



MLPD Update **MLPD** October 2013

Newsletter of the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities

Produced by the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities
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Co-Chairpersons Report by Jess Turner and Carlos Sosa

This is an exciting time in our province! On October 29th, the final public reading for Bill 26: Accessibility for Manitobans Act occurred. The legislation will work to identify, prevent and remove barriers faced by Manitobans with disabilities.

I, read a statement in support of the bill on behalf of The League. The MLPD's statement praised the work of the Advisory Committee thus far in ensuring the voice and active participation of persons with disabilities is upheld. It was recommended that the Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities devise an annual plan for the legislation that will ensure adequate and timely implementation, as well as a strong process of review.

The final reading of Bill 26 is suspected to be taking place in December, when the bill will become law if passed.

In July, Diane Driedger gave her resignation to MLPD in order to pursue a full-time teaching position in Disability Studies at the University of Manitoba. Although we were very sad to see her go, we wish her all the best in her new endeavors. Diane has committed to staying involved with The League by sitting as a representative on the advisory committee for Bill 26.

At the end of this fiscal year, MLPD will be facing a further 65% cut in core funding. This means the Executive and Provincial Council is working hard on plans for The League to become financially sustainable, while maintaining visibility in the community and efficacy.

Brian Sinclair Inquest Underway by Colleen Watters MLPD Ethics Committee Chairperson

The inquest into the death of Brian Sinclair got underway on August 6, 2013 and continued throughout

the month. It is on a break for September and is set to resume October 7.

Brian Sinclair was a 45-year-old Aboriginal man with a disability who used a wheelchair. He went to the emergency room in September 2008 with a bladder infection. He waited 34 hours in the ER and died there without being seen. An inquest was called to find out the reasons why Brian died and to make recommendations for change to avoid the same thing from happening again.

Several perspectives were presented during phase one of the inquest. Brian's family (in particular his sister) and some Aboriginal community representatives believe that Brian died because he was an Aboriginal man. A doctor pointed out that Brian abused solvents which affected his brain and was a contributing factor in evaluating his ability to function and communicate, and he believed Brian should not have been living independently. The Chief Medical examiner testified about the breakdowns in the triage system in the ER, and that these deficiencies could have occurred even if "Snow White" was the patient. Some employees of the hospital also cited system

breakdowns and a crowded ER with overworked staff. The disability perspective was not mentioned. There were also differing opinions about whether or not Brian was triaged in the ER.

Clare Simpson and I attended the inquest on a couple of afternoons. When I was there, the discussion centred around video footage of the ER during the time that Brian waited for treatment. There were gaps in the video at the point when Brian died. A police detective testified that whether the video records are determined by movement around the camera. When Brian died, he was not moving, which meant that the video was not recording at the time.

Following the conclusion of Phase One of the inquest, two critical incident reports were leaked to the CBC. One report noted that on four occasions, members of the public approached the triage desk indicating that Brian was vomiting and needed help. Their pleas were ignored. Another reported that Brian had been observed 17 times in the ER during the 34 hours he waited there. These reports would be valuable evidence at the inquest. However, by law, critical incident reports cannot be introduced as evidence. Heidi Graham and Arlene Wilgosh of the

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) noted that some recommended changes to ER and triage procedures have already been implemented.

Members of the MLPD Ethics Committee will attend the inquest when it resumes in October. At the request of Provincial Council, we are preparing a press release to the media indicating our availability for interviews about our disability perspective on the inquest. The inquest is open to the public and will take place in Court Room 30 of the Law Courts Building, 408 York Avenue at 9:30 AM each day.

CCD Award Winner by Deanna Ng



Marie White (left) Valerie Wolbert (right)

How do we decide who is a hero at MLPD to win the prize? Each year, a member or group is awarded for their efforts at MLPD.

MLPD, being a member organization of the Council of

Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), gets to decide their hero for the year. This person, according to the CCD, is someone who values and works towards creating equality, human rights, inclusion, and accessibility.

This year's award winner is Valerie Wolbert. She was presented the award by Laurie Beachell (CCD National Coordinator) and Marie White (Past CCD Chair) at our Annual General Meeting on Thursday, June 6th.

Wolbert has been volunteering for MLPD in various areas such as serving on Provincial Council for 2 years, and on the Fund Raising Committee. Her work on the Fundraising Committee varied from planning, to contacting members, to helping the event be a success! She also assists staff with the production of the Update Newsletter.

Ethics are a passion for Wolbert. She also serves on the MLPD Ethics Committee, which is presently monitoring the media's coverage of the he cases of Brain Sinclair (who passed away in the emergency room) and Gloria Taylor (who chose assisted suicide).

“I really enjoy advocacy and that kind of thing,” said Wolbert, “MLPD is the voice of people with disabilities.” And so we are.

Wolbert strongly believes people with disabilities and especially people with intellectual disabilities should live in an inclusive community. Wolbert describes her work with MLPD and People First as “interconnected.” We are advocating for the same purpose.

Like MLPD, CCD values team work and has different committees on a variety of areas such as transportation, social policy, human rights, and technology.

In 2008, the co-creators of the Freedom Tour: Susie Weiszmann, David Weremy, Mark Blanchette, Kevin Johnson, and Valerie Wolbert won this award.

Other MLPD members who share similar values have won the CCD Award in previous years such as Colleen Watters in 2011-12, Gail Finkel/Ainley Bridgeman (posthumously) in 2010, and Daniel Halechko in 2009.

Note From MLPD Ethics Committee on Two Cases About Assisted Suicide and End of Life Issues by Colleen Watters

In addition to the Brian Sinclair case which you will read about in a separate article, two more cases related to assisted suicide and end of life issues have been in the spotlight over the past month.

Canadians with disabilities are celebrating the British Columbia Court of Appeal ruling in *Carter v. Canada* opposing assisted suicide. The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) and the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) applaud this decision and are urging the Supreme Court of Canada not to grant an appeal in this case. CACL and CCD intervened in this appeal to ensure that the Supreme Court of Canada’s ruling in *Rodriguez* not be overturned and to oppose any change in the Criminal Code that would legalize assisted suicide.

Although the Government of Canada has no plans to re-open the discussions on assisted suicide, it is likely the debate will continue among Canadians for a long time to come.

In a separate decision related to end-of-life issues, The Supreme Court of Canada dismissed an appeal that would have permitted doctors to end life support for a man with a brain injury without the consent of his family or a substitute decision maker. The case involves 61-year-old Hassan Rasouli, who is being kept alive on a ventilator and feeding tube because of difficulties he encountered with brain surgery in 2010.

Doctors at Toronto's Sunnybrook hospital believe there is no therapeutic hope of recovery and that keeping Rasouli on life support will result in his medical complications becoming worse as his body deteriorates. However Rasouli's wife, Parichehr Salasel, did not consent to end life support, citing the couple's Shia Muslim religion and a belief that her husband's move

Manitoba Access Awareness Week 2013 A Success by Colleen Watters

The Province of Manitoba proclaimed June 2 to 8, 2013, Manitoba Access Awareness Week (MAAW). MAAW raises awareness of the barriers people with disabilities face that affect

their full participation in society and promotes the removal of these barriers.

The week began on Monday, June 3 with a kick-off at the Forks. The Honourable Jennifer Howard, Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities, brought greetings on behalf of the province. A delicious barbecue with pork on a bun, veggie burgers and drinks was enjoyed by those who attended. Members of the Vision Impaired Resource Network (VIRN) led participants in a sing-along to close the gathering. Other MAAW highlights included:

- Ride for Fun Event presented by the Vision Impaired Resource Network (VIRN) which took place following the kick-off.
- Daily Lunch and Learn series organized by Winnipeg's Independent Living Resource Centre, June 3 and 5.
- Public Relations Event sponsored by the Resource Centre for Manitobans Who Are Deaf-Blind and the Manitoba Deaf-Blind Association, June 3
- Breakfast presentation on Accessibility as an Economic Driver by Dr. Kevin Stolarick of the Martin Prosperity Institute,

co-hosted by the Disabilities Issues Office (DIO) and the Alliance of Manitoba Sector Councils, June 4.

- Disability awareness training event co-hosted by the MAAW Steering Committee and Manitoba Hydro, June 5.
- MLPD Annual General Meeting and Workshop, June 6.

On Friday, June 7, a very successful awards luncheon was held to celebrate the leadership provided by individuals, organizations and businesses in making Manitoba an inclusive society. The Honourable Jennifer Howard, Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities acknowledged the leadership provided by all nominees and presented five awards, as follows:

Jane Sayer: Jane was celebrated for her years of work as a strong advocate for the acquired Deaf-Blind community.

Nick Ternette (Posthumously): Nick was nominated for his years of leadership at the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities (both as a Provincial Council member and as Transportation Committee Chairperson) and his strong

advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities. Emily Ternette accepted the award on Nick's behalf.

Student Services Unit, River East/Transcona School Division: The Student Services Unit, including Tammy Mitchell, Susan Miller, Sherri Black and Michael Bennett, was nominated for developing a pilot process to assist division schools to develop a culture of inclusion.

Riverside Grill (Selkirk): The Riverside Grill was celebrated for enabling people with intellectual disabilities to obtain their first jobs and to develop skills to assist them to obtain future employment opportunities.

Canada Safeway: Canada Safeway was nominated for hiring employees who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing as customer service representatives to work in three Manitoba stores.

Congratulations to all award winners.

MAAW 2013 was organized by a Steering Committee composed of the following members: Jess

Turner (Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities); Janet Forbes, (Community Living Winnipeg); Shannon Martin (Reaching Equality Employment Services); Doris Koop (Vision Impaired Resource Network); Valerie Wolbert (People First of Manitoba and MLPD); Pat Shandroski (Canadian National Institute for the Blind); Natalie Mulaire and Heather Hiscock (Society for Manitobans with Disabilities), Louis Gaudry (City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee), Shirley Kalyniuk and Ed Zimmerman (Rossburn Age-Friendly Community Committee) and Colleen Watters (Disabilities Issues Office).

For further information on Manitoba Access Awareness Week, please contact Colleen Watters, DIO (204) 945-5304 or e-mail colleen.watters@gov.mb.ca You can also visit the DIO website: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio>

Transportation Committee Report by Jess Turner

Handi-Transit continues to be a top priority and source of review for the Transportation Committee. MLPD has encouraged Handi-Transit to implement a reduce fare for seniors, as well as allow attendants to ride for free.

In 2005, Winnipeg Transit implemented the reduce fare for seniors. Eight years on, Handi-Transit is still lagging behind in the area of creating a fair and parallel fare structure. Handi-Transit implemented the reduced fare for students nearly two years ago, and is in a process of submitting a report to City Council that will encourage the adoption of the seniors fare and no charge for mandatory attendants.

Many public transit users are concerned about the new electronic fare boxes that have been installed on all buses. The new fare boxes will allow riders to pay their fare using cash, bus tickets or pre-paid Smart Card. The next phase of the project will involve the installation of card filling stations across the city, and then Smart Cards will be issued to the public. Organizations will still be able to give out bus tickets and

“coins” to volunteers to cover the cost of travel.

If you would like to become involved with the Transportation Committee, we are always looking for new ideas and energy!

Thumbs Up for Access by Deanna Ng

Big thanks go out to the Winnipeg Foundation for their generous support to the MLPD Thumbs Up for Access project and their commitment to accessibility in the community. We couldn't have done it without them! This is especially important with the upcoming Access Legislation Bill 26, which has passed its second reading and is waiting to be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Tuesday, November 12, 2013.

We worked hard to promote the need for accessibility. When MLPD was closed during the summer, Thumbs Up continued and much effort was put into developing our presentation and promoting it to any community group looking for a speaker. We contacted Coffee News and Canstar Community News for complimentary ads, and

purchased an ad in the Winnipeg Metro.

So what is this presentation and what is it about?

It is about barriers, access, universal design, what can make a place more accessible for people with all types of disabilities, along with a personal touch from Laura Schnellert. She is often accompanied by a guest – someone who was open to sharing their story about barriers and what helps in terms of accessibility.

Laura has a daughter, Karen, who uses a wheelchair for mobility and has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy. They are not strangers to barriers and accessibility. Representing MLPD at all the presentations was indeed a unique opportunity to share information and bring awareness.

Laura says, “Sharing personal experiences related to the barriers and accommodations experienced by my daughter and myself brought an understanding of how disabilities are a part of everyone’s life. The presentations explained how we need to be respectful, think about, and interact with people who have disabilities not only for our own comfort but also for the quality of community life.”

Where have we presented?

Starting in September, different groups were interested in our presentation. Our very first group we met was on September 11th, the Introduction to Sociology Department at the University of Winnipeg. Michelle Owen, the Professor and the class of over 80 students were very appreciative of our presentation, saying it was well done. They even requested the presentation to be uploaded to their site.

The major audiences were the 7 districts of the Manitoba Municipal Administrators' Association, who included our Thumbs Up for Access presentation in their annual *Roadshow* to various communities across Manitoba. The first stop was Swan River on September 16 where Laura presented to an open audience. From there, they traveled to Rosedale Municipality on September 17 and presented to a keen audience. This municipality requested a copy of our presentation, which we sent. The next stop was Shoal Lake, on September 18. On September 19, the destination was Pelican Lake, where the information was much appreciated. From there it was on to Melita on September 20. The next destination was Dominion City on September 23 where the

audience was familiar with accessibility and shared their own experiences. The final stop was Gimli on September 27, where again, the audience had positive comments and feedback.

All in all, representation from over 100 municipalities outside of Winnipeg had our presentation.

On September 30, we presented to Supporting Employment & Economic Development (SEED) Winnipeg Inc. This was a lunch time presentation that was well-received with lots of keen interest and good questions by all in attendance. They requested an accessibility assessment by MLPD, and as they have done several access improvements, they were given a certificate of recognition by the MLPD. .

Diane Driedger, a Professor with Disability Studies at the University of Manitoba along with her class welcomed Laura Schnellert and Dorian Phillips on October 1st. Dorian used a speech generating device to communicate with the audience.

On October 2, Laura Schnellert and Mel Graham were welcomed by the West Broadway Community Ministry, where a small but interested audience that attended.

The Thumbs Up presentation will be promoted beyond the project time period of mid October, 2013 as Laura Schnellert and Derek Legge have agreed to continue presenting on a volunteer basis. If you have contacts with any association or club who might use a speaker presentation, please have them call the MLPD office at 204-943-6099.

Rico John Volunteer & Busker By Deanna Ng



Rico John

Rico John, a busker, is a charismatic, talented, and community-minded individual, and is a member of MLPD. He has lived in Winnipeg for 17 years and during this time lost his vision from glaucoma.

You may see his talent when he

busks in different areas of the city. He performs in front of Portage Place on Monday and Friday afternoons. You may also see him perform on the over-pass by the Millennium Library or sometimes by the MTS Centre.

The Winnipeg Downtown Biz arranges to have buskers in front of Portage Place for everyone's enjoyment. They are interested in expanding their program which currently has 3 different shifts throughout the business day.

Previously this year, there was a Busk Off. John won Second Place in this Portage Alive Competition.

John is a born musician – he plays percussion such as steel pan instruments and drums.

“After losing my vision and employment, I decided I can't sit down and wait to be adequately addressed, so I do something to augment income.” He continued, “Busking is a respectable way and capable way of me because I can drum and make noise with my voice.”

John's music is a mixture of poly rhythms extracted from African and Caribbean rhythms where the lyrics carry deep meanings of peace or observe what is going on in our society that affects all of us

and how we can respond to it. According to John, Traditional African society used music as a way of communication that carried messages far and wide about important events such as births, deaths, weddings, or when the market was open.

John is motivated to impact his community by the smiles of passers-by knowing he made their day more positive.

John has a passion for community work. He volunteers for different organizations including CNIB and the Trinidad-Tobago African Caribbean Community's special events. His work with MLPD is on various committees and assists with different fundraisers.

Having good friends like Gerry Agostini, who introduced him to more groups and friends has kept his passion for helping others alive. Growing up in a talented and hard working family has motivated him to be who he is.

City of Winnipeg - Pedestrian & Cycling Strategies **By Jess Turner**

The Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies will help shape changes in infrastructure and support

programs that will encourage all of us to walk and cycle more – whether for work, pleasure, or day to day personal travels for shopping, visiting friends and family, or running errands. The Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies will provide direction for civic investments in infrastructure and support programs over the short, medium, and long-term to help make walking and cycling safe, convenient, attractive, and fun.

MLPD sits on the Stakeholders Advisory Committee which will meet four times to develop the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies. We need your input! Work is well under way on the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies, and they will continue be developed over the next several months, with anticipated completion in early 2014. As potential strategies are studied, we hope Winnipeggers will offer input and feedback on walking and cycling in Winnipeg, through surveys, a stakeholder advisory committee, small group discussions, a workshop, and an open house, and which will be supported by public communication materials.

Email: walkbike@winnipeg.ca.

Or visit:

<http://www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/MajorProjects/ActiveTransportation/WalkBikeWinnipeg/default.asp>

There will be a stakeholders meeting on Saturday November 30th from 9am to 2pm (location to be determined, contact MLPD later in the month for more details).

Employment & Income Security Committee

The next meeting is coming soon in the MLPD boardroom. If you are interested in attending or have any suggestions/ideas call MLPD @ 204-943-6099



TRANSIT INCONSISTENCIES NETWORK (TIN) at MLPD

We have launched a Transit Inconsistencies Network (TIN). We are asking riders to document problems and exceptional service in regards to Transit and Handi-Transit by noting time, date, number of the driver or taxi driver, and nature of the complaint or compliment, and submit it to the MLPD.

We have forms for this purpose. You can email or call the office the information. We will be submitting your complaints and compliments to the Transit staff on a regular basis. We hope that action will be taken to address your concerns.

In addition, we also encourage users of accessible taxis to make complaints directly to Gary Stillson, Acting Chief Taxicab Inspector at: 945-0289.

When you make a complaint about quality of service or lack of service, please let Me know as well.

CLOSING THE GAP, DISABILITY RIGHTS PENDANT

Hilary Druxman, a Winnipeg designer, has created the “Closing the Gap” disability rights pendant for the MLPD and the DisAbled Women’s Network (DAWN) Manitoba as a fundraising tool.

“This simple, but meaningful pendant represents closing the gap of understanding between people with disabilities and the non-disabled world,” said Diane Driedger, MLPD’s Provincial Coordinator. The pendants are \$35.00 and available at the MLPD office or online at hilarydruxman.com.



JOELLE MOON
AS NATURE INTENDED SKIN CARE

WWW.ASNATUREINTENDED.CO
JOELLE@ASNATUREINTENDED.CO
204.792.0028

Introductory natural skin care kit available for \$25 (Retail value \$46). \$5 from each sale goes to MLPD.
Package includes: 1.5 oz avocado and green tea face lotion, 2 oz lotion, 8 oz makeup remover/cleansing oil (can also be used on hair and nails), lip gloss, soap, bath salt, and free delivery.

Save the Dates

ILRC Talent Show – International Day of Persons with Disabilities

What: Show your Talent!

Why: This is a day for celebrating!

When: Tuesday, December 3rd, 11:00-2:00

Where: Victoria Inn 1808 Wellington

How: Call (204)947-0194

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

What: Theme: break barriers, open doors for an inclusive society for all

Greetings from Hon Jennifer Howard Minister of Finance & Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities

Presentation on Manitoba's Fulfillment on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

When: Tuesday December 3, 2013,
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Registration at 9:30

Where: Winnipeg Convention Centre 375 York, main floor

Who: Disabilities Issues Office (host)

How: To register please email Tracy MacMillan
tracy.macmillan@gov.mb.ca
Or call: 204-945-7613

New Option to Donate!

MLPD is a Canadian registered charity. For an alternative method of donating, go to our website and look for this icon on the top right hand corner.

Or go to CanadaHelps.org and search 'MLPD - MANITOBA LEAGUE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INC.'





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Who We Are

The MLPD is an organization of people with disabilities that works on concerns affecting the lives of people with various disabilities in Manitoba.

MLPD strives for improvement in areas such as accessibility, education, employment, housing, transportation, income security, and support services.

The MLPD supports Manitobans with disabilities with social policy research and consultation, public education programs, information and referral services.

MLPD Staff:

Josie Concepcion (Office Manager), Laura Schnellert (Thumbs Up Coordinator), Derek Legge (Thumbs Up Consultant), Deanna Ng (Thumbs Up Office Assistant)

The 2013/2014 MLPD Provincial Council:

Jesse Turner (Co-chair), Carlos Sosa (Co-chair), Allen Mankewich (Vice Chair) April D'Aubin (Secretary), Justine Kiwanuka (Treasurer), Shayani Fernando, Kristian Hooker, Zephania Matanga, Danielle Otto, Mindy Tucker, Colleen Watters, Valerie Wolbert

This newsletter is available in alternate media upon request.

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