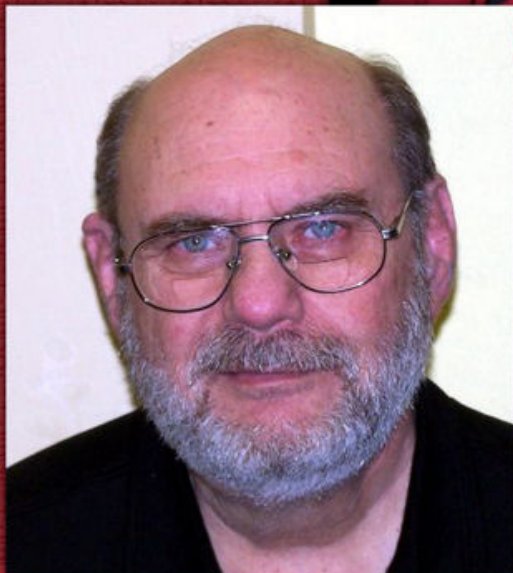


Spring 2009

Focus on MS



ACTIONREACTION



Back Row from left: M. Drolet, S. Silverman, S. Wong, R. Frankel
Front Row from left: E. Poliquin, B. Velasco, J. Boman
Absent: D. Landry

Journalism-Photography class

Jeffrey Boman – writer and layout
Michelle Drolet – teacher, editor,
photographer
Guyette Fleurant - writer
Ron Frankel – writer
Denise Landry – writer
Evan Poliquin – writer
Seymour Silverman – writer,
photographer
Susan Wong - teacher's assistant
Berlita Velasco - writer

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STEVE JARVIS

By: Denise & Jeff

In November 2008, Steve Jarvis became the new Director and Strategic Manager of the Action Centre. Steve is married to Andrée and has two stepchildren. He also has a brother who is an engineer in Calgary, AB; and a sister who lives in Victoria, BC.

Steve is a graduate of Concordia University with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in English. He worked in the pharmaceutical industry for 40+ years. First, at Merck Frosst where he was in Marketing and Sales. Later, he went on to become Group Product Manager at Schering-Plough. Following this he was VP at two major pharmaceutical advertising agencies and finally worked for a division of Young & Rubicam here in Montreal. As a result, he has acquired considerable talent in marketing, and communications which Steve now hopes will help him direct, and raise funds at the Action Centre.

Steve has only been with us for a short while, but his humanistic approach as well as financial savvy will go a long way at the Action Centre. We all hope Steve enjoys his time, raising money, developing new programs and interacting with all the members.

Welcome Steve, to our lovely Action Centre family.

Cover Photo: Members of the Action Centre who have been diagnosed with MS.

Back Row – Robin Rubinstein, Jeffrey Boman, Michelle Drolet, **Front Row** - Seymour Silverman, J.P. Dussault

Cover photos by: M. Drolet
Photo of M. Drolet by: Lazlo
Collage by: Emilie Rancourt

Poème d'amour pour la Saint Valentin, pour vous tous les amoureux.



*L'amour existe encore
Deux regards se croisent
Le coeur bat plus fort
La passion envahit le corps
Baisers, caresses c'est l'ivresse
Le premier amour de notre jeunesse
On y repense avec nostalgie
Il a marqué notre vie.*

*On se marie entre 20 et 30 ans
Mariage rime avec toujours
On a envie parfois de nouveauté
Les liens tissés au fil des années
Eloignent une passion éphémère.*

*Têtes blanches visages ridés
On marche main dans la main
Notre amour a survécu
A l'usure du quotidien
Il aura été le plus fort
Notre amour existe encore.*

Par : Guyette Fleurant

Life at the Action Centre

By: Guyette Fleurant

A « Lovers' Party » was held at the Action Centre on February 13th. Red – the colour of passion – winged Cupids, and hearts were prominently featured. Couples – Yves and Carole, Nancy and Donald, André and Johanne, Cara and Jonathan, Guyette and Camille, and our good friends had a wonderful time. We partied, you better believe it. Some fifty members enjoyed a great chicken dinner and danced. Claire & Vanessa as well as two former volunteers, Rollande and Robert, were there as guests. Nancy, our computer teacher, won the beautiful fund-raising basket made by Maria Mustillo. Daniel Jarry found a much appreciated sponsor, M. Bossé. Maria passed around chocolates, cards and best wishes sent by clients. If I could afford it, I would have sent a special wish to all of you my Valentines.

It was a wonderful party among friends.

Rick Hansen foundation support – Thank You!

By: Jeff Boman & Seymour Silverman

We wish to thank the Rick Hansen Foundation for its donation to support the Action Centre Arts & Crafts program. As a result of their generosity, many of our members are able to participate in the endeavor of producing items for our annual bazaar and our famous Christmas and Holiday cards. Our sincere thanks go to the Foundation for this valuable assistance.

**Rick Hansen
Foundation** 
Provides funding for our Arts & Crafts program

MEMBERS



Evan Poliquin

My name is Evan Poliquin. I am 66 years old and have Cerebral Palsy. My friend Audrey Hamilton from my DDO residence introduced me to the Action Centre in October 2007. I attend the painting, writing, and the advanced computer classes. This place is delightful. I feel free and not restricted to any program. The environment is clean and the staff is very joyful. It is nice to be among the members who are very friendly.

I enjoy the painting class, where I can express myself in my drawings and scenery paintings. When I am absent I think of my unfinished painting. The teacher is very helpful and the class is quiet and peaceful while we are working. In the advanced computer class it is difficult to do by myself. It is a struggle, but I challenge myself. In the writing class, I like the ideas and creative writing being shared. It helps me to grasp and put words into action. I hope to be part of the Action Centre for a long time.



Peter Cohn

Photo by: M. Drolet
Biography by: Denise Landry

Peter Cohn, now 70, was raised in Montreal by loving parents. An excellent athlete growing up, he received a hockey scholarship to prep school in the United States. Upon graduation, he returned home and developed a mind for business while obtaining a Bachelor of Commerce degree at Sir George Williams University.

By 1964, Peter entered married life, and then fathered three wonderful children. These were the happiest days of his life. In 2004, his life suddenly changed. He had a stroke, which crippled his right arm and leg. Needing help to do some things, he moved into Maimonides accredited home with seven people. He gets moral support from his devoted sister.

Peter still enjoys watching sports and exercises when he can. He also reads and plays scrabble. He is very supportive and generous, especially with his friends at the Action Centre, who share his positive outlook on having a disability. Peter still loves his children, and now his grandchildren. He plans to be this active, caring man for years to come.

Memories – Collective poem

By: Denise, Evan, Ron, Jeff

*In the country with my gum boots I was
running after grasshoppers,
while my brother walked around
with his invisible elephant.
The smell of the flowers
in the open field reminded me
of a friend I had met in winter,
when the iceman came
in a horse drawn cart
& the girl from Mill Hill
brought me behind the sofa
to kiss...*

The Secret Room

By: Ron Frankel

I remember the very first house I lived in was a modest, but comfortable upstairs duplex that had two bedrooms, a living-room, a cozy kitchen with an ice-box, not a refrigerator (the ice man came in his horse-drawn cart daily) there was a 'secret room'. I was told by my mother "If you go into this room, you will make Daddy sad, so don't go in this room." But one evening after a great mom cooked supper Dad picked me up and brought me into the secret room and stood me up on a wooden coca-cola crate so I could see what he was about to do. In this room there was no over-head light but a small yellow light. On top of a counter there were three trays of a liquid that looked like water, but I knew it was something else, because it smelled like vinegar. I watched as Dad placed a blank piece of white paper into a frame under a small projector then, he pressed a button and the projector went on for about eight seconds. It was a backward image of a car. At this point, Dad took the paper and put it into the first tray a picture of a car appeared and then into the second tray, then the third where it stayed and soaked for an hour. That night I found out that Dad was a photographer and 'the secret room' was a dark-room.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

By: Michelle Drolet

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a progressive degenerative disease of the nervous system. MS is believed to be an autoimmune disease whereby the body's immune system attacks the myelin in the brain or on the spinal chord.

The myelin is the sheath which covers the nerves in our body. The sheath is similar to the covering on an electrical wire. For ex: the wire which connects your TV is black on the outside (sheath) & the wire inside is red (nerves). If you take a knife and remove some of the black wire, then the electricity does not flow correctly.

Some of the symptoms of MS include: numbness, weakness in the limbs, fatigue, urinary, bowel and balance problems, memory loss, concentration difficulties, pain, paralysis and blindness.

MS used to be a disease that affected people between the ages of 20 and 40, but recent research has found that children as young as 2 are now being diagnosed with MS. St. Michael's Hospital, in Toronto, has opened a new MS paediatrics section.

There are four types of MS:

Relapsing/Remitting – This type is the most common. After a relapse, the person usually gets better. A relapse is the occurrence of new symptoms which last at least 48 hours. People with this type of MS will usually advance to Secondary Progressive MS

Secondary Progressive – This type get steadily worse over several years

Primary Progressive - The symptoms quickly progress from the onset of the disease

Benign MS – A person has one attack and never gets worse

There is no cure for MS. However there are medications to control both the symptoms as well as the frequency of the relapses. There are presently numerous trials of new oral (all current ones are needles) medications in the pipeline.

Recently it has been proven there is a link between a lack of vitamin D and the prevalence of MS.

MS is a challenging illness, but there is hope for a cure on the horizon. We all remain optimistic.

For further information on MS you can contact the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada: 514-849-7591.

A WELL KEPT SECRET

by: Michelle Drolet

The new Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) offers grants (free money) as well as bonds.

Why could this be important to you?

- You could be eligible to open a RDSP and deposit a maximum \$200,000.
- If you are eligible for the RDSP and deposit money into it, then you could be eligible for grants as well.
- Finally, you could be eligible for a bond of \$1,000 per year for a maximum of 20 years.

In order to QUALIFY, you must have the disability tax credit. This is form T2001 available from the Federal Government at: www.cra.gc.ca – forms or call 1-800-959-2221.

You can register for an RDSP as well as the grants at most banks: The RDSP allows the parents, guardians of children, and adults with disabilities to set aside up to \$200,000 in a plan that offers tax shelters similar to a Registered Retirement Saving Plan (RRSP). The amount you can deposit depends on your family income. If you are married, the family income includes that of your spouse. For more information call 1-800-665-7700. If you participate in an RDSP – you are allowed a grant.

The grant(s):

If your income is less than \$75,769 and you contribute to the RDSP, the federal government will give you extra money. An example: If you contribute \$500 you will receive 300% of that amount which is \$1,500. If you contribute \$1,000 you will receive 200% of that amount which is \$2,000. The annual limit is \$3,500 and there is a maximum of \$70,000 up to age 49.

The Bond(s):

You do NOT have to have an RDSP for this bond.

If your family income is lower than \$21,287 and you are between the ages of 18 and 49 you can receive a bond of \$1,000 per year up to a maximum of \$20,000. If your family income is between \$21,287 and 37,885 a formula is used to the amount of the bond. If the family income is more than \$37,885 – NO GRANT IS PAID.

YES, you can be on welfare.

It is a long task to fill out all the forms, but I believe many of you will benefit in the long run. The deadline for the RDSP is the end of February of every year.

There may be something brewing with the Quebec Government for those over 50. I am waiting to hear more information. There are many rules & regulations with these plans. One is if you withdraw money from the RDSP and grant fund before ten years, you must repay the grant(s) you received.

Tracy Broeze wrote "These are vehicles you really need a financial adviser's help with: First to understand its complexities and, second, to work out ways to gain maximum benefits." (*The Gazette*, Wednesday February 11, 2009)

DID YOU KNOW? (Accessible Parking)

By: Michelle Drolet & Jean-Yves Gagné

According to the by-law # 33(1) of the city of Montreal, if you have a sticker or plate for people with disabilities, you may park for 60 minutes in the following areas:

- A resident's zone
- A lane or a park
- A no parking zone
- A street cleaning zone

Please note that it is still illegal to be parked in a NO STOP zone and at bus-stops. If you park in front of a meter, don't forget to pay!