

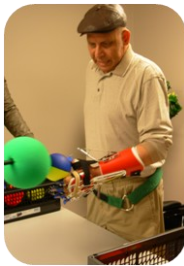
November, 2010

## TransAlta and Shaw TV Give a Hand up to Survivors

The *SaeboFlex*® Orthosis was designed by Occupational Therapists from the USA frustrated with the lack of rehab options for survivors of severe brain injury, including stroke.

This mechanical orthosis helps clients practice opening and closing their hand. One of the most challenging consequences of brain injury is loss of motor function of the arms/hands. This makes performance of simple tasks such as holding a cup extremely difficult.

Thanks to a generous donation from TransAlta, ARBI conducted Phase One of a Pilot Project to explore the use of *SaeboFlex*® to improve upper limb function in stroke clients. Initial results were measured with three participants. All clients were motivated and pleased with their achievements.



*"I can look back and see what an improvement I have made through Saebo. When I go home, it gives me more freedom to reach certain things, which I couldn't do before," shares Arun, Pilot Project participant.*

Shaw TV covered the project in a documentary titled "A Helping

Hand"; view it on our website at [www.arbi.ca](http://www.arbi.ca). ARBI recently hosted a course on Saebo for 25 therapists from across the western provinces and looks forward to helping more clients with this innovative device. For more info contact Ana Gollega, Research Leader at 403-242-7116.



## Through Your Eyes I See ...

- Client:** **Through your eyes I see ...**  
You reach your arms out openly,  
To guide, support and help me,  
I've been practicing to lift my arms,  
So that I may meet yours graciously.
- Volunteer:** **Through your eyes I see ...**  
How hard you try day in and out,  
I can hear your inner plea,  
You work so hard towards your goals,  
To be the best that you can be.
- Client:** **Through your eyes I see ...**  
That you hung hope upon my heart,  
As if garland on a tree,  
Because of you and your belief,  
I am now a brand new me.

## Volunteers Give the Gift of Time *We invite you to join our team!*

Join our winning team and make life better for a brain injury survivor. Call us at 403-242-7116 or email [info@arbi.ca](mailto:info@arbi.ca). We will provide a thorough orientation to our programs and match you with a volunteer opportunity that best meets your needs.



### Holiday Closures

**ARBI will be closed from December 24, 2010 to December 31, 2010. Programs resume on January 3, 2011. Happy New Year!**

## E.D.'s Corner: A note from the Executive Director



ARBI is advocating passionately for funding from Alberta Health Services; 92% of our referrals from AB Health professionals validates our case. The pending *Request for Proposals* for brain injury services *must* include the need for rehab for survivors of *the most severe* brain injury, including stroke.

Everyone deserves timely and accessible health care!

ARBI stakeholders contributed 163 letters supporting our funding need. The Minister of Health, the CEO of Health Services, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports and MLAs all received copies. **Thank you!** ARBI is grateful to our ongoing funders Alberta Infrastructure, Alberta Seniors and Community Supports and the United Way of Calgary. You are true partners.

The annual *Sponsor our Survivors* breakfast was a resounding success. Over 150 guests were mesmerized by the story of *Iron Al*, a six-time Ironman and his recovery from a devastating stroke. Special thanks to the Hubbard family for sharing their story.

To date, we have raised 76% of our \$250,000 goal! Thanks to all the generous donors who contributed to this campaign and throughout the year.

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From left: Hosts Jim Gray and Brenda Mackie alongside Bud McDonald, ARBI President and Judy Stawnychko, Executive Director with Fred Lesage from TAQA North, as he presents a cheque to ARBI for \$25,000.

ARBI raises 47% of our \$1.8M annual budget. Your generous donation is important to help people like Alan succeed. It is easier than ever to make a gift:

- Fill out the enclosed donation form and mail
- On-line at [www.arbi.ca](http://www.arbi.ca) (link to canadahelps.org)
- Call ARBI at 403-242-7116

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season,

*Judy Stawnychko*

## Volunteer Corner

### The Man of Many Hats

This retired firefighter has been volunteering with ARBI since 1998.

Lorn started supporting his brother Nonnie with his rehab, and has since volunteered with four other clients. He is currently working with Barry. He sat on the golf tournament committee, and actively sits on the Board of Directors, providing a strong family voice.

*"The connections you make here are for life. You make friends ... I saw with my brother how much their lives can improve,"* he says. We are grateful for the involvement of our team of dedicated volunteers, like Lorn.



## Music to My Ears

The songs of the season ring through the crisp winter air; the sweet chime of jingling bells, the festive choir notes of our favorite classics. For a brain injury survivor, music is an essential part of the rehabilitation process, re-programming the brain one note at a time ...

The Music Therapists work with the clients with singing, vocalizing, and instrument use. Science says that when the brain listens to music, many areas are stimulated at the same time.



### *The miracle comes from observing the change in people.*

"Shawn", typically has his head down, arms pulled tight against his chest, and a vacant expression. In music therapy he lifts his head, smiles and makes eye contact. Recently, he was beating a drum, setting the tempo and *leading the group*. In Music Therapy, he seems comfortable, embracing the moment.

**Music Therapy takes place every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at ARBI.**

## Walking with Denis

Today Denis, a stroke survivor, is practicing walking. As he grabs a hold of the cane, he looks over and smiles.

With volunteer Jenny along side him, his steps become more confident. *"Practice pushes me into achieving my goal of getting back on the golf course ... the more I can walk the better I will become at it,"* he declares.



After suffering a stroke in July, 2009 Denis came to ARBI the following October. *"I am extremely fortunate to come here,"* he says.

This summer marked Denis' and his wife Arlee's 53rd anniversary and this Christmas they will spend time with family.

**The support of our donors helps make Denis' progress possible, walking towards his independence one step at a time. Thank you!**

## Seek & Say

Every week Lukasz, Carla and Juliet meet to practice word retrieval in a group they titled **Seek and Say**. *Seek and Say* helps participants to improve communication skills, retrieving descriptive words from their brain's memory bank.

When a brain injury occurs and damage is done to the left side of the brain, communication skills are often disrupted. Many strategies and activities are used to prompt word retrieval.

**The group, as described by Lukasz, Carla and Juliet, is a time to work on communication, but also to connect and share with one another.**

What Lukasz loves about the group is *"Sharing and helping each other out. It's positive, helping, and joking together."*

Everyone cheers each other on! Carla and Juliet high five supportively when they answer questions correctly.

Lukasz came to ARBI July, 2009. He is making tremendous gains in his rehabilitation. He suffered a traumatic brain injury September, 2008 and his memory, endurance and communication skills were affected. Today, this enthusiastic young man works hard towards his goals. He shows progress in exercise tolerance, communication and confidence.

**Your donation gives voice to survivors, where words may not have been possible before. Thank you!**

