

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It has been another exciting year as Chair of The Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities Inc (MLPD). The year commenced with Paula Keirstead and I acting as Co-chairs. Recently, Paula has had to step down from the position due to employment-related reasons. Paula's knowledge and experience will be missed, especially to me as a mentor, but I have been happy to continue on as Chair of the League.

The year has been a challenging one for MLPD, as we face considerable cuts to our federal funding source. MLPD will lose 35% of funding this coming fiscal (2013-14) year, 65% next year, and the funding source will be completely dry in just under three years' time. In March, we met with the Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities, Jennifer Howard. During this meeting, Howard let us know our provincial funding would be renewed for another year and she underscored the important role MLPD plays in the province. Continued support from the provincial government and Minister Howard is greatly appreciated.

This initial funding cut has posed many challenges to the way MLPD will be able to operate. Sadly, in the coming fiscal year we have to cut a part-time office assistant position, which has been filled by Deanna Ng for the past few years. Although Deanna will continue working for MLPD as part of the Thumbs Up Team, her energy and enthusiasm will be missed as the first person people speak to when they walk through MLPD's doors. As a result of funding cuts, for the coming 2013-14 year we have also decided to close the organization's doors one day per week to make best use of our current staffing resources. We will also be making smaller changes, such as issuing one less *Update* per year in order to avoid overextending the limited resources MLPD has to work with.

To deal with both current and future funding cuts, MLPD has struck a Fundraising Committee. The Fundraising Committee has successfully put on one Bud & Spud fundraiser and are planning another so far. The fundraising initiatives not only bring dollars into the organization, but give our members an opportunity to network and connect with others. Next year, MLPD will be celebrating its 40th anniversary and we plan to celebrate by hosting an Art Auction Gala. I look forward to seeing everyone dressed up and enjoying the festivities!

Our new fundraising initiatives have considerable positive aspects, such as providing a social venue for members and creating greater visibility in the community for MLPD. At the same time, having to organize such fundraising events limits our efforts as policy organization. We have a core group of members, who sit on Council and our various committees. Although our group is full of great ideas, our efforts and energies are limited for both disability-related reasons, among others. As we enter a new economic era, MLPD will need to find sustainable balance between creating systemic change and securing the funds necessary to stay alive.

I strongly encourage our members to become involved in MLPD's fundraising efforts. It is my energy, your energy, our collective energy that has made MLPD what it is today.

Looking forward to the next year!

Jesse Turner

Provincial Coordinator's Report

by Diane Driedger

The past few months have been busy and fruitful. Accessibility Legislation was introduced in the Manitoba legislation in April. Many MLPD members were present at the reception at Minister's Howard's office and to witness the First Reading in the Legislature from the visitor's gallery. After Minister Howard read the bill, the visitor's gallery broke into resounding applause and some whoops.

MLPD looks forward to the process of drafting standards for the different aspects of our lives: employment, customer service, education, to mention a few. The Accessibility Legislation may be passed by the end of this Legislative Session in June.

MLPD had its funding from Family Services renewed for the June 2013-14 fiscal year. We are most appreciative of the financial support and the recognition from Minister Howard in our meeting with her this spring that we fulfill a "unique role" as a cross-disability voice of people with disabilities.

On another note, we also have heard that the federal grant that we receive through the Council of Canadians with Disabilities has been cut by 35% for this year. Due to this cut, we have looked hard and long at our situation, and have had to make some changes.

The MLPD office will now be closed on Fridays. We have had to, unfortunately, make the decision to eliminate the Communications Assistant position at MLPD. We bid farewell to Deanna Ng who has worked so hard and so dedicatedly in this position, on March 15th. We are sorry to see her go. Thanks for all your work, Deanna!

We have a leaner staff going into this fiscal year, however, MLPD's Committees and Provincial Council continue to do many hours of volunteer work on behalf of people with disabilities in Manitoba. We look forward to our AGM on June 6th and to a new Provincial Council for the coming year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ethics

The Ethics Committee deals with ethical issues related to people with disabilities as they are brought to the attention of MLPD.

Over the past year, the Ethics Committee was involved in the following activities:

Review Panel and CPSM:

On June 2011, MLPD sent a letter to the Hon. Theresa Oswald, Minister of Health, urging her department to reconsider the establishment of an end-of-life review panel to deal with issues of withholding and withdrawing life-sustaining treatment. We recommended that her Ministry continue to work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba (CPSM) to alter its Statement to remove the alleged absolute power for end-of-life decisions that it now places with physicians and asked her to legally mandate physicians to consult with patients and their proxies in all matters of life and death decisions. We have met with the Department of Health several times about these issues and, this spring we again raised our concerns at a

meeting with the Deputy Minister of Health Milton Sussman. We will continue the dialogue with the government on the establishment of a review panel and changes to the CPSM.

Legalization of Assisted Suicide:

Update on Gloria Taylor Case:

On June 15, 2012, the Supreme Court of British Columbia handed down its decision in the Carter case, opening the door for assisted suicide in Canada. Justice Lynn Smith found that the “provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting physician–assisted dying, unjustifiably infringe the equality rights of Gloria Taylor, and the rights to life, liberty and security of the person of Lee Carter, Gloria Taylor and Hollis Johnson.” Gloria Taylor, a BC woman with ALS, was seeking the right for a physician assisted suicide at a time of her choosing when she felt it was necessary. The court ruled that physician-assisted suicide is constitutional under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Government of Canada was given one year to change the law legalizing physician-assisted suicide under the Criminal Code of Canada. In the meantime, Gloria Taylor was granted an exemption which gave her the right to seek a physician-assisted death under certain conditions. In early October, Gloria Taylor died from an infection and did not act on the exemption granted to her.

The Government of Canada has launched an appeal to Judge Smith’s ruling through the BC Court. Following the Government of Canada’s decision to appeal the case, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, the Hon. Jason Kenney, PC, MP, wrote to the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) and stated, “Today, our government announced that we will appeal the decision of the BC Supreme Court that struck down the law banning euthanasia, paving the way for the legal killing of the elderly and infirm. My position on euthanasia has always been clear. I believe that the inviolable dignity of human life requires that we do everything possible to help those at the end of life to die with dignity, but that killing a person is never dignified.”

The appeal was heard in 2013, and CCD and the Canadian Association for Community Living were co-intervenors and David Baker of Baker Law served as legal counsel. MLPD members Rhonda Wiebe and Dean Richert co-chair CCD’s Ending of Life Ethics Committee, and they

directed CCD's work on this case. The results of the appeal should be known within the next three months. If the provisions against assisted suicide contained in the Criminal Code are struck down, vulnerable Canadians with disabilities will be put at risk. We will watch this case as it moves forward.

Susan Griffiths Case:

The Ethics Committee has been monitoring the case of Susan Griffiths, and several members of the Ethics Committee, Clare Simpson, Jim Derksen and Dean Richert responded to media stories about Susan by speaking against the legalization of assisted suicide. Susan Griffiths was a 72 year old grandmother diagnosed with an incurable and rare brain disorder called Multiple System Atrophy which, among other things, causes loss of muscular control and the ability to perform personal care tasks such as bathing, dressing, using the washroom and eating without assistance. Ms. Griffiths considered her illness a life sentence and chose physician-assisted suicide. Since this is illegal in Canada, she travelled to Switzerland where a doctor at the Dignitas Clinic assisted her to end her life. She died on April 25, 2013. Prior to her death, she asked Manitobans to write to their MPs urging that physician-assisted suicide be legalized in Canada. Her friends took up the cause and are currently sending letters written by Susan to all MPs.

Follow-Up Forum on End-Of-Life Issues:

The MLPD is supporting the work of the Department of Community Health Sciences (University of Manitoba) and St. Boniface Hospital Ethics to organize a follow-up forum on end-of-life issues. Due to the illness of one of the organizers and other factors, the forum has not yet taken place but is being discussed. When plans are more formalized, the Ethics Committee will be promoting it to MLPD members.

Thank you to the members of the MLPD Ethics Committee for your work over the past year. Members include: April D'Aubin, Clare Simpson, Jim Derksen, Rhonda Wiebe, Dean Richert, Valerie Wolbert, Harry Wolbert, and Margot Miller.

Colleen Watters
Chairperson

FUNDRAISING

I co-chaired the Committee with Jesse Turner. We held first annual Bud, Spud & Steak event in July 2012 at Canad Inns - Tijuana Yacht Club. During this event we had a turnout of 150 people who came out and supported our efforts while having a great evening out.

We wish to thank all our donors who made the silent auction possible as well as all the entertainers and volunteers who made sure that the event would run as smoothly as possible. Although we encountered a few challenges, we were able to overcome them with help from Canad Inns and the grace and patience of our guests.

In 2014, which marks our 40th Year, in addition to our annual Bud, Spud & Steak event, we hope to celebrate our long and fruitful journey as a voice of persons with disabilities in Manitoba with an ART AUCTION GALA! We are looking forward to partnering with our members who are artists. We will inform members well in advance how and when they can submit their art work, which will be selected by a juried process.

In addition to these efforts, in the coming years, we hope to develop sponsorships, which are strategic business partnerships, to further bolster our fundraising efforts. Sponsorship would enable MLPD to garner funds OR support (in cash or in kind) for future projects and activities we hope to carry out. In terms of our Art Auction Gala, we are exploring ways in which we could partner with the Arts & Disability Network Manitoba.

Shayani Fernando

Housing

Our band of hearty housers was particularly hard-pressed this year by individual health concerns. These contributed to some erratic attendance throughout, and no meetings at all for the months of December and January.

A crumbling infrastructure and flood liabilities meant that Manitoba's Cabinet was just about the only identifiable group, including both opposition

parties, who weren't demanding a rent allowance to income assistance recipients of 75% of the provincial median. In light of the 1% PST raise, this fabulous support most surely would have evaporated PDQ had the measure been actually adopted on budget day this spring. Yet after the initial cost, there's no reckoning by which it doesn't make total economic and social policy sense, and the assertion by a recent MLPD press notice, that some of disabled recipients' dollars required for special diets is going into covering rents, is certainly unarguable and deserving of airing. Perhaps we need to find a warm body willing to publicly lay out the dollars and cents figure verification and after that's done, go back to the media when the time and circumstances are right.

While endeavouring to make our presence count in a campaign that preoccupied ourselves and all of our housing-connected allies, we found that bedbug eradication required yet more of our attention. In fact, if you'd rather not peruse pamphlets on the subject (available at the MLPD office), you'll find all the remedies your heart desires in our November and February minutes. Bedbugs really are a pest!

We witnessed our own spring urban logjam when houses that should have been occupied by young people with disabilities, sat empty due to unnecessarily rigorous regulations connected to the enforcement of the recently renovated National Building Code. The specific complaints that brought the problem before the public eye relate to houses constructed in good faith and prior to the regulations' coming into effect, so that a meeting of the minds may yet occur in regard to those houses. What providing agencies are supposed to do about the exorbitant extra costs in the future is matter for grave concern. These and several more issues, plus a few holdovers from other years that won't go away, will keep MLPD's housing committee busy well beyond next September.

Besides wishing to re-thank this year's gracious guest-presenters, not all of whom got thank-you letters I'm afraid, we need to recognize three of our own. Leonore Saunders has been a member for at least a decade and at 87, is only stepping back from further involvement because she has to trim some of her activities. Long-time member Ken Shachtay too is finding that his energy level is not quite equal to all he'd like to do. Our new secretary, Marlaine Myk who, as a Manitoba Housing policy analyst, also serves as our connection with that most relevant slice of government for us. Finally,

the League's Deanna Ng who, as always, went that extra yard in supporting our interests, no matter what those interests required. All future success, Deanna.

Mel Graham
Chairperson

Personnel

Paula Keirstead chaired the Committee during the 2012-13 fiscal year. On 5 April 2013, Paula resigned from the MLPD due to her new employer's conflict of interest policy. MLPD wishes Paula great success in her new position at the Provincial Ombudsman Office and we appreciate how effectively she managed MLPD's personnel issues.

In June 2012, the MLPD, one of the organizations funded by the Social Development Partnerships Program-Disability (SDPP-D), learned that over a two-year period Human Resources Skills Development Canada would reduce grant funding from the SDPP-D. For 2013-14, the MLPD's SDPP-D funding is reduced by 35%. The SDPP-D funding has been transferred to MLPD by the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD). MLPD's efforts to have the Province of Manitoba defray the organization's budgetary shortfall were unsuccessful.

With a smaller budget, the Council will reduce the League's operations by one part-time position, Communications Assistant. During 2012-13, Deanna Ng filled this position. (While the grant from the Opportunities Fund was in effect, the MLPD was able to have a full-time Communications Assistant, but when the grant expired, the position returned to its former part-time status.) We thank Deanna for her contributions to the League.

Diane Driedger, Provincial Coordinator, and Josie Concepcion, Office Manager, remain in their positions.

Diane works four days a week and Josie works half-time. In 2013-14, the office will be closed on Fridays, because we do not have full-time staffing.

Daniel Halechko resigned from his part-time position with the Thumbs Up project and MLPD recruited Laura Schnellert, former Executive Director of

the Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba, to work part-time on the project. Deanna Ng will be working on contract with Thumbs Up. The League wishes Daniel all the best in his new activities.

Zanna Joyce continued on contract on our Health and Financial Literacy Projects.

We at the League are very fortunate to have staff who approach their work with zeal, creativity and dedication. Thank you, everyone.

April D'Aubin
Secretary (Executive Committee)

Transportation

Nick Ternette had been Chair of the Transportation Committee for the past few years. The committee was only able to meet a few times this year before Nick became ill and passed away. His leadership will be sorely missed by The League. I have agreed to take on the role of Chair, and recognize that I have lofty shoes to fill. The short amount of time I experienced having Nick as an elder and mentor will last a lifetime. The committee, with Nick at the helm, was able to accomplish many initiatives related to making public transit and Handi-Transit more accessible.

Some of these accomplishments include lobbying transit to remove the pole at the front of the bus for better access, as well as reviewing the new electronic fare boxes being installed and providing feedback regarding accessibility. The committee provided strong feedback opposing many of the policy changes being proposed by Handi-Transit, which would significantly impact the cancellation process and fees associated with cancellations. Letters were written encouraging Handi-transit to implement equalized fares for seniors, and a report was submitted on attendants being allowed to ride for free that included a review of policy in other provinces. With regards to taxis, the committee encouraged the Taxi Board to create a stronger policy to support consumers with service animals, as members were being denied service. The taxi board has since sent information out to drivers as to how to accommodate a person with a service animal. The lack of accessible taxis continues to be an issue that the committee is working on.

Recently, Winnipeg Public Transit put on an awareness event to teach users with mobility needs to ride transit buses. The event highlighted the history of public transit, as well as gave a report on the new features being implemented for transit, such as the electronic fare boxes. At the event, I asked questions such as who gets priority on the bus, the limit to the number of wheelchair, walkers and strollers allowed on the bus, and the amount of disability awareness training drivers receive. The answers given were vague and underscored the need for greater training and policy development needed by Winnipeg Public Transit. For example, when I ride a bus, I am often referred to as “wheelchair” as opposed, to the drivers using person-first language such as person in a wheelchair or wheelchair user. Greater awareness about the unique needs of users with various disabilities on the part of public transit is the key to creating more accessible and efficient transportation in Manitoba.

All of us who use public transit or Handi-Transit know first-hand the barriers that exist. If you would like to see changes made to either transit systems, your input on the committee would be greatly welcomed! MLPD continues to compile complaints for both Handi-Transit and public transit to be submitted on a regular basis. Should you have a complaint, please call in to the office to have it added to the Transit Inconsistency Network (TIN).

Two members of MLPD also sit on the Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee, myself and Louise Hearn.

Jesse Turner

Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD)

Some Highlights from 2012-13

MLPD is a CCD member. Manitobans are national leaders: **Carlos Sosa** (MLPD representative to CCD), **Rhonda Wiebe** and **Dean Richert** (Ending of Life Ethics) **Dean Richert**, **Jim Derksen** and **Yvonne Peters** (Human Rights) **Valerie Wolbert** (Disabling Poverty/Enabling).

Regrettably, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) decided to withdraw operating funds from 18 national disability organizations over two years. HRSDC's decision affects CCD and MLPD, because HRSDC transfers funds to CCD, for redistribution to provincial groups. Developing new revenue is a high priority for CCD. Despite these challenges, CCD continues promoting access and inclusion.

Steve Estey brought CCD's views to the UN's 5th (2012) Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Vangelis Nikias continues to educate Canadians about the CRPD.

CCD has encouraged the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) to be a frontrunner on access and inclusion. In response, the CMHR formed an Inclusive Design Advisory Council (IDAC) with participation from a number of Manitobans with disabilities among others. The CMHR has promised publicly to exceed the Smithsonian Museum's accessibility standards.

On 12 – 13 October 2012 in Toronto, the Conference Board of Canada held a Summit on Sustainable Health Care where Rhonda Wiebe, Co-chair of the CCD Ending of Life Ethics Committee, debated the motion: end-of-life decisions belong to the individual. Rhonda argued against the motion.

In 2012, in the Carter case, a BC judge ruled Canada's assisted suicide prohibition was unconstitutional. The BC Court of Appeal granted CCD and the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) intervener status in the case. In March 2013, the Court heard CCD/CACL argue that Canada's ban against assisted suicide should remain in place, because assisted suicide reinforces disability discrimination and puts vulnerable persons at risk.

Through a CCD project, John Stapleton has researched disabled people's increased participation in social assistance programs and he discussed this with MLPD members at a March 2012 workshop co-sponsored by CCD.

CCD had a major victory at the Supreme Court in the Moore case, which focused on accommodation in education.

April D'Aubin
CCD

Thanks to All Our Funders and Corporate Donors

Your Support is Greatly Appreciated

The Province of Manitoba Department of Family Services and Housing

Human Resources Development Canada

Manitoba Community Services Council

The Winnipeg Foundation

The Michael J. Rosner Fund

Administered by The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba

Manitoba Hydro Selkirk & Interlake Employees' Charitable Donations
Committee

Fort Garry Industries

Global Innovations Computer Consultation Services

Missionary Oblate Sisters

Pinnacle Staffing Solutions

As Nature Intended - Joelle Moon

Hilary Druxman

Taylor Hair Design

Terry McIntosh - Avon Representative

Healing Hands - Gerry Agostini

Lygia Ramcharan

Gourmet Cup

Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC)

Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba (CPAM)

The Levene Family

Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities Inc.
Statement of Operations
March 31, 2013
(Unaudited)

Assets

Current assets:

Cash and short-term deposits	\$52,991
Accounts receivable	14,032
Prepaid expenses	84

\$67,107

Capital assets:

Equipment	\$16,236
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\$16,236

Accumulated amortization	13,000
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\$ 3,236

\$70,343

Liabilities, Deferred Contributions and Net Assets (Deficiency)

Current Liabilities:

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$13,853
Deposit payable	1,200
Deferred leasehold inducement	2,805

17,858

Deferred contributions

5,968

Net assets (deficiency):

Investment in capital assets	3,236
Internally restricted	31,041
Unrestricted	12,240

46,517

\$70,343

Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities Inc.
Statement of Operations
Year ended March 31, 2013
(Unaudited)

Revenues:

Government of Canada	
Human Resources Development	56,816
Province of Manitoba	
Family Services	50,000
Community grants, donations, fees and sundry:	
Donations	11,891
Fundraising	5,479
Membership	311
Rental	15,120
Jewish Foundation of Manitoba (M. Rosner Memorial Fund)	1,042
Project administration fees	9,150
Sphere-Quebec	10,629
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	160,438

Expenditures:

Amortization of capital assets	1,489
Equipment lease	4,524
Fundraising	4,309
Liability insurance	1,403
Meetings	636
Memberships	1,000
Printing, postage, supplies and general office	3,819
Rent	33,289
Review engagement fees	7,364
Salaries and benefits	91,509
Sundry	1,005
Telephone	2,912
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	153,259
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Projects:

Revenue:	
Winnipeg Foundation -Thumbs Up	10,262
Government of Manitoba -Department of Health	18,273
Expenditures:	
Thumbs Up	(11,421)
Department of Health – Primary care survey	(17,273)
	(159)

Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$ 7,020
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***Provincial Council Members
2012-2013***

April D'Aubin	Carlos Sosa
Shayani Fernando	Jesse Turner
Laura Gordon	Colleen Watters
Paula Keirstead*	Valerie Wolbert
Zephania Matanga	

* Resigned

Executive Committee Members

Co-Chairpersons - Paula Keirstead & Jesse Turner
Vice Chairperson - Carlos Sosa
Secretary - April D'Aubin
Treasurer - Laura Gordon

MLPD Staff

Diane Driedger - Provincial Coordinator
Josie Concepcion - Office Manager
Emily Ternette - Communications/Program Assistant **
Deanna Ng - Program Assistant
Daniel Halechko - Thumbs Up Coordinator

** On Leave

This report is available in alternate media upon request.