

# THE BRAINY BUGLER

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Summer 2013

## Animals Invade The Picnic!



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## GET TO KNOW THE CHIRS BOARD MEMBERS!

*Robert A. and Shannon Y. the BBN Roving Reporters, had an opportunity to interview two of the CHIRS Board Members recently, to find out more about them, and what the CHIRS Board does. Here is a condensed version of their conversations:*

**Maureen Bird- Graper** is a retired Administrator from the Toronto District School Board. She also does some part-time work for the University of Toronto in the Continuing Education department. Maureen is a family member of ABI survivors. In 1993 her family went on a trip to Florida. They were in a bad car accident, hit by a drunk driver. Her husband and younger son both sustained a brain injury. Maureen says “In life, you have to laugh. In the early stages of the accident, we had moments where we would just laugh. It helped.” A former student of hers asked her to do a presentation at an ABI conference and she got involved with the ABI Network. Now she helps to plan the conferences. Maureen was then connected with CHIRS. She was asked to join the CHIRS Board 2 years ago. This year, she is the Chair of the CHIRS Board. She says “We support clients as well as the staff. That is our role. CHIRS is amazing. It would be better if we were more well known, but it would also be harder because it would mean being in higher demand.” Maureen said that she had been to the Hallowe’en party, “That was great!” Like Rika, Maureen mentioned the presentation from some of the parents and family members. “We want to be more involved. More knowledge=More Passion.” When asked “If you had one wish for CHIRS what would it be?” Maureen answered: “More money to make it better for staff and have more programs. That’s the mercenary side of me! The compassionate side of me wants the clients to build more skills to be more independent. I also wish that people that do not have advocates at home could have one. I am over the top impressed by CHIRS. The Mentorship program is second to none.”

**Rika Vander Laan** is an independent consultant in Rehab and ABI. She first knew about CHIRS in 1995 when she was the Executive Director of the ABI Network and had an orientation at CHIRS. Rika feels that the Board is to support the work of CHIRS by supporting the Executive Director, and to help CHIRS explore opportunities and possibilities for future development. She says one of the key functions is “to act as a sounding board for the Executive Director because a lot of the ideas come from the staff and clients of CHIRS and it is good for us to help her make choices and decisions and give feedback. As a Board it is our responsibility to hold the organization accountable, to see that funding is used appropriately, policies are upheld and risk management is handled properly. We are not there to interfere with the day to day, we are at a more strategic level.” Rika explained that the Board usually meets 8 or 9 times a year, but they may meet less often in the future because things run smoothly at CHIRS. Rika talked about a meeting last year with clients and family members. “It was good for me, we had dinner together and had long conversations. I hope it gets to be an annual event. It helps us see what some of the challenges and ideas are.” When asked if she had anything else to share, Rika said “please keep the Board informed and keep doing all the wonderful work. We don’t always know the right questions to ask.”

### In memory

In the past few months we have lost a number of our clients. We send our condolences to the friends and family of the following:

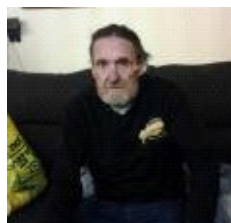
Brian Henderson  
March 8, 1959- February 14, 2013



Debra Stewart- Obedkoff  
March 9, 1957- January 30, 2013



Michael Hall  
January 8, 1950- February 5, 2013



Ronald Fox  
June 27, 1952 – March 11, 2013



The CHIRS club was the host of three monthly Iron Chef Battles in the Winter of 2013. January was Team Munir against Team Sean in Battle Appetizer. February was Team Munir against Team Sean in Battle Main dish. March was Team Rowen ( filling in for Munir) against Team Sean in Battle Dessert. The Mentors and clients worked with staff to create delicious recipes in one hour based on secret ingredients selected on the day of the competition. The teamwork under the one hour deadline was the key to the overall success of the events. Celebrity judges for each competition included a senior managements staff, a fellow staff member, and client. The group was especially honoured to be given cooking tips and observations from a true celebrity chef and staff of Breakfast Television, Man Chef: Peter Graben. Thanks to all that participated and see you at the Second Annual Iron Chef.

## Articles of Interest

### St. Lucia Adventure

My husband Allan and I went to St. Lucia for a full week. I wanted to see the sea critters, and meet the island residents-and I did. I wanted to go snorkeling but I needed more experience in the water, so before I left I practiced my swimming with the CHIRS West Swim group. Munir is the best teacher! While we were in St. Lucia, we drove dune buggies for 2 days. On the first day we drove through the rainforest to go to the Piton Volcanos. The next day we saw Oprah Winfrey's village and other famous people's mansions. The food was great and the service was superb. The weather was sunny and warm. Allan and I might go back again next year!

*Lorraine M.*



*Lorraine and her husband Al in St.Lucia*

### ABI and Marginalization

After suffering Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), I felt marginalized; somewhat irrelevant to everyday society. It felt to me that I had been relegated to the backwaters; no longer in the mainstream of Life. What could I do to change my mindset and “get back into the game”? Well, “I’m only one person”, I thought. “What can only one person do? How can only one person make a difference to anyone or anything?” Then in my reading, I came upon this. It has made all the difference in my thinking ...

**One**

***One tree can start a forest;***

***One smile can begin a friendship;***

***One hand can lift a soul;***

***One word can frame the goal;***

***One candle can wipe out darkness;***

***One laugh can conquer gloom;***

***One hope can raise our spirits;***

***One touch can show you care;***

***One life can make the difference;***

***Be that one today.***

***Based on***

***Hebrews 11 : 32-34***

***the Bible (NIV)***

***Richard P.***

*The following fictional story is inspired by a Robert Palmer song of the same name...*

### Johnny and Mary

Johnny wanted to play baseball all his life. Johnny at the age of ten years was drawing stats of baseball heroes and collected baseball cards. He was already a baseball nut. Johnny met Mary at middle school and they became instant friends. Mary developed an interest in music and reading however, Mary was also interested in some sports. Their friendship blossomed into a good relationship, however they were both very high energy people. They were still young and were going through growing pains. Johnny grew up in a hurry but his dream and friendship with Mary carried on.

*Andrey B.*

### Jill's Review

#### 'The Great Gatsby'

*Jill is the Movie Outing mentor. They went to see the Great Gatsby on Sunday June 19. Here is her review.*

Toby Maguire becomes friends with Leonardo DiCaprio (The Great Gatsby), but I feel that Leonardo DiCaprio uses Toby Maguire to get to Daisy Buchanan. The movie is very lavish, and this time was easier to understand than reading the book – I read the book more than 30 years ago.

*Jill H.*

## Articles of Interest

### Marcy's Pet Corner

*Hi! I'm Marcy and I will be doing a column every issue of BBN on people from CHIRS and their pets. If you have story about your pet, please let me know. Here is Rob F's story:*

We had a dog named Benson. He was a BITSA (Bits of this and Bits of that). I had had a dog back in Scotland named Tania. She was a Doberman. I couldn't bring her when we moved to Canada. I missed her and missed having a dog but my wife said she didn't want another dog. One day when I got off work (I was a carpenter), I decided to go see if there was any Dobermans at the pound. There were no Dobermans but there was a puppy that was mixed and had colours of a Dobe. He came right up to me and licked my face. I fell in love right there and took him home. I surprised my wife. It took her a bit but she fell in love with him. We called him Benson. He died a while back at age 14. I miss him, he was a great dog. We also have a cat named Sarabell. She is an old gal but she rules the roost!

*Marcy H.*

### Saying Goodbye to East Swim Program

Frank G. and Kelvin S. were sad to learn that the East Swim Program will not be offered in the fall as they spent the last day of this program making a big splash off of the slide at Agincourt Pool. • They have really enjoyed being a part of the East Swim Program over the years and have made great strides towards accomplishing their goals of getting and staying fit and improving their swim strokes. • Though sad to hear about their program coming to an end, both participants were hopeful joining a potential adapted and integrated community aquafit program in the fall if CHIRS is able to work with the city to find an appropriate venue and time slot. •CHEERS for CHIRS for having a great East Swim Program over the years!



# JUNGLE JAM!



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# CHIRS ANNUAL PICNIC 2013



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# Articles of Interest

## CLIENT UPDATES

Jackie W.

As some of you might have experienced, as life goes on we have new adventures in our lives. Jackie, who some of you might remember from programs like Boardwalking, Music Group, Cooking Club and Hobby Group has moved to a new home. Tanja J recently went to visit her and they spent the morning sitting in the garden talking. Tanja told me "I couldn't stop holding her hand because I miss her!" While visiting they watched the chipmunks and squirrels. Tanja also told CHIRS staff that the Jackie's new staff seems nice and very helpful. Jackie also told Tanja about the programs that she has been enjoying. There is a Dog Therapy Program, Music Program, Art Program and other social activities. Cougar Bait (Wayne Booker's Band) even plays for the residents sometimes. Jackie is enjoying her place which is in the neighborhood which she grew up in.



Norman H.

Norman moved from Aldebrain to a nursing home due to changes in his needs and to be closer to his family.

Currently he is in good health, and eating well as always! He is still a very social man and likes to chat with everyone who walks by. He loves to participate in church services on the weekend and sing his heart out. Although he is missed here, he is enjoying his new home.



## Kids party

We had our first of what we hope will be an Annual Children's Party for children of both staff and clients this winter. Despite the snow storm the night before, people braved their way in for a great show put on by several performers including Lenny Graf, a well known children's performer. It was followed up by the World's Best sundae bar! A great time was had by all.



*Cake by Kim G.*





**MARCH 2013**

David M.  
***Mentor Duties***  
 Tuesday PM Club Coverage  
 Special Event Volunteer



**April 2013**

Keith M.  
***Mentor Duties***  
 Friday PM Mentor  
 Club YouTube VJ  
 Co-facilitator of Club Karaoke  
 MIX lounge Volunteer



# Mentor Of The Month

**May 2013**

Mirko S.  
***Mentor Duties***  
 Computer Café Attendant  
 Sports Road Trip Facilitator  
 Creator of Wrestling Talk  
 Fantasy Sports League Co-commissioner



**June 2013**

Kevin B.  
***Mentor Duties***  
 Wednesday AM Club Coverage  
 Baking Group Facilitator



**July 2013**

James C.  
***Mentor Duties***  
 Friday AM and PM Club Coverage  
 Mentor Summer Outing Facilitator  
 Community Fitness Mentor  
 Special Event Volunteer



“Tell me and I forget, teach  
 me and I may remember,  
 involve me and I learn.”  
 - Benjamin Franklin



## Articles of Interest

### St. Patricks Day Walk 2013

It was a cold windy winter morning, and I had just been dropped off at the Steam Whistle Brewery to attend the St. Patrick's Day 5K Walk. As I made my way to the CHIRS meeting spot I realized my walker was broken. This day of all days! It was just hours away from the walk starting! So, I tried to get some assistance in fixing the wheel. Roy helped me fix it by duct-taping the broken plastic front left wheelguard together. During the wait between my arrival and the start of the race, I picked up some more donations for the race. I raised \$440 dollars this year. The race finally started and we were off! I did have to walk with assistance, as the walker kept veering to the left, however, I DID complete the entire 5K even with the broken walker. LauraLee stayed with me the whole race. We even had our own police escort. I felt happy and proud to have finished. Next year I hope to raise more money, and I hope NOT to have a broken walker!

*Anne-Marie C.*



*Anne-Marie with Student LauraLee*

### WHAT MAKES ME HAPPY

I would really just love it if I could leave this country and move to the greatest place on earth, which is the fantastic country of Israel. I would love to move to Israel because Israel is the homeland of all of the Jews in the whole world. It also really is just one of the nicest places on earth! Many of my family already live there, and obviously so would I. One of my favourite memories of Israel is that the weather there is always fantastic! Also all of the beaches in the Holy Land are all so very beautiful and sublime. One of the most famous places in Israel is the Wailing Wall. When I was at the Wailing Wall, I really felt like I was one with God.

*Danny S.*

### My Valentines Day

This year I had the best Valentine's Day I have ever had. The ADS staff played a dating game in the Club. I was the bachelorette. The bachelors were: 1. Keith, 2. Pete, 3. Kirk, 4. Mark. The first question I asked was "if you were going to be an animal, which one would you be?" I also asked them each to describe their perfect first date. I had to pick one at the end and I picked number 2 (Peter). We went to Timothy's at Yonge and Finch. Thank you CHIRS and Peter, for making my Valentine's Day!

*Marcy H*

### My Wizard of Oz Experience

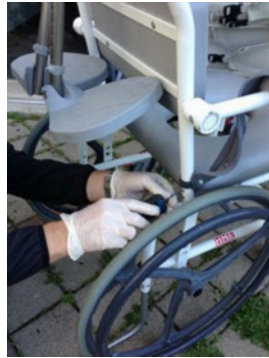
Yesterday I went to see a marvelous play called The Wizard of Oz. It was AMAZING! When it started, I thought to myself 'this is going to be great!' I knew there would be a lot of similarities to the movie of the same name. To be completely honest, I was amazed to see just how accurate the play was. I mean, the wizard actually scared me at first, because he was so loud and angry looking. After maybe fifteen minutes or so, you realize he is not scary at all. In fact he is really nice. There was one scene where the Wicked Witch of the West got melted by a bucket of water, which actually killed her. I could not believe how they accomplished that. It truly amazed me. In conclusion, everyone should come and see the play.

*Michelle G.*

## Articles of Interest



*Jim Madore & Al Rathwell  
from Motion Specialties*



### Wheelchair & Walker Clinic June 4, 2013

The Fourth Annual Wheelchair & Walker Clinic took place at Aldebrain this year. This event continues to be complimentary to clients as we continue to build a positive relationship with Motion Specialties. This year, ADS was able to send 1 client, Gary O. along with Roy as a facilitator. Gary was all smiles after his electric wheelchair was cleaned.

This is a preventative clinic for clients to review their assistive devices. Major issues such as brake repairs, damage to the frame, worn wheels and uneven casters can be spotted at the clinic to prevent major break downs in the future.

We would like to thank Al Rathwell, Sale Representative and Jim Madore, Service Manager from Motion Specialties for their generous time and effort to service the assistive devices at CHIRS. Thank you to Michele Graham, CHIRS Residential Manager and to the CHIRS staff for making arrangements to facilitate this event for clients. I am hoping to see more clients, and community members participate in this event in the future!

*Amee Le, Occupational Therapist*



## Turnabout

The hunt for relaxation under the sunny sky led Mary and Deborah to the park, where they enviously gazed at a group of children tossing a frisbee to one another. Their envy built with each pass of the frisbee, eventually leading Deborah to approach the child leading the game and say, “Got room for one more?” Deborah could instantly tell from his expression he didn’t like that idea, so before he spoke she collected Mary and headed home to find her own frisbee. Each wore mischievous smirks when leaving the park, for with that frisbee they would play their own game directly in view of those other children. “It’ll be here, if it’s anywhere” said Mary once arriving at her apartment. There existed a storage closet filled with initially used and eventually forgotten sporting equipment. It was there that Mary referred, and with a lift and a shove aside of forgotten equipment she found that frisbee. “Are you ready?” asked Mary while motioning for Deborah to follow “Ready for what?” wondered Deborah while blindly following Mary. With frisbee in hand Mary led Deborah back to the park. When reaching there, they immediately began playing their own game of frisbee directly in view of those children. After the child leading his game tired he approached Deborah and said, “Got room for one more?”

*Zia L.*

# THE BACK PAGE

## Words of Wisdom

### Haiku poem

You are my good friend  
Who helps me when I need you  
And I want you to know  
I'll be there for you  
Let me know when you need me  
Never will I hesitate  
You will always be my friend  
*Shared by Sharon S.*

### Haiku poem

New buds grow on trees  
That had no leaves all winter  
Soon flowers will bloom  
Stars shine in clear sky  
The moon is near first quarter  
Sky shimmers brightly  
Insect buzzing fills the air  
Warm mild wind and sunny days  
*Shared by Andrey B.*

### The Earth

Is it green, blue or yellow?  
It dances in the atmosphere  
*Kim G*

### Kindness

Attention folks, it is Kindness Week.  
Kindness is one of the fruit of the spirits. It  
would be actually better if we didn't need  
such a thing so that people could be nice to  
each other. What next in the world? Like  
honesty or many others before changing the  
world? I do think it should go back to what  
it was without Kindness Week.  
*Donna W.*

### What I Want

What I Want  
Physically,  
I want to go to Spain.  
In my mind, though,  
I want to go as far north  
As I can  
A north of the mind only  
I want total isolation.  
Finland,  
Norway,  
Or Alaska?  
No!  
Nunavut;  
To go to an igloo  
of my mind  
Isolation,  
for thinking and mulling  
what's on my mind.  
This is what I want.  
Total blank.  
To think.  
All on my own.  
In a blanc igloo  
of my mind.  
Totally on my own.  
That's what I want.  
*Evi K.*

## CHIRS is now on Facebook!



<https://www.facebook.com/chirstoronto>