



Canadian Association
Paraplegic Canadienne des
Association Paraplegiques
(Manitoba) Inc.

MPF MANITOBA
PARAPLEGIA
FOUNDATION INC.

May 2008

Newsletter of the Canadian Paraplegic Association (Manitoba) Inc.

Spring Issue

PARATRACKS



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Cenerini**

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**paraplegic or tetraplegic*

CPA extends its sympathies to the families of the following loved ones who recently passed away:

Ernie Ramstead

Beverley Weddall

Morley Zatsler

Freda Brown

Joey Levesque

Marianne Bossen



William Kaiser

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MANITOBA PARAPLEGIA FOUNDATION INC. (MPF) NEWS

MPF funds go to work in four main areas:

Special projects, product testing, research and direct aid to persons with spinal cord injuries. CPA thanks MPF for its continued support to improving the quality of life of persons with spinal cord injuries.

MPF has approved several requests for financial support during the past few months.

Some of the highlights are as follows:

During the month of November 2007:

☞ Funding was granted for the purchase of an Action gel pad for a CPA member. This pad will provide the member with cushioning while using his bath seat and will also function as a back-up under the Roho cushion used in his manual wheelchair.

☞ Funding was provided for the purchase of steel toe boots which are needed to accommodate a CPA member's ankle foot orthotic device. These boots will enable the member to stand for most of the day to fulfill his duties as an auto mechanic.

During the month of December 2007:

☞ Funding was provided for the cost of "PushBlack" push rims – a new product designed for wheelchair

users with decreased hand function to increase traction or grip when propelling the wheels. These rims will be tested in everyday use in the Manitoba climate by a CPA member, and the information gained during the trial will be shared with CPA members.

☞ Funding was granted to assist a CPA member with the purchase of environmental controls in his new home. The controls will enable the member to turn on/off the lights and appliances, control and intercom/door lock and door opener at the entrance to his house via remote control. Having control of the entranceway will allow the member to come and go independently as well as allowing him to let his attendants in as required.

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You can visit MPF's website at:

www.cpamanitoba.ca/mpf Applications for assistance are available through the website or by contacting the CPA office.

Community Survey from the Access Advisory Committee of the City of Winnipeg

The Access Advisory Committee advises the Mayor and Winnipeg City Council on the status of the City of Winnipeg's information, properties, and services accessible for persons with disabilities to the benefit of all citizens.

Our committee would like to hear from you about your thoughts and opinions to help us make Winnipeg the ultimate in accessibility. Your input will be used to guide our Committee's Strategic Planning.

Please let us know what you think of Winnipeg's accessibility before May 16, 2008 so that we can ensure that your needs are being met.

To find the survey, please log in at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=G7WWjtu_2bJpyA_2fFbZpiAG2w_3d_3d

To receive a copy by mail, e-mail, fax, or to arrange to complete the survey by phone, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest and support in Accessibility in the City of Winnipeg.

Sincerely - Jenny Gerbasi

Councillor, Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry

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Sledge Hockey

The swish, swish of skates moving along the ice, the power of the glide, the ability to turn on a dime and receive a pass, the physical workout, the teamwork, the physical contact, and of course, setting up for the shot and the feeling of pride after you score. Based on this description, you may be thinking ice hockey. However, what is being explained here is Manitoba's newest inclusive sport, Sledge Hockey, which hit the ice in October of 2007. With the assistance of Hockey Canada, Manitoba Moose, Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, and some very dedicated individuals, sledge hockey has arrived in Manitoba.

Sledge Hockey is played on an adapted piece of equipment that has two skate blades located underneath a bucket (seat) which is connected to a light weight metal frame. The player skates across the ice using two modified hockey sticks that have been outfitted with picks. This sport is played by individuals with and without a disability, and can be



played by all ages.

Sledge Hockey is a paralympic sport with Canada's national team playing and practicing out of Calgary. Having sledge hockey in Manitoba provides individuals with a disability an opportunity to compete in a sport that may lead to the Paralympics.

Currently Sledge Hockey Manitoba has over 15 registered players who play at various indoor ice rinks that are located through the City of Winnipeg. "The current season concluded at the end of April with the league starting up again at the end of September.

If you are interested in learning more about how to participate or would like more information, please do not hesitate to call Bill Muloin at 975-3261. You can also visit SMD's website at http://ws457366.websoon.com/news/358/cool_as_ice.aspx or check out the videos on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFroEUToyaY> and remember, GAME ON!!!!!!"

MPF Product Testing

From time to time the Manitoba Paraplegia Foundation Inc. (MPF) purchases equipment to be tested to determine the quality of the equipment and whether we can recommend it to CPA clients. In this issue of ParaTracks we review three such products.

1) Invacare Mariner Rehab Shower Commode Chair.

This is a shower commode chair with large rear wheels which allows an individual to independently propel the chair. This chair comes in 16 in. or 18 in. widths and fits over most toilet bowls. The all aluminum frame and stainless steel hardware provides optimum rust resistance which makes it ideal for showering. This chair has a padded seat for skin protection and the seat can be rotated to provide an opening at the front, either side or the rear. It has swing-away footrests and the foot pedals are height adjustable without any tools.

After purchasing the Invacare Mariner Rehab Shower Commode Chair, MPF loaned it to the Spinal Cord Injury Unit on R5 of the Rehab Hospital. Here are the pros and cons that have been noted for this chair.

Pros

- The chair is not showing any sign of rust.
- The chair is easy to propel which allows for independent toileting and showering.
- The ability to rotate the seat has proved very convenient for individuals who are able to provide their own care.
- This is one of the lowest-priced Shower Commode chairs on the market.

Cons

- The padded seat broke down within a year and had to be replaced.
- The front casters are a sealed unit which cannot be taken apart and cleaned if they become filled with hair or other debris.
- The back tires leave black marks on the floor after showering.

Conclusion

This is a sturdy, well-built shower commode wheelchair with a couple of glitches as noted. If you are considering buying one of these chairs, be sure to shop around. We

found there is quite a price difference between various vendors.

2) Colorado Hand Cycle. This is a stationary hand cycle that is mounted to a table and used for upper body as well as cardiovascular exercise. It is promoted as a good exercise machine for paraplegics and quadriplegics. It is designed for home use which makes it cheaper to purchase than the Saratoga Cycle which is meant for an institutional setting. MPF purchased this hand cycle and loaned it to a client who has been using it on a regular basis. Here are the pros and cons.

Pros

- ❖ This hand cycle is sturdy and operates very smoothly.
- ❖ It is easy to adjust the tension to change the workout level.
- ❖ Handles are available to allow quadriplegics with limited grip to use this cycle.

Cons

- ❖ Expensive. Expect to pay around \$1,000 for this unit.
- ❖ Heavy. Once it is set up it is not easy to move to a different location.

Conclusion

If you have the bucks this is a good piece of exercise equipment for wheelchair users. Prior to purchasing the Colo-

rado Cycle, MPF had purchased a no-name hand cycle to try out. It arrived broken, it was made very flimsy and had to be returned. As usual you get what you pay for.

3) BLAX Wheelchair Push-rims. These push-rims have a neoprene coating with a light knurling texture to provide enhanced grip. They are designed primarily for quadriplegics who rely on friction between the palm of their hand and the push-rim to propel a manual wheelchair. MPF purchased a pair of these push-rims and one of our clients has been using them for the last month.

Pros

- ❖ Very good “tackiness” and durability.
- ❖ Maintains better grip even when wet.

Cons

- ❖ These push rims provide so much grip you have to be careful you don’t damage the skin on your hands.

Conclusion

One of the best gripping hand rims on the market. Definitely superior to the vinyl coated push-rims offered by the major wheelchair manufacturers. You can check them out at www.pushblack.com.

~Greg Winmill~



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Dave Tweed, President

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EDUCATION IS REHABILITATION TOO

In my role as a vocational counsellor for CPA I have noticed one very striking constant in all of the people who go through the Rehab. Hospital. Those people who truly understand Rehabilitation, understand that although you must work hard physically to regain all the physical ability you can, you must also give the brain a workout to develop new skills that are not dependant on your body strength. For a very few this educational part of rehabilitation starts right after their SCI (Spinal Cord Injury) but for most of us it takes a while to really understand that without an education we are going nowhere fast.

There are, of course, those who own their own business and can continue to run it, as well as those who can, with some accommodation, return to their pre-injury employment. Good for them. Unfortunately they are a small minority. Most of us need to hit the books to gain new skill sets to start a new career. If you are between 16 and 65, this means you.

We have all heard the saying you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Please don't get me wrong, I'm not calling anyone an old dog, but the metaphor seems apt. When we get to a certain age we think we are too old for school. Nothing can be further from the truth. Since I have been

with CPA I have seen a person over 50 go to college and start a new career totally different than what they were doing prior to their SCI. I have seen people in their 30's take upgrading and go on to college or university with promising futures. I did not go to university until I was 42 years of age. Your age really has nothing to do with it. It is all about you. Do you want a fulfilling career that provides you with a comfortable income and life style? If you do, you have to go and get it. Regardless of your level of SCI, education levels all fields. Anyone know of a Conservative MP by the name of Stephen Fletcher?

At CPA we will bend over backwards to assist you in attaining your goals as long as you are willing to do the work. Very few people like to go back to school when they have started down the path of their chosen career but the new reality in our present day dictates that most of us will have to. If you sustain a SCI it is almost a certainty. Don't say "I can't" for any reason, whether it be age or the fact you did poorly in school the first time around. When you sustain an SCI you are left with the muscles that still function to do what your whole body used to do. For most of us the best muscle to use is the one between our ears.

~Al Schultz~

NO LIMITS

David Tweed, C6 quadriplegic, shows that he has few limits when it comes to finding recreational opportunities for someone in a wheelchair. During the week David works hard as owner of *The Access Store*, but when it's nice out and it comes time to play, you'll find David and his son Brayden at the floodway enjoying a day of riding together. "As a quadriplegic, I find there aren't a lot of outdoor physical activities that I can take part in. To be able to ride in my dunebuggy along side my son on his quad gives me a great sense of freedom and mobility."

David recently became a dealer for these dunebuggies and was able to modify an existing set of hand controls to make it easy for anyone in a wheelchair to drive. David is offering anyone interested in checking this out an opportunity, by contacting him directly to make arrangements.

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When I Was Injured at the age of 30...

So *how have you all been? I have to say that ParaTracks is looking awfully sharp these days. Kudos to Mike and everyone else involved. After I agreed to do this story, I suddenly thought, "Ohmigod! Here goes another episode of, "Lorne's World." I was already acutely aware that ParaTracks kind of smelled like that when I was editor. I eventually rationalized that there was much information in this story that others might use. Perhaps also, it was interesting in an anthropological perspective... and that someday a high school student somewhere might do a paper on how people in the past lived with something called a, "Spinal Cord Injury". So, this is for you... no plagiarism please!*

When I was injured at the age of 30, one of the biggest questions in my mind (right after, "so... where exactly is medical science on curing spinal cord injuries...?") was, "where would I live?" My third storey walk-up on trendy Corydon Avenue was definitely out of the question. The circumstances of my injury left me with a very modest income... there was no multi-million dollar settlement, and an upscale state-of-the-art home in a nice neighborhood with all the latest accommodations that give a high-level quadriplegic a decent quality of life wasn't going to happen for me.

I was truly envious of others who were able to go that way. I watched them cruising around the city with an attendant in tow. (The self-managed care program allows clients to take attendants with them virtually wherever they go. This increases freedom and full participation in a multitude of settings.) During medical appointments they have an assistant who can properly dress and position them. I know that hospital staff try very hard to make you comfortable, but they just don't see the severely disabled enough to know what to do once they've stripped you naked and moved you from wheelchair to bed and back. The usual scenario is five or six staff persons all attacking you from all angles... when all you need is one patient and experienced assistant to make the whole ordeal... well, not be an ordeal.

When I signed off as editor of ParaTracks I said I was going to undertake a massive restructuring of my life. In order to access self-managed care, I had to find another place to live... although there is a lot of security in a shared-care setting, the Holy Grail for me was a backyard with room enough for a dog to run around and a vegetable garden. My first few schemes reached dead ends, until one day everything fell together like a bolt of lightning. I never thought I would OWN a home, most likely, I would rent from a friend and we could apply to Manitoba Housing to subsidize my rent

(that still is a viable option if you can find someone interested in such an investment... that deal only fell through because of the wicked housing market that Winnipeg experienced recently). When that scheme hit the wall, I decided to look one more time at the option of buying a house.

After enrolling in the Homebuyers Saving Circle program at SEED Winnipeg and the assurance of a little help from my family, I called The Spence Neighborhood Association (SNA) – whom I had initially contacted years ago, but just thought the scenario too expensive – to see if they had any homes available that I could afford. They first told me that there was a huge waiting list and they actually discouraged me from applying. When I asked if being disabled made any difference, they said, "absolutely"! Suddenly, they urged me to come in immediately... as they soon were building a home on Spence Street, approximately half a block away from the University of Winnipeg, with no buyer yet in sight...

Long story short, I was in!

I moved from a shared-care situation near the Manitoba Legislature into a core area community that



slab on grade construction means there are no stairs. It is a visitable home!!

is actively redefining itself. There is a huge focus on greening and safety with tremendous opportunity for involvement for all members of the community. I know that there are security risks living in the downtown area, but I have become security conscious, my yard will be completely fenced, there is a monitored alarm system (included in all houses built by SNA), and I know that security throughout the neighborhood is enhanced by getting to know who your neighbors are. Not only does SNA have monthly board meetings, they also hold community events, like block parties, where you can get to know neighbours from all over the community, not just the ones next door!

As derelict houses are shut down and families and persons with special needs move in, the nature of the community changes. The University of Winnipeg is rapidly buying properties in the area for student housing and other projects. Given my proximity to the university, I'm hoping to reside inside of a greatly expanded downtown university campus in the not-too-distant future!

OK, the intro is over, let's talk about the house!

It's extremely spacious (1300 sq. ft) with a very open concept through the living room, kitchen and dining area. The heating system



Power door operators - for easy access!



Wide Open Spaces...

consists of a boiler that heats water that runs through the concrete floors. Nice and toasty on stocking feet I'm told. There is also the opportunity to go to thermal energy which would decrease the cost of heating the water. The home is R2000 throughout, and therefore very efficient for heating and cooling. I also qualified for a FREE (yes, free... I'm not kidding) energy-efficient washing machine after Manitoba Hydro completed the R2000 testing of the home!

Slab on grade construction means there are no stairs... it is a Visitable home. I was able to install an incredible lift system that can lift me from bed to wheelchair and vice versa. A separate track takes me from my bedroom to the Jacuzzi (which I paid for

myself – worth every penny :) The majority of the lift was funded by Manitoba Health, while the second track was sponsored by MPF.

Other accommodations included in the MPF funding were a power door operator and an automatic leg bag drainer. The reason for the door opener is obvious, but the leg bag drainer is really exciting - now that I have switched to self-managed care, I can have longer gaps between attendants and not worry about the inevitable urinary explosion... fluid goes in... fluid comes out.

Anyone interested in this fabulous product should check out the web site at: <http://www.jb-3.com/>. The unit can be purchased through a Canadian dealer, in Vancouver at: <http://www.chairstuff.com/demo/>. I'm already



...and big ol' hallways!!

thinking of modifications, which could give it an electronic activation device... I think it looks like a cinch. On the other hand, there are no electric parts to break down... and because urine passes through the machine – it's a snap to clean.

The cost makes it even more appealing, as fully electric models, including battery pack, are available for around \$900. The JB-3 can be had for a gentle \$229, which was nice, because the power door operator went from just under \$900 to about \$1600 (...purchased from Ambassador Door Sales). I was extremely fortunate to have someone in my family who could install it. (Thanks Don!) Installed, the quote was \$2200!

In order to operate the various electronic components throughout the house, including an intercom, which allows me to determine who is at my door before I open it, MPF also funded a new Ensom system. It was installed mostly through Rehab Engineering... although there was a little extra wiring... also funded by MPF.

Whew! There, you made it through the long list of features. I'm still wearing a three-mile smile every day that I wake up in my new home. I'm extremely pleased with the staff that I've hired, and because I make all the scheduling decisions together with my staff, there's virtually no stress. I've gotta say, I was somewhat hesitant to leave the shared-care model, but the risk has paid off in a lifestyle that is now everything I thought it would be!

I would urge anyone interested in such a home to contact Karen Giesbrecht at the Spence Neighborhood Association to get the ball rolling. I would also like to say that these homes represent an exciting possibility for the future and I envision involvement from community organizations and all levels of government to generate programs that would put these homes within the reach of as many persons with disabilities as possible. (Sharing self-managed care staff with other clients in close proximity, would provide full-time work for attendants...

and would provide a source of alternate staff when the need arises.)

The involvement of accessible design consultants is crucial to ensure that each home is designed to meet the needs of each individual. There must be some authority given to those consultants, so that accommodations are unquestionably included in the design



*Two track systems in one -
The angled track leads to....*

of the home. I regret that the door thresholds were not sunk into the concrete; they are like huge speed bumps at the entrance to the home. Also, the hallway and its doorways could easily have been improved upon. I encountered some resistance to the idea of installing sliding doors, which should not have happened, and I wish that I had been a little more firm on that point.

With down payment assistance, a mortgage could be put in place that is compatible with government subsidized rents. After a small investment from the government, recipients of such a grant would become



*...the Jacuzzi... and the lift serves a dual
purpose as a multi-positional bath chair!*

home owners. The equity acquired could provide financial security for the future. There is also a great opportunity to subsidize incomes by renting a spare room (or incorporating space for a live-in attendant) or creating and renting parking spots at the rear of a very spacious 50 foot-wide lot. That's enough space for five cars to park and still have ample space for whatever floats-yer-boat in the backyard.

OK, that story wasn't nearly as fun as I thought it would be... what's important though, is that I envisioned this dream of owning my own home and made it happen! This spring I plan on putting in my first garden and getting a puppy from the Humane Society. Oh yeah, in case you're wondering... my office is ready and waiting for me to get back to the business of producing video. Hopefully I can make an announcement on that in these pages in the not-too-distant future!



The Office

~Lorne Chartrand~

New City of Winnipeg Disabled Parking Regulations

The Winnipeg Parking Authority has announced that it is phasing out the practice of permitting up to four hours free parking at meters for persons with valid Provincial Disabled Persons Parking Permits. It has never been the law to permit this free parking concession, only a practice. The current by-law actually only permits a vehicle displaying the Permit to park for up to four consecutive hours even though parking in that place is restricted to less than four hours. The by-law says nothing about the parking being free. This "practice" grew out of a recognition that, especially in winter, a disabled person might be unable to gain access to the meter and in any event would find it difficult to return periodically to feed the meter.

With the introduction of new technology that permits paying for metered parking through the use of a cell phone and credit card, a person can call a number listed on "easy to see" signs in metered areas and park for a set time. Before the set time expires the Authority will call on the person's cell phone and ask if more time is required and the process will be repeated. It is the ultimate intention to remove all limitations on the length of time one may park in a metered area. It is also intended to increase greatly the number of metered places throughout Winnipeg designated for the exclusive use of Permit holders. This latter process is already in motion.

The Parking Authority is working on a system, similar to that used in some States, which will allow prepaying of parking by a Permit holder through the issuing of a punch card that can be displayed by those Permit holders who do not have a cell phone or credit

card.

The intention is to begin to issue on-site warnings to Permit holders once the vast majority of metered areas are cell phone accessible and the on-street designated disabled parking spots have been properly signed. This may take the form of "zero value parking tickets" delivered to windshields along with a brochure outlining the new procedures.

On the positive side, the removal of free parking for Permit holders might remove some of the incentive for people to obtain Permits. The greatest problem with parking for disabled persons is the proliferation of Permits and the consequent shortage of available designated parking spaces. There are over 30,000 Permits now issued and most of those are issued to people who do not qualify under the existing criteria of having a grave physical disability and who are unable to walk either, without a mobility aid, or more than 50 metres without great difficulty or danger to their health or safety.

~Art Braid~

*CPA Representative on the Disabled Permit Program
Advisory Committee of SMD*

"Mark your Calendar"

**Sunday, June 8 - 6th Annual
Rick Hansen's Wheels in Motion**

Wednesday, June 18 - CPA's Annual General Meeting

Friday July 25 - 8th Annual Day at the Beach



INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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multichair 3000tx (Patent Pending)

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multichair 4000

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multichair 4000tx (Patent Pending)

- Waterproof nylon cloth back, Fold-back locking padded arms, Seamless padded Ensolite seat cushion, Adjustable swing-away footrests, Four 4" diameter casters with wheel locks
- It folds up and packs in a black nylon carrying case that complies with FAA requirements for carry-on luggage, goes through the airport X-ray machine, even tow it behind your wheelchair



multichair 4020 & 4024

- Two 20" or 24" diameter wheels with coated handrims, Solid rubber tires, Toggle wheel locks, Stainless steel quick release axles, Aluminum axle blocks, Two 5" diameter casters with total-lock brakes
- See multichair 4000 for additional details



multichair 4020rx (Patent Pending)

- Fold-back adjustable locking padded arms, Seamless padded Ensolite seat & back cushions, Two 20" diameter wheels with coated handrims, Solid rubber tires, wheel locks, Stainless steel quick release axles, Aluminum axle blocks, Two 5" diameter casters with total-lock brakes
- Big wheels in front create a chair that is less than 24" wide and 32" deep making this the narrowest, shortest, most maneuverable shower/commode chair available anywhere, Backs up over all toilets (wheels don't hit wall or tank), Big wheels in front provide a very stable chair, Superior side access for toilet activities.



multichair 6000 & 6000tx (Patent Pending)

- Commode/shower slider system eliminates bathroom transfers and is an effective alternative when installing a roll-in shower isn't possible.
- Push handle adjustable cloth back, (multichair 6000 comes with padded back & fold-back locking padded arms), Adjustable swing-away footrests, Total-lock brakes on 5" casters, Adjustable seat height, Seamless padded Ensolite seat cushion.
- Removable bridge section
- Carrying case with pull-out handle & wheels

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Yvette Cenerini on being a Mom...

On September 4th 2007, I gave birth to the most beautiful baby boy. That's right, "I" gave birth. Days after my C5 spinal cord injury, I remember being 15 years old on the ICU asking the doctors if this spinal cord injury would inhibit my ability to make babies and was relieved to find out that it was possible for a quadriplegic woman to give birth. From that moment on, the hope of one day being a mother and having a family carried me through many difficult times and motivated me to be as successful and independent as possible in order to be the best Mom possible. In the 13 years that followed, I finished high school, went to university, learned how to drive, built a home, and married my husband Alain. Three years later, when I first saw the tiny flashing heartbeat of my baby on the ultrasound monitor I knew I was in for the experience of a lifetime...

Apart from the chronic bladder infections, the iron deficiency, the constant state of dizziness, the dreaded pressure ulcers, the intense mood swings and the countless sleepless nights, my pregnancy was a piece of cake. Actually, one of the most challenging parts of the pregnancy was answering the same 20 questions that followed the "I'm expecting" announcement. Labor was everyone's favorite topic; all assumed that I would be scheduled for c-section, that I did not have the option of delivering my baby naturally. I would tell them that the obstetrician informed me of a 30% chance that all would go well and delivery could be without c-section. There was really no way of predicting what would happen, it could go either way. It never failed; the next question was always: "So, how will you know when you're in labor?" I answered how my doctor had quite simply put it: "There's never been a reported case of a woman giving birth without knowing it; when the labor pains start, don't worry, YOU'LL JUST KNOW." Well, of course I'll know, my body always has a way of letting me know that something's not right. And then there was my personal favorite: "Boy you're pretty lucky you're not gonna feel a thing!" Wrong! Not feeling a thing is in fact extremely dangerous in my case; avoiding autonomic dysreflexia was the anesthesiologists' main concern. In the end, it was the breeched baby who decided for all of us; there was no more uncertainty, a c-section was scheduled. The procedure went better than I had imagined, without complication. It was a boy!

Then began the breastfeeding adventures... I managed to nurse Adriel for two months with the help of a small army, which included my husband, lactation

consultants, nurses, my sister, my mom, a few friends, my personal care attendants...and one electric breast pump. Of them all, Alain was the most dedicated. He became an expert on positioning, latching, switching, pumping...we called him the Milk Foreman. In Alain's absence, someone else needed to help me take care of Adriel and take over the Milk Foreman duties. Directing care for my child was at times very frustrating, specially when those "No one can do it as well as I can" maternal instincts set in; and let me tell you that instructing someone how to squeeze my nipple and shove it into my baby's mouth was never pleasant. Likewise, it could not have been that enjoyable for those who did step up to help me feed my son and for such devotional friendship, I am very grateful. Nursing was physically demanding, after eight weeks, my body finally protested: I was hospitalized because of a very serious bladder infection and put on bed rest because the pressure ulcers were not healing...enough was enough; it was time for Mommy to recover, to regain her strength.

Here we are now, six months later, and things are running smoothly. Both Adriel and I are happy and healthy. Daddy is still home from work on parental leave and has adapted well to his Mr. Mom role. We work as a team when it comes to caring for our child. Alain is in charge of feeding, diaper changing, nose cleaning, bathing and dressing, whereas I am master of bedtime lullabies, babysitter coordination and playtime when Daddy's busy or needs to rest. As Adriel becomes more independent, I will be able to do a lot more to help out, for instance, his recent introduction to solid food gives me the opportunity to spoon feed him, allowing Alain the opportunity to steer clear of the airborne mashed bananas and rice cereal.

Friends and family continue to play a very supportive role and still help out on a regular basis, the Family Center provides respite once a week and Self-Managed Home Care has definitely made a difference. Of course adapting a few things necessary for baby has allowed me to be as involved with Adriel's care as possible. The handsome boys at Rehab Engineering have modified a crib that enables me to wheel under it, allowing access to Adriel when he needs me. I was also given a play table, where I can safely play with Adriel at a height that is comfortable for me. Despite my physical disabilities, I feel rather confident in my parenting abilities. As a wise woman (my mother) reminds me, being a good mother involves a lot more than bottles and cleaning



dirty bums...hugs and kisses go a long way in a child's development. Oh sure, there's that great aunt of mine who thinks it's a miracle that I managed to reproduce and asks me the strangest questions, the most recent one being: "Do you play with him?"... But for the most part, people comment that they always knew I would make a great mother, never once doubting my capabilities to love and care for Adriel.

This experience has allowed me to appreciate and

respect my body in a new way. Although its paralyzed limbs do not permit me to run or stand, my body has brought me great joy, a joy that I do not take for granted. When Adriel smiles that toothless, dimpled smile of his, I think of the magical moments the three of us have shared, I think of how thankful we are to have him in our lives, and I think of how proud I am of myself and my husband for what we have accomplished thus far. So, would I ever do it again?? *Definitely... maybe!*

THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE

Away down south, far from home
I have no comfort, I feel alone.
I feel downhearted and less than best
As I struggle to keep up to the test.

I am not winning the battle I fight
I try to be calm with all my might.
I cannot deny that I have much fear
And I cannot express my feelings so others "hear".

I still want to be a champion of sorts
In my own community I provided supports.
I must learn new skills and develop new strengths
I have struggled to compensate and have gone to great lengths.

My problem is that I am feeling so crazy
And getting so angry at this new world so hazy.
My view of which is not yet clear
As I struggle to move forward but remain stuck right here.

I used to be "very strong"
I could lift a huge weight and carry it long.
Now it takes every ounce of my strength
To move myself a transfer-board length.

I must shift my weight in my chair
I must be conscious of bodily functions, be aware.
I must keep my skin free of pressure, I must keep it clear
I must! I must! Is all I hear!

I am a strong and caring man
I am a person with strong needs.
I am a blessed creature of God
I am tortured in my body - with a heart that bleeds.

I do not feel lucky that I am alive
I do not feel happy I did survive.
I do not love my life as it is now
I do not feel strong as under life's burdens I bow.

The time will pass, as time will do
The time will pass, and I will do all that I set my mind to.
The time will pass, and with the good Lord's grace
The time will pass and I will regain my speed in this human race.

Glenis Pacak, RN, BN - Inspired by Jerry Kalaserk

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

My legs they feel,
But they cannot walk.
My heart it speaks,
But it cannot talk.

I cannot explain, why I have this strife,
For I've tried to do good, enduring this life.
I'm a good man, though I've had many falls,
Some might call me an Angel, others an Angel outlaw.
As I sit, and watch this world fly by,
In this heart pumping prison that just would not die.
My body screams out "I want it all back",
But my mind says, "Patience, you just stay on track".
For I've seen, and I've done, many a wrong deed,
But that doesn't warrant this life of longing, and need.

I suffer not from self-pity, nor self disdain,
But it's hard to fake happiness, with this incredible nerve pain.
My mind drifts back, to a time when it was all there,
When I could still stroke my lover, or run my fingers through hair.

But I will not often travel down memory lane,
For as I sit in this wheelchair, I know it would drive me insane.
I long to throw a ball, or run with the wind,
Or toss my children in the air, like dad did when I was a kid.
However, that's not in the cards I've been dealt,
For a broken neck and paralysis is what I got paid out.

I still have a good life, though it just may be odd,
So make not the mistake, thinking that I don't thank God.
He never told me to speed, and to be so mad,
But yet he answered the prayers, of my mom and dad.

I now have lots of time, to sit and think,
To think about life, to find the new me, and push my abilities to the brink.

If it's true what they say, about things happening for a reason,
Then I'm very interested to see, since this is my twelfth season.
Yet I still wait for that magical sign, for my reason on Earth,
Cause if the sayings are true, it's been in my future since birth.

I must still be a father to my Brianna and Brett,
And a son to my parents, for they're not done with me yet.
And so, there you have it, I shall carry on,
And wait on the day, this affliction is gone.
So mock not my tears, for they are very real,
This is not a game, and this is not surreal,
THIS IS MY LIFE.

Written by Ben Anderson,
November 25, 2007

Date of Accident: November 27, 2004, 7:38 p.m.



by
Kristine Cowley,
PhD

HEALTHY-SHOULDERS

Spring is nearly upon us, and we start to think about getting outside a bit more. The idea of getting around without the snow – actually not getting filthy every time I leave the house is quite appealing to me.

It's also the time when beginning to get outside often means more activities, which can lead to more chances of transferring, or lifting something and ending up with a dreaded shoulder injury.

So, if you don't have a current shoulder injury, here is a reprint of some useful exercises to strengthen the shoulders to prevent injury.

The Exercises

Pendulum Swing

Sitting upright, holding a weight (5-20 lbs.), swing the loosely hanging arm in small circles for 20 – 40 repetitions (reps). This is a minimum-energy exercise emphasizing a completely relaxed arm.

Wing Flaps

Put the backs of your hands against your hips. Rotate the elbows forward as far as possible without experiencing pain. Then bring them back. Do 20-40 reps.

Scarf Arm Throw

"Throw" the relaxed arm diagonally across and above the opposite shoulder, as far around and back as comfortable, for 20-30 reps. The other hand may assist by pushing the elbow around and back.

External Shoulder Rotation

With the upper arms in home position, elbows tucked in close to the body, forearms forward and horizontal, and the backs of the hands facing up, hold a rope, bungee cord or cloth tightly with both hands about six inches apart. Slowly pull one hand around as far as possible to one side, while the other hand is resisting. Then use the other hand to go the other way. The grip may be easier if you wrap the cord around each hand or knot the cord. Go back and forth 10-20 times.

Curls

With the arm hanging down against the body, palms or thumbs facing forward (your choice), hold a weight (1-15 lbs.). Without moving the elbow, raise the weight to almost touch the upper arm. Then lower it slowly. Do 10-20 reps.

Military Press

Hold a weight (1-15 lbs.) in your hand, touching the shoulder, upper arm in home position. While sitting straight, raise the weight straight up as far as you can. Your arm should point to the ceiling. Then lower it to the shoulder. If you have balance problems, use the other to stabilize your body. Do 10-20 reps.

Straight Arm Raises

Face forward (facing 12 o'clock). With your right arm extended but relaxed in the home position, hold a weight (1-5 lbs.). Slowly raise the extended arm (pointing at 1:30 for the right arm, 10:30 for the left arm) until the weight is above the shoulder with the thumb pointing up. Lower it slowly to the home position. Do 10-20 reps.

Wheelchair Push Ups

Sitting upright, place your hands at the top of the wheelchair tires. Push down and raise your body until your arms are straight. Then lower yourself slowly. As you repeat, try to keep your elbows close to the body. Do 10-20 reps.

Internal Shoulder Rotation

Tie a long bungee cord to a closet doorknob. Tie some knots in the cord to make it easier to grip. Grab the end of the cord in a taut position with your back to the door. The elbow is tucked into the body, upper arm is in home position. If the body faces forward at 12 o'clock, the right lower arm is horizontal and points to 3 o'clock. Still holding and gradually stretching the cord, rotate the lower arm around in front of the body, until it points to 12 o'clock—then slowly rotate it back. Do 10-25 reps.



Middle and Lower Trapezius Muscles: Method 1

While maintaining good sitting posture and with arms slightly abducted and externally rotated, squeeze the shoulder blades down and together. This exercise should precede the shoulder external rotation exercise with the resistance band.



Middle and Lower Trapezius Muscles: Method 2

While lying in a supine position with the arms at approximately 45 degrees of abduction, pinch the shoulder blades down and together. Extend the arms against the mat for resistance.



Serratus Anterior Muscle

Attach a resistance band to the back of the wheelchair or the knob of a door on the side to be strengthened. Start with the shoulder blades pinched down and together, then punch the arm forward.



Shoulder External Rotators

Place a towel roll between the trunk and each arm. While keeping elbows bent to 90 degrees, grasp the resistance band. Pinch shoulder blades down and together, and then slowly pull hands apart.

If you do have a shoulder injury: Certain exercises can be quite useful in the recovery process but they will depend on the specific nature of your injury so you should see your physician or physiotherapist in that case.

Of interest to the issue of shoulder pain – an article by Nawoczenski et al., 2006 (Clinical trial of exercise for shoulder pain in chronic spinal cord injury) reported that the following exercises reduced the shoulder pain in a group of 20 persons with SCI over the 8 week study.

Although I think this report should have used a better control group (ones that were actually experiencing shoulder pain), the photos are quite useful for exercises for the shoulder and so they are included here (Figure 1, Figure 2).



Upper Trapezius Muscle

While maintaining good sitting posture, use one arm to stabilize the trunk and the other arm to gently bend the head to one side. Avoid rotating the head during the stretch.



Pectoralis Muscle

Position the wheelchair in the doorway and with the forearm on the doorjamb, keeping the elbow below 90 degrees. Slowly rotate the chair away from the doorjamb.



Long Head of the Biceps Muscle

Position the wheelchair in the doorway and with the arm slightly abducted, place the forearm on the doorjamb. Slowly rotate the chair away from the doorjamb. It is important to maintain scapular retraction and depression during the stretch.



Posterior Capsule

Lay partially between supine and side, lying on the side to be stretched in order to stabilize the scapula (stretch is shown for right side in this image). Place a pillow underneath the opposite scapula. Gently pull the arm across the body with the opposite arm, without rotating the shoulder.

Rick Hansen Wheels In Motion

presented
by
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The 6th Annual Rick Hansen Wheels In Motion will take place in Winnipeg on June 8, 2008. This year's event will feature the unique and exciting Scotiabank Wheelchair Challenge, with teams of five competing against the clock and each other in a wheelchair relay. Participants will try their hand at mouth-painting, wheelchair sports, and other activities that foster a better understanding of what it is like to navigate through life in a wheelchair.

Schedule:	
Registration:	9:00 a.m.
2k Walk/Wheel	9:30 a.m.
Opening Ceremonies	10:30 a.m.
Wheelchair Challenge	10:45 a.m.

Since 2003, Wheels In Motion has raised more than \$7.6 million to support more than 700 Quality of Life solutions for people living with SCI. In Winnipeg alone, more than \$100,000 has been raised to support local projects that have had a tremendous impact on the quality of life of people with spinal cord injuries (SCI).

How to get involved

There are a number of ways to get involved with Wheels In Motion, have fun, and make your community more inclusive and accessible for all!

- Enter a team in the Winnipeg Scotiabank Wheelchair Challenge.
- Participate in the 2K Walk/Wheel event.
- Volunteer to plan or help out at the event.
- Make a donation, pledge a participant, or help us fundraise by organizing a special event.

For more information:

please visit www.wheelsinmotion.org or contact Kim Wilson at 204 257-0070 or kwilson@wheelsinmotion.org.

To volunteer, please contact Rita Burgess at 204.985-3603 or Rita.Burgess@scotiabank.com

WANTED: A volunteer representing CPA to join the Wheels in Motion organizing Committee. If you are interested in helping to plan the event, please contact Ron Burky at (204) 786-4753.



Dan Joannis dit Adieu et Merci au C.P.A (Dan Joannis says Good-bye and Thank-you to C.P.A)

As some of you may already be aware, I recently accepted an offer of employment with the provincial government and, as a result, I worked my final day with CPA on February 22nd. While I am in many ways sad to see my employment with CPA come to an end, I am nonetheless excited about and thoroughly enjoying my new position as Claimant Adviser with the Claimant Adviser Office (CAO).

The CAO was created by the provincial government in May 2005, to assist individuals with bodily injury claims resulting from motor vehicle accidents in their efforts to appeal decisions made by Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI). The CAO, as well as the Automobile Injury Compensation Appeal Commission (AICAC) which hears the appeals, are entirely independent from MPI.

Looking back on nearly 8 years with CPA, not including summer jobs as a university student and a brief term as a Board member, I feel a definite sense of pride in recognition of having been a part, however small, in the history of an organization that plays such an integral role in the lives of the members which it serves. After the onset of my own spinal cord injury in 1991, my family and I relied extensively on the support and guidance of

CPA, from practical suggestions on how to modify our home for wheelchair access, to vocational services aimed at preparing for a new career, to adjustment counselling – CPA was always there to help. Without these and other crucial supports from CPA after my injury, there is no doubt in my mind that I would not have been in a position, many years later, to begin providing the same important rehabilitation counselling services to a new generation of people living with spinal cord injury.

As much as I relished the work itself, it's the people who have made my time at CPA so rewarding. In particular, I wish to express my appreciation to the CPA staff, past and present, for their friendship and support over the years. As well, I feel gratified to have been able to work alongside such highly dedicated professionals at the Health Sciences Centre – unit staff on RR4 and RR5, therapists in the OT, PT, and Recreation departments, the outpatient clinic, and the folks down at Rehab Engineering.

Although I have moved on to a new position with government, I have every intention of staying connected to CPA in the future. So keep in touch and hope to see you all again before too long!



Dan's farewell gift from CPA staff



Dan and Liz Joannis with Lincoln

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Come out for a game of wheelchair basketball and stay for a free workout at the YMCA after the event. No experience is necessary. Anyone with or without a physical disability is welcome. We will be raffling off great prizes and food and refreshments will be served. All equipment is provided by the Manitoba Wheelchair Sport Association.

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YES! Count me in as a member of the Canadian Paraplegic Association (Manitoba) Inc. All members receive "ParaTracks" CPA (Manitoba) newsletter, "Total Access" CPA National Magazine and voting privileges at the Annual General Meeting. Members also receive discounts at various health care supply stores - Stevens Home Health Care Supplies (special pricing for supplies & 10% off equipment), The Access Store (10%), Northland Home Health Care (10% off medical supplies), Disabled Sailing membership (25% discount).

I wish to select the following category of Membership:

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All Monies donated remain in Manitoba to support CPA (Manitoba) Inc. An income tax receipt will be issued for any amount over \$15.00. Sustaining, Charter and Patron Members will receive recognition of their generous contribution in the context of events such as our Annual General Meetings or in the programs of other CPA (Manitoba) Inc. functions.

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