFORMATION & REFERRAL

MedsCheck

By Andrea Murray

MedsCheck is a new, private consultation with your pharmacist that ensures you're getting the most from your medications and that you're taking them correctly. In this free, 30 minute one-on-one appointment with your pharmacist, you can discuss how your prescription, over-the-counter and alternative medications may be affecting each other. All Ontarians who are taking three or more prescription medications for a chronic condition are eligible.

For more information, call the INFO Line at 1-866-255-6701 or by TTY at 1-800-387-5559. You can also visit their website, at www.medscheck.ca.

Toronto Public Library Bookmobile and Home Library Service

By Andrea Murray

The Bookmobile is the Toronto Public Library's "branch on the go." It makes 31 stops at community centres, apartment complexes and shopping centres around the city. The Bookmobile is equipped with a wheelchair lift, and has computer access to the library's online catalogue, databases and web page. For more information, call 416-395-5560 or visit their website at www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/hou_boo_index.jsp.

The Home Library Service is available for Toronto residents who are "homebound" for three months or longer due to age, illness or disability. A variety of library materials, including books, paperbacks, large print books and talking books, are selected and delivered free of charge. For more information, call 416-395-5557 or visit their website at www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/spe_ser_home_library.jsp.

Workplace Essential Skills Partnership (WESP) Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities

If you have a disability, you're unemployed or you're looking for work, you may be interested in this six-week employability workshop. Registration is now open. The program runs November 5th – December 14th, 2007 at CNIB (1929 Bayview Avenue Toronto, ON M4G 3E8).

WESP also provides the following services:

- Job Accommodation Assessment
- Vocational Evaluation
- Job Development – Connections to employers
- Post –placement Monitoring

For more information please call Carolyn MacDiarmid at the CCRW National Office at (416) 260-3060, extension 227, or at the CNIB Location at (416) 486-2500, extension 8343; or by email at cmacdiarmid@ccrw.org.

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Gateway to Screening: A Participatory Needs Assessment of Women with Mobility Disabilities -Project Update

By Nancy Barry

The Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT) recognized the need to increase the level of awareness of screening for breast, cervical and colorectal screening among disabled women in the Toronto area. Partnerships were then developed with the following agencies in order to write a proposal and seek funding:

- Canadian Cancer Society
- Marvella Koffler Breast Health Centre at Mount Sinai Hospital
- University of Toronto, Faculty of Nursing
- Springtide Resources
- Anne Johnston Health Station
- St. Michael's Hospital
- Ismaili Cancer Support Services.

The project is funded and supported by the Canadian Cancer Society, Diversity Champion Team who provides direct and in-kind support for the project. They will also ensure that the project reflects the diversity that exists in Toronto and that recommendations from the research will be carried forward in a meaningful and

sustainable way.

We wanted to explore the experiences and needs of women with mobility disabilities when they access breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening by conducting a community-based participatory project that would carry out a qualitative needs assessment. In qualitative needs assessments, the aim is to gain personal insight from individuals or groups as to the nature and impact of a particular situation (Kaufman, R. & Fenwick, W. Needs Assessment: Concept and Application. Educational Technology Publications, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632, 1979).

We are pleased to announce that we have completed our five focus groups, in which we spoke with approximately 16 women. The Gateway Team is currently entering the data analysis phase of the project where we will be carefully going over the transcripts from all of the focus groups and compiling the results into a comprehensive report. At this time, on behalf of the Gateway Project Team I would like to convey our sincere thanks to all of the women who participated in the focus groups. Your input and voices were invaluable to the outcome of this project. Stay tuned for future updates!

Breast Health Awareness Workshop 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 take place at a Breast Centre, where you will have the opportunity to actually tour the facility and learn more about what actually takes place during a routine mammogram. Linda Muraca, a nurse clinician at the centre, will be talking to us about the importance of routine breast screening, regular checkups, good nutrition and maintaining an overall healthy lifestyle for women, while dispelling some of the common myths about breast cancer. This exciting event will happen:

***Tuesday November 27, 2007 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Marvella Koffler Breast Centre, Mount Sinai Hospital
600 University Avenue, Room #1285C (University & Dundas).***

Please RSVP to Nancy (x27) or Kimberly (x34) before November 20, 2007 at (416) 599-2458, or by TTY at (416) 599-5077. Attendant services will be available. Other accommodations may be available upon request. Accommodation requests must be made before November 9, 2007. Light refreshments will be served.

Coffee Club Update

By Nancy Barry

Until further notice, the Coffee Club will not be meeting again. I want to take this opportunity to thank Carmen McGee for volunteering his efforts and dedication toward the Coffee Club. The Coffee Club was originally Carmen's idea, and he graciously volunteered one Saturday each month to "host" the event at Dufferin Mall, and did a wonderful job! Thank you Carmen.

If you have any questions/concerns about the Coffee Club please contact Nancy at CILT. Revisions for coffee club events are currently under consideration. We would like to hear your ideas about how we could make the coffee club work more effectively. While Dufferin Mall seems to be a great location for people, it is very difficult to have a large group meet in a food court, especially when the mall is so busy. Unfortunately, it is not possible to reserve tables in a food court in the same way that we are able to make reservations at restaurants for the Diner's Club. So if the Coffee Club is to continue in the future, we have to come up with a different way to meet. Any and all ideas are welcome. Your feedback is really needed so please call Nancy. Thank you.