



MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.

August

The 23rd Anniversary of the ADA Celebration in Gardner was a success - we had a great group of people. As usual, the activities run by the DCR were fantastic - the kayaks went out constantly though out the day. And MA Statewide Independent Living Council did a great job with the overall management of the event - the food was good, the band was fun, and everything went smoothly. The SILC even ordered up perfect weather for us! The best part of the day was the *company* with both new attendees, and returning people.

Wednesday, August 28, is the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights March on Washington. The Civil Rights movement grew to include people with disabilities. Fred Maahs, Chairperson of the American Association of People with Disabilities, will be speaking shortly before 3 p.m. at the [Closing Commemoration](#).

We have an action packed fall planned with the IL Conference in September, and the MWCIL Gala Fundraiser in November.

On a very sad note, we were very sorry to learn of Bill Taylor's death last week. He passed away shortly before a celebration of his legacy. Bill worked at [Advocates, Inc.](#) in Framingham for 33 years, and as President and CEO, shaped the organization into a community force that enriched the lives of thousands of local residents with disabilities. His vision will continue to positively affect our community.

from Paul W. Spooner,
Executive Director of MWCIL



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Calendar

IL Conference -
September 17-19

MWCIL Fundraiser Gala
and Awards - Friday,
November 3

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.

[Donate](#)



All online gifts are tax deductible. *We couldn't carry out our important*

Gardner ADA Celebration

Over 100 people from around the state gathered in Gardner for the 23rd anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) were wonderful, making sure everyone (who wanted to) kayaked, and hiked around the pond.

Colleen Flanagan from Easter Seals organized the young people to do an inspiring chant. We don't think these kids are going to allow the status quo when they see injustices happening and improvements needed. We were happy to have MDC Commissioner Charlie Carr back, and to listen to his words of wisdom! Heidi Reed, Commissioner of MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, also gave an excellent speech.



Our photos from the day are on the MetroWest Center for Independent Living [website](#).



About Us:

[MWCIL website](#)

(past issues are available at our website)

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2nd Annual MWCIL Gala Fundraiser You're invited!

Last year's event was a lot of fun. Of course, Paul was an easy target...so much material! This year's roastee, State Senator Karen Spilka, may be a little tougher! Please join us as we honor Bill Henning, BCIL executive director, as an exceptional contributor to independent living. Spend time with friends, roast Karen Spilka, and have a great meal.

When:

Friday, November 15, 2013

Where:

Sheraton Tara, Framingham

Tickets:

\$100 per person

Please visit our [webpage](#) for all the details on how you can become a sponsor.



Durable Medical Equipment Re-Use You Can Help!

Mass. Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and the Shapiro Family Foundation are funding a new DME Re-use pilot program in greater Boston. To ensure the program is effective, they are seeking input from DME Users. Please take this survey, and help guide the program plans.

Online:

[Survey Monkey](#)

Call:

Randi Sargent, MRC (617) 204-3626

Email:

reuse@massmail.state.ma.us

Unbelievable Discrimination

The first story is from Fountain, Colorado, where a neighbor is threatening to sue the Giesege family to remove the ramp that their daughter needs to get into her home. The reason? Curb appeal! Say what? Click on the link, and you'll see a plain, inoffensive ramp. We're really not sure what is so unattractive, but ok, we all have our own tastes. You can read the whole story at [MSN](#). I suppose I would respect the story more if the creepy neighbor's name was listed instead of the family with the ramp...

The second story happened in Washington, D.C. If this is true, and no one has disputed it, it's almost worse, because we expect the nation's capital to be more civilized, more advanced, and more highly evolved than the rest of the us. According to the [Washington Post](#), two brothers visited the National Air and Space Museum. Max is 21 and uses a wheelchair. His brother, Jake, is 25 and does not use a wheelchair. They wanted to try the flight simulators, and were told that one was too risky, but that they could get tickets for the second one, the RIDE. When Jake went to help Max out of the chair and into the RIDE, "a supervisor came running over" and told Jake to put Max down. Next, (again - i'm thinking SHE should be named, not Max and Jake) this federal employee directed all of her comments to Jake, as though being in a wheelchair meant that Max was unable to communicate. The brothers have filed a "federal discrimination lawsuit against the National Air and Space Museum, alleging that they were denied access to flight simulators and publicly embarrassed" during their museum visit.

Each of these two stories showcases the continuing uphill climb to achieving what was intended 23 years ago with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Both stories are disturbing, especially in 2013.

Abilities Expo

This free event is geared to the community of people with disabilities. The [Abilities Expo](#) will showcase new products and technology, adaptive sports, and workshops on a wide range of topics such as traveling, IEPs, monkeys as service animals and accessible homes.

When:

Friday, September 20, 11 A.M. - 5 P.M.

Saturday, September 21, 11 A.M. - 5 P.M.

Sunday, September 22, 11 A.M. - 4 P.M.

Where:

Boston Convention and Exhibition Center

Hall C

415 Summer Street

Registration:

Register [online](#) and save time at the entrance

Event is free

2013 NCIL Conference



Julie and David from MWCIL, and Jim from MASILC attended the annual conference of the National Council of Independent Living (NCIL) in Washington, D.C. The conference, entitled "Re: Generation" included workshops and rallies with disability advocates from all over the country. Massachusetts isn't "there" yet, but they learned that many areas of the country are far behind us. Visit the [MWCIL website](#) for more photos.

Digital Divide

The NY Times recently reported on "[Most of U.S. Is Wired, but Millions Aren't Plugged In](#)". "Administration officials and policy experts say they are increasingly concerned that a significant portion of the population, around 60 million people, is shut off from jobs, government services, health care and education, and that the social and economic effects of that gap are looming larger. Persistent digital inequality - caused by the inability to afford Internet service, lack of interest or a lack of computer literacy - is also deepening racial and economic disparities in the United States, experts say."

Attorney Lainey Feingold, a disability rights attorney, [responded](#) to the article by pointing out that people with disabilities are facing an even greater divide: "Internet use among householders with a disability is only 48% compared to 76% for householders with no disability". As Ms. Feingold highlights: "there is a digital divide for people with disabilities because of a lack of accessible online content."

We know how to make websites usable to everyone, but universal usability is not always implemented.

Thanks to John Winske and the DPC Newsletter for the link.

2013 IL Conference Meeting the Challenge



MASILC members and nominees, ILC staff and board members, state IL employees and other interested parties are invited.

When:

September 17 - 19

Where:

Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel and Trade Center
181 Boston Post Road., West
Marlborough, MA 01752

Registration:

Due by August 30. See the [MASILC IL Conference webpage](#) for registration information.

The conference includes 2 1/2 days of workshops, dinners, the IL Follies, and the quarterly SILC meeting. Contact Jim Clark at jclark@masilc.org with questions.

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