



INDEX

SPRING 2011

Cover

**'Small but Mighty'.
Living with
Rheumatoid Arthritis.**

Inside Pages

**PEICOD Human Rights
Award**

RSDP

Notes

**Job Search Club
Work Abilities Program
Work Abilities Resource
Centre
PEICOD Foundation &
Scholarships
Goin' Fishin'**

Back Page

**Council Information
Contact Us**

**Charlottetown Area
Transit - Accessibility
for All - In Time**

**Disability Advisory
Committees (DAC)**

March 2011 Issue

'Small but Mighty' - Living with Rheumatoid Arthritis

Sheena Thomson was diagnosed with Polyarticular Rheumatoid Arthritis after a bout of Rheumatic Fever when she was two years old. Every joint in her body was affected and since then she has had three major surgeries, numerous cortisone shots in her joints, and too-many-to-count physical problems to overcome as she went about building her life. "I have rheumatoid arthritis, it's part of my life, but it's not my life".

Sheena's gratitude for her parents shines all through her conversation. "I came out of my shell because I was allowed to. My parents never coddled me, never patronized me. They knew I would ask for help if I needed it." And there were many times when she did need it, especially through all the visits to the IWK. Here Sheena breaks off to praise the specialists who treated her for several years. "They were wonderful. They understood me and what it was like for a kid to be so different. The doctors helped me realize I could get on with my life".

All these influences must have worked, because if ever there was a better example of how determination can help to overcome adversity, look no further than the petite young



Sheena Thomson

woman who is Sheena Thomson. She passed all her grades at Westisle High School, graduating with the students she had started school with in Grade 1. She never missed a major event at school, insisting that any medical treatment could "only happen before or after".

She graduated from UPEI with a Major in Sociology and Anthropology and a Minor in Women's Studies ("Which I loved!") Sheena developed her writing and research skills while at UPEI, and worked in several research positions, including a short contract at the PEI Council of People with Disabilities. But Sheena wanted a career, so decided to go back to school to gain a Child and Youth Care Worker qualification.

She succeeded, in true Sheena fashion, and is now the Supervisor of 27 children in an after-school program—happy with her achievements. With an apartment, a happy personal life, and the start of a career, nothing will stop her now.

Sheena need look no further than her mirror to determine who is responsible for her success so far. She is a powerful force and a reminder of how high we can reach.

The Mission Statement of the PEI Council of People with Disabilities is:
"to promote the full participation and inclusion of people with disabilities in Island Society"

JOB SEARCH CLUB

Job Search Club for people with disabilities. Get assistance and gain confidence in applying for jobs, learn how to network, have your resume and cover-letter updated. No charge! Every Monday and Wednesday in March, 2.30pm to 3.30pm.

Call **Patt** at 892-9149 extn.226 to register.



WORK ABILITIES PROGRAM

Resources and workshops to explore job searching skills such as resume development, skills identification, interviewing skills and career planning direction.

Ch'town: 5 Lower. Malpeque Rd., 892-9149:

Summerside: 11 Water Street, 436-9259

Montague: Brudenell Mini-Mall, 838-5878

WORK ABILITIES RESOURCE CENTRE

Open 9.00am to 4.00pm Mon. to Thurs. Computers available for job search, job applications, resume and cover-letter writing.

Staff are available to help.

Call **Phyllis** at 892-9149 extn. 227 to confirm space is available.

PEI FOUNDATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Up to six Foundation Awards of \$500 each, can be awarded annually to applicants with a permanent disability, who are 19 or under, and a permanent resident of PEI.

ALICE AND ROY BRUCE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Up to four \$500 scholarships can be awarded annually towards the cost of post-secondary education. Applicants must have a permanent disability and live on PEI. Two reference letters are required with the application from the most recent educational institution / school attended as well as proof of acceptance at a post-secondary institution.

Deadline for applications to the Foundation or for scholarships is June 30th, 2011. Application available at the PEI Council for People with Disabilities.

**5 Lower Malpeque Road, Charlottetown.
(902) 892-9149 www.peicod.pe.ca**

GOIN' FISHIN'

Some excellent news for fishing enthusiasts. The Morell River Management Co-op wants to welcome wheelchair users to Anderson's Pool, where avid fishers can relax on the fishing platform for as long as they wish as they anticipate their next perfect catch. Work was carried out in 2010 to extend the wheelchair accessible area of this excellent facility. The fishing platform is easily reached from the parking area. Just cross the bridge, turn onto the trail for a short distance and the platform is there. The trail has been extended for half a kilometre so that it is now possible to travel down it by wheelchair through the woods and along the stream once the day's fishing quota is safely 'in the bag'. The trail is accessible subject to the weather conditions. If you want more information please call Roddy Milton, the Co-ordinator of the Morell River Management Co-op. He will be happy to answer your questions, and give directions. His phone number is **739-2004**. **Email: mooneyspond@bellaliant.com**

Contact **maddak.com** and follow the links to



order this Fishing Pole Holder for wheelchairs. The clamp, with its large wing nut, attaches the holder to either side of a wheelchair so that the pole can be held firmly in place and operated with one hand. \$33.60 US.



Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. And Today? Today is a gift. That's why we call it the present.

Babatunde Olatunji





A DAY TO REMEMBER FOR THE PEI COUNCIL OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Friday December 10th, 2010, was a proud day for the PEI Council of People with Disabilities. The organization was presented with the Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission Award for the Advancement of Human Rights, in recognition of exceptional achievement in promoting human rights and equality in the Province of Prince Edward Island.

In the photograph Left to Right.

The Hon. Doug Currie, Minister of Education;
Marcia Carroll, Executive Director PEICOD;
Peter Doucette, President of the Board, PEICOD;
PEI Police Commissioner Gerard Mitchell, Guest Speaker;
Ann Nicholson, PEI Human Rights Commissioner.

RDSP (REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLAN (RDSP))

The Government of Canada has now made available the **Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)** to help people with disabilities, under 60 years of age, who are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit.

A matching **Canada Disability Savings Grant** of up to \$3,500 per year will be paid on eligible contributions made to an RDSP.

The Government of Canada will also contribute a **Canada Disability Savings Bond** of up to \$1,000 per year to the RDSPs of eligible low- and modest-income Canadians, even if no contribution is made.

To find out if you are eligible:

Go to **www.disabilitysavings.gc.ca**

Or call **1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)**

TTY users may call **1-800-926-9105**

NOTES

MAKING COMMUNITY LIVING A REALITY

Two days of dialogue and exchange on the key issues facing persons with intellectual disabilities, and their families, in their struggle to reclaim and maintain their right to live in community.

March 28—29, 2011, Rodd Hotel Charlottetown.

Contact **Bridget Cairns** at **info@peiacl.ca**

case aces

CASE is a national association promoting workplace inclusion for Canadians with disabilities.

16th Annual Supported Employment Conference, 'SHIFTING THE BALANCE' - June 7—9, 2011 Westin Nova Scotia Hotel, Halifax, NS.

For more information go to www.supportedemployment.ca

~ CCD NEWS ~

Tony Dolan has represented PEI on the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) for many years and was recently elected as Chair. Past-President of PEICOD **Anne McPhee** was elected by the Board to be the new PEI rep. The January meeting was held in Ottawa and Anne reports that she learned a great deal and is looking forward to the next meeting in June in Winnipeg.



ABILITY NEWS

CONTACT US

PEI COUNCIL OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
WEBSITE: WWW.PEICOD.PE.CA

CHARLOTTETOWN OFFICE - 5 Lower Malpeque Rd., Unit #2 - Landmark Plaza, Charlottetown, PEI, C1E 1R4. Telephone: 902-892-9149 / Toll Free: 1-888-473-4263

PRINCE COUNTY OFFICE - 11 Water St., Summerside, PEI, C1N 1A2 (Entrance on Heckbert Street) Telephone: 902-436-9259

KINGS COUNTY OFFICE - 2 Crescent Lane, Montague, PEI, COA 1R0. (Brudenell Mini Mall) Telephone: 902-838-5878

Charlottetown Area Transit - Accessibility for All - In Time

According to recent news reports of the study commissioned by the City of Charlottetown to develop a Strategic Plan for Charlottetown Area Transit by Dillon Consulting Limited, there are some key subjects raised that will impact people with disabilities.

- The goal to provide a fully accessible public bus system should be a key priority for Charlottetown Area Transit.

(NOTE: The term 'accessibility' now includes an aging population, families with strollers, tourists, and newcomers **as well as** persons with disabilities.)

- Designated routes to be 100% accessible at all times. For example, University Avenue.
- To encourage more winter ridership, Public Works to clear snow build-up away from bus stops so that persons with disabilities can actually get into a fully accessible vehicle, and
- Curbs and sidewalks to be rebuilt at bus stops to allow for accessibility.

Such changes would have to be phased in over several years before the Transit system could be described as 'fully accessible'. New budgets would have to be approved, **and political will would have to be demonstrated that the changes would be made.** The proposed changes would mean that the Transit System would be closer to providing a truly public service.

DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES MEETINGS

EASTERN KINGS

Souris Hospital

Main/Level Boardroom at 1:30 pm
Wednesdays. March.16, April 20, May 18

EAST PRINCE **Summerside**

Lions Seniors Complex/ Brophy St. at 1:30 pm
Tuesdays Mar,9, Apr. 12, May 10.

SOUTHERN KINGS

Montague

PEI COD Boardroom at 12 noon
Weds. Mar. 23, Apr. 27, May 25

QUEENS

Charlottetown

PEI COD Boardroom at 3 pm
Weds. Mar. 23, Apr 20, May 18

WEST PRINCE **Alberton**

Maplewood Manor at 12:30 pm
Tuesdays Mar. 16, Apr. 19, May 17.