

A QUESTION OF PERSPECTIVE

“Blind folks are people too!” states a recent graduate from the W. Ross MacDonald school for the blind & visually impaired in Ontario. “I’ve known jerks as well as beautiful blind people,” she continues. Walking without hesitation toward a chair, Diane is totally blind herself following the onslaught of diabetes when she was 8 years old, but she speaks of what she knows best, her perspective. “Just because a person is blind, doesn’t make them a saint. We ‘blinks’ are human too.”

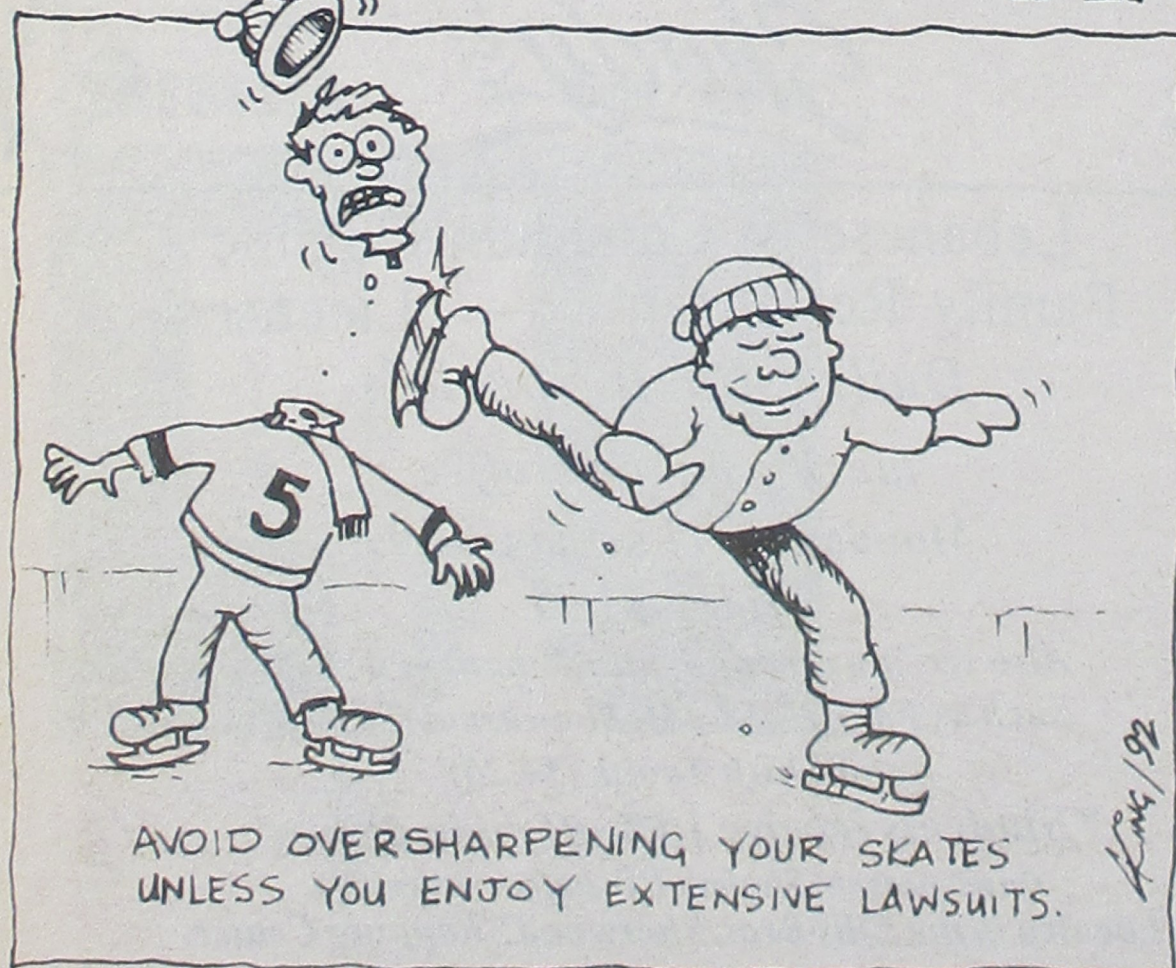
Diane is currently studying at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, a fully sighted institution. She aspired to become a social worker to assist people who need her support. Her bubbly personality could bring a smile to the saddest face. The University tried to accommodate her disability by offering some physical compensation such as ride programs. However, she finds it difficult, at times, to integrate into the sighted school on a social basis, one reason being the perception from most sighted students. “Most of them are so terrified of me, they leave a 2 meter gap between us, never saying a word and everybody stares like I’m the black plague revisited. I can feel their icy looks and a friend with eyes have confirmed it. It seems as if they’re afraid to reach out and touch me in case they’ll catch something. As far as I know,

you don’t need protection to be near a ‘blink’...yet. But every now and again someone comes along and asks me questions about how ‘it’ happened. One guy was a real gentleman. He always helped me with my books and asked me to be in his group discussions. I felt good about that,”

Diane had a high opinion of people, despite some of her experiences, and remains optimistic in the highest sense, even after a kidney transplant due to the diabetes, low hemoglobin, and 2 heart attacks she had last Christmas. She has to take anti-rejection pills and insulin shots for the rest of her life but she has a deep conviction about living life to its fullest potential, given the choice. “We all have our own perception of problems. My brother thinks he’s had a hard life because his sister is blind with diabetes and his cousin is in a wheelchair. There’s guilty. If he lets that thought clog his mind, the poor soul is going to waste his own precious time, but I can’t tell what to do, I can only say how I ‘see’ it. It’s true, my physical health hasn’t been the greatest but it’s take a lot more than just that to keep me from enjoying a great life!”

‘Hats off to Diane!’ She is an ideal student of the ‘90’s, in my view. It is, after all, just a question of perspective.

CANAL SKATING TIP #1



Cribbage Challenge!

On Saturday, Feb 15, second floor of the barn the U.P.E.I. C.S.S. presents... Cribbage Tournaments! For the paltry sum of two dollars per person (couples only), you can peg your way to fame and glory. The Grand Prize: with be half the door intake. With also a 50/50 draw and great prizes to be given away. So get your cards warmed up. Prizes donated by: Coca-Cola ltd., Hearts and Flowers Sweet Factory and Dominoes. Registration starts at 1 pm sharp. With play beginning as soon as possible.