

June 29, 2011

Issue: 12

MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.

Budget Negotiations Continue

Greetings!

As you may have read in our alert, the Senate has restored the MRC Independent Living line item. The entire state FY '12 budget is now being negotiated by the House-Senate Conference Committee. We've asked supporters to contact their legislators and voice their approval of the restored IL line item. The budget is due. Governor Patrick just signed a 10 day stop gap budget to keep critical services operating, and benefit checks coming.

In other news, we've included a World Health Organization report of people with disabilities that is disturbing, and highlights that there is much more work to be done in every country. We've also included a new report on housing for people with disabilities in the United States, and this report is equally disturbing.

We're also promoting the R-Word public service announcement, and would like to congratulate Framingham on their new award winning Bowditch Park.

Regardless, we have made progress, and the 2011 Anniversary of the signing of the ADA is a great time to celebrate the positive. We have an article remembering Justin Dart, who was a key contributor to the ADA and the Independent Living Movement. Please join us on July 22 (see sidebar) in Gardner.

from Paul W. Spooner, Executive Director

The "R" word is NOT Acceptable!

Share this Public Service Announcement:



In This Issue

[R-Word PSA](#)

[Bowditch Field](#)

[Legacy of Justin Dart](#)

[WHO's World Report on Disability](#)

[Priced Out in 2010](#)

[Housing Forum](#)

[Online Resources](#)

[Dual Eligibles](#)

[Emergency Preparedness](#)

[ADA 2011](#)

[MA PCA Program](#)

ADA Day 2011

MWCIL and MASILC are celebrating the 21st Anniversary of the signing of the ADA with food and entertainment! Please join us!

When: Friday, July 22
Time: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where: Dunn Pond State Park in Gardner.

Dunn State Park is among the state's most accessible recreational areas, and even offers kayaking!

[Download](#) the flyer for more details.

Framingham's Bowditch Field



The newly remodeled Bowditch Field Athletic and Cultural Complex in Framingham has won an Accessible Design Award from the MA Architectural Access Board (AAB), and the Boston Society of Architects. These awards are given out to projects that have incorporated access as part of their design. The field re-opened in October, 2010, and has been the site of concerts, high school and college sporting events, as well as this year's Framingham H.S. graduation.



Note the accessible features such as multiple curb cuts and low ticket windows.

For more photos of the accessible features of Bowditch Field, visit our [Facebook](#) page.

The Legacy of Justin Dart

Celebrating Victory Honoring Leadership
by Sarah Peterson, Former JFA Moderator

June 22 is a historic day for the disability community. Not only does it mark the anniversary of the 1999 Supreme Court Olmstead decision which affirmed the



MA PCAs

MWCIL has partnered with other organizations to create the [PCAForever](#) website devoted to providing information about the Massachusetts Personal Care Attendant program as well as publicizing advocacy opportunities and needs.

We have posted our first [video](#). Thanks very much to Amy for sharing her experiences and thoughts.

We are actively seeking stories from consumers.

[Email us](#)

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right of people with disabilities to live in their homes and communities, but it also marks the anniversary of the death of Justin Dart, Jr. who is widely recognized as "the father of the Americans with Disabilities Act," "the godfather of the disability rights movement," and co-founder of Justice for All.



In a time when the rights of many people with disabilities are in peril, it is important to remember the strength of our collective roots, acknowledge our current allies and rededicate ourselves to the work ahead.

There are no words to describe what Justin Dart meant, and continues to mean, to the people whose lives he touched, to the disability community nationwide, and to the movement worldwide. He was a leader like none other. I, unfortunately, never had the joy of meeting Justin Dart personally. However, I draw tremendous inspiration, guidance, and power from his life and words as documented in his manifesto, [With Liberty and Justice For All: Toward a culture of Individualized Empowerment](#), and in the [stories](#) reported by his friends.

C-SPAN has recently posted the [video of his memorial service](#) in their video library. I encourage advocates, young and old, to spend time watching, listening and learning about Justin's life and vision of a "revolution of empowerment." Justin taught us: "Get involved in politics and advocacy as if your lives depended on it. They do, and the lives of our grandchildren. You can be a soldier of justice. You can be a revolution of one. The dedicated, total effort of a single individual to struggle for the human dream is a monumental, irreversible victory for the person and for humanity. That is real happiness. That is the good life."

As we face major reductions in services at the national, state and local levels, as Congress considers deep cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, food stamp programs, TANF and Social Security, these words are as applicable today as they ever were.

Lead On, Patriots!

[Click Here](#) for more on Justin Dart.

Reprinted from the June 17, 2011 [American Association of People with Disabilities](#) Newsletter and the Justice For All email.

WHO's World Report on Disability

The World Health Organization has just published a report called "[World report on disability](#)". This disturbing report details how over 1 billion people in the world live with a disability, and yet people with disabilities remain second class citizens. Every government needs to improve services, and improve accessibility. The [UK's Guardian](#) provides a good overview of the major issues experienced world wide by people with disabilities. "One of the report's key

messages is that disability is less about health conditions and more about social and economic barriers to inclusion." Aid organizations can do more by ensuring the projects that they fund are inclusive.

Housing Crisis

[Priced Out in 2010](#) is an in-depth, national study of the housing crisis for people with disabilities by the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc, The Consortium for People with Disabilities and the Housing Task Force. The report was written by Emily Cooper, Ann O'Hara and Andrew Zovistoski.

[Disability.gov](#) links to this report, and offers insights: "This report shows that in 2010, the basic cost of shelter, represented by the average rent for a modest one bedroom apartment, was more than the entire income of an individual receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Federal housing affordability guidelines state that low-income households should pay no more than 30% of monthly income towards housing costs, or about \$211 per month for someone who receives SSI. Priced Out also reports that there was not one state or community in the nation where a person with a disability on SSI could afford to rent housing without a permanent rental subsidy."

Housing Forum

Regardless of income, finding accessible housing is a challenge. A June 14 Conference by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia and the Inglis Foundation and the Disability Opportunity Fund will inform organizations interested in developing such housing of existing challenges, new HUD initiatives and financing opportunities. This article by [RISMedia](#) talks about the conference, and provides some statistics about housing for people with disabilities.

Online Resources

The [United Spinal Association](#) has several helpful publications, all available to [download](#) for free. Among the extensive selection are "Disability Etiquette", "Women's Health" and "Airline Travel" - something for every situation! The publications are geared towards people with spinal cord injuries, but there is lots of important information for everyone.

The USA Tech Guide website is associated with the United Spinal Association, and continues on with great information on wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and assistive technology choices. There are some great blogs, including one on [Wheelchairs of the Future](#), and another about the [Wheelchair World](#).

Dual Eligibles

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Office of Medicaid (MassHealth) planned an open meeting for Tuesday, June 28, 2011.

This meeting was to be open to the public with broad participation encouraged from dual eligible consumers, family members, advocates, providers, health plans, and other interested parties.

Please contact Beth Tortolani at Beth.Tortolani@state.ma.us for further information.

The Massachusetts Hospital Association has responded to the RFI on Integrating Care for Dual Eligibles. Read the [response](#) posted by the [Disability Policy Consortium](#).

Emergency Preparedness

We've already seen the tornadoes in central MA, and MetroWest has experienced severe thunderstorms and power outages and it's only June! The [Disability Policy Consortium](#) has developed a new personal emergency preparedness publication which anyone can download for free.

Anyone who has life-dependent power needs or other daily requirements for medical care or services should register at their Town Hall with the Civil Defense Emergency Preparedness staff. Emergency responders should be starting with this list.

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