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Ryder-Cheshire Volunteers

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CHANGES



Ryder-Cheshire Volunteers

Welcome to the Summer 2009 edition of Pathway, RCV's newsletter, which is another issue full of news about activities and people you are helping to support.

Despite the difficult times we find ourselves in at present, we are pleased and extremely grateful that so many of you have remained steadfast and loyal supporters of our work for disabled people. We extend a warm welcome to those people in the Reading and Midlands areas who have pledged ongoing support and to all of you we say a simple but very sincere THANK YOU.

The 'Leisure & Learning' service continues to be a great success and RCV is helping more and more people. We are delighted to say that, with the support of a local media company, a short film is currently being produced to show the complete story of what RCV does. It will feature members and volunteers pursuing their activities and speaking about their experience of the scheme. A shortened version of the film will be available on the web site later this year and we will bring you an update of its launch in the next edition of *Pathway*.

RCV is saying a fond farewell to our Chief Executive, Sylvia Wear, who is retiring this month after 23 years of dedicated service with RCV. Sylvia joined as the very first Co-ordinator of the pilot project set up by Leonard Cheshire in South Oxfordshire in 1986. She then became a manager and took up the post of CEO in 2004. The organisation has grown considerably over the years mainly thanks to Sylvia's hard work and unwavering dedication. Read more on Page 4. Good luck Sylvia, in your well earned retirement, and thank you!



Sylvia Wear, who has been instrumental in making RCV what it is today, has retired.

We welcome Stephanie Flower, who comes to RCV from the Child Brain Injury Trust, as our new CEO. More details in our next issue.

With a fresh and enthusiastic team on board, we look forward to further success. Thank you again for your continued support and enjoy the summer!

Josephine Jewell *RCV Fundraiser*

THANK YOU AYLESBURY

We are very grateful to Aylesbury Town Council who recently donated £2,000 to RCV.

The photograph shows Catherine Wells, (second from the left), and Liz Pusyck, from the RCV Vale of Aylesbury Project receiving the cheque for £2,000 from Councillors Mike Smith (left) and Kevin Peters on behalf of Aylesbury Town Council at a recent Project pub lunch social at The Horse and Jockey, Aylesbury.



A PATHWAY TO LEISURE & LEARNING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

C O U N T D O W N S T A R

Are you a fan of Countdown - Channel 4's long running and popular word game? Those of you who are will be familiar with the format - trying to form words from 9 chosen letters and also solving numerical brain teasers. It's hard enough



Channel 4's Countdown - 7 April 2009

finding a word in 30 seconds sitting at home in your armchair with a cup of tea but imagine how much harder it is for the contestants!

So

congratulations to Andrew, a Member of RCV's Cherwell project, for having the courage to appear on the programme in April.

His opponent was Fiona, the unbeaten/defending champion but Andrew displayed some great play and easily solved the conundrum at the end.

Andrew says he hated Maths and English at school, but discovered a love of word and number games after a road accident. His injuries were serious and left him with a brain injury and using a wheelchair. During his long convalescence, a new TV channel was launched with a short daily programme called... Countdown!, and the rest is history! Andrew plays every day at home and his highest score is 151 (this will mean a lot to other Countdown players!).

Andrew also enjoys Scrabble and RCV have been able to help by providing a volunteer to come and share a game with him on a regular basis. Usually, Andrew wins!

Andrew was able to give us an insight into what it is like at the TV studio. He told us that it was easy to get about as there was lots of room and ramps where needed. He also explained that hidden behind each contestant's name plate is a small screen so they can see the numbers/letters without having to look up - very handy! It was very hot under the lights, but Andrew wore a summer shirt so he felt OK. He wondered how Jeff (the compere) managed every day - dressed in a jacket, collar and tie!

Was Andrew nervous? He was more excited than nervous, he said. At home, he is there on his own, but it was very exciting to have an opponent to play against, as well as the Countdown team and the studio crew.

Andrew has also come to several RCV pub lunches and finds the chance to socialise with different people helps his confidence.

In fact, Andrew explained that the reason he had the confidence to appear on Countdown in the first place was because of all the support



Andrew and the famous Countdown clock

he has from the staff where he lives, and the regular Scrabble games he has with his RCV volunteer, Philip.

One thing is certain - we are all very proud of Andrew - our Countdown Star!

RCV GOES DVD

We feel that it's not always immediately obvious what RCV does. So we decided to try and make it easier for potential members, donors, trust funds, social services and council departments to understand our aims and objectives. To that end we are working with Ignite Creative, a non profit making organisation specialising in the production of short films, who are helping us to make a promotional DVD for training, presentation and fund raising applications. At the time of writing, filming is going well and we hope to be in a position to launch the new film later in the year. It will hopefully also appear on our web site. Updates in our next newsletter!



Mezza of Ignite and Lorraine Murphy, recently returned to us after maternity leave, setting up the next shot!



BUTTERFLY - Why can't I fly?

*All around me
butterflies are flying.
I can't why?
All the time I try,
But I fall to the ground.*

*I'm happy now,
But no one had the
nerve to tell me why I
couldn't fly.
For years, everyone has
tried to make me fly.
I wanted to spread my
wings and fly.
Just like the other
butterflies.
But my wings wouldn't
let me.*

*Doesn't matter now,
As I have learnt to grow,
By striving towards my
goals.
All this, without being
able to fly.*

*Not getting trapped in
any webs,
Or tied down to people
staring and saying,
"Oh bless that poor
butterfly".
But I know I'm a
beautiful butterfly.*

*Poem by Kerry Noble
who is a member of RCV*

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE GOLF

One of the joys of helping individuals who are physically disabled is to see how they develop, flourish and grow into new relationships and activities.

Two RCV members from South Derbyshire are taking up a new interest with the help of their volunteer Jim.

Jim has been joining Michael, who has suffered a stroke, and Adam, who has Bipolar Disorder, at RCV's swimming session in Swadlincote in South Derbyshire.

In the course of conversation, Jim mentioned that he was a golfer. Michael and Adam said that they would like to have a go with a golf club! Jim took them to the local golf range and everyone enjoyed their day out.

Jim now collects the other two and they visit a different course each week to practice their golf swings, weather permitting of course! The golfing experience is proving to be a hit with Michael and Adam and the three have become great pals!

BEREN & PIPPA HAVE A SORT OUT!

Those of us who are old enough to remember a time before digital cameras will usually have drawers full of photographs from a time when you bought a film, then took it to Boots or another developer and eagerly awaited the time when we picked them up and viewed them. Do you have your precious family photographs forgotten and tucked away in various cupboards and drawers at home?

Pippa, from Hatton Green near Warwick, had hers jumbled up in carrier bags in all sorts of cubby holes. So when she saw that Boots was offering two photo albums for the price of one she thought that it was the time to do something about them. With the help of RCV Volunteer Beren, they are spending one very happy afternoon each week sorting the dozens of photos into proper albums.



Pippa is seen with Beren having fun sorting photo albums for Pippa's family

Volunteer Beren enjoys her time with Pippa and knows the benefits to both of them *"It's time away from her MS, her life is full of doctors and carers and everything to do with her MS. Our time together is about her and that makes it worthwhile"*.

The photographs may well take all of the summer, but we're sure that Pippa's family will love seeing their memories beautifully presented in date order from years ago.

LONDON MARATHON

Super fit Wantage athlete Peter McGowan ran the London Marathon for RCV in April. It was a 9th Marathon for Peter who completed in under 3 hours and raised nearly £1,000 for us.

Well done Peter - your efforts are much appreciated.

A GREAT DAY OUT AT CHATSWORTH HOUSE

Ann Hanson, a Member of the Warwick project has written us an article describing a day out she enjoyed last summer.

“Last summer Paul and I enjoyed a wonderful day at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. We were escorted around the house by extremely

friendly and knowledgeable staff, who with the aid of an efficient system of lifts for people with reduced mobility, made the tour interesting and trouble free, it was almost like having our own personal guides.

Home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, the house is surrounded by 105 acres of beautiful gardens, with incredible architecture and sculpture. This includes 5 miles of footpaths, many of which are wheelchair accessible, and with the loan of a mobility scooter (free of charge), I was able to enjoy most of it.

Added to this are three gift shops, an excellent restaurant and delicious tea rooms, all you need to complete your day is a good helping of sunshine!”



Two Poems from Sylvia Bateman in the Vale of White Horse, Oxfordshire

A Piece of Cake

Chelsea is on the telly
The match has just begun -
For Nigel, it's exciting -
He is in for some fun!

It's going to be a long night.
I think it's time for tea.
A slice of cake for Nigel -
A bigger bit for me!

The cake was very tasty -
It filled a little hole.
Then, Nigel started shouting -
Oh, thank goodness! It's a goal!

The team are very happy
And their manager has his say,
“I'm proud of the team's effort -
We won again today”

Daffodils in Spring Time

The daffodils are lovely,
Sun is shining bright
Another camera moment -
They look a smashing sight!

I hope they're still as lovely,
When Delia comes to call,
All different yellow colours,
Still standing straight and tall.

The daffodils are lovely,
We have had such a show!
It was raining heavily,
Making them bow low.

Soon it will be Easter,
The blooms, they soon are gone:
Trumpets fade and fall
As they sing swan song.

GOODBYE SYLVIA

Sylvia and RCV - can you separate the two? Well, now we have to. Sylvia steps down as Chief Executive at the end of June, after a short period introducing our new CE, Steph Flower, to the role. She wants to spend more time with her grandchildren; and after 23 years steering RCV from small beginnings to its current operations across seven counties, who can blame her?

Sylvia will be greatly missed, not only because she won the respect, admiration and affection of members, staff and volunteers, but also because she never stopped putting RCV first. She was always thinking about the way ahead, what might be achieved, what might be changed - and she thus made the growth and development of the charity look effortless. But it wasn't effortless; it was the result of a huge amount of hard work and attention to detail.

All of us involved with RCV owe her a huge debt of gratitude for the way she has implemented Leonard Cheshire's marvellous idea of alleviating the isolation of many disabled people and involving them in activities which *they* chose to do. We wish her well in her retirement. She is clearly going to be the ultimate doting grandmother!

Philip Allan - RCV Chairman of Trustees

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT WHICH IS HELPING TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE A DISABILITY

If you not wish to receive these newsletters or if you would prefer to receive them via Email,
please let RCV know via: info@rcv.org.uk or 01926 495446.

These are also contact details for any general enquiries about RCV.