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WSA Website Is Up and Running!

Want information about the latest events at the Association? Want to order garbage bags or wood products? Want to find out more about our programs and services?

Check out our new website at www.winnifredstewart.com

Oilers 50/50 Volunteers Needed!

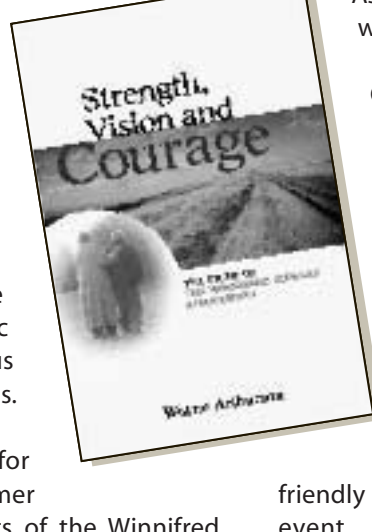
The Association was fortunate to have been selected to be part of the Edmonton Oilers 50/50 draw. The game day is March 28, 2003 and we need 44 volunteers to be part of this fundraiser. Call Karen at 453-6707 if you are interested in helping.

Winnifred Stewart Association Celebrates 50 Years of Service

The Winnifred Stewart Association has been enhancing the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities since 1953. A number of activities and events will celebrate this significant milestone over the course of the year. For more information about any of our celebration events, go to our website at www.winnifredstewart.com or contact Roxanne at 453-6707, ext 249.


Winnifred Stewart Association

February- "Strength, Vision and Courage: The Story of the Winnifred Stewart Association", a 50th anniversary celebration book authored by Wayne Arthurson, will be available for sale. Copies of the book will be donated to all branches of the Edmonton Public Library and to various post-secondary schools.



April- A reunion for clients, families, former teachers and students of the Winnifred Stewart school and other interested parties will be held on April 26th at the Winnifred Stewart Association building. This event will be a chance to share memories, tour the facilities and look at historical displays. It is anticipated our new Assisted Living Home will have its grand opening at this time as well.

May- A Wall of Honour will be unveiled at our Annual General Meeting May 27th. The wall acknowledges supporters of the

association throughout the years and will be on permanent display at the Association's main building. All are welcome to attend.

October- The Association will be hosting a major community fundraising event - this 50th anniversary event will be the first of its kind in Edmonton! The 50th event will bring together our clients, families, volunteers, corporate and community partners, and the general public. It will see thousands of participants join forces to compete for incredible prizes in a friendly and fun filled atmosphere. The event promises an unforgettable experience for all involved, from the young to the young at heart. Stay tuned for more information, with the official announcement and details coming early in 2003. Our thanks to Incite Solutions for their hard work in making this project come together. The increased awareness of the Association created by our 50th anniversary celebrations will serve us well as we take our next steps towards the future.

Employment Makes a Difference

By Judy Payne

Few people regardless of, or absence of, a disability, relish the idea of searching for a job. One only needs to thumb through the yellow pages to discover numerous agencies willing to assist those seeking employment. Some employment agencies charge their clients a fee as high as \$5,000 to provide their client with the tools needed to obtain a job.

Why are people so willing to sacrifice so much time, energy and money in the pursuit of a job? The main reason is due to the fact that we primarily define our purpose and ourselves by what we do for a living. Do you need to be convinced of this? Next time you encounter someone new, time how long it takes before the question of "What do you do?" enters the conversation. You will find most will reply with a title or a description of their employment.

What we do for a living has a direct correlation to how we feel about our role and ourselves as contributors to society. Individuals with developmental delays should have the opportunity to answer, "What do you do?" with the

same response the majority of us use. Thanks to a number of employers, many of our clients are out working and contributing to their community. Everyday their success causes another brick to crumble in the wall of barriers, which keep people from working, and contributing to their community in a way they find meaningful.

You can support our clients by letting people know of the many employment positions individuals with developmental disabilities successfully hold in the community. You may talk of the strong work ethic and long-term dedication most bring to the job site.

Look around your place of employment. Are there any jobs that everyone has been meaning to do but just cannot find the time? Chances are, there is a position someone with a disability could fill. All it takes is for someone to step out of the box and see the endless possibilities.

For more information, contact Rhonda at 453-6707, ext 228

Construction begins on Seniors Home

By Roxanne Dubé Coelho

After two years of fund raising, the Association broke ground on December 3, 2002 for its second assisted-living home for seniors with developmental disabilities. The residence will be home to 10 individuals who are experiencing Alzheimer's disease and increased support needs related to aging in addition to their primary developmental disability. The home is slated to have its grand opening in April 2003.

Our thanks to the following donors for making this project possible:

- Allard Foundation
- ATCO Gas
- Celanese Canada Inc.
- Community Initiatives Program
- Edmonton Realtors Charitable Foundation
- Great Human Race
- Knights of Columbus 12353
- Kristie Charitable Foundation
- Melton Foundation
- Minerva Foundation
- Sawmill Golf Tournament
- Winnifred Stewart Foundation

And the many donors to our fund raising campaigns over the past three years. Together, we will make a difference for people with developmental disabilities.

A Tribute to Lorna Thornton

March 16, 1936 - October 7, 2002 - By Dorothy Szelekovszky



Lorna came to the Winnifred Stewart Association later in life. She initially came to our recreation day program and eventually made Residential Services her home. Lorna lived in a couple of houses until the Winnifred Stewart House opened up, where she touched the lives

Lorna had a wonderful sense of humor and along with it came her Mona Lisa smile. She would often have a sparkle in her eyes or would burst out laughing but rarely would she share the joke - our guess is she was laughing at how crazy we could be.

Lorna was an avid card player and taught many staff how to play cribbage and rummy. She had her own set of rules that always seemed to be in her favour. She also enjoyed quiet times playing solitaire on her own. Lorna was an exceptional bowler and it was rare for her not to win.

Lorna was a positive individual. Whenever anyone asked her how she was, her response was, "I'm feeling very, very good today," even on days when you could see she was feeling under the weather. She loved to sit in the dining room at WSH so she'd never miss out on anything that was going on in the house.

Lorna will be remembered as a strong individual who had a zest for life and lived each day to the fullest. She gave us many cherished moments and it's because of these memories she will always be in our hearts.

New Equipment for RLSS Program

The RLSS program received some early Christmas gifts of equipment for the program. Our grateful thanks go to:

- The ACT Foundation, for providing funding of \$3,400 to purchase two exercise bikes and a recumbent bike to enhance the exercise program.
- The Children's Ability Fund, that funded the purchase of close to \$10,000 worth of specialized equipment for our sensory room, creating more opportunities for clients to engage in this wonderful experience.

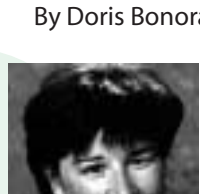
This is equipment we would have otherwise not been able to obtain, and will make a big difference to our clients. Thank you so much!


Auction Event a Success

The Association's 10th Annual Dinner and Auction, held on October 18th, brought in close to \$40,000 for our programs and services, including our new Assisted Living Home. Guests dined on a wonderful meal at the Sawmill Banquet and Catering Centre and then settled in for an evening of lively bidding and dancing to The Nomads. The 50's theme event kicked off our 50th Anniversary celebrations with a bang. Our thanks to all the donors, sponsors and participants for their support of this event.

Mentally Handicapped Can Make Their Own Wills

By Doris Bonora



A recent case in Alberta provides welcome recognition that persons who are mentally handicapped can successfully perform certain legal functions even though they may have a

mental deficiency. Specifically, this case held that a person with a mental illness can have the capacity to make a valid Will, providing opportunity by extension for people with a developmental disability.

In this recent case, Mr. Weidenberger had been hospitalized intermittently over several years as a result of his schizophrenia and other diagnosed mental illnesses. The Public Trustee was appointed his Trustee, as Mr. Weidenberger was unable to manage his own financial affairs.

Mr. Weidenberger wrote a handwritten Will in which he left "all his wealth" to his family in Hungary. He carried this handwritten Will in his pocket with a bundle of documents marked

"important papers". The Will was brought to court to determine if Mr. Weidenberger had the capacity to make it and to determine if it was valid. The court found that the Will was a valid handwritten Will.

The court made a number of interesting findings that are helpful to persons with a mental handicap wanting to make a Will. The court found that there should not be a higher standard of proof just because the Testator had a history of mental illness. Cognitive impairment and confusion alone were not to be grounds for declaring a person incapable of making a Will. Even though the mental power may be reduced below the ordinary standard, if there is sufficient intelligence to understand and appreciate the testamentary act, then the power to make a Will remains.

The court held that being under the control of the Public Trustee was not determinative. The cognitive functions required to be competent to manage your affairs versus having the capacity to execute a Will are two distinct and separate functions. A person may

function at one level and not the other. This case certainly opens the door for anyone with a mental handicap or illness to be able to prepare a Will. The relevant period for assessing capacity is at the time that the Will is created.

The court specifically said "The court must afford the mentally ill the benefit of being treated with dignity and respect by allowing them the right to manage their own affairs to the extent to which they are capable". This case is an excellent example of the treatment which should be afforded the mentally ill and the handicapped. Those with a mental handicap must be recognized for what they can do and there should not be an assumption that a diagnosis of mental handicap is indicative of all that a person can achieve.

If you have any questions in respect of this article or on the topic of Wills, please do not hesitate to contact the author Doris Bonora at 780-497-3370 or at dbonora@rmf.com. Doris Bonora is a partner with the law firm of Reynolds Mirth Richards & Farmer.

Volunteer Opportunities

Community Access Assistant - Research community-based opportunities for recreation and leisure activities for our clients and create a resource binder of the information.

Craft Instructor - Develop and instruct craft activities for our clients.

Donor Recognition Assistant - Call our donors just to say thank you! Two positions are available.

Home Décor Support - Assist our residential clients in decorating and personalizing their rooms.

Horticulture Instructor - Develop and instruct basic horticulture workshops for our clients.

Lifestyle & Exercise Facilitator - Develop and implement a program of activities, both facility-based and in the community, for our residential clients.

Lifestyle & Exercise Support - Assist individuals with pursuing recreational activities (swimming, walking, dancing, etc.) in the community. Several positions are available.

Program Support - Assist individuals in our Recreation & Leisure Support Services and Work Opportunities day programs to allow for a more individualized approach. Many positions are available.

Reading Group Facilitator - Organize and host a reading group for our residential clients to help encourage and maintain their reading and social skills.

Speech Therapy Support - Assist one individual in improving speech. Volunteer must be a speech therapy student or professional.

Spiritual Support - Assist individuals with pursuing spiritual activities in the community. Several positions are available.

Sports Card Advisor - Share your interest in hockey cards with one of our clients to help organize and expand his collection.

Woodworking Assistant - Put your woodworking skills to use by assisting clients to complete a variety of projects.

WSA Dinner & Dance Coordinator - Organize and oversee three annual dances for our clients.

For more information about these positions and other available opportunities, please contact:

Karen Dwyer,
Volunteer Services Coordinator
Telephone: 453-6707, ext. 243
e-mail: karend@winnifredstewart.com

All volunteers must complete and pass a screening process. Volunteers will be selected based on their suitability for available positions.

The Winnifred Stewart Association has been enhancing the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities since 1953. Today we are innovators in working with aging adults with developmental disabilities to design customized programs that address the unique needs of our clients and their families.

Publications
Mail Agreement
40662034

Our core services include:

- Community-based residential housing
- Employment training and placement services
- Recreation and leisure support programs
- Planning and support services

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