

August 17, 2011

Issue: 14

MetroWest

Center for Independent Living, Inc.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Greetings!

July 26 was the 21st anniversary of the signing of the ADA. In Massachusetts, we celebrated with an afternoon of music, food, kayaking, and great company at the accessible Dunn Pond State Park in Gardner. Boston and Mayor Menino also sponsored another event at City Hall Plaza where I gave a keynote address. Remembering 1990, when the Act was signed, we have many reasons to celebrate. Considering how things should be, we still have work to do! And given the political and economical climate, we all need to stay involved, and make sure our voices continue to be heard.

from Paul W. Spooner, Executive Director

ADA Day in Gardner

Friends from all over the state gathered at Dunn Pond State Park on July 22 to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the ADA. This celebration was sponsored by MASILC. Unfortunately, the excessive heat kept some at home, but those who did attend had an excellent time. The shade and the breeze off the water kept the temperature almost tolerable! We enjoyed live music from Tom Filiault Band (with Steve Higgins on the drums) and a good meal. MRC Commissioner Charlie Carr spoke from the heart about what the ADA means to everyone. The hiking path through the woods gave many folks a shady spot to hang out and talk to friends. And almost everyone kayaked. For some, it was their first time out in a kayak. The DCR staff was outstanding in setting everyone up, and showing them how to paddle and maneuver their boat.

More photos of the day can be found on the [MWCIL website](#). Click on the Photos button on the right.



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Online Donations

Have you or a friend or relative been helped by MWCIL? Would you like to give back and help the next person who needs support? If so, our new, SECURE online donation page is for you! Check out our PayPal button option for donating any amount to make sure that MWCIL is still here, when you or a loved one needs help. Go to [MWCIL Webpage](#) or click on the Donate button.

[Donate](#)



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



Expo, Conference, Competition Products and Technology that Change People's Lives: Assistive Technology and Universal Design in Massachusetts

When: Friday, September 23 from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Where: Hynes Convention Center, Boston

The Expo / Conference / Design Competition is free to the public. Experience and learn about the current state-of-the-art of inclusive products and technologies that transform the lives of people with disabilities and older people. Help initiate a strategy for integration of inclusive design and assistive technology into the Massachusetts innovation agenda. *Be a part of it!*

Agenda Themes

- Home
- Work
- Life-Long Learning
- Fitness/Recreation/Sport

Contact Information

General Info: info@ChangePeoplesLives.org

Join Competition: competition@ChangePeoplesLives.org

Be an Exhibitor: expo@ChangePeoplesLives.org

Hosted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Governor Deval Patrick, Lt. Governor Timothy Murray, Secretary JudyAnn Bigby, MD (EOHHS) & Secretary Gregory Bialecki (EOHED) & Secretary Paul Reville (DoE).
Convened by the [Institute for Human Centered Design](http://www.instituteforhumancentereddesign.org)

More Information at: www.changepeopleslives.org

ADA Day in Boston

Mayor Menino and the Boston Commission for Persons with Disabilities sponsored a celebration at City Hall Plaza. Free food, music, and some informational tables were enjoyed by everyone. Kristen McCosh, the Boston Disability Commissioner, introduced the speakers. Mayor Menino talked about the importance of the various improvements in accessibility he is working on in the city. He stressed that improvements are not just ramps and sidewalks;

mission without you!

MA PCAs

MWCIL has partnered with other organizations to create the [PCAForever](http://www.pcaforever.org) 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](#)

About Us:

MWCIL website
(past issues are available at our website)

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that access, acceptance and enjoyment of life in Boston are the goals of the community.

Then, our favorite speaker, Paul Spooner, spoke about the history and significance of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Paul has been a key activist since Independent Living was a grassroots movement, and was present at the signing of the ADA. He mentioned segregation and inequality, and discrimination as important motivators for the legislation. "As an American, July 4 is our day of independence. But as an American with a disability, July 26, 1990 will always be my day of freedom". Paul went on to mention the Olmstead Act of 1999 which specifies that services need to be available in the community.

Photos from the event can be seen at the [MWCIL website](#). Click on the PHOTOS button on the right.



Local Public Transportation



Three MetroWest towns recently got vans equipped with lifts for riders with disabilities from the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority. "Starting July 22, Hopkinton, Holliston and Sudbury will each get a loaned, 12-seat Ford van through the state Department of Transportation Mobility Assistance Program at no cost. Each van also includes space for two wheelchairs." Read more about this

good news in a [MetroWest Daily News report](#).

As the baby boomers age, and more people can't drive, the need for public transportation increases. Many of our suburbs have little public transportation, and even less for people with disabilities. The MetroWest Daily News recently published an [article](#) describing this issue.

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are a very real threat to Massachusetts residents. Most communities do not have adequate drainage for the intense rainfall, and flooding can occur. High winds can knock over trees and structures, causing a loss of power and other services.



Because of this threat, [MEMA](#) (MA Emergency Management Agency) has recently published tips for individuals who require additional assistance. [Download the report](#) for complete information. Here are some highlights:

- Create a Personal Support Network, or Self Help Team to help you identify and acquire resources, as well as assist you during an emergency. Include people from home, school, work, and where ever you spend significant amounts of time.
- Complete a Personal Assessment of what your capabilities and limitation, and what assistance you need.
- Become informed about your community's Emergency Plans, evacuation routes and shelter locations.
- Learn about your community's Alerting/Warning Systems.
- Contact your local Emergency Management Director to learn about available services.
- Develop a Disaster Supply Kit for 3-5 days. Plan a Portable Kit for evacuating.
- Make an Emergency Plan including family communications, and plans and back-up plans with your service providers.

Super Committee Info

Along with raising the debt ceiling in August, legislators also agreed to a new Super Committee of 12 legislators. Their mission is to come up with at least \$1.2 trillion more in spending cuts, with \$1.5 trillion a more desired outcome. If they fail to propose an agreement, or if the Senate and House fail to approve their agreement, then \$1.2 trillion in cuts will be automatically allocated evenly among the Pentagon's budget and programs for the middle class. These "trigger" cuts are supposedly a big enough incentive to each party so that the committee members will compromise and work together. We'll see.

Democrats from the House of Representatives

- James Clyburn of South Carolina
- Chris Van Hollen of Maryland
- Xavier Becerra of California

Republicans from the House of Representatives

- Jeb Hensarling of Texas
- Dave Camp of Michigan
- Fred Upton of Michigan

Democrats from the Senate

- Patty Murray of Washington
- **John Kerry of Massachusetts**
- Max Baucus of Montana

Republicans from the Senate:

- Jon Kyl of Arizona
- Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania
- Rob Portman of Ohio

Sept 16 - Deadline for supercommittee to hold its first meeting.

Oct 14 - Deadline for House and Senate committees to submit recommendations to supercommittee, if they choose to do so.

Nov 23 - Deadline for supercommittee to vote on plan with at least \$1.5 trillion in savings.

Dec 2 - If supercommittee approves plan, deadline to submit report and legislative language to President and Congress.

Dec. 9 - If legislation is approved by the supercommittee, each committee receiving a referral of the supercommittee bill must report that bill without amendment by this deadline.

Dec. 23 - Deadline for House and Senate votes on supercommittee plan.

Dec. 31 - Deadline for House and Senate to vote on a balanced budget amendment to the constitution (cannot vote sooner than Oct.1).

Jan 1 - If Congress has not passed a joint resolution of disapproval, Secretary of Treasury is authorized to raise the debt limit by an additional \$500 billion. Any agreed upon deficit savings from the supercommittee would be credited against the \$1.2 trillion sequestration, i.e. across the board cuts in non-exempt programs.

Jan 15 - If the supercommittee's plan fails, or falls short of \$1.2 trillion in savings, sequestration would be triggered and start in 2013.

The president's third and final debt-increase is likely to come some time in early 2012.

(Thanks to AAPD for the timetable!)

Paul Kahn PCA Service Award Save the Date!

September 15, 2011 - Annual PCA Service Award Ceremony
The Paul Kahn PCA Service Award will be presented on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. in a ceremony at Nurses Hall in the Massachusetts State House.
Senator Pat Jehlen and Rep. Kay



Kahn will co-host this event. Attending the event will be PCA's, their clients, union leadership, legislators and other invited guests.

Ruth and Paul Kahn

Five PCA's from across the Commonwealth will be honored for "the selfless work they perform to enable individuals with disabilities and elders to lead more independent and productive lives." These awards honor not only five individuals but the dedicated work of the more than 27,000 PCAs working in the MassHealth program throughout the Commonwealth. For more information on the awards, please go to [Award Winners](#).

PCAs, consumers and agency staff are invited to attend. To confirm your attendance and get more information about this event or for special accommodations, please contact Michelle Byrd @ 617-210-5715.



2010 Award Winners

President Obama and the ADA

President Obama released a [Proclamation](#) on this important anniversary. ..."Despite these advancements, there is more work to be done, and my Administration remains committed to ending all forms of discrimination and upholding the rights of Americans with disabilities. The Department of Justice continues to strengthen enforcement of the ADA by ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to community-based services that allow them to lead independent lives in the communities of their choosing. Under provisions of the Affordable Care Act, insurers will no longer be able to engage in the discriminatory practice of denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions, and Americans with disabilities will have greater control over their health care choices. And last year, I signed an Executive Order establishing the Federal Government as a model employer for individuals with disabilities, placing a special focus on recruitment and retention of public servants with disabilities across Federal agencies."...

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