

Improvements for the handicapped

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Completion of a formal study of the transportation needs of the handicapped in the Battlefords is one of the goals the Battlefords National Access Awareness Week committee hopes will be accomplished by June 1994, the next observance of this special week.

Among other goals are respite care for caregivers; continuing public education about achievements of people with disabilities; and staging a workshop on awareness of barrier-free design in public buildings.

The sixth annual National Access Awareness Week was held May 31-June 6 after which a report card was prepared showing where the community is in regard to accessibility for people with disabilities.

The report records community achievements during the past year in the five target areas of transportation, housing, employment, recreation and education.

In the area of transportation, a new replacement Handi-Bus was put into operation by Battlefords Transit System. Illegal parking in designated parking stalls for disabled people is down about 55 per cent due to increased fines.

Housing saw Battlefords Residential Services open a new group home on St. Laurent Dr. and the Edwards Society a group home on Clark Dr., both homes completely wheelchair

accessible.

Battlefords Urban Native Housing Corp. provided wheelchair access to two of their homes and in one of the homes lowered cupboards, installed a hydraulic bathtub lift, and constructed wider entrances, doorways and an entrance ramp.

Battleford Housing Authority added a ramp to a duplex while the Saulteaux Reserve Elder's Lodge is wheelchair-accessible and one unit is designed for a person using a wheelchair.

A new service at Canada Employment Centre is an automated

display terminal displaying jobs across the country. One of the terminals is wheelchair-accessible.

Sask. Hospital hired a second vocational therapist to assist with rehabilitation; and Portage Vocational Society obtained a janitorial contact with Sask. Wheat Pool.

In the area of recreation, Heather Kuttai-Seib won a bronze medal at the 1992 Paralympics in Barcelona, Spain in the mixed air pistol competition.

Special Olympics activities saw local athletes compete in the Saskatoon Indoor Games, Winter Games

in Melfort and Disabled Skiers Festival in Kimberley, B.C.

On the education front, two lifts were installed at McKittrick School and two computer configurations purchased for disabled students by the Public School Division.

At Fort Battleford, all buildings are wheelchair accessible with movement between three buildings made easier by wooden boardwalks, hand rails installed where needed, public washrooms have electric door openers, wide doorways and baby change tables.

