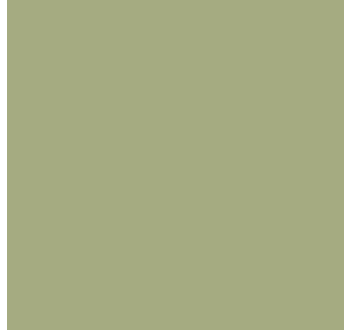


*Giving people without
speech
new ways to talk*



Open Access Resource Centre

Annual Report 2010 - 2011



Mission Statement

Open Access Resource Centre, a community-based resource, provides Manitobans with communication challenges:

- ❖ Access to equipment, by offering short-term equipment loans, and
- ❖ Training and consultation to increase knowledge of technology for communicating.

President's Report

It has been another busy and exciting year at OARC. We are nicely settled into our space now and the move has proved to be an excellent decision. The ability to have secure storage space for our equipment and better office and meeting space has been wonderful.

OARC continues to grow – both in reputation and in services. This year we added 49 new devices to our library and purchased long-term communication systems for over 40 children throughout the province. We offered training and technical support for devices and apps to individuals and groups both at our office and at other locations.

Recently we received a letter from the Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Disability Programs and Employment and Income Assistance, recognizing our high level of service delivery and requesting our assistance in developing a program for long-term speech generating devices (SGD) that would parallel the Communication Devices Program run out of Deer Lodge Centre. This is both a recognition of our current work as well as a possible new direction for better coordination between short and long term systems for devices. We are pleased that government views us as a partner with expertise to contribute to this discussion.

We had an incredibly successful conference this year with Susan Stokes as our speaker. Over 200 were in attendance. Our thanks go to sponsors, volunteers and staff for all of their efforts in making sure that everything ran smoothly.

The Board and staff spent time this year considering OARC's future direction. The staff prepared a discussion document outlining the trends that are affecting us in the areas of funding, technology, users, training, etc. One of the most important trends that has been emerging is the increasing use of iTouchs and iPads as communication devices. As more and more useful apps are created, these devices have become more popular. This is causing a shift in the services that are requested by clients from equipment loans to training needs. While an equipment loan program will still be necessary with the more expensive, more complex devices, iTouchs and iPads can meet the needs of others. We have already seen a dramatic increase in requests for training for these devices and specific apps. It is also conceivable that OARC has a role to play in developing apps. We will continue our strategic planning throughout the year but it is clear that our business is transforming significantly as technology changes.

I would personally like to thank all of the staff of OARC – Lori, Val, Janet & Doris – for all of their hard work and commitment. They are what makes this an amazing organization that truly makes a difference. I would also like to thank my fellow board members for bringing their intelligence, imagination and sense of humour to each and every meeting. It has truly been a privilege to be the President this year.



*Respectfully submitted, Catherine Rushton
President*

OARC Program Report

Imagine if there were a bank that credits your account each morning with \$86,400, and carries over no balance from day to day. Every evening it deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day.

What would you do? Draw out all of it, of course.

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is Time.

Every morning, it credits us with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this we have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft.

Each day it opens a new account for us.

Each night it burns the remains of the day.

If we fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is ours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against "tomorrow."

We must live in the present on today's deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness, and success. The clock is running. Make the most of today.



Anonymous

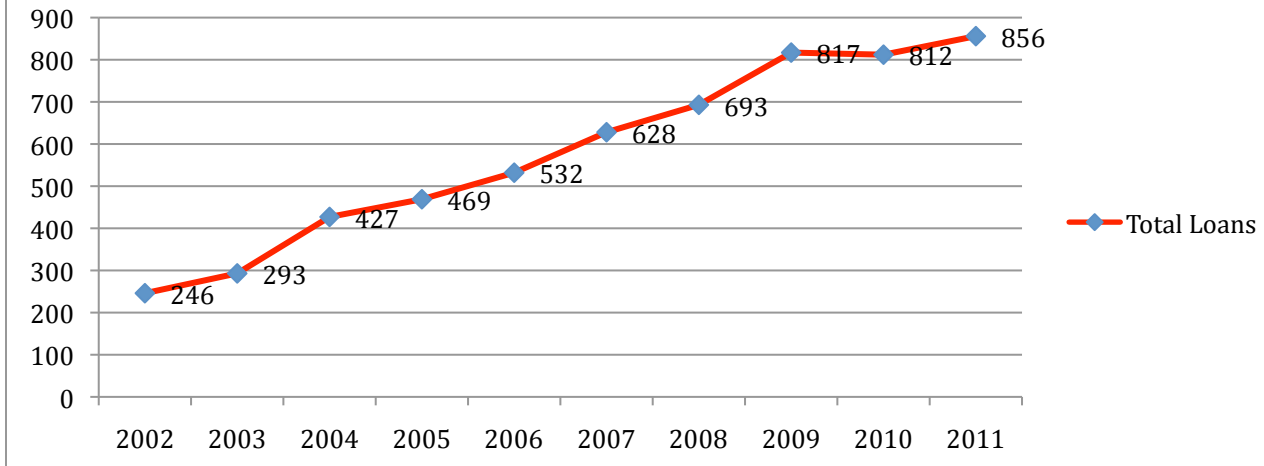
This year has been one full of making decisions of how to best make use of our TIME at OARC. The choices of how to spend our time were many throughout the year and the demands on our time constant. We had to analyze what is most important and prioritize accordingly. All of this has come as a result of:

- a continued increase in the number of devices in our library which in turn require our support – this year we added 49 new devices to the Equipment Loan Program and did not increase staff time to support these devices.
- An increase in demand for training around the use and management of iTouches and iPads as speech generating devices.
- Maintaining the same kind of activities outside of our equipment loan program (ie. conference, newsletters, fundraising, etc.)

The trend to use iTouches and iPads as Speech Generating Devices has piqued the interest of many teams supporting individuals with communication challenges. OARC was quick to jump on this trend right from the start and because of our diligence in learning as much as possible in this area we have developed some intellectual capital that others are looking for. Once we offered our first workshop on various apps for special needs students on the iTouch/iPad we began receiving requests for presentations from all over the province and from all kinds of groups. Not only have we been asked to do group presentations, we were also asked to assist families, clinicians and teams to set-up and implement a student's personal iTouch/iPad as a communication system. iTouches and iPads have made speech generating devices more affordable and accessible (for everyone), putting them into the hands of more people. However, that is only the first step in making them successful communication systems. They still need to be customized and managed to make them relevant and motivating for someone to use as their voice (both inner and outer). With our understanding of how this works OARC has been committed to continuing to educate our communities as to how to best make that happen.

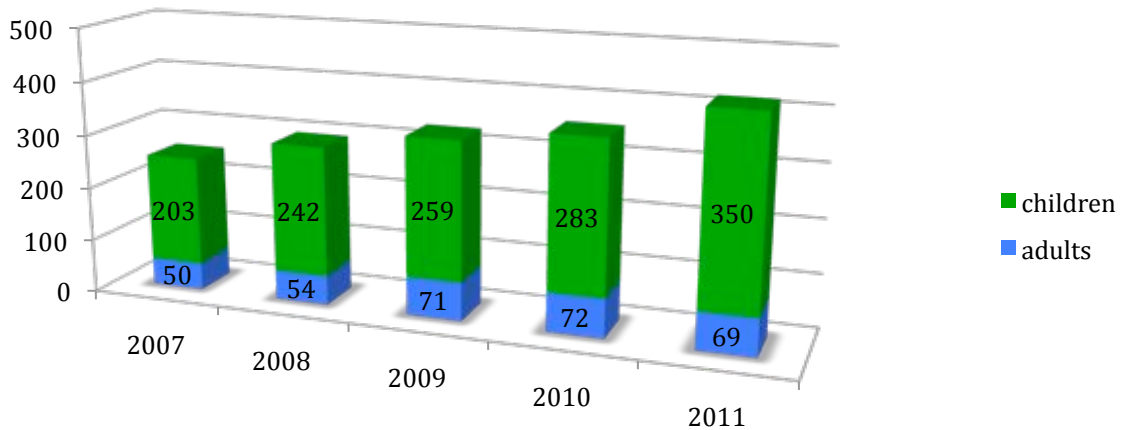
As seen in the following chart our statistics for loans going out this year has once again begun to jump up. The dip in the number seen last year was as a result of longer loan periods and fewer possible loans during the year. The total loans per year are in direct relationship to the number of devices we have in our library. The more devices we have, the more loans are available during the year. We continue to strive to add devices to our library to meet the demands and as a result are able to increase our service numbers.

Total Loans (Year End)



To best meet the demands of the community we are constantly re-evaluating the best way to offer our services. When we moved to a 10 week loan period our hope was to give people the time needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the speech generating device borrowed from our library. Mission accomplished, as there are fewer people asking to repeat a loan with a particular device simply to evaluate whether the SGD is a good match for a particular individual. That has freed up loans for new individuals, which in turn has resulted in a greater number of individuals using our library. This is particularly noticeable in the number of children borrowing our devices. The slight drop in the number of adults using our services is also a good sign. We have been referring adults to the Communication Devices Program that is available to them through Deer Lodge Centre and we anticipated fewer adults would need to access equipment from the OARC library. It seems the system really is working.

Individuals Served (Year End)



Our numerous other activities included:

- ✚ Winnstock 2010 – April 15, 2010 where we received approximately \$19, 000.00 to purchase devices
- ✚ A radio interview on CJNU set up through the Winnipeg Foundation
- ✚ Work with the Red River College Creative Communications class on the development of a new brochure
- ✚ Supporting a Communication Devices Peer Group for Adults
- ✚ Presentation at the Council for Exceptional Children conference
- ✚ A couple of newsletters
- ✚ Collaborating with the Manitoba Association for Computing Educators (ManACE) to deliver a one day workshop around the iTouch/iPad apps
- ✚ Development of Wiki pages highlighting apps to support the iTouch and iPad with special needs students
- ✚ Apps presentations in Lorette, Kenora, Dauphin, Steinbach, Brandon, and here in Winnipeg
- ✚ Education and promotion of Speech Generating Devices through presentations to students in the Para Educator courses at Red River College, Red River College Steinbach, Jobworks, and the Urban Circle Training Centre
- ✚ Display set-up on numerous occasions to increase the awareness of our services
- ✚ A most successful conference with Susan Stokes that resulted in our highest registration in over 10 years
- ✚ And the list goes on...

This year the Board of Directors along with the staff began to tackle some of the “trends” we are seeing around us that impact our program, demands on our service and future planning. We began the discussion of where this will take us as an organization by classifying the identified trends as a “threat” or an “opportunity” and further discussed how we could modify our services accordingly. Our Board and staff will continue to work on this trends document and incorporate the results of our discussions into the OARC Strategic Plan for next year. It is through these interactions that I am once again reminded of the valuable service our Board of Directors plays as they provide that much needed perspective and connection with the community, helping us keep the “big picture” in mind. With much gratitude, I would once again like to thank each Board member for their supporting role in making OARC such an effective and relevant service.

This past year I have felt the demands on our time as staff, increase significantly. I have been so proud to be working with Doris, Val and Janet who handled this pressure and made a difference in spite of it. They are at the core of the Open Access Resource Centre and have continued to show loyalty and commitment to what we do. I am grateful to be able to work with each one of them and am honoured to call them my colleagues.

*Respectfully submitted, Lori Wiebe
Executive Director*



Finance Committee Report

Committee Members: Richard Fillion (Chair), Donna Passey, Lori Wiebe

The relocation of OARC was completed and we were able to entirely fund this transition through grants and donations (monetary and in kind). The additional space at our new location came just in time as, once again this year, we received donations that allowed us to purchase a record number of speech generating devices!!! Fortunately we had the foresight to relocate since our previous office space would simply no longer have been adequate to accommodate the magnitude of our organization.

In 2009, OARC saw relocation as a necessity, which meant that some of the operating expenses would increase. The board of directors however, felt the additional expenses could be absorbed for a year or two. We are now in a situation where addition funding is crucial to be able to effectively operate the organization. We have added ~ \$200,000 worth of new devices to our lending library over the past two years. This represents a 227% increase in the book value of our lending library. This growth has led to an increase in insurance rates, office expenses and rental costs to support the additional services/space required. During this two-year period, the increase in funding from the Government of Manitoba has been less than 2.75%.

The economic downturn of 2008 has put pressure on Manitoba Government to tighten their spending. This being said, we are continuing to work with the representatives of the departments that fund our operating budget to strive towards securing additional funding that will allow OARC to continue to provide the excellent service levels we have offered in the past.

Thank you committee members and supporters of OARC.

*Respectfully submitted, Richard Fillion
Treasurer*

Personnel/Nominating Committee Report

Committee Members: Kevin Biggar (Chair), Carol Conan, Lori Wiebe

It was with much gratitude that we said our farewell to board members Andrea Morphy and Jenn Allan in June 2010 for their many years of service to OARC. The recruitment process began in spring and we were pleased to accept Carol Conan as the newest board member as she began her term in September 2010. Throughout the year the Personnel Committee continued to provide support to the Executive Director, relating to staffing issues and exploration of the ramifications of a first-ever maternity leave. The next step was to set up the process for the hiring of a term replacement for the Manager of Development. We began mapping out this hiring process at the beginning of March with implementation beginning in the middle of March.

*Respectfully submitted, Kevin Biggar
Chair*



Development Committee Report

Committee Members: Catherine Rushton (Chair), Ron Bryer, Dorian Phillips, Janet Hamel

The Development Committee met several times throughout the year to oversee the fundraising, marketing and communication activities of OARC. With over \$90,000 raised to purchase speech-generating devices this has been another exceptional year and we could not have done it without our generous funders!



Highlights

- ➔ OARC once again benefitted with support from Foundations, Corporations, Associations and Individuals (see Devices Added to Our Library chart below).
- ➔ Spring brought to a close our relocation project with grants received from The Winnipeg Foundation and Manitoba Community Places Program
- ➔ Our final year with the third party event – Winn\$tock 2010 - resulted in a donation of \$19,750 towards the purchase of seven devices for the library.
- ➔ Over one-quarter of the total revenue raised for speech-generating devices was received through a generous grant from Autism Speaks Canada.
- ➔ Two color newsletters were distributed this past year to connect with our broader community. Thank you to Anne Fountain, Jenn Allan, Andrea Morphy, Val Buissé, Ginette Pritchard, Lori Wiebe and Janet Hamel for their contributions. A special thanks to our dedicated student volunteers in Carol Conan's program at Murdock McKay School who took on the task of stuffing the envelopes for mailing.
- ➔ Several new groups were reached this year with presentations to further promote the awareness of our services.
- ➔ OARC was featured with a display at several new venues this year including Women's Awareness Day, The Winnipeg Foundation Anniversary Celebration, and at the SAG Conference.
- ➔ OARC received both solicited and unsolicited In Kind donations this year totaling \$13,720; benefitting both the equipment loan program and operating of the organization.
- ➔ Thanks to the connection made through Catherine Rushton, we were able to work with the Creative Communication class at Red River College, to begin developing an exciting new brochure.

Thank you to all our donors who made it possible for OARC to continue building our equipment loan program. In total 49 devices were purchased with the support of those listed below.

*Respectfully submitted, Catherine Rushton
Chair*

Government Support



The Province of Manitoba
Department of Family Services and Consumer Affairs

Foundations and Corporations

Autism Speaks Canada
BMO Fountain of Hope Employees Foundation
Cambrian Credit Union
Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba
Francofonds Inc.
Kiwanis Club of Winnipeg Foundation Inc.
Manitoba Community Places Program
Manitoba Hydro Employees' Charitable Donations Committee
Scotia Bank
Sun Life Financial
The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba
The Winnipeg Foundation
Wawanesa Insurance
Winnipeg Goldeyes Field of Dreams



Individual Donors

Marlene Beaty
Kevin Biggar
Martine Bonneau-Laczko
Aileen & Ron Bryer
Jim & Patricia Burns
Shelley Cook
Joan Dudar
Margaret Ellis
Charlotte Enns
Doris Fierback
Richard Fillion
Diana Freeman
Renée Gillis
& Peter Redekopp
Barb Gwyer
Jan Halmarson
Brenda & Phil Halprin
Astrid Harms
C J Harvey
Lawrence Hecht

Lisa & John Highmoor
Norine Hodges
Brenda & Sean Hurry
Roberta Hurtig
Kirk Johnson
Michelle Kelner
Harold & Rose Krahnke
Lisa Light
& Darren Oryniak
Pat Locken
Marnie & Floyd Loewen
Louis Riel SLPs
Rhonda Lyle
Cheryl Marcoux
David Martin
Carol McInnis
Andrea Morphy
Jane Natrass
Melonie Okapiec
Leanne & Steven Peleck

Cheryl Proceviat-Gains
Arthur Quanbury
Ron & Irene Ricketts
Laura Roberts
Shirley Rosenfeld
Catherine Rushton
Karen Shanks
Carla & William Sharman
Arlene Smolak
Cathy Spack
Lorraine & Don Swanson
Betsy Thorsteinson
Erika Von Kampen
Cindy Walker
Lori Wiebe
Anonymous Donations:
Friends of OARC
All Charities
United Way of Calgary
United Way of Ottawa



Tribute Gifts

Gifts In Honour of:

Paulette Lajoie
Stephanie Harvey's Birthday
Bev & Norman Wolk's 50th Anniversary

Gifts In Memory of:

Janet Loughran

Gifts in Kind

Bridges
Todd Chivers
Esdale Printers
Janet & Cary Hamel
Microcomputer Science Centre Inc.
Kenneth Pankratz
River Park Flooring















Monthly Donors

Val Buissé
Nancy Clarke-Shippam
Leslie Goerzen
Peggy Ingram
Friend of OARC
Jane Lawler
Andrea Marginete
Jackie Markstrom
Amanda Newhook
Arnel & Agnes Pagtakhan
Anna Randall-Gryz
Michelle & Dave Reader
Karen Shanks
Pat Silver
Louise Stuart
Ricki Valcourt
Ernie Wright



While every effort has been made to include all of our donors, our apologies for any omissions or errors.

Devices Added to the Library This Year:

Funder	Device Purchased	Funder	Device Purchased
 The Power To Give Manitoba Hydro Employees' Charitable Donations Committee Manitoba Hydro Employees Charitable Donations Committee	4 - iTouch packages iPad package 7 Level Communicator	 WINN\$TOCK 2010 Winn\$tock 2010	Go Talk 20 3 - Say It Sams Tobii S 32 2 - iPad packages
 Kiwanis Club	Alt Chat	 CP Association	Alt Chat
 JEWISH FOUNDATION OF MANITOBA Today. Tomorrow. Forever.	3 - Say It Sams	 Autism Speaks	5 - iTouch packages 6 - Say It Sams 6 - iPad packages
 FRANCOFONDS C'est ici que je donne Francofonds Inc.	Zingui (shared with Winn\$tock)	 Cambrian Credit Union	Go Talk Express 32 Attainment Talker 6 + 24 iPad package iTouch package
 BMO FOUNTAIN OF HOPE Employees' Foundation BMO Financial Group BMO Fountain of Hope	Say It Sam	 WINNIPEG GOLDEYES FIELD OF DREAMS FOUNDATION Winnipeg Goldeyes Field of Dreams	Say It Sam
 Wawanesa Insurance Wawanesa Insurance	iPad package	 Sun Life Financial SunLife Financial	iPad accessories
 Friends of OARC	2 - Say It Sams iTouch package 2 - iPad packages	 Scotiabank Scotia Bank	iTouch accessories

Donations of devices from:

Bridges



Todd Chivers
9 touch screens



Microcomputer Science Centre Inc.



Conference Committee Report

Committee Members: Kim Churchill (Chair), Lynda Ames-Smith, Stacey Marcoux, Lindsay Morris, Mary Alex Puchniak, Carla Sharman, Janet Hamel

Susan Stokes Conference

On March 11th, 2011 OARC held its conference at the St. Boniface Golf Club with 200 people in attendance. Our speaker was Susan Stokes, who has specialized in the area of autism spectrum disorder as both a speech/language pathologist and autism consultant for over 25 years. Her speaking style was engaging and entertaining and she shared very valuable and practical information.



Please Teach Me to Communicate-Expressive Communication Strategies was the topic of the day. The following areas were discussed during the one-day conference:

- Identification of common communicative forms exhibited by students with communication challenges. Some of the common communicative forms included; motoric, gestural, vocalizations, visuals and verbalizations. Susan encouraged participants to look at an individual's unusual or challenging behaviors and at what expressive communicative purpose the behavior serves.
- Identification of core communicative functions (requesting, seeking assistance, cessation and protesting) necessary for being a functional communicator.
- An understanding of the pros and cons of common Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems and their use. Susan discussed various forms of AAC from low-tech (Picture Exchange Communication System-PECS and sign language) to high-tech (Voice Output Systems). The iPhone, iPod Touch and the iPad with Proloqou2go were discussed as being great options for communication devices along with other applications (music, organizational tools, prompts, timers etc.).
- Knowledge of how to use visual instructional strategies to teach various expressive communication skills. Susan warned that while teaching these skills, verbal prompts should be limited and suggested using hand-over-hand prompts to direct students to the visual expressive communication strategies.

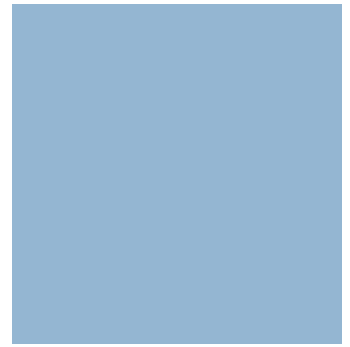
Susan shared the following quote that sums up the day of learning:

“The single most important skill a person with autism can learn is functional spontaneous communication” (from Joanne Cafiero, National Academy of Science Report: Educating Children with Autism, 2001)

OARC would like to thank the Conference Committee for organizing such a successful conference. Also many thanks to our presenting sponsor Bridges, our morning break sponsor Aroga, and to Dynavox and Microcomputer Science for sharing the newest technology in AAC . A special thank-you for the in-kind support of this event to Esdale Printing, Four Points by Sheraton at the Winnipeg International Airport, James Richardson and Sons Ltd, and Keith Metcalf Inc.

This year the OARC conference committee had a draw for various prizes donated by Bridges, Aroga, Dynavox, Microcomputer Science, Lynda Ames Smith and Sun Life Financial. Tickets were given to those who donated any amount towards the purchase an iPod Touch. Because of the generous support of our attendees OARC was able to "upgrade" from an iPod to an iPad because of the generous support of our attendees totaled \$615. Thank-you for your support!

Respectfully submitted, Kim Churchill
Chair



Equipment Loan Program Committee (ELPC) Report

Committee Members: Astrid Harms (Chair), Jennifer Barthel, Val Buissé, Lori Wiebe

It has been another productive year for the ELPC. We have completed one of the tasks that we started last year: we have developed an “Emergency Use Only” Device Policy. This policy has been developed to address the use of some of the SGDs which are currently in our library. The specific SGDs referenced in this policy are those which are not working optimally. This policy outlines which devices it applies to and the circumstances under which the devices can be utilized.

The development of a Wish List of SGDs to add to our lending library is one of the ongoing priorities of our committee. In an effort to obtain broader input from the community, we sent out a survey in November 2010 to elicit feedback. The survey was in the form of a checklist and covered a variety of areas in terms of low, medium and low tech devices, as well as hand held and larger devices. There was also an opportunity for additional comments and feedback. We had a fairly good response rate and the feedback that was obtained was utilized in developing our Wish List. Thank you to those who participated in the survey. We hope to continue to use surveys and other means to solicit community input into the ongoing development of our library.

*Respectfully submitted, Astrid Harms
Chair*

2010

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2011

Board
of
Directors
and
Staff



Board of Directors

Catherine Rushton - President
Kevin Biggar - Vice-President
Astrid Harms - Past-President
Richard Fillion - Treasurer
Jennifer Barthel - Secretary

Ron Bryer - Director
Kimberlee Churchill - Director
Carol Conan - Director
Donna Passey - Director
Dorian Phillips - Director

Staff

Lori Wiebe - Executive Director
Val Buissé - Speech/Language Pathologist
Janet Hamel - Manager of Development
Doris Fierback - Admin. Assistant

Open Access Resource Centre



For more information about the Open Access Resource Centre

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