



February 2012

Issue: 20

## MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.

### Budget Season

Greetings!

The Budget Season has begun. We hope you read the News Flash we recently sent out. Our job going forward is to stay informed and talk to our legislators! Transportation is also a hot topic.

We've also shared details of several local upcoming fairs and expos, as well as adaptive recreational opportunities.

On the calendar is the annual Statewide Independent Living Education Day on April 4 at the State House 11:00 a.m. Staff and Consumers from MWCIL will travel to the State House and join the other 10 Independent Living Centers and other advocates in educating our legislators.

from Paul W. Spooner, Executive Director

### Transportation

Hearings continue on the proposed rate and service changes. About 100 people attended Framingham's Valentine's Day meeting. Laura Krantz of [MetroWest Daily News](#) covered the event, focusing on the hardships the increases will mean to people who can least afford it. Several legislators attended, including State Sen. Karen Spilka and representatives Chris Walsh, Tom Sannicandro, Carolyn Dykema and Tom Conroy. Selectmen from Ashland and Natick voiced objections. Susan Petroni of the [Framingham Patch](#) also reported on the hearing.

Monday night's hearing in Boston heard strong objections according to the [Westborough Patch](#). The [Patriot Ledger](#) reports on Quincy Mayor Thomas Koch urging residents to attend Wednesday night's hearing in Quincy. Over 300 residents attended a Hingham hearing on February 8 according to [Boston.com](#).

[DPCMA](#) (Disability Policy Consortium) has set up an easy-to-use web page so that you can tell your legislators exactly how you feel about these transportation proposals. Include details about your personal use of public transportation and what the changes would mean to your life.

[Six additional hearings](#) have been added in Fitchburg, Winthrop, Haverhill, Revere, Hull and Brighton.



#### In This Issue

[Transportation](#)

[SSP Q and A](#)

[Acquired Brain Injury Waivers](#)

[Summer Camps](#)

[Autism Fair](#)

[Ms. Wheelchair 2012](#)

[Winter Recreation](#)

[Oregon Lawsuit](#)

[SSDI](#)

[Author Interview](#)

[Donate](#)



#### The Story of a Beautiful Girl

View or read this [PBS Interview with Rachel Simon](#) about her bestseller titled [The Story of Beautiful Girl](#). The book "explores empathy and tolerance in the form of a love story where characters with disabilities overcome heavyweight

Some legislators have met with MBTA officials to discuss the proposals, but according to this article by [Kyle Cheney in Wicked Local](#), no alternatives were suggested. We look forward to hearing constructive solutions from our legislators!

## MA SSI State Supplement Program (SSP) Questions and Answers

We recently sent out a News Flash giving an overview of upcoming changes to the state's SSP program. Meanwhile, the state has compiled a list of questions and answers that were discussed at informational meetings. Download the [Questions and Answers](#) for more specifics.

## Open Enrollment for Acquired Brain Injury Waivers

From May 1-21, 2012, eligible brain injury survivors can enroll in the ABI Waiver program. The ABI Waiver Program enables eligible brain injury survivors to move from nursing homes, chronic care or rehabilitation hospitals into the community. Medicaid and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) have contracted with the Brain Injury Association - Mass to develop an outreach strategy to share information about the Acquired Brain Injury Waiver Program.

The New England Index has posted a [Fact Sheet](#) with more information.

Questions: Call 800-242-0030 or visit [www.biama.org](http://www.biama.org)

## Summer Camp and Recreation Expo for Children with Special Needs

Where:  
Framingham High School Cafeteria  
115 A Street, Framingham, MA 01701

When:  
Sunday, March 11 Noon-3 p.m.

Come to the 5th Annual Summer Camp and Recreation Expo for Children with Special Needs to meet and learn about summer camps and recreational organizations in Massachusetts and the surrounding area. Speak directly with the representatives, pick up literature and get fully informed about what is out there for your child.

For additional information:  
Web site: [www.f-sepac.org](http://www.f-sepac.org)  
Email: [campexpo@f-sepac.org](mailto:campexpo@f-sepac.org)

obstacles." Ms. Simon talks passionately about society, institutions, and people with disabilities in this interview with Judy Woodruff.

### Donations

If you appreciate MWCIL and the support it provides you, please consider a year-end 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.

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

### About Us:

**MWCIL website**  
(past issues are available at our website)

### Email

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Snow Date: Sunday, March 18

## Adolescent and Adult Autism Resource Fair

This free event is by [Autism Alliance of Metrowest](#) (a Program of Advocates Inc).

Invited autism experts in following fields: Medical care, Housing, Technology, Recreation, Legal and Financial, Dental care, Insurance, Vocation, Employment, Day habilitation. Learn more about available community resources.

When: Saturday, March 31, 2012, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Where: Morse Institute Library, 14 East Central Street, Natick

Email: [autimalliance@earthlink.net](mailto:autimalliance@earthlink.net)

Phone: (508) 652-9900

More info online:

<http://www.autismalliance.org/specialevents.htm>

## Ms. Wheelchair 2012 Contest

When: Saturday, March 3, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Where: Finnegan's Gymnasium, MA Hospital School, 3 Randolph Street, Canton, MA

Entry Fee: \$100 due by February 15

Phone: Autumn Grant at (774) 501- 1185

Website: [www.mswheelchairmass.org](http://www.mswheelchairmass.org)

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/mswheelchairmassfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/mswheelchairmassfoundation)

Who is eligible?

- MA resident
- Between ages of 21-60
- Any marital status
- Using wheelchair for 100% of your active daily mobility

Ms. Wheelchair is not a beauty contest. Contestants are judged on their accomplishments, self-perception, and communication skills in the following:

- Personal Interviews
- On-stage Interviews
- Platform Speech

***The winner will compete at Nationals for the title of Ms. Wheelchair America 2013!***

Winter Sports

MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) continues to improve its listings of accessible sports throughout Massachusetts. Visit the [DCR Universal Access webpage](#) for details.

[Waypoint Adventure](#) is for people of all ages and abilities. This winter you can sign up for snowshoeing / winter hikes at the Assobet River Wildlife Refuge in Sudbury and at Mount Willard at the White Mountain National Forest in NH. Contact Adam Combs at (978)417-0315 or [acombs@waypointadventure.org](mailto:acombs@waypointadventure.org).

[AbilityPlus](#) has programs at Mount Snow in Vermont, and Attitash and Wildcat in NH.

[All Out Adventures](#) in western MA has a few more weekend activities scheduled.

Chapter of Disabled Sports at Northeast Passage offers cross country skiing and competitive sports such as sled hockey and quad rugby. Located at University of New Hampshire's Durnham campus. For more information or to register for any of Northeast Passage's programs, call (603) 862-0070 or email: [northeast.passage@unh.edu](mailto:northeast.passage@unh.edu).

CHD Disability Resources - Adaptive Sports and Activities provides barrier-free recreational and competitive opportunities for people of all skill levels and age groups, as well as their family and friends in the Springfield area. Includes ice sledding, adaptive skating, and down hill skiing events. Email Nancy Bazanchuk [atnbazanchuk@chd.org](mailto:atnbazanchuk@chd.org) or (413) 737-1426, (413) 221-9532 to receive an email notification of "CHD's Disability Resources Weekly Update" and information about upcoming events. CHD is looking for Junior Players with physical disabilities and are able to use their upper body to hit a puck to participate in sled hockey.

[Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation](#) (formerly Maine Handicapped Skiing), located in Newry, Maine, offers skiing lessons at four of Maine's finest ski resorts: Alpine skiing and snowboarding at Sunday River Ski Resort, Sugarloaf and Saddleback. Nordic skiing and snowshoeing at Sunday River XC Center and Pineland Farms. (800) 639-7770.

[New England Disabled Sports](#) is based at Loon Mountain and offers skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and a biathlon. For additional information, call (603) 745-6281 ext 5663 or [info@nedisabledsports.org](mailto:info@nedisabledsports.org).

[New England Handicapped Sports Association](#) is located at Mount Sunapee, NH. and provides ski and snowboard opportunities. For additional information, call, (603) 763-9158, ask for Tom Kersey, Executive Director or [info@nehsa.org](mailto:info@nehsa.org)

[The Outdoor Enrichment Program at Carroll Center for the Blind](#) has several alpine and cross country ski trips for people who have visual impairments or who are blind. Contact Arthur O'Neil at [arthur.oneill@carroll.org](mailto:arthur.oneill@carroll.org) for dates.

[Stride Adaptive Sports](#), based in upstate New York, has winter sports programs at Jiminy Peak in western MA. They

offer lessons Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 6 - 9:30PM. Also takes special requests. Contact the STRIDE office for application and to register at (518) 598-1279 or [info@stride.org](mailto:info@stride.org).

[Sudbury Adaptive Winter Sports and Recreation](#) has a wide variety of activities. For additional information contact Anna at (978) 443-3257 or [wooda@sudbury.ma.us](mailto:wooda@sudbury.ma.us).

[Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports](#) offers programs at Pico, Bolton Valley and Sugarbush Mountains in Vermont. Contact Erin Fernandez, Executive Director, for information at (802) 786-4991 or email [director@vermontadaptive.org](mailto:director@vermontadaptive.org).

Thanks to the Disability Policy Consortium for this extensive listing.

## Oregon Lawsuit Against Segregated Workshops

"Advocates for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities filed a class action lawsuit on January 25, 2012 challenging Oregon's failure to provide supported employment services to more than 2,300 state residents who are segregated in sheltered workshops where they perform mundane tasks, such as folding UPS bags.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court, charges state officials with violating the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act by confining individuals with disabilities to segregated settings where they have little - if any - interaction with non-disabled peers. Moreover, they are paid far below the state's minimum wage of \$8.80 for doing rote tasks that offer no training, no skills, and no advancement...."

Read More at [DisabilityRightsOregon.org](http://DisabilityRightsOregon.org).

"The United Cerebral Palsy Association of Oregon and Southwest Washington along with eight individuals representing thousands of Oregonians with intellectual or physical disabilities filed a class action lawsuit Wednesday against Gov. John Kitzhaber and top managers at the Department of Human Services."

## SSDI

David Stapleton and David Mann, researchers at Mathematica, believe that SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) benefits are "failing both people with disabilities and taxpayers."

They discuss how things have changed, but SSDI has not: "our major programs define disability as an "inability to work" due to "medically determinable" impairments, even though advances in medicine and technology now make it possible for some people with very significant impairments to work. Structured around this definition, the current system discourages work and encourages long-term dependence on public supports. Of the nearly 13 million working-age Americans receiving SSDI or Supplemental Security

Income (SSI) benefits today, over half live in poverty. Most will continue to receive benefits until they become eligible for Social Security retirement benefits or die."

Their article in [The Hill's Congress Blog](#) also offers some ideas on restructuring services.

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