



**Athlete's determination and spirit truly inspiring**  
*Rotary speaker series features wheelchair racer*

***For Immediate Release***

***DATE – March 31, 2010***

What costs more than \$5,000 and weighs just 13 pounds?

The racing wheelchair custom designed for Paralympian Michelle Stilwell, who won two Gold medals at the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing.

Stilwell was a very active teen, excelling at track, basketball and ringette, until an accident at age 17 rendered her a quadriplegic.

Though this must have been a huge blow for the young athlete, she didn't let her disability stop her from being involved in sports.

In fact, she took an immediate liking to wheelchair basketball and quickly climbed the ranks to Canada's national team, winning a Gold medal with Team Canada at the Paralympic Games in Sydney in 2000.

Stilwell showed her true determination and strength of character when she was forced to quit wheelchair basketball due to complications from her spinal injury.

Rather than just throwing in the towel, she instead started training for a completely different sport – wheelchair racing.

In fact, she went from a novice racer to a World champion in just two years and has been winning medals and setting records ever since. Sprinting is her forte, but Stilwell, or Mikey as she likes to be called, also trains for marathons and has two 10 km races on her calendar for April and May in the Vancouver area.

These days Stilwell leads a very busy life, juggling marriage and motherhood with a tough training regiment and a demanding schedule of speaking engagements and competitions that take her around the world.

According to her website, Mikey is really looking forward to next year's World Championships in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Stilwell will be the featured guest at the Rotary Presidential Speaker Series II on Thursday, April 22 at the Belle Petroleum Centre in Peace River. Cocktails at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m. Doors open for the speaker event at 7 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased at the 2010 Alberta Summer Games office, the Belle Petroleum Centre or from any Peace River Rotary member and will cost \$30 for the speaker event alone, \$60 to attend the dinner, as well.

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ABOUT THE 2010 ALBERTA SUMMER GAMES

On July 19 – 25, 2010, the Peace Country is hosting the 2010 Alberta Summer Games. Over 3,000 athletes, coaches and officials will be visiting the Peace region to participate in Alberta's premier youth sporting event. The communities of Falher, Grimshaw, Manning, Peace River, Berwyn and Nampa, the MDs of Peace No. 135 and Smoky River No. 130, the County of Northern Lights and Northern Sunrise County are playing host to this multi-sport, multi-cultural extravaganza. Let's show these future Olympians some good old-fashioned Peace Country hospitality, in the spirit of the Games—good sportsmanship, competitiveness and camaraderie. For more information on the 2010 Alberta Summer Games, please visit [www.2010albertasummertimegames.ca](http://www.2010albertasummertimegames.ca)

Peace, Sport, Spirit