

impact



Thank YOU!

From Vancouver and Victoria to Vernon, Vanderhoof and beyond, we're making an impact.

Through your donations and support, the British Columbia Paraplegic Association (BCPA) is able to make a positive impact in the lives of people with spinal cord injury (SCI) and their families in every corner of BC. BCPA staff and services are there to help these British Columbians adjust, adapt and thrive—by providing answers, information and community experiences. We make our impact through our Peer and Information Services programs, which rely heavily on staff who themselves have an SCI or related physical disability.

In this issue of *Impact*, we're pleased to highlight some of the ways we've been able to make an impact in the lives of those we've served in recent months. All of this was made possible through your financial support. On behalf of the BCPA board, staff, volunteers and members, thank you.

Chris McBride
Executive Director



Mile High Adventure

PEOPLE ARE OFTEN SURPRISED to learn that most individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI) are able to enjoy outdoor activities. In fact, with the right attitude and equipment, people with SCI are able to enjoy many of the adventure recreation opportunities BC has to offer.

This was certainly the case in August, when a group of our Peers from Northern BC descended on Whistler for a four day outdoor adventure tour.

"It was amazing!" says Jurgen Posselt, a BCPA Peer from Prince George (pictured in photo above). "I hiked the trails using a specially designed 'trailrider', which resembles a wheelbarrow guided by two volunteers. I hit the waters in an accessible kayak. And I even took to the air in an adapted glider plane. I haven't felt that kind of freedom since my injury. I never imagined that I could enjoy the outdoors to this extent again."

Adventure opportunities like these help Peers and their families adjust, adapt and thrive in their new lives. They're made possible thanks to your donations and sponsorships. To learn more, visit www.bcpara.org.



Tyze: Circles of Support

BCPA has recently been granted funding from the McConnell Family Foundation to enlist Tyze as a key online tool to help people with SCI stay connected. Tyze provides super-secure, private, personal, online networks that help groups of people connect, care, collaborate and contribute to an individual's wellbeing.

"We know that creating opportunities for peer connections is one of the most important and lasting aspects in overcoming the challenges and barriers people with SCI face throughout their lives," says BCPA Executive Director Chris McBride. "With Tyze, we can increase our reach to ensure our members across the province have the circles of support they need."

BCPA is rolling out the Tyze initiative over the coming months.

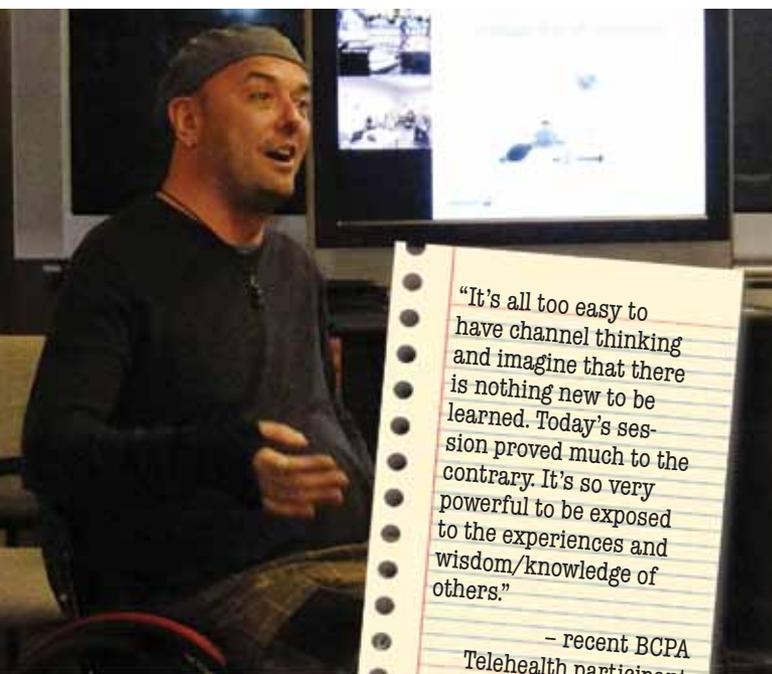


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Impact is the semi-annual donor newsletter of the British Columbia Paraplegic Association (BCPA). An online edition is available at www.bcpara.org.

To update/change delivery address or if you no longer wish to receive Impact, email impact@bcpara.org or call 604.324.3611.

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"It's all too easy to have channel thinking and imagine that there is nothing new to be learned. Today's session proved much to the contrary. It's so very powerful to be exposed to the experiences and wisdom/knowledge of others."

- recent BCPA Telehealth participant

Third-Party Fun-raising!

OVER THE PAST YEAR we have seen an exciting trend emerge as more individuals and organizations support BCPA by planning and hosting independent fundraising events. This is a fun and unique way to support our organization, and helps to build greater awareness of BCPA throughout BC.

Third-party fundraising does require time and effort, but for organizations like the Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA), it's incredibly rewarding.

"For well over a decade, BCPA has been the charity of choice for us," says Keith Sashaw, VRCA President. "The main fundraising event is the 50-50 draw at our annual Christmas lunch, which attracts over 1,200 leaders in the construction industry and is recognized as the foremost networking event for our industry. Through the support of our members we raise \$10,000 annually through this event for BCPA. This amount is supplemented throughout the year with other fundraising initiatives such as the 'Chip in the Bin' and other activities at our annual golf tournament."

And it's not just for organizations. Individuals like Sarb Bains (below), who recently hosted the Chamkaur Singh Dosanjh Memorial Dinner and Dance, also believe that third-party fundraising is rewarding in more than one way. "For me it's about raising money for a cause that's close to my heart," says Bains. "I dedicate this event to my dad, Chamkaur Singh Dosanjh, who passed away in a car accident that left my brother a paraplegic and my mom a quadriplegic, as well as my uncles who took care of me. It allows me to raise funds but also to share my passion with the South Asian community, who understand little of the world of SCI."

If you have an idea for a third-party fundraising event, big or small, please get in touch with us.



Tuning in to Telehealth

For many people with an SCI living in remote parts of BC, Telehealth is their only way of accessing the information and support they need. Telehealth is the video-conferencing system that the BCPA Peer Program uses to allow people across BC to participate in monthly education sessions held at GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre in Vancouver. Participants can listen and watch guest presenters, as well as take part in discussions and ask questions relating to living with an SCI.

BCPA is now in its second year of providing monthly Telehealth sessions. Last year, more than 200 people attended these sessions. Topics include research, nutrition, bowel and bladder management, sexual health, physical activity and skin care. Feedback has been very supportive.

Rewarding Academic Excellence



EACH YEAR, the BC Paraplegic Foundation (BCPF) provides bursaries to individuals with SCI to help them achieve a post secondary education. BCPA manages the application and selection processes. This year, six bursaries were awarded to deserving students. Below, we introduce you to three of them.



DUSTIN PAUL is a high-achieving UBC law student. His SCI resulted in quadriplegia, so he uses a power wheelchair and requires assistance with most daily living activities such as dressing and preparing meals. Because he's unable to write, he relies on a note-taker at school and voice-activated computer software to help him complete his assignments. None of this holds him back—not only does he have stellar grades, but he's also a born leader with a deep community commitment. "I have no doubt he will, by both example and advocacy, make the world a better place for people with disabilities, and indeed for everyone," wrote one of his professors in support of his scholarship application.

ELYSSA DONOVAN sustained an SCI during an accident six years ago. Undeterred, she pursued her educational goals and has found learning to be of great value during her rehabilitation and adjustment. She has produced excellent grades in her undergraduate studies (English major) at UBC's Okanagan campus, and she now finds herself moving ever closer to becoming a high school teacher. A letter of recommendation from one of her professors noted her high degree of responsibility, initiative and diligence. She described Donovan as a "high achiever" and one who "puts significant effort into learning."



KELLY CHARLTON has made great progress since becoming paraplegic two years ago. His goal is to combine his ten years of pre-injury work experience with a business certificate in order to "re-enter the work force as soon as possible." He plans to complete the Business Program at Victoria's Camosun College without taking a break. "During the seven weeks of this short term, Kelly has made amazingly rapid progress," wrote one of his instructors in a letter of reference. "In fact, he has completed two complete math courses, each with a final grade of A plus, during this brief time. This amount of work completed, with such high grades and in such a short time, is almost unheard of in my over 40 years of teaching experience."

We'll introduce you to the remaining three bursary recipients in the next issue of *Impact*.



Kudos to Current Swell...

...who recently played an online concert and raised \$1,000 for BCPA and SCI-focused organization, Life Rolls On. The up-and-coming BC band is inspired by a friend who died from SCI-related complications. Show your appreciation by visiting www.currentswell.com.

Celebrating Ten Years of Bus Stop Hopping

A record 15 teams hopped on board BCPA's 10th Annual Bus Stop Hop on Sunday, August 7. The event, inspired by TV's *Amazing Race* and supported by TransLink, highlights the accessibility of metro Vancouver and its transit system and encourages those with a physical disability to get out and experience the city. Teams of four travelled across metro Vancouver using accessible public transport including the Seabus, Aquabus, Canada Line and our bus service, collecting crucial points at various landmarks such as Lonsdale Quay and YVR, and by completing fun challenges as they went. All participants thoroughly enjoyed the day and now have a greater understanding of accessible transportation. "The Bus Stop Hop has changed the way I understand accessibility... it is possible to move about given time and awareness of resources," says one participant. Thanks for the great event!"



BCPA Annual Report

The BC Paraplegic Association 2010/2011 Annual Report is now available to read online at www.bcpara.org. If you'd like a hard copy sent via regular mail, please email your request along with your name and mailing address to vancouver@bcpara.org.



An evening of ugly ties

BCPA'S INAUGURAL "UGLY TIES CHANGE LIVES" CAMPAIGN saw more than 35 businesses in the Lower Mainland support BCPA by hosting in-house "Ugly Tie" days and competitions. The week-long event wrapped up with the Ugly Tie Affair, an evening of celebration and wacky ties which took place December 29th at the Four Seasons Hotel in Downtown Vancouver. During the evening, guests bid on auction items and took part in the fun reverse draw. More than \$6,000 was raised during the evening, bringing the campaign total to approximately \$17,000 (donations are still coming in). We'll tell you more about the campaign and how you can get involved in 2012 in the next issue of *Impact*.

ICORD Operations Manager Dr. Lowell McPhail (left) and BCPA Provincial Peer Program Manager Fernando Romero donned some truly ugly ties for the evening.



New Face at the Table

The BCPA Board of Directors recently welcomed new member Anthony Ariganello, President and CEO of CGA-Canada. "I got involved in BCPA as a way of giving back to the community at large, and more importantly to devote time to an organization and a cause that I truly believe in," says Anthony, who is a Certified Public Accountant. "I have a friend in Montreal who is a paraplegic, so I'm very aware of the support that's required. I hope to provide some business leadership skills so the organization runs on all cylinders, with the full support of the rest of the Board and the Executive Director."



Thank you...

...to volunteer extraordinaires **Al Brotherton and Rick Downie**, who spent countless hours tirelessly promoting the "Ugly Ties Change Lives" campaign to businesses across the Lower Mainland, while managing the daily logistics of the campaign. Without their efforts, the campaign would not have been the success that it was.

...to **Ed & Sally Gibson of Cambie Plumbing**. Each year the Gibsons collect money from their suppliers and friends in support of BCPA and present us with a cheque at the Doug Mowat Memorial Golf Tournament. They have raised tens of thousands of dollars over the years.

Stay in the Loop!

If you'd like to learn more about BCPA fundraising events and how you can support BCPA, email impact@bcpara.org or call 604.324.3611.



Make Your Own Impact.

Please donate to the BC Paraplegic Association and help support our programs and services for British Columbians who have sustained a life-altering spinal cord injury. **You can donate easily and securely online at www.bcpara.org.** If you prefer, you can also use this clip out form.

Yes, I would like to support the BC Paraplegic Association.

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ Province _____ Postal code _____
Email _____ Phone _____

I would like to give the following gift now: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$200 Other Amount \$ _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I have enclosed a cheque (payable to the BC Paraplegic Association)

Please Charge my Credit Card Visa Mastercard

Card number: _____ Name on Card: _____ Expiry: _____

Please mail this completed form to BCPA head office: 780 SW Marine Drive, Vancouver, BC, V6P 5Y7

BCPA is a registered charity. We adhere to all Canada Revenue Agency regulations and guidelines of fiscal responsibility and practice the highest ethical standards. We are audited independently and our financial statements are public. Please contact us if you would like to receive a copy of our annual report or our complete audited financial statements. BCPA's charitable registration number is 11883 5024 RR0001.