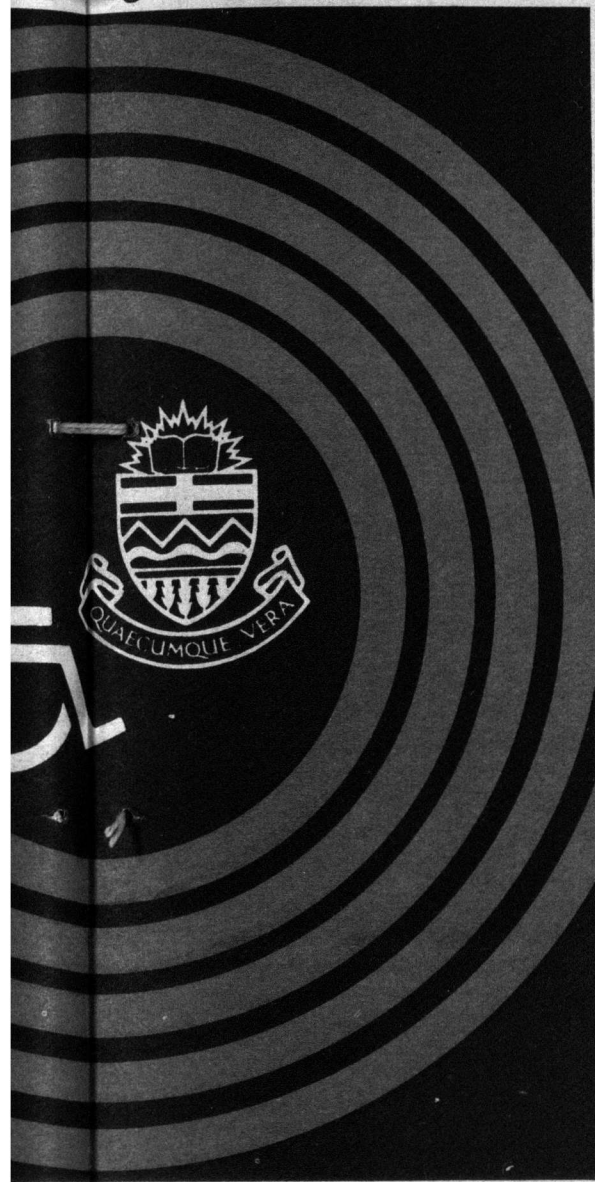


# ers to human contact: bled student d you



stuck outside an elevator that's frozen, which has happened at Tory. It's been really bad in this past week - incidents with DATS - students stuck for two hours waiting for a bus, or classes that have been very carefully planned to meet schedules which have been moved.

**Gateway:** What are some of the other things that happen on campus that no one hears about?

**Nicely:** For a blind person certainly there are many obstacles to getting an education. Imagine sitting in a class, especially a math class, and someone is writing on the blackboard and saying "this plus this will give you this." - or something more complex. You're at a little bit of a loss if you're plodding along taking notes in Braille. So for that purpose students look for someone to take notes for them. We need notetakers. I should mention that we have a really good corps of volunteers, but it's small compared to what we need because timetables don't often fit. We have about forty, but one student in the course of the week may need attention from up to five volunteers, whereas another may need help only in registering.

**Gateway:** How many different things are there for volunteers to do?

**Nicely:** Making tapes, going over notes with blind persons, just helping to review, helping wheelchairs get from one class to another. A lot of wheelchairs now are motorized so it's not as much of a problem, but students walking with a cane may need help getting books from the library and so on.

Professors seem to try and make things easy. If a student is blind, someone else at exam time can read the exam and write out the answers for them. We recruit volunteers to do that, to provide that service.

Most students rely on taped material, and again the professors might say "OK, you can tape my class."

At the beginning of each term registration is often a lot of extra work, and so the registrars office cooperates with us - gives us registration forms on behalf of the students as a short cut through registration.

I think that the university is appreciative of the needs of disabled students, we've been getting a lot of referrals from other departments who are becoming more aware that if the service were cut it could fall to individual departments, and just make it that much more difficult to coordinate effective solutions to problems.

**Gateway:** You spoke briefly before about the International Year of the Disabled - do you have any other comments on it? Has it been a success?

**Nicely:** If you read some of the various publications like *The Spokesman*, (An Alberta Handicapped Committee Publication) you'll get a lot of debate on that. There is a lot of concern that projects initiated at various levels of government that year may not be completed. And building standards or any laws or amendments that were made were minimal.

**Gateway:** How would somebody in a wheelchair get from the Tory Building to the Students' Union Building?

**Nicely:** When a student in a wheelchair has to get from one class to another, he doesn't go as the crow flies, not by any

means. And in order to keep warm, there are indoor routes which may be very far out of the way; it involves a lot of extra time and energy - energy that some of them may not have to spare. That's why students who may be able to manage a manual wheelchair may go on to the electric for the purposes of getting around campus.

With the Tory Building there are no underground connections. In order to get to a class in the basement they have to take an outside elevator into the building, then to the inside elevator for which they are issued a key from this department, to get down to the basement. Now when the class is over, and let's assume that they want to get up to the third floor - ten minutes, right? They have a key that will call that elevator down to the basement, but that elevator is usually full of people, who are not likely to get out - and so the only way that person can get to the third floor is to

thought of a gimmick to get people to do that - something like a scavenger hunt. I'm going to try and get three wheelchairs and try and get people to find their way from point A to point B and to try and make a phone call.

I talked to the fire marshal because we're concerned about what happens when there is a fire alarm in the Tory Building and there is someone in a class who is in a wheelchair, or someone who is blind or otherwise impaired.

People may say well, I want to help, what can I do? There is a general procedure that should be followed, so I've asked the fire marshal to speak to those willing to listen. Evidently what they do is ask disabled people to get to the nearest elevator, and within four minutes the Fire Department, the campus wing, will be there to help them.

There was an alarm last year - a girl in a wheelchair who was also able to walk - that's another thing, we assume that if someone is in a wheelchair that they can't walk and we're surprised if they do. Anyway, these two or three people took it upon themselves to carry her down the steps in her chair, which is extremely heavy,



Marion Nicely, Coordinator of Disabled Students' Services.

photo Ray Giguere

wait until the rush is over.

And then to get to SUB they would have to pretty well take an outdoor route. They could cut across to the Dentistry-Pharmacy building to the north facing entrance and follow that route all the way over to CAB to the west facing entrance, and go outside from there.

And to get into a library, there are special doors to get in and out. If they want to get into the Rutherford ground entrance there is a special buzzer there, and someone from the library will come down and let them in. So what they are doing is drawing attention to themselves no matter how much independence they are able to get. The special needs that have to be met will always draw attention to the disability.

**Gateway:** What sort of displays are planned for "Awareness Days"?

**Nicely:** As part of the displays, one will have a booth put up by CNIB, and the mobility instructor will bring along some white canes and some blind-folds and give people a chance to try that out. I did that last year and it was quite an experience... I suddenly wondered "where the heck am I?" You hear all these voices, and there is one person beside you who is supposedly with you and you can't pick that voice out from the rest. That was a very good experience. As far as wheelchairs, I haven't

and she kept saying, "put me down I can walk," and they wouldn't listen to her and they carried her all the way out. And when they learned that it was just a fire drill they were very disappointed, and also exhausted, and she was mad at them because they wouldn't listen to her. You assume that the person doesn't have any responsibility for themselves. You want to be helpful, and that is a very positive characteristic, but sometimes we go overboard.

**Gateway:** What haven't we talked about that we should talk about?

**Nicely:** I was going to mention something about the energy level of students who have their mobility impaired but again I don't want to generalize because there are students who are as strong or stronger than you or I. Again when a person comes here they are admitting that they need help and that is a hard thing to do, even if you do. I have students come in here who need nothing more than a key, and I may never see them again all year and they are very happy.

We try and encourage and support their independence as much as possible. We'd like everyone to know that these services are available because we might just make something a little less difficult.

your lab partner (who walks slowly due to a spinal injury) asks for your help?

- What if you are having lunch with a blind person and an alarm sounds?

Get an expert's advice - Fire Marshall S. Smith. Learn about your responsibility as an able-bodied person. Learn about your responsibility as a handicapped person.

**Films**  
Films to be viewed between

11:30 and 2:30 on Wednesday, January 20, in SUB Theatre

These films (most produced by the National Film Board) offer you an excellent overview of a number of disabilities or handicaps in terms of how they affect those individuals having them and give you a chance to explore your reaction.

**A Different Approach**  
Carroll O'Connor, Ed Asner, etc, offer an unusual look at the subject of hiring disabled persons.

A memorable film.

**I Am Not What You See**

A woman with cerebral palsy who happens to have become a practicing - or a practicing psychologist who happens to have cerebral palsy? In a highly acclaimed studio interview, filmed with Roy Bonisteel for CBC's *Man Alive* program, (Sondra Diamond) speaks frankly and sensitively of her life struggle to be recognized as a complete human being... (National Film Board).

**My Friends Call Me Tony**

"a portrait of a warm, lively 10-year old who can only distinguish light from shadow" (National Film Board)

**Look Beyond**

(look for this slide-tape presentation in the display booth areas as well) The shared hope of disabled persons is presented artistically and succinctly through the efforts of M. M. Mathewson, S. Rabinovits, O. Fified, and M. Grandmaison with Pat McGhee's

acclaimed International Year of Disabled Person's song filling the audio portion.

**Pins and Needles**

Highly recommended for viewing by the Multiple Sclerosis Society, this Australian made film answers many questions in its intense portrayal of a woman having the disease.

**The World of One in Seven**

"Documentary about the one in seven Canadians who have some type of physical limitation.