

# Luke Soap... by Luke Anderson



## Additional beds for Parkview approved

Ontario's Minister of Health, Tony Clements, has approved an additional 19 beds for the new Parkview Home.

"Parkview submitted this request a year ago along with our business plan for a new building," said Parkview Board Chair Melody Potter. "I am so pleased that we will be able to serve an even greater number of seniors in the Stouffville community."

The new Parkview Home for the Aged, proposed for construction on the Parkview Village site, will now be able to accommodate 128 residents. Ms. Potter indicated that a contract is about to be signed with an architect, and that the fundraising program, which is currently in the initial stages of its community/corporate phase, has raised over \$1 million towards its goal of \$3 million.

"Barring any major, unforeseen complications, we anticipate the new Parkview Home will open in late 2005 or early 2006," said Ms. Potter.

I would like to start this article by venting a bit.

It goes something like this... I had nearly finished writing my article for this month and decided to leave the computer running overnight. Just as my attendant was heading out the door for the night, I asked him to turn off the monitor on my computer.

Next morning I wheeled up to the computer to put the finishing touches on the article, only to find that not only had the monitor been turned off, but the brain of the computer had also been turned off. Digesting this and knowing that I hadn't clicked the save button before finishing the previous night, I hung my head, turned away from the computer, clenched my teeth and pounded the armrest of my chair a couple of times.

Losing computer work seems to happen to me quite often; I never seem to learn to love hitting that save button and unfortunately lost work rarely turns up for me. I picture in my mind a bunch of files sipping sodas on lawn chairs on a tropical island, much like all of those lost favourite toys on an extended vacation with the dust bunnies in some dark, hard-to-get-at place. Anyway, I will now attempt to rewrite what I had, and do my best to write it with the same enthusiasm...bear with me.

So, wanna try a new game that I've recently stumbled upon?! It's called "Be My Hands". Let me explain. Having recently

graduated from the school of Lyndhurst spinal cord rehabilitation, leaving behind SARS masks, soggy mixed vegetables and loud snoring roommates, I am now adjusting to living life in my own apartment in the big city.

The goal here is not to regain physical strength but to establish strong skills towards living independently. The term independent is interesting when used in the spinal cord injury context. There are various levels and severity of injury resulting in very different forms of physical disability; along with these come different forms of independence.

I have come to understand that a person like myself, with a high-level cervical spinal cord injury, can live independently. Crazy concept, hey? It's definitely a different way of life, and one that I wouldn't have chosen; however, it's a way of life that allows me to do what I wish when I wish to, thus letting me achieve a certain level of independence.

You see, there are people out there. No joke! People with working hands! These people are the key ingredient to my form of independence, and all it takes is a quick "Could you give me a hand?". There are a lot of people out there, which equates to the potential for a lot of independence, it just takes the guts to pop the question and the magic begins.

Here is an example: I felt like eating a mango a couple of days ago, so I did. I had just finished getting some help preparing my

lunch and we were predicting the outcome of the Stanley Cup finals when I got the craving.

I asked my helper to get the mango from the fridge and grab a sharp knife from the drawer. I like my mangos cut a certain way [ridiculous I know] and apparently he had never cut a mango before, as I quickly found out when I returned to the kitchen after answering a telephone call.

He had a confused yet determined look on his face, like a mad scientist about to mix two volatile liquids, and was about to begin surgery when I wheeled back in and instructed him to abort his mission. I then took control of the situation.

Patiently -- at first -- I described my mango-cutting process... "Do you see how the mango is wider in one place?" I asked. No answer. "Do you see how the mango looks like it's been partially flattened?" I questioned. Still nothing.

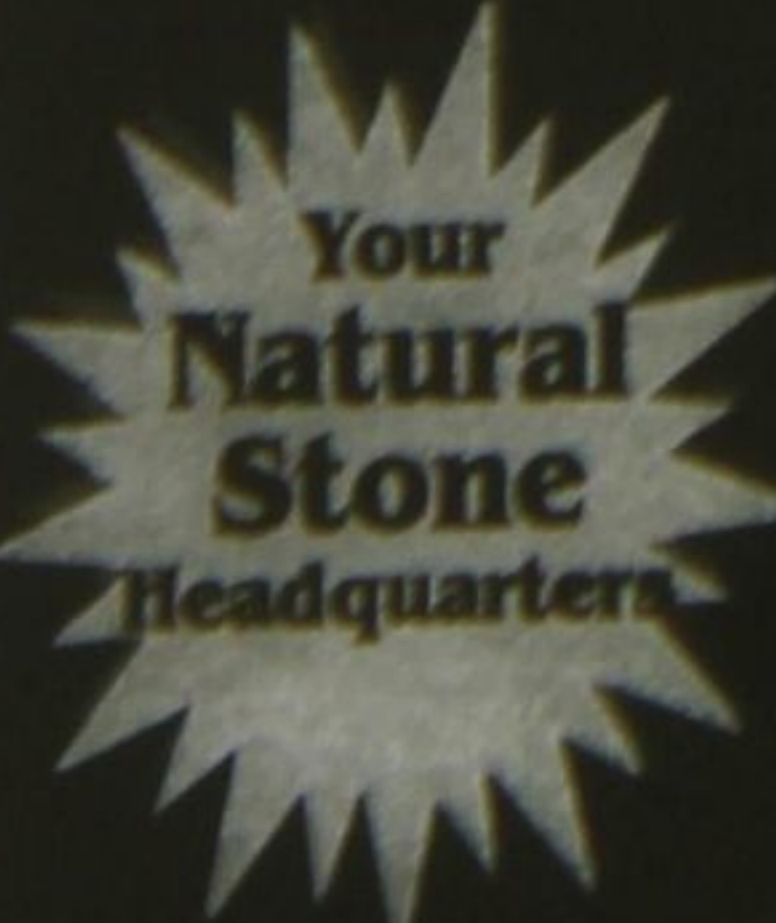
All I got was a raised eyebrow, at which point I knew this was not going to be easy. I wanted to jump out of my chair, grab that mango and do it all by myself. But just as I was on the verge of packing in the game of "Be My Hands" for a game of "Frustration", I realized that this was not possible, took a deep breath and regained my composure.

After 10 mouth-watering minutes of careful explanation, we were both glowing with satisfaction and enjoying the sweet taste of that perfectly ripe mango. Magic.

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