

COMMUNITY LIVING
Owen Sound and District

Perspectives



Back Row: Melissa Pettigrew (Staff Advisor), Neil Matheson, Terri Johnston, Rachael Arnold, Kevin McMillan, Anne Marie Ruxton. Front Row: Deanna McGillivray, Amy Shute Co-Ordinator for the Splash Pad project and Kathy Pantlin.

Hawthorne Cup

The Bruce Shoreline Self Advocate Group had an opportunity this summer to join the seventh Annual Hawthorne Cup Golf Tournament to fundraise for their group. The event was held on Aug. 21, 2015 at the

Saugen Golf and Country Club. Several members of the Bruce Shoreline advocates assisted with running a putting contest. Self advocates assisted with collecting money, collecting golf balls and keeping track of each

golfer's points. Many of the golfers stopped by our putting course to take a chance on having the highest number of points at the end of the tournament. The putting contest raised \$650 for our group.

See 'Group' on Page 3

Resolved: Change The World

By Dave Hingsburger
Reprinted from *The Direct Support Workers Newsletter*
Volume 5 Issue 1

New Year's, for many, is a time when resolutions are made and, usually quickly thereafter, broken. Even so, some do succeed. Some make a decision, stick to it, and change their lives. This issue begins our 5th year of publication and, in talking about it, Angie and I decided to mark this milestone by telling you three stories. Each of these stories will illustrate how we all, in our work with people with disabilities, can, if we choose to, change the world. We can have an impact that is much greater than we imagine and, if we put our minds together and act as a group purposefully, what we achieve can be nothing less than world changing.

The Power of Simply Being:
Joe and I were shopping in ASDA, a large grocery store, in Liverpool many years ago, and we went for a cup of tea after shopping in their little cafeteria. We had just taken our seats beside the window which looked as if it were weeping for want of sun, and we began chatting. I noted being noticed by some of the others who were there having coffee, reading the paper or catching up with friends. Then, a fellow with a really significant physical disability came into the room accompanied by his support provider. His chair was complex and was steered by breath; his body, was shaped atypically and asymmetrically and the chair cushions looked like they were made by a high street tailor. The support provider got in line and got them each a coffee and then sat down beside the

fellow in the chair. Those in the restaurant who had thought me different, reevaluated their point of view, and shifted their gaze to the man in the chair. I have noticed something odd. In general the more people admire the technology of a chair the less they value the person using it. I was growing uncomfortable because many people were openly gaping as they were watching the fellow in the chair drink his coffee with the support worker's assistance.

And then it happened.

They began to chat. I couldn't hear, no one could hear, what was being spoken about because they both spoke very quietly, but they chatted and they laughed, and soon it was unremarkable to see a coffee cup make its way up to either set of lips. They were having such a good time, enjoying each other's

See 'We Have' on Page 4

Being in a Family's Space is an Honour, says Special Needs Resource Consultant

Michelle Prowd hopes Ministry of Education continues to see importance of early years support for children who have a disability

By Michelle Strutzenberger
Though she's been accepted into teacher's college several times, Michelle Prowd keeps feeling drawn back to her work as a special needs resource consultant with Community Living Owen Sound and District.

"I find it very rewarding

working with the parents," says Prowd, whose role often includes accompanying families to appointments.

"It's a privilege, really, to be in the family's space like that, especially when they're emotional or they break down, because I'm often the

See 'I Think' on Page 3

Children's Services says Goodbye to Joanne Chapman

Joanne is a familiar face in the halls of Community Living but not for much longer. After 30 years of dedicated service to Grey-Bruce families Joanne is retiring from her position with the Infant and Child Development Program at the end of June.

Throughout her career Joanne did her work with passion. Early Intervention wasn't just a job to her it was a

calling. Joanne was introduced to the Infant Development Program through personal experience. Joanne's son had heart problems and was hospitalized several times as a young child. He was referred to the Infant Development Program by staff from the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. Joanne learned first-hand the importance

See 'Joanne' on Page 2

Celebrating Our Awesome Communities

Communication Strategy Committee Update

Submitted by Craig Rourke on behalf of the Communication Strategy Committee

The Communication Strategy Committee which consists of self-advocates and staff members from a variety of departments at Community Living Owen Sound and District has decided that our key message this year is to promote and celebrate how inclusive our communities are and to highlight personal stories of people, their

relationships and valued roles within their communities. Some initiatives we have started working on is capturing some personal stories on video, paper or PowerPoint. Self-advocates and staff are partnering to conduct interviews, make videos and record these stories. In a few months when we have a collection of stories to share we will start to make presentations to community

See 'Self-Advocates' on Page 3

Yvonne Spicer to Speak in Owen Sound

The Sound Advocates have invited Yvonne Spicer to speak in Owen Sound on May 11, 2016. Yvonne is a very active self-advocate and participates on the Ontario Council. Yvonne will spend the day in Owen Sound and the morning will be dedicated to talking about how to be a good self-advocate and how to identify and plan for your goals and dreams. The afternoon will give people

time to work on packages called My Life/My Plan. The event will be held at the Independent Learning Centre at 867 10th Street West, Owen Sound. The event will help to celebrate Community Living Month and The Sound Advocates plan to invite other self-advocates and groups in the area to attend. There will be a small cost to attend the event and some snacks will be provided.

Sound Advocates Voicing Transit Concerns

The Sound Advocates are planning to put together a letter to the City of Owen Sound to give a voice to concerns about city transit and specialized transit. People with concerns are asked to send them in writing to the Sound Advocates so that they can be included in the letter.

The Sound Advocates hope to have the letter submitted in the spring of 2016. The Sound Advocates plan to request that a representative from City Council come and speak to the group about the letter. We are very hopeful that they will address our concerns and changes may happen.

Flaherty/Elliott RDSP Bursary Award

It's that time again for people who do not yet have a Registered Disability Savings Plan to apply for this bursary award. This year the Board of Directors of Community Living Owen Sound and District has expanded the program from two awards of \$500 each to six awards of \$500! The purpose of the RDSP award is to assist people connected to the services and supports of Community Living Owen Sound and District to open a Registered Disability Savings Plan and to thereby encourage people to save for their retirement.

- Applicants for a RDSP Bursary must be "connected" with Community Living Owen Sound and District (for example, connected through Children's Services, Family Support and/or

receiving supports provided by Community Living Owen Sound and District) and be eligible to be a beneficiary of an RDSP (the individual is eligible for the disability tax credit (DTC); has a valid social insurance number (SIN); is a resident in Canada when the plan is entered into; and is under the age of 60).

- Applicants for a RDSP Bursary may not be already named as a beneficiary of an RDSP account but may have already initiated an application (no funds deposited).

For more information or an application form, please contact your Family Resource Worker or your Community Support Worker. The application deadline is May 31, 2016.

IS YOUR CHILD ON TRACK?

We provide play-based, child developmental screenings with individualized activity plans to enhance your child's skills. Our programs are specifically for families with children aged newborn to 5 years, who have special needs, or who may be at risk for delays in development.

For more information about our service or to request a consultation call: 519-370-0866 ext. 101

Children's Services
865 10th Street West, Owen Sound
Community Living Owen Sound and District

Our work is serious fun!

Joanne Chapman a Wealth of Knowledge

Continued from front of early intervention and how the Infant Development Program helps families.

Sue Murdoch remembers the early years well, and writes, "In the mid-80's Infant Development Program was made up of the three musketeers, Denise Cheer, Sue Murdoch and Joanne Chapman. We all had our roles that made up the team. Denise performed the assessments and the cognitive aspects, Sue provided her nursing background for the various pediatric conditions, and Joanne the physical/motor aspects of development. We traveled as a team to families for the initial visits so we travelled a lot together. We were fortunate to have Joanne as her employment with Community Living was kind of a fluke. I knocked on her door one day to visit her son Jeff who was about two months old. We both looked at each other with a little shock and recognition that we knew each other from high school. In our conversation I mentioned that we had an opening in Infant Development. She applied and just happened to have exactly the qualifications we were looking for with her degree in Kinesiology. Soon we were a team and grew to be friends, a friendship that has lasted 30 years."

Over her 30-year career Joanne gained a wealth of knowledge and experience that

she brought to her work supporting families. Visits took place in the family's home. At visits Joanne would monitor the child's development, provide play-based activity suggestions, and help families connect with community resources. Joanne was often heard to say, "I give the suggestions but it is the families that make the real difference in their child's life."

Joanne was knowledgeable in all aspects of development but with her kinesiology background she was an expert in motor development. Joanne generously shared her knowledge in many ways. She could be counted on to give motor tutorials and answered motor-related questions for her co-workers. She would sometimes even go along on a visit to better understand what was happening and offer suggestions on how to resolve a specific motor concern. Joanne was a regular presenter at Ontario Early Years Centres, the Health Unit and day care staff

meetings. Joanne also sat on committees. She was a onetime member of the social committee at Community Living. For a few years she was a member of CART, the child abuse review team. Most recently she sat on the Tummy Time committee, a committee that promoted development by reminding



Joanne Chapman

parents to put their infants on their tummy to play for at least an hour a day.

Lori Wilson, from the Cradlelink program, talks appreciatively about Joanne's valuable contribution to the volunteer training component of the program. She writes, "Joanne has been a regular guest speaker over many years at our Cradlelink volunteer orientation. When we plan a new orientation session, our minds automatically go to asking Joanne to talk about

(Joanne) always has a very relaxed, and fun approach to talking to the new volunteers, and is full of handy tricks and tips...

infant development! She always has a very relaxed, and fun approach to talking to the new volunteers, and is full of handy tricks and tips, including making simple "toys" that might attract a baby... a simple metal coffee tin with a variety of lids is a classic! She likes to demonstrate with her Dolly, and makes it all look so easy! She inspires us to try some of her ideas, and makes us believe we can help teach the wee ones in Grey and Bruce learn to love tummy time, roll over, sit up, stand on flat feet... We can change the world one baby at a time! New volunteers always provide lots of positive comments and leave feeling confident to try some of Joanne's tricks. No matter how many times we listen to Joanne, Leanne and I always seem to learn something new from her. When we've come to her with questions or challenging scenarios, she always listens, seems to be able to imagine the

scene playing out, and then gives us some ideas to try. We wish her well in her retirement, and will miss crossing paths with her on a regular basis."

A yearly highlight for Joanne was the Ontario Association of Infant and Child Development annual conference. She liked to be up to date on the latest research, innovative ideas and new therapies. She also liked catching up with colleagues and being up to speed on what was happening in other programs around the province. A true testament of her dedication to Infant Development and the Ontario Association was her faithful attendance at the OAICD annual general meeting after a long day of speeches and workshops. With meetings, and shopping out of the way, Joanne could be counted on to bring out the peach schnapps.

Joanne's experiences at work and caring for her son have also influenced her choice of volunteer work. For many years Joanne has been involved with a non-profit organization called Second Chance Kids. Second Chance Kids raises funds to assist local families whose children are hospitalized out-of-town; providing funds to help cover the cost of their accommodation, meals, and travel. From personal

experience Joanne knows the cost, not only financially but also emotionally, of having a

child hospitalized out of the area. Second Chance Kids is dear to Joanne's heart and she has been a board member since its launch in 1988.

In her spare time Joanne enjoys playing volleyball, golf, playing cards, travelling with her husband, spending time with her grandchildren and summers at the family's trailer at Sauble Beach. Sue Murdoch, Lori Wilson and Leanne Kennedy have a few suggestions for Joanne for things to do in retirement. Here is Sue, "I wish Jo lots of luck in her retirement and maybe we can play more golf together." And from Lori and Leanne, "However, we do know of a lovely little volunteer program, Cradlelink, that might be a really nice fit for her. Just 4 hours a week! It provides ample opportunities to snuggle with little ones. You know our number Joanne! Watch for the ad in the newspaper every spring and fall! Best wishes."

Good bye Joanne. You will be missed.

Self-Advocates Spreading Positivity

Continued from front
partners to let them know how inclusive their community is and to encourage them to also champion inclusivity in their social circles. We recently heard a definition of "community" that we liked which is: community is where people are known, noticed, or missed. We will be highlighting all of the ways people are known, noticed and missed in their communities.

If you know of someone who would be willing to share their stories of inclusiveness and/or how they have had a positive impact on their community, please contact Craig or Michelle at 519-371-9251.

The other initiative we have undertaken this year is to have a kindness event each month to spread positivity and through

our awesome communities. Recently we conducted two such random acts of kindness initiatives. These were initiated by the committee and were undertaken by a number of self-advocates, sometimes with the support of Community Living staff. In January we shovelled random driveways and walkways and on Feb. 12 we handed out over 200 carnations to random people in Owen Sound and Port Elgin. Both initiatives were very well received and left the community smiling. Stay tuned for further kindness initiatives and for information on how you can participate in the fun. People have really enjoyed making connections with people in their communities and meeting neighbours.

Finally we have purchased an updated copy of a game created by Community Living

Toronto called "Spinclusion" that we will be taking to classrooms from Owen Sound to Port Elgin. The questions posed as part of the game challenge students to think of ways they or their school is inclusive or could be more inclusive. Themes discussed are including people of all sexual orientations, genders, races and abilities. Along with the Spinclusion game, we will be going to primary classrooms and reading a number of books with themes about diversity and inclusion such as: "A Boy and his Jaguar," "Just Because," "Don't Laugh at Me" and "It's Ok to Be Different."

If you know of a class who would like us to come and read with them or play Spinclusion with them, please contact Kim at 226-664-0789 extension 457.



Left to right: Deanna McGillivray, Duncan Hawthorne, Anne Marie Ruxton, and Alvin Ruthven at the Hawthorne Cup Golf Tournament.

Group Donates to Splash Pad

Continued from front
The money was used to pay for the registration fees for the 2015 Self Advocate Retreat that was held Nov. 6, 2015 in Walkerton. The members of the group also chose to make a donation towards a local community project which is raising funds to build a Splash

Pad in Saugeen Shores. On Nov. 25 the group went to the Bicycle Rouge Children's Boutique to present the donation to Amy Shute, Co-Ordinator of the Splash Pad project. Amy was very grateful for the donation and thanked the group for helping with this project.

'I Think My Biggest Strength is Compassion'

Continued from front
person they do that with.

"I feel honoured that they've allowed me in their world and in their space and that I can support them through and give them the right advice and direction."

Prowd attended university thinking she would be a teacher, but after a placement in a school for children who are visually impaired, she saw there were other ways she could use her gifts.

"I think my biggest strength is compassion," Prowd says. "I think I have always had that with the families . . . I can make families feel at ease."

As special needs resource consultants, Prowd and her colleagues work largely in area daycares to support families who have children with a disability. The team will help the families to carry out recommendations put forward by other supporting professionals, such as occupational therapists and speech language pathologists. They will also work with teachers to provide

recommendations and a plan to ensure the child is well supported in the classroom.

Prowd has many rewarding stories from her nearly 18 years of working with Community Living Owen Sound and District. One boy



Michelle Prowd

she began working with when he was 18 months old wasn't walking, talking or making eye contact. He had received a diagnosis of autism. By the end of junior kindergarten, however, he had progressed to speaking, walking and relating so well "one would almost think they could take the autism diagnosis away," Prowd says. She credits his

parents in large part for working very hard to follow through on the recommendations for his care.

Another child who had been told he probably would never walk has just begun to do so.

Prowd also shares stories of mothers who are trying hard to move past former difficult situations and are now going to college, for example. "We get subsidy for daycare for them and they're trying, they're really trying to move forward. Those are rewarding (experiences too), because if the mothers flourish and grow, then their child grows."

Looking ahead, Prowd hopes the Ministry of Education continues to recognize the importance of the kind of support she and her colleagues provide.

"I just hope they see how important the early years are, especially in regards to special needs and the supports that are needed to start successful journeys for these children and their families," Prowd says.

Community Living Owen Sound and District and Facebook

In recent weeks, Community Living Owen Sound and District has been focusing on using Facebook as an additional forum to connect with our stakeholders. It has been exciting to witness the increased interaction as well as gaining several new followers each week. We

have been sharing resources that may be of interest to families, supported people and our community friends and neighbours. Our most popular posts have been when we have shared contributions that the people we support have made in their community. We hope you will take a look

at our Facebook page to see what we've been posting. Reminders and demonstrations that we all belong and have valuable contributions to make are always a joy to share.

Please check out our Facebook Page! www.facebook.com/communitylivingowensound

MOM'S RETREAT

May 28th and May 29th

Theme: Handle with Care, Take 5!

This year we will be returning to the great Evergreen Resort! There will be lots of fun to be had at this scenic, peaceful and beautiful place.

If you haven't registered or would like more information please contact: Sandra Gibbons at 519-370-0866 ext. 113 or Sandra McManaman at 519-371-9251 ext. 231



Coming again this summer...

TEEN CONNECT

A summer initiative for youth

For information please contact Brianna Styles at 519-371-9251 ext. 233

‘We Have Choices. We Can Change The World’

Continued from front
company, savouring the coffee that something more magical than even Disney could manage happened. Suddenly there were just two guys talking. The sheer normalcy of the situation challenged every prejudice and preconception that anyone would have about disability even, as in this case, significant disability. The support worker’s ability to demonstrate, on such a public stage, that respect and relationship can coexist with the reality of disability was as much a political act as it was an act of support. I don’t know if the staff realized what he was doing — often those who are extraordinary at their work don’t — but I hope he understood that the two of them there, at that moment, doing what they were doing was a direct challenge to every person sitting in that place, every person who thought that staring was the appropriate response to difference, every person who had put down their coffee in disgust, every person. That staff was supporting a person with a disability and engaging in community change at the same time. I am telling you this story here, and it’s preaching to the choir, but imagine all those folks in that coffee shop going home that day. Imagine the story they had to tell.

OK.

Pause.

Now imagine the story they would have to tell if the support worker had come in, got coffee, and grudgingly lifted it up annoyed because it interfered with typing a text on their phone.

We have choices.

We can change the world.

Or not.

The Power of Staying Silent

I had been working with a small group of self-advocate facilitators as part of my ongoing work with an agency

in the States. One of them and I got into quite a heated argument when I took on the ‘I speak for those who can’t’ sentiment. She had said that she worked with a woman with Down syndrome who was so incredibly shy that she never spoke up for herself. A couple of times shopkeepers had short changed her and she proudly talked about going to the store with the woman and talking to the shopkeeper or the manager or whomever; the woman with Down syndrome standing shyly silent, and embarrassed throughout. I said that this was grandstanding not advocacy and we had a battle royal. A couple of weeks later, I was able to meet the woman with Down syndrome and she was indeed shy but she had a way of carrying herself that demonstrated a clear message of personal pride and purpose. In meeting with the facilitator, who had calmed down, we talked about teaching advocacy rather than doing advocacy.

Here’s what happened.

They were in the local pharmacy where the woman with Down syndrome had picked up a few things for purchase. She was waiting in a short lineup of people for her turn. By the time she got to the front, the line up was much longer. She watched as her items were tallied up and then she had change dumped into her hand. She took a breath, looked at the teller who was reaching for the next person’s things, and spoke.

“Could you please count the change out for me,” she asked in a quiet but firm voice as she handed back the change, “because some people steal from me?”

The staff told me that the second part of the statement was not part of the training; it was simply an added on fact that explained the purpose of the change. The teller glared at her but, before she could refuse, a man standing much further back said, “Count her

change out, we’ve all got time.” The lineup waited for the few seconds it took for the change to be counted out. The woman with Down syndrome thanked the teller and moved on.

OK.

Pause.

Imagine the story that people are going to go home and tell. They are going to tell a story of a strong and powerful woman with Down syndrome who knows how to speak up, who knows that people take advantage of her and who knows strategies to deal with dishonesty. I imagine there might even be people there in that line up that need to learn to speak up themselves — lack of self-advocacy skills isn’t just an issue for people with intellectual disabilities! She could have made a huge difference in the life of another person. All this because the staff understood the power of silence — hushing up so that another, a less used, voice can be heard.

Compare this to what the story they would have to tell if the staff had brought her back and made a huge fuss over her being short changed. They would all wonder why she’s allowed out by herself and think about how awful it would be to be so constantly vulnerable. They would have their misconceptions about disability reinforced.

We have a choice.

We can change the world.

Or not.

The Power of Passion

An older man with an intellectual disability moved into an apartment building where he received minimal support for issues around budgeting and other more routine matters. He had dreamed of his own place for a long time, starting when he was young and on the ward of a large provincial facility. After a couple of days his support staff noticed that he seemed tense and edgy.

On investigation she found

out that he was being bullied by some and aggressively ignored by others. People complained about having him in the building even though he was a good neighbour; he was then and is now a kind polite man.

Things didn’t get better but they didn’t get worse; the bullying was almost exclusively name calling and jokes at his expense. He didn’t fear any physical violence. He had wanted an inclusive life in the community but it felt to him like he was living, completely isolated, in an unwelcoming environment.

That spring, on the urging of his staff who strongly supported his idea, he approached the superintendents of his building, people who had been very supportive of him, and asked if he could grow flowers along the front of the building where they got lots of sun. They loved the idea and said they would purchase what he needed.

He began to garden.

The staff would time her hours to come by when he was working outside and would garden with him for a while before going in to do other work with him. The two of them laughed and chatted and he taught her about gardening. Soon other frustrated gardeners were showing up and joining in with the chatter and helping out with the work.

Within a few months the seeds were sprouting but a community was full grown. Bullying of any form stopped because people wouldn’t have

it. He was a valued member of a group of people who took pride in where they lived.

It may not be as immediately evident here what the staff did. But what she did was wonderful. She encouraged him. She backed him up. She joined in with him. She never took leadership. She never took on battles that weren’t hers. She allowed him to find a way to make the community his. She supported him through the bad times and into the good.

OK.

Pause.

Imagine how he is being spoken of, by his fellow gardening buddies. Imagine how their view of someone with a disability had changed. They went from silent acceptance for some and active participation for others of bullying and teasing to outspoken proponents of respect. This is enough to tell you that they had changed. And that their change led to action. The ripple effects of this will go far and wide.

Now imagine if the staff had not encouraged him, had told him that he’s better just keep to himself. What if they had been defeatist and said that the superintendents would never go for it so don’t even bother trying. What if they just did the budgeting and got out — without thinking about the life he was living. There would be no story to tell.

We have a choice.

We can change the world.

Or not.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

June 22nd, 2016

Location to be determined.

For more information, please call Lorraine at 519-371-9251 ext. 224

PERSPECTIVES PURPOSE:

Perspectives promotes acceptance of people with different abilities in our community. We celebrate successes and embrace new ideas, approaches and opportunities.

Editorial Team: Jennifer Ramsay, Lorraine St. Germain, Erica Rooney, Ava Sandink, Tammy Robertson, Heather Thomson

Photographer: Charles Cottrell

Executive Director: Rick Hill

We encourage readers to use the newsletter for new ideas, contacts, websites and resources. Perspectives welcomes comments, contributions of articles or questions.

www.communitylivingowensound.ca

When you make a financial contribution to the Foundation for Community Living Owen Sound and District, you will make a difference in the lives of those you care about today and in the years to come. Consider making your donation today.

For more information and/or to make a donation, please contact the Foundation of Community Living Owen Sound and District at 519-371-9251.



COMMUNITY LIVING OWEN SOUND AND DISTRICT 2015 – 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President: Brian Hopson **Vice-President:** Ann Vos **Treasurer:** Ros Brooks

Ron Fenwick, John Cherrie, David Elliott, Gary Dale, Robyn Bumstead, Andrea Wist and Mary Sylver

Community Living Owen Sound and District
769 4th Avenue East, Owen Sound, ON N4K 2N5
Telephone 519-371-9251, Fax 519-371-5168

Association Membership applications are available from our office.