

November 2010

Issue: 4

# MetroWest

Center for Independent Living, Inc.

## Post-Election

Greetings!

We hope you exercised your right to vote. The results for Question 1 mean a huge loss to drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs. We're thankful that we do not have to add the losses that Yes for Question 3 would have meant. We're also pleased that Question 2 passed. While everyone agrees that 40B isn't perfect, maybe the drama of the ballot initiative will encourage legislators to fix it. Make sure you report any voting problems to the Secretary of State. MWCIL is also interested learning about any voting problems (and good experiences!) on our facebook page.

While MWCIL does not endorse any specific candidates, we are pleased that many Massachusetts elected officials who have supported IL are returning to office. Their seniority and commitment to disability issues will be especially needed in this climate of economic problems.

We've been receiving very interesting newsletters from some other organizations which we encourage you to check out. First, the [ADDP](#) (Association of Developmental Providers) is participating and reporting on the Department of Developmental Services' Residential Study Group who are reviewing and analyzing current community residential services...in challenging economic times. You can read the current [ADDP Newsletter](#), and we encourage you to sign up for future newsletters, especially if you could be affected by these studies.

And the [Disability Policy Consortium](#)'s latest [newsletter](#) is all about Emergency Preparedness, and what is currently happening in state government to support preparedness. Again, sign up for their newsletters - they will continue to provide information as well as opportunities to participate in forums, and affect decisions.

Happy Thanksgiving!

from Paul Spooner, Executive Director

## MWCIL Visitors

Secretary of Health  
and Human Services,  
Dr. JudyAnn  
Bigby, Senator  
Karen Spilka and  
MWRTA Administrator



### In This Issue

[MWCIL Visitors](#)

[ADAPT Rally Video](#)

[New High-Tech Van](#)

[Budget Deficits](#)

[SS Funding](#)

[Holiday Open House](#)

[Charlie Cards for MetroWest](#)

[ADDP Conference](#)

[Admin. of Developmental  
Disabilities Invites Visions](#)

[ARC Presents](#)

[Self-Advocacy Leadership Series](#)

[DOJ Public Hearings on New  
Technology Access Rules](#)

## Holiday Open House

\* \* \*

Please join MWCIL and  
MASILC (MA Statewide  
Independent Living  
Council) for  
AN AFTERNOON OF  
CHEER  
Wednesday, December 22.

\* \* \*

Time: 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.  
Place: MWCIL - 280  
Irving Street, Framingham

\* \* \*

RSVP by Dec. 17  
MWCIL: 508-875-7852  
or [info@mwcil.org](mailto:info@mwcil.org)  
MASILC: 508-620-7452  
or [info@masilc.org](mailto:info@masilc.org)

Ed Carr visited MWCIL on October 28. Consumers and staff benefited from a discussion of regional transport as well as MassHealth.



Dr. Bigby and Ed Carr

Everyone agreed that the improvements to the MetroWest Transportation have been very beneficial to the area. The MWRTA is administered by Ed Carr who is committed to accessible transportation. Senator Karen Spilka and the General Counsel on the Senator's staff, Mary Ann Padien are credited with crafting the legislation needed to move money from the MBTA to the MWRTA (MetroWest Regional Transport Authority) so that the whole system, and accessibility to the system, could be improved for MetroWest. Ed, Karen and Mary Anne thanked Paul Spooner for his vision and input into the process.

Dr. Bigby opened her comments by stating her commitment to Health and Human Services for people with disabilities. She then opened the floor for questions. Since Secretary Bigby



oversees MassHealth among other agencies, Jini Fairley inquired if a spousal income waiver is being considered, especially for people with disabilities who need the PCA services from MassHealth in order to live in the community. MassHealth currently has several waiver programs where the spousal income is not considered for MassHealth eligibility. Jini talked about situations where people in nursing homes cannot afford PCAs on their own, but their spouse's income puts them just over the maximum income allowed by MassHealth so they may be forced to stay in a nursing home. The really puzzling thing is that it would be cheaper for MassHealth to pay for PCAs than to pay the nursing home bills. Dr. Bigby asked questions, took notes, and made sure that she understood the issues.

Ed Carr, Executive Director of the Metrowest Regional Transit Authority inquired about collaboration with para transit services that RTAs provide and the medical transportation services that MassHealth and other health state agencies provide.

## Video from the ADAPT Rally Washington, DC - September 2010

View this [VIDEO](#) of this important ADAPT Rally from the [Center for Independent Living in Central Pennsylvania](#). You can find more details about the rally on the [ADAPT website](#).



## Charlie Cards for MetroWest!



MetroWest Regional Transit Authority will now accept Charlie Cards. Customers can add stored card value at all ticket machines and through the [MBTA website](#).

MetroWest is the first region to participate in the Patrick Administration's implementation of a unified state transportation system.

## ADDP Conference and Expo in Worcester March 18, 2011

The Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers and the Hanover Insurance Group will sponsor the annual conference with Judy Woodruff as keynote speaker.

The goal of the conference is to provide professional development and management tools for executive staff, directors and managers who support individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities or brain injuries.

[ADDP Web Info](#)

Administration of  
Developmental Disabilities  
The Administration on  
Developmental Disabilities  
invites you to share your  
vision of the future.



Adaptive Evaluation and Training Van

## High-Tech Adaptive Van

The [MA Rehabilitation Commission](#) (MRC) recently purchased this van and adapted it with state-of-the-art high-tech assistive technology devices using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

The specifications and production supervision were provided by the Rehab Technology Dept. of MRC. The vehicle contains multiple sets of adaptive driving controls. Specific controls can be activated and deactivated. The van will be made available to Mass Rehab consumers with significant disabilities for evaluation and training. Consumers can try out different sets of controls, and ensure that they choose the best devices. The van will also be used for training consumers while they are waiting for their own vehicle to become available.



Van controls

Until now, consumers had to travel out of state for both evaluations and training.

## Post-Election Nationwide

With huge budget deficits looming, the new Republican governors and state legislators across the country are promising to solve the problem with massive cuts, layoffs, and a general reduction in government (Read this [NY Times article](#) by Monica Davey and Michael Luo). While we may not notice as much drama in MA with Deval Patrick returning for a second term, it is important for people with disabilities to stay focused on politics, and vigilant regarding what is being discussed in our legislatures. We can make a difference in decisions through advocacy actions.

[CLICK HERE](#) to submit your ideas. They are currently holding regional sessions in Philadelphia, Detroit, Dallas, Orlando, and Denver.

ARC of MA presents "Uniting Together for Healthy Communities" Dec. 10 - Springfield Elizabeth Szewczyk, CT's 2010 Biggest Loser is the keynote speaker. The conference is geared to health, education, and human service professionals, post-secondary students, adults with disabilities and their families, and other supporters. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

Self-Advocacy Leadership Series for Adults with Developmental or Intellectual Disabilities

January 6, 2011  
9 weeks  
Thursdays 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Springfield Technical Community College

Register by DECEMBER 15 - The series is limited to 12 participants. To apply, call Lee Lemanski at 617-770-7676, ext. 118 or Sandy Houghton ext. 109

A SALS [brochure](#) can be downloaded.

DOJ Public Hearings on Technology Accessibility Rules  
The Department of Justice has scheduled three public hearings on four [Advance Notices of](#)

## Health Care Reform in Need of Active Voices

Health care reform contains provisions for individuals with disabilities, but they are not yet a reality. Regulations that can improve access to medical care and independent are not yet written, making an active voice important. Stay in touch with elected officials, and stay aware of legislative calendars.

[EMAXHealth](#) provides more ideas on how to stay active in the ongoing debate.

## Social Security Funding at Risk

More advocacy is urgently needed to ensure that the Social Security Administration (SSA) is funded at a level that reduces the unacceptable number of its pending claims and hearings. Americans depending on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for their basic income, health care costs, and family support will suffer if this issue is not addressed soon. Dozens of organizations representing stakeholders of Social Security sent a letter to leaders in the House and Senate requesting that Congress fund SSA at the recommended level of 12.379 billion for FY 2011. This level of funding has been requested by President Obama, and has been recommended by crucial appropriations committees and subcommittees. These stakeholder organizations also called for funding SSA at a higher level based on the idea that an extended Continuing Resolution could help ease the considerable backlog in disability claims, appeals and hearings, and increase assistance for SSA's field offices.

It is imperative that SSA receives funding to alleviate the increase in requests for assistance primarily due to the American economic downturn. The 25-month period ending October 2010 showed a rise in claims pending a disability medical decision by 53%. The SSA field offices are continuing to see a record number of visitors while also having to process an additional 1.2 million SSI redeterminations for FY 2011, an increase of 100% from 2008. Providing SSA with the resources it needs will allow the agency to reduce the hearings backlog and protect many individuals from undue financial stress. Permitting the SSA to fund its operations during an extended Continuing Resolution would guarantee that SSA will continue to make progress in reducing the sizable backlogs that have accumulated. NCIL urges you to call your representatives in Congress and advocate for an increased funding level for SSA to adequately address this imminent threat.

This [article](#) is provided by the National Council on Independent Living.

Proposed Rulemaking, which seek public comment on the possibility of revising the ADA regulations to address accessible web information and services, movie captioning and video description, accessibility of Next Generation 9-1-1, and accessible equipment and furniture. The comment period closes on January 24, 2011.

- December 16, 2010 at the United States at the Access Board in Washington, DC
- January 2011 in San Francisco, CA - date and location tbd ([ada.gov](http://ada.gov) will post shortly)

## About Us:

[MWCIL website](#)  
(past issues are available at our website)

### Email

Phone: 508-875-7853  
280 Irving Street  
Framingham, MA 01702

Find us on Facebook 



Join Our Mailing List!

[MetroWest Center for Independent Living](#)

[Forward email](#)

 [SafeUnsubscribe®](#)

This email was sent to [srorke@mw cil.org](mailto:srorke@mw cil.org) by [srorke@mw cil.org](mailto:srorke@mw cil.org).

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy](#)

Email Marketing by

[Policy.](#)



MetroWest Center for Independent Living | 280 Irving Street | Framingham | MA | 01702