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MetroWest

Center for Independent Living, Inc.

AUGUST

Greetings!

We hope you have been enjoying a relatively quiet summer. The politicians are running around campaigning while the rest of us try to stay cool, enjoy our vacations, and do some work.

The Massachusetts Primary is September 6, and we strongly encourage everyone to vote. Several of our MWCIL communities have contested primary races. If you are not a registered voter, now is the time to register so that you can participate in the November election. Everyone's vote will be critical in November, as both the MA Senate race, and the Presidential race are currently polling as extremely close. As an aside, most candidates are out and about right now, and this season can be a good opportunity to educate our politicians about Independent Living! This is the season when they want to talk to everyone.

We also want to remind you to review your Emergency Readiness plans. So far, we've had a drama-free summer. We hope it continues!

We are very glad to see that some of the Paralympics may actually be viewable here in the U.S. See the article below for the details.

Enjoy the rest of your summer. Rest up and we'll all get back in gear in September!

from Paul W. Spooner,
Executive Director of MWCIL



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Work Incentive Seminar Events

The Social Security Administration is sponsoring webinars for people interested in learning how work will affect Social Security benefits. The upcoming webinar is for people who receive Social Security Disability benefits and want to learn how the [Ticket to Work](#) program can help them make more money through work and become financially independent. You'll also learn about other [work incentives](#) that can help you return to work. [Register online](#) or call 1-866-968-7842 (V) or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY/TDD).

The next webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, August 22 at 3 p.m.

Donations

If you appreciate MWCIL and the support it provides you, please consider a gift of any amount. By showing your appreciation and giving back, MWCIL can provide more services for the community. We thank you! Go to [MWCIL Webpage](#) or click on the Donate button.

Past webinars can be viewed at [Cornell University's website](#).

Dual Eligibles Public Meeting

MassHealth has scheduled a public meeting on the "dual eligibles" or integration of Medicare and Medicaid demonstration. All stakeholders and members of the public with interest in this demonstration are encouraged to join.

When:

Friday, August 31, 2012 at 10am - 12pm.

Where:

One Ashburton Place
21st floor, Conference rooms 1, 2, and 3
Boston.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for participants who need assistance by contacting Donna Kymalainen at Donna.Kymalainen@state.ma.us

Back to School Assistive Technology Easter Seals Open House

Easter Seal's Assistive Technology Regional Center (ATRC) will host a free Open House with hands-on opportunities to see and try out various academic tools such as Kurzweill 3000, Livescribe Pulse Pen, WordQ, text to speech software, various eBook readers including the iPad 2 and Kindle, talking calculators, digital recorders, Acrobat and perhaps some other surprises. This is a drop-in event for anyone who would like to learn more about how they might better aid a student's learning with assistive technology. Staff members will be available for questions and assistance.

All are welcome.

Where: Easter Seals ATRC

89 South Street, Boston, MA 02111

[Click Here for Directions](#)

When: Wednesday, September 5, 2012

from 10:00-12:00 pm and 2:00-4:00 pm

RSVP: atrc@eastersealsma.org or 617-226-2634

Public Forum to Identify the Concerns of MassHealth Members with Disabilities

Christine Griffin, EOHHS Assistant Secretary

Donate



All online gifts are tax deductible. *We couldn't carry out our important mission without you!*

Got Computers?

Do you have computer parts sitting around unused? How about your employer or relative? Let MWCIL's Computer Recycling Program take them off your hands!

Donated computers are refurbished at MWCIL and given free to qualified consumers. All donated equipment **must be three years old or newer, and in working condition**, providing a charitable tax donation to the donor. Refurbished computers are given to consumers who have passed the Center's basic computer course, enabling them to better access resources necessary for independent living.

MWCIL is a licensed Microsoft reseller of operating systems, so each donated computer's hard drive is completely erased according to industry standards. MWCIL installs a new Microsoft operating system. Worried about your old information? Don't be! Past donations have come from schools, law firms, and even the Internal Revenue Service, which were satisfied with MWCIL's security precautions. For more information, contact Michael Gentile, Computer

Dr. Julian Harris, Medicaid Director

Who:

- People with disabilities
- Family members of people with disabilities
- Advocates
- Community stakeholders active in disability rights

When:

Thursday, September 6, 11:00 am-1:00 pm

Where:

Ralph J. Froio Senior Center
Main meeting room on Floor 2
330 North Street, Pittsfield
Parking is available

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

Services/Systems
Administrator. 508-875-
7853.

About Us:

MWCIL website

(past issues are
available at our website)

Email

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

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MA Health Care Reform

Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012: The Future
of Health Care Cost Containment in
Massachusetts

With the enactment of Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012, MA begins an ambitious, first-in-the-nation effort to bring health care spending into line with growth in the economy.

An upcoming discussion, moderated by WBUR's Martha Bebinger, will cover how the law will shape our state's health care system in the years to come.

When: October 1, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Registration: 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Where: The State Room, 60 State Street, Boston

The [Boston Globe](#) reported on the signing ceremony with links to more details on the bill.

Paralympics London 2012

August 29 - September 4

The Paralympics will begin on August 29. Ticket sales are reportedly at their highest level in history. ***The U.S. Olympic Committee just announced broadcast and online coverage plans.*** For full information on expanded coverage, visit the [Team USA Paralympics website](#) and navigate to their news page.

The [Youtube.com/USParalympic](#) channel is partnering with NBC Universal and the International Paralympic Committee to provide some coverage.

The International Paralympic Committee is also planning to broadcast 580 hours of live sport from the [IPC website](#).

NBC Sports Network (NBCSN) will air one hour highlight shows on September 4, 5, 6 and 11 at 7 p.m. and NBC has scheduled a 90

minute special at 2 p.m. on September 16.



Anjali Forber-Pratt who grew up in Natick, left last week to compete in the 100, 200, and 400 meter wheelchair sprints. She expects to race on Sept. 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8. She will post updates on twitter - @anjalifp and on her website: www.anjaliforberpratt.com.

The [MetroWest Daily News](#) reported on Anjali's efforts.

Oscar Pistorius wowed us all with his Olympic efforts. He will also be competing in the Paralympics, where, as defending champion of the 100, 200 and 400, he hopes to win (as reported in the [Huffington Post](#))!



Photo From the London Telegraph

One Hotel at a Time

In Rochester, NY, ADAPT members recently protested at the Rochester Institute of Technology President's office because the RIT Inn and Conference Center failed to commit to making its swimming pool accessible. In addition to securing a commitment to order and install permanent lifts, the inn's manager will review the relationship with the American Hotel and Lodging Association, who has been actively lobbying against the requirement to make their pools accessible.

Read the full report at scribd.com. Thanks to the AAPD news for the link, and thanks to ADAPT members for their effective action.



We also read an informative [blog](#) from a Pool Supplies retailer about the requirements for pool lifts, and how to install one. Frankly, we have NO idea why there has been so much hoopla... we suspect the American Hotel and Lodging Association has spent more on lobbying than they would have on the lifts. The blog article should not be considered a requirements specification, and anyone installing a lift

should consult the actual ADA , but it feels accurate, and feels like not that big a deal!

PCA Orientation Program Bill Update

H 4081/S 268: An Act to provide personal care attendant orientation program has been dropped from the senate agenda. We would like to thank disability advocates for expressing their concerns; we think that our calls made a difference. The PCA's union will be refiling the bill, so going forward, we need to work with them to find common ground and address the issues. The PCA Workforce Council is currently organizing a taskforce to work on these issues.

Historical Bricks vs. Accessibility



Kristen McCosh, City of Boston Disability Commissioner, has written a compelling [Op-Ed piece for the South End News](#) supporting accessible, paved, safe curb cuts even in historic Boston. Anyone who has navigated a wheelchair over the heaving and cracked brick sidewalks will understand the need for usable sidewalks and safe curb ramps. What exists today just isn't good enough. Commissioner McCosh would appreciate your support by

commenting on the article.

Thanks to Bill Allan at DPC for this story.

Universal Design

[Judith Graham with Kaiser Health News](#) reports on a new book co-edited by Henry Cisneros (4 term mayor of San Antonio and former Secretary of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development: HUD) titled "Independent for Life: Homes and Neighborhoods for an Aging America".

Cisneros talked about his mother's experiences of aging in place, as well as his plans. He suggests public and private strategies for financial support for age-related home improvements (which should be renamed and supported as *disability-related home improvements* or *community living improvements*).

He also, importantly, talks about making communities more accessible so that people who don't drive can walk or roll to groceries, pharmacies, libraries and parks. "The suburbs are the worst place to age because they're so unwalkable and totally dependent on the automobile. Living in a cul de sac is really hard when you lose access to your car. So these communities have to think of new strategies."



Affordable, Accessible Housing:

The [PR Newswire](#) recently published an article by the California State Independent Living Council titled Affordable, Accessible Housing Increasingly Out of Reach for People with Disabilities.

Several California communities are trying to address the lack of accessibility by, among other things, adopting the state's Universal Design Model Ordinance. The intent of the ordinance is to increase opportunities for persons with temporary, developing or permanent disabilities to "age in place."

"Trying to decipher the maze of information and resources can be overwhelming," said Hand, "and that's where independent living centers (ILCs) come into play. ILCs provide a number of services to people living with disabilities, including educating them about housing options as well as assisting them in negotiating rents and working with landlords. But more needs to be done."

Visitability:

We've written articles before about the need to change local zoning laws to require "visitability" where anyone in a wheelchair can get into any home, and use the bathroom. We're light years away from this in Massachusetts and our aging population is going to pay the price. People with disabilities already are paying the price.

John B. Kelly Day

"At a ceremony in Boston to mark the 22nd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the opening of a wheelchair accessible walkway through city hall plaza, Second Thoughts Director John Kelly was surprised when Mayor Thomas Menino proclaimed that July 26, 2012 to be "John B. Kelly Day." The award was made to honor the advocacy John has done in the past ten years to improve accessibility throughout the city of Boston through his work with the Commission for Persons with disabilities, the Architectural Access Board, and his Neighborhood Access Group. Congratulations, John!"



Photo of John Kelly at 2011 ADA Celebration in Boston

Thanks to Bill Allan and Disability Policy Consortium for this news.

MWCIL recently interviewed John Kelly for the [PCAForever website](#). John shared his experiences and insights in support of the MA PCA program.

Complex Rehab Technology

The United Spinal Association has been following, and actively participating, in the development of new Medicare procedures for customized wheelchairs.

The quick list of the complexities involved in defining Medicare support includes "why a medicare wheelchair is needed, qualifying criteria on where it is to be used, who can get one, what type of wheelchair can be had, what additional components will be paid for, who needs to be evaluated for one, who needs to do the evaluation, who can sell one, how is the cost decided, and of course the usual government mix of laws, regulations and codes that are all bundled up with some very familiar looking red tape." (Ziggi Landsman).

A bill has been filed with Congress, but seems to have stalled: [H.R. 4378: Ensuring Access to Quality Complex Rehabilitation Technology Act of 2012](#).

The United Spinal Association has also provided a [link](#) to contact your Congressional Representative in Washington, and encourage him/her to support this bill.

Does My Disability Pride Scare You?

Blog by s. e. smith

"this ain't livin'

we never know how high we are / till we are called to rise"

The author's rare and open insights into disability pride and culture should be read by everyone at meloukihia.net. Poke around the site - there are other excellent articles, such as "Don't Stare at Me is an Access Need Too".

Senatorial Forum

The Disability Policy Consortium and Perkins School for the Blind are taking the lead in organizing a forum for the two candidates for the U.S. Senate, incumbent Sen. Scott Brown and challenger Elizabeth Warren.

We have given each candidate options of Friday, September 28 or Monday, October 1 with the event starting at 1 PM. The location will be Perkins School for the Blind, 175 North Beach Street. Mark your calendars now!

Co-sponsors include the Arc of Massachusetts, Bay State Council of the Blind, Boston Center for Independent Living, Carroll Center for the Blind, Deaf, Inc., Independent Living Center of the North Shore & Cape Ann, Independence Associates, MAB Community Services, Metrowest Center for Independent Living, Stavros ILC, and the Talking Information Center Network.

If your organization would like to be added as a co-sponsor, please email Meeting@dpcma.org.

Thanks to the Bill Allan and the DPC for the article.

Tour Boston

MNIP has provided a list of online resources for the Boston tourist. While this was listed in our July newsletter... we're printing it again just in case you've found an unexpected vacation day!



AbilityTrip.com - a travel guide for the community of disabled travelers and their companions. This website has information for other places world-wide!

MassVacation.com has an accessibility page.

MA Department of Conservation has pages for Universally Accessible state parks, events and activities.

Explore Boston was created by Nora Nagle during her Gopen Fellowship through the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network. This website lets you know what to expect before you head

to museums, theaters, zoos, and other tourist destinations.

Sports - [TD Garden ADA Seating](#), [Fenway Park Access Guide](#), and [Gillette Stadium ADA Info](#).

[Everyone Outdoors](#) is a blog with many outdoor, accessible activities.

[Adaptive Sailing](#) at Piers Park Sailing Center in Boston.

[Community Boating](#) in Boston

[Boston City Parks](#) - we could not determine (from the website) the accessibility of individual events and sites, and suggest you call first.

Mosquito Spraying



NOTICE: Both West Nile Virus and EEE have been detected in MA mosquitoes. The DPH (MA Dept. of Public Health) has just declared that the threat of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in New Bedford and Westborough is HIGH! Framingham has a rating of moderate. You can get more details on the [DPH website](#). (Thanks to MA Congressman Tom Sannicandro for broadcasting this local update.)

DPH recommends that residents use DEET insecticide products (read the warning label first), be aware of peak mosquito hours (dusk to dawn) and wear long sleeves, long pants and socks to reduce your risk of getting mosquito bites.

Mosquito spraying continues around the state. We advise that you pay attention to any upcoming spraying and follow some basic precautions.

- Stay indoors, keep your windows closed, and turn off window fans during the time spraying occurs. If your air conditioner has a fresh air intake feature, you may want to shut off the intake during the time of spraying.
- Keep pets indoors when spraying is occurring in your immediate area to minimize their risk of exposure.
- If skin or clothes or other items are exposed to the sprayed pesticide, wash with soap and water.
- If the spray gets in your eyes, immediately rinse them with water or eye drops, and call your doctor.
- If you have a small ornamental fish pond, you may want to cover it during the night of spraying.
- Following the aerial spray, rinse any homegrown fruits and vegetables with water.

Weather conditions including temperature, wind speed and precipitation can impede aerial spraying activities. Residents are urged to check the DPH website at www.mass.gov/dph for updates. Residents can also get a daily 5 p.m. update on spraying activities by calling 2-1-1.

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