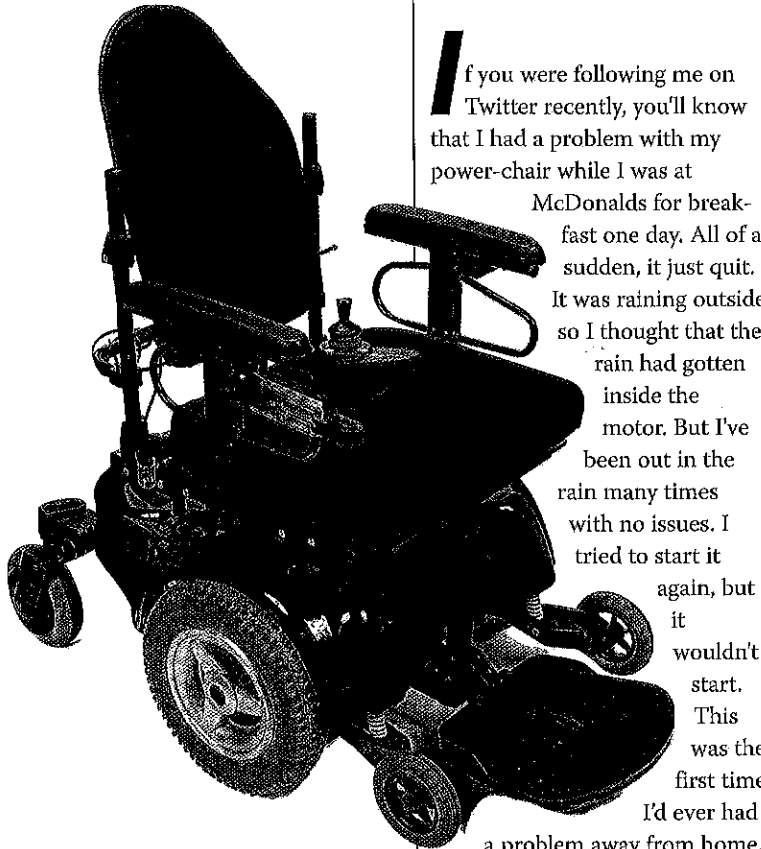


EMERGENCY SITUATION SOLVED!

By Frank Pozen



If you were following me on Twitter recently, you'll know that I had a problem with my power-chair while I was at McDonalds for breakfast one day. All of a sudden, it just quit. It was raining outside so I thought that the rain had gotten inside the motor. But I've been out in the rain many times with no issues. I tried to start it again, but it wouldn't start. This was the first time I'd ever had a problem away from home.

In case you're ever in an emergency like this, you may want to know...

I called the ODSP and a wheelchair maintenance company. The maintenance company did not have any technicians available and there was also the possibility that I would need a loaner if the technician couldn't fix the chair. ODSP called another wheelchair maintenance company and they weren't going to be able to get anyone to my location quickly enough. It was a little discouraging as they are the biggest company in the mobility business in Toronto. So I called ODSP and they contacted H.M.E. Ltd. who called me back in about five minutes. I was told that one of their technicians was at

"...batteries should be replaced as part of regular maintenance. But ODSP only approves a repair if I request it. Maybe routine wheelchair maintenance should be part of their procedures."

Woodbine Centre and he would call me as soon as he was finished there. The girl on the phone told me he would be over around 2:00 p.m. He did exactly that. He called me to confirm my location and Eugene arrived just after 2:00 p.m.

After looking at the chair, he decided that it was not the motor but it could be the joystick or the two batteries. He asked me how old the chair is and if the batteries had ever been replaced. I said no, so he looked at them and decided that one of the batteries was dead. But he replaced them both because obviously he didn't know which one was dead. He carries batteries in his truck so I assume this is a very common problem.

I asked Eugene questions because I planned to write about this but I didn't question his decision as I believed he knew what he was doing. And that's been my

experience with power-chair technicians. I don't know anything and he's the pro so I'm going to trust him unless he gives me a reason not to trust him. Once the new batteries were installed, the chair was fixed. He said he was guessing, but I figured it was an educated guess.

All's well that ends well. And I didn't need a loaner. Eugene told me that batteries should be replaced as part of regular maintenance. But ODSP only approves a repair if I request it. Maybe routine wheelchair maintenance should be part of their procedures. I'll know better in the future because I will be eligible for a new power-chair January 2011. And after yesterday, H.M.E. might get that business. Stay tuned as I plan to write about that process.

For more from Frank, please visit his blog at: <http://frankp316.blogspot.com> ©

CLASSIFIEDS To place your ad in this section please call 416-422-5644 x212 or email bevjenkins@cpaont.org

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

The Capital Wheelchair Curling Club in Ottawa are inviting people to visit or contact them to find out about their many activities that are available for people with disabilities. Many of their members are members of CPA Ontario, and they currently offer and run the largest wheelchair bonspiel in Canada every November. If you are interested in more information about the club and its activities, please contact:

Barry Lemoine, Director Public Relations
Capital Wheelchair Curling Club
c/o 128 Firewood Private
Ottawa, ON K1T 2C1
(Tel) 613-733-5550 Email: barrylemoine@rogers.com