

TRAAC NEWS

Therapeutic Recreation Association Of Atlantic Canada

Winter 2011

Message from the President:

Celebrating Ourselves

Hello TRAAC Members,

I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season with plenty of opportunities to spend time with family and friends. As we begin another year, we prepare to celebrate ourselves during National Therapeutic Recreation Awareness Week, February 6-12, 2011.

This edition of TRAAC News has been developed keeping Therapeutic Recreation Week in mind and reminding us to celebrate ourselves as individual Recreation Therapy professionals and the profession of Recreation Therapy.

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I hope that each and every one of you can take the opportunity to celebrate and reflect on your contributions to the TR profession, your clients, your colleagues and yourselves. As Therapeutic Recreation continues to grow across Canada, the National Therapeutic Recreation Awareness Week is one time that we can seize the opportunity to inform the public of the services that are offered and the possibilities that exist.

Thank you for all that you do each and every day, celebrate and enjoy National Therapeutic Recreation Week!

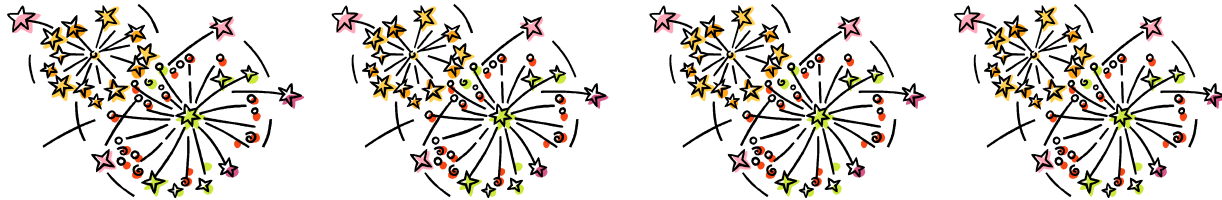
Heather Baker, CTRS
Recreation Therapist
TRAAC President 2010-11

**TRAAC Members have spoken and the
new TRAAC logo is.....**



We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who voted and helped decide TRAAC's new logo! The vote was close and there was lots of participation among TRAAC members. Our next step is to develop other promotional materials and items to display our new logo. If you are interested in volunteering to help out please contact Stephanie Wood, Promotions Chair, at Stephanie.Wood@dal.ca for further information! Thanks again for your participation!

Celebrating Therapeutic Recreation Week 2011



It is almost here! Smack dab between New Year's Day and Valentine's Day is Therapeutic Recreation Week, an entire week dedicated to celebrating TR. Before you brush off TR week as just another "Hallmark Holiday", let's look at how TR Week can benefit your facility, your community and you.

This year, TR Week begins on February 6 and lasts until February 12. According to the Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association (CTRA), TR Week is a way to celebrate the TR as a profession, our clients and practitioners of TR. By celebrating TR Week professionals across the country raise awareness of the benefits of recreation and leisure.

Promoting the benefits of TR in the work place can take place in many forms. It can include placing a TR information board with basic information on TR, such as a definition of TR, pictures of interventions, and staff and clients' testimonials at the main entrance of your facility. If space is limited try sending out a mass e-mail with similar information as the information board to your entire agency.

During this week, we can make an extra special effort to promote TR in the community. CTRA suggests writing press releases to local papers, describing TR and why what you do is special or setting up a TR information board in a public area such as a mall or school. Finally, by using a local community group as volunteers (such as the Elks, Scouts Canada, or Girl Guides) during group programming you can increase public awareness of TR.

Last year, Capital District Health Authority used TR Week to increase employee moral. During their lunch hour, employees embarked on a chilly walk through Point Pleasant Park and came back to their offices to bowls of chilli, cooked by Chris Dube, Recreation Therapist, and her partner. CDHA employees were also treated to a coffee house tour. Together they learned how coffee was brewed from seed to cup. They also learned how to make a mean cappuccino.

No matter what you do to celebrate, take some time to celebrate Therapeutic Recreation!!

For more information and other ideas on how to celebrate TR Week check out the CTRA promotional package at: <http://canadian-tr.org/>

Lukas Akerley
TRAAC Communications Committee Member

TR Interns' Perspective

As they embark on their internships, the following fourth year therapeutic recreation students from Dalhousie University share their thoughts on where and why they've chosen their placements and how things are going thus far!

Name: Claire Lederman

Hometown: Truro, NS

Internship: Grand Falls, NFLD, Carmelite House with Carl Ings

I chose to go to Grand Falls, NFLD for my internship because I wanted a new experience outside of NS, but that would still be helping people in Atlantic Canada. I received a lot of support from my professors and instructors at Dalhousie in securing my internship and I feel confident and ready to apply what I have learned. I have now completed my first full week! I can't believe how quickly it is going by so far, and I hear it will only speed up. I really like working at the Carmelite House and am enjoying long term care a lot. It is challenging and has proved to be far more diverse than I originally had thought it would be. Every client is different and I am learning a lot about different medical diagnoses and dementias. Most of the residents are the sweetest people I have ever met. A lot of the seniors seem to really like me and they call me "the mainlander girl". One resident actually paged for a nurse Friday morning to get "the mainlander girl" to come get her for morning exercise group. I'm so glad I chose to come to Grand Falls.

Name: Sarah Fallis

Hometown: Ontario

Internship: Choices affiliated with the IWK in Halifax

The main reason why I am interested in my internship location is because it matches the demographic I wish to work with in the future. I am interested in working with youth who face mental health and addiction issues through outdoor experiential therapy. This is the demographic that Choices reaches. The first week was busy. So much information, meeting people and getting to know the schedule can be a little overwhelming. I am looking forward to becoming more comfortable and discovering my place and role with in the agency. Being in a totally new professional setting can be very intimidating especially as an intern, but my mentors are amazing teachers and I have felt very welcome. I am looking forward to a busy but rewarding internship!



TR Interns' Perspective (contd.)

Name: Austin Oswald

Hometown: Truro, NS

Internship: New York State Psychiatric Institute

It appears to be that time of year when Dalhousie University's fourth year students studying in the school of Health and Human Performance apply their knowledge through internship. My name is Austin Oswald and I am one of seven students graduating in May of 2011 with a degree in Therapeutic Recreation. I have been asked to provide my perspective on the internship process and give my insights to all of you readers as to what it is like to be interning today.

I would like to begin by stating how blessed I have been to study among such wonderful, talented, and intelligent peers. Dalhousie University, I feel, has offered the graduating students of 2011 with a learning opportunity that prepared us to be leading-edge interns and practitioners in the field of therapeutic recreation. I would like to thank the dedicated faculty members and professionals, you know who you are, who have supported our class through our four years of growing pains as we become recreation therapists. I would not be in the position I am in today had it not been for all of you.

On January 7, 2011, I packed my belongings for a sixteen hour drive to my internship destination: New York City, land of opportunity. My travels involved long days and torrential weathers; however, do not worry as it was nothing that a true Nova Scotian could not handle. I finally arrived at my new home for the next 14-weeks in Astoria, Queens where I am staying with friends of friends of friends, if that makes any sense. The bond that brought my roommate and me together, you will not believe, was Recreation Therapy. One of the indirect persons involved in my pursuit for housing was a recreation therapist from Nova Scotia who used her resources, like a true RT, to find me a place to stay. We truly are great people, us recreation therapists!

I am interning at New York State Psychiatric Institute, a major research facility located in the heart of the city, Manhattan. I am working with and learning from a wonderful recreation therapist with a diverse background in recreation therapy. I have been assigned a role on a 12-patient bed eating disorder unit where recreation therapy is an integral part of the therapeutic process of the client's rehabilitation.

All of the programs are research based as clients in the program are recruited by a research team for two purposes: rehabilitation and research. The hospital is built from a foundation of three pillars: research, education, and quality care. I have been thrown into the mix with other students interning on my unit where, after time, we are expected to represent our department exclusively. I am working and learning with students from social work, psychiatry, medicine, nutrition, nursing, and best yet RECREATION THERAPY. The program is very competitive; however, the practitioners are dedicated and passionate.

I am learning a lot and greatly appreciate this wonderful opportunity before me. I have, within my three days as an official intern, used a black room, attended a ballet recital, and both clinical rounds and department meetings with the recreation therapy staff at the hospital. Although this process has been overwhelming and taxing, I haven't stopped smiling. I am excited to take full advantage of this learning opportunity and share my insights with the wonderful people back home who prepared me to excel in this experience.

Save the Date!!

'TRAAC'ing New Directions

May 4 – 6, 2011

**Consider presenting on one of this
year's conference themes:**

- ✓ **Health & Wellness**
- ✓ **Innovative Approaches**
- ✓ **New Partnerships**
- ✓ **NCTRC Specializations**

***Call for Presentations
are due
February 28, 2011!!***

Those Making TRAAC's!

It's exciting to see the field of therapeutic recreation expanding and growing! We want to be able to highlight our fellow TR colleagues' successes. Have you or a colleague won an award, published an article, completed some research, etc? If so, we want to acknowledge this accomplishment! Please email Lynette Stevens, Communications Chair at lstevens@shannex.com with further information!

All of us at TRAAC would like to acknowledge any members who recently wrote the NCTRC certification exam in January to become a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS)! Congratulations one and all!

Request for Volunteers!

It's not too late to volunteer on one of TRAAC's committees! If you are interested in becoming involved please contact the following Board Member for more information on your committee of interest!

Promotions Committee – Stephanie Wood Stephanie.Wood@dal.ca

Communications Committee – Lynette Stevens lstevens@shannex.com

Advocacy Committee – Janet Crealock Janet.Crealock@horizonnb.ca

Education Committee – Crystal Watson Watson.Crystal@gmail.com

15TH ANNUAL CTRA CONFERENCE

Canada's National Therapeutic Recreation Conference

POWER IN PROCESS

May 25-27, 2011
Whistler, BC

For Registration Information & Conference Program:

http://www.bctra.org/ctra_conference_2011



2011 TRAAC Awards are coming!

Since 2008, the Therapeutic Recreation Association of Atlantic Canada (TRAAC) has presented three awards to TRAAC members in recognition of their contributions to the field. The spirit of these awards is to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements made by those working in the therapeutic recreation community at different stages in their career.

- The **Vanguard Award** celebrates the successes of those who have been working in the field for a period of more than 5 years.
- The **Horizon Award** celebrates the successes of those working in the field for a period of 5 years or less.
- The **Crystal Award**, named after the first recipient of the Vanguard Award, celebrates the successes of students studying therapeutic recreation at either the community college or university level.

These awards are an excellent way to recognize the fantastic contributions of your fellow colleagues in the field of TR. Nomination forms will be available in February. For more information contact Stephanie Wood, Promotions Chair at Stephanie.Wood@dal.ca

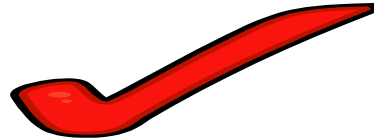
Request for Photos!

We're excited to report that TRAAC's new website is nearing completion! We would love to have some more photos highlighting the benefits and therapeutic value of our client's participation in our recreation programs! If you have photos that you would like to contribute to TRAAC's new website please go to our current website under "About Us" and then "Marketing" to download a photo release form or contact Lynette Stevens, Communications Chair, at lstevens@shannex.com for further information on how to contribute your photos! Thanks in advance for your help!



Membership Update!

Survey Results... soon to be available! We are pleased to report that the survey results will be posted on our *new website* in our *Members Only* section, one of the many things to be checking out with the release of the website in February 2011. For a sneak peak at the results, contact Dana Mills at membershiptraac@yahoo.ca. A big thank you goes out to those members who took time with providing your feedback. Your suggestions and comments will help guide the Association with our future initiatives and strategic directions.



Two Important Reminders: Membership Enhancement Changes!

We are “TRAACing New Directions”... and the first place is with the roll out of our *revised professional membership category*. Our professional membership scope has broadened for the 2011-2012 year and forward, and is now clarified as per our Joint Standards of Practice. Professional members only need to include your NCTRC certification if it is applicable with in the field of recreation therapy.

The second exciting change we are rolling out this year is the *availability to renew or obtain your Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association membership* when filing your application with TRAAC. We are happy to be able to add this to your benefits for your membership year as per our Joint Membership Agreement with CTRA.

The revised application forms will be available in the first part of February so watch for them in your email box or on the website.

For further comments or questions regarding these changes or anything related to TRAAC contact Dana Mills at, membershiptraac@yahoo.ca



TR Practitioner Spotlight with Charlotte Frankland

1. What made you decide to study therapeutic recreation?

I was always very involved in sports growing up and at one point I wanted to be a professional coach. A friend and I were looking through Dalhousie's calendar and we came across Recreation Therapy/Recreation Management. I felt I had a pretty good understanding of the management side so I decided that Recreation Therapy would be a good fit for me.

2. Where are you currently working?

I'm working as a recreation therapist at Digby General Hospital on their Restorative Care Unit.

3. How long have you been working in the TR field?

It will be five years in May. The time has went by very quickly!

4. What is your favourite program to facilitate?

One of the best programs that I've facilitated so far was with the occupational therapist and physiotherapist that also work at the Restorative Care Unit. Last March we jointly organized a Paralympics during March Break. Each day was different; we had a Cognitive Day, Physical Day, etc. We played different expressive games and staff members teamed up with patients for many of the programs. Holiday parties are also always fun as well as cooking groups. The patients are usually skeptical that the food will turn out but when they ask for a second helping you know you've reached success!



5. What is the best part about your job?

I love it when you reach a patient that wasn't keen in the beginning to participate in recreation programs but in the end really begins to become involved and enjoy themselves. It's also great when other professionals and staff really get what TR is all about and understand its benefit.

6. What do you find most challenging about your job?

Some people do not have an understanding of TR and its therapeutic value. I was the first recreation therapist to work at the hospital but people are understanding more.

TR Practitioner Spotlight with Charlotte Frankland

7. What is something you'd like to do but never really have the time?

I'd like to travel more but probably no farther than the US. Anyone that knows me knows I'm a very picky eater. I'd probably need to bring my peanut butter with me!



8. What do you like to do in your leisure time?

I spend a lot of time volunteering. I coach soccer in the summer and referee. Right now I'm coaching school soccer and badminton. I'm on the board for our local soccer association and also volunteer with the Relay for Life.



9. Do you have a favourite story/memory in your career thus far?

When I started working at the hospital there was a patient that had cancer. They didn't feel she had a lot of time left so we tried to make sure she had the best quality of life possible. She enjoyed reading so the local librarian would bring books in that she could look through and then pick out the ones she liked. Her room didn't have a window so we decorated it according to the season. In the summer, we put suns and flowers all over the walls and then leaves in the fall. It was all about her quality of life.

10. Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for students currently studying TR or those that are on their internships?

The best advice I can give is that regardless of how your day is going always remember that the patient/client comes first. Also, always remember that you have a purpose at your workplace even if you feel others do not understand what you do.

TR Practitioner Spotlight with Mary Bourgeois

In honour of TR Week, it's important to pay tribute and get to know our colleagues throughout the Maritimes. In addition to speaking with Charlotte in Digby, we spoke with Mary Bourgeois who works in Moncton, New Brunswick!

1. What made you decide to study therapeutic recreation?

I was studying for a BSc and did a lot of volunteer work at the Rehab in Fredericton. I was inspired by what the recreation workers could do with the patients and how it impacted their lives.

2. Where are you currently working?

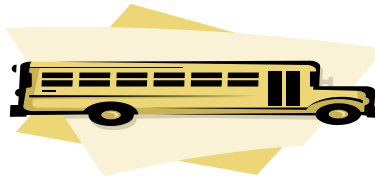
I'm working as a recreation therapist at Kenneth E. Spencer Memorial Home in Moncton, New Brunswick.

3. How long have you been working in the TR field?

I've been working in TR since 1990.

4. What is your favourite program to facilitate?

I really enjoy doing community outings with the residents. It's nice to get them out in a different environment and maintain their connection with the community.



5. What is the best part about your job?

I enjoy going out in the community and doing the home assessments for the Adult Day Centre that is part of Kenneth E. Spencer Memorial Home. I also cover two satellite homes one which is run in Bathurst, New Brunswick and also one in PEI.

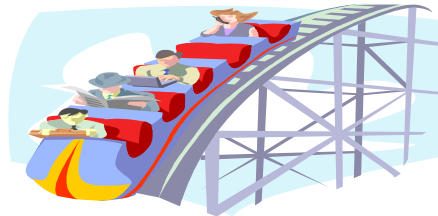
6. What do you find most challenging about your job?

For me the most challenging part is the lack of awareness of therapeutic recreation in New Brunswick which results in inconsistent hiring practices in the province.

TR Practitioner Spotlight with Mary Bourgeois

7. What is something you'd like to do but never really have the time?

We as a family love to travel, so I would like to have the opportunity to take a long road trip with my husband and girls exploring various parts of Canada and the United States. Everyone but me enjoys roller coasters so maybe a roller coaster ride is in my future!



8. What do you like to do in your leisure time?

I spend the majority of my leisure time with my children who are five and eight years old. I also volunteer to support my oldest daughter who is disabled and have been very active in promoting recreation and leisure for children with special needs. We participate in therapeutic horseback riding and adaptive swimming. We have also just become involved with a new initiative here in the Moncton area through Easter Seals which allows children and teens to do some activity sampling (ie. bowling, skiing, sledge hockey, track & field and curling).



9. Do you have a favourite story/memory in your career thus far?

I can remember early in my career completing social histories with residents only to find that most of the information was not accurate. It was at that point that I learned that the process was more important than the outcome in some cases.

10. Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for students currently studying TR or those that are on their internships?

It's important to think outside the box and always remember that risk taking is a part of life.

Board of Directors

2010 – 2011

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