



Connecticut Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin

“Enhancing the effectiveness of disability activism by organizing and empowering individuals, families, groups and organizations”

Disability Rights is a Civil Rights Issue

November, 2005

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If you want something to appear in the next edition please send it to us - jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com or skoslosk03@comcast.net — or Jayne Kleinman, 55 Corrigan Ave., Meriden, CT 06451, 203-631-4800.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS AND REMOVALS: If you are not interested in receiving this Bulletin, or you would like this information sent to a different e-mail address, please e-mail Jayne Kleinman at jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com with your request.

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One Person Made a Difference Rosa Parks (1913-2005)

In 1955 Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of a segregated bus and helped launch the civil rights movement. She inspired others, including individuals with disabilities to fight for their civil rights.

Recently the *Washington Post* Outlook section carried an article entitled, "The Other Movement that Rosa Parks Inspired: By Sitting Down She Made Room for the Disabled". The article by Charles Wilson who has been doing research for a book about the disability rights movement is attached at the end of this Bulletin.

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Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Nov. 8 - 6:00-8:00 pm	Work Discrimination for People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing-	St. Francis Hospital - Hartford	EEOC, P&A, CDHI, & St. Francis Hospital	1-800-708-6796
Nov. 9 - 10:00 am	Legislative Hearing on Gaps in Medicare Drug Coverage	Legislative Office Building	Appropriations, Human Services, Public Health and Aging Committees	stoubman@ nhlegal.org
Nov. 9 - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm	Kathie Snow, nationally known speaker and disability advocate	Courtyard by Marriott - Orange	Milford Collaborative	cmccaps@aol.com
Nov. 9 – 8:30 am – 12:30 pm	Life, Works, and Words of Jean Vanier	St. Thomas Seminary - Bloomfield	MCC Institute on Disability and Community Inclusion	860-242-3304 or mmek2@aol.com
Nov. 13-15 7:30 pm	<i>Murderball</i> (the movie)	Cinestudio at Trinity College	Disability Awareness Theme	

			Housing Quad	
Nov. 13-18, Feb. 6-9, April 3-6	Social Role Valorization Events in Massachusetts	See article below	SRV Implementation Project and MA Alliance for Personal Action	yatessns@aol.com
Nov. 14 – 9:30 am – 12 noon	Improving Access to Services Using Universal Design	MDC Training Facility – Hartford	CT Clearinghouse	1-800-232-4424
Nov. 14-18	Demonstration of New Voting Machines (see article below)	Locations throughout the state	Secretary of State and P&A	Elanah Sherman 860-297-4322, 1-800- 842-7303, or elanah.sherman@po. state.ct.us
Nov. 15 – 9:30 am – 1 pm	Part 1 of USE Training (Understanding Special Education)	Office of Protection and Advocacy – 60 B Weston Street - Hartford	AFCAMP (see article below)	860-297-4358
Nov. 17 – 8 am – 12 noon	Reading Myths and Realities (see article below)	Norwalk Inn and Conference Center	Spednet of New Canaan, Smart Kids with LD, & New Canaan Public Schools	www.spednet.org/ readingmyths.htm
Nov. 17-20	National Conference - “Reclaiming Freedom: A Call to Action”	Sheraton Hartford	National Assn. for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA)	Narpa.org/narpa 334-491-6277
Nov. 19	Successful Transition to College and the Workplace	NEAT Marketplace, Hartford	Nonverbal Learning Disorders Assn.	NLDA@nlda.org
Nov. 19 – 9:30 am – 12 noon	Emergency Preparedness in NE Connecticut	Buchanan Center at Mansfield Library	Northeast Regional Advocacy Network	Patty Hope
Nov. 21 - 6-9 pm	New Haven Area Parent Support Group Meeting Topic: Autism	Dixwell Newhallville Mental Health Center – 660 Winchester Ave. – New Haven	PEETA (Parent Empowerment through Education, Training, and Advocacy)	Sincilina Beckett – 203-627-4985
Nov. 30 – 1-4 pm	Transportation Institute	Legislative Office Building	UConn Center on Disabilities	Jayne Kleinman – 1- 860-679-1575 or toll

		Hartford		free 1-866-623-1315
Dec. 3 – 7:30 pm	Benefit Concert – Tim Maynard and Carolyn Fisher	Manchester Community College – SBM Auditorium	MCC Institute on Disability and Community Inclusion	
Dec. 6 10:00 am - 3:00 pm	Lessons Learned: A Forum on Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities	Northeast Utilities - Berlin	Developmental Disabilities Network	jjagger@uchc.edu 860-679-1584
Dec. 11-14	White House Conference on Aging	Washington, D.C.	US Administration on Aging	www.whcoa.gov
Sept. 16, 2006	Disability Advocacy Collaborative Convention	CT Expo Center - Hartford	Disability Advocacy Collaborative	jjk1009@hotmail.com 203-238-9391

Disability Advocacy Collaborative Update

Much has been happening with the Disability Advocacy Collaborative, but this issue of the Bulletin will focus on developments in two regions of the state – the northeast area and the Greater Waterbury area (see articles that follow). Bulletin editors do want to acknowledge the receipt of second year funding from the Council on Developmental Disabilities (\$50,000) and the approval of a volunteer position through VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America). More next month.

NADR and Independence Northwest Support Collaborative Initiative

On October 20th Collaborative Project Director Stan Kosloski and Assistant Jayne Kleinman were welcomed at the monthly meeting of the Northwest Advocates for Disability Rights (NADR). Eighteen individuals, representing a broad cross-section of disabilities, were in attendance. Chera Simpson, Community Advocate for Independence NorthWest, wrote the following article for the Bulletin:

“Thanks you so much for your informative speech on the statewide Disability Advocacy Collaborative and the Disability Convention. As you are aware, NADR is an arm of Independence Northwest. We are forty members strong and as you experienced, the members are an incredible group consisting of not only people with disabilities but of community leaders such as the local Area Agency on Aging, a non-profit mental health agency, a housing development project, and a child psychologist from the local school

system. With this type of community involvement, we are able to reach a greater number of people with disabilities who become actively involved with NADR.

We have to date had many successes. We have been featured in local newspapers four times for our work on housing, transportation, accessible polling places, and other local issues. We attempt to work on one federal, one state, and one local issue at a time, but always allow room for emerging issues. Our most recent local success was the installation of audible traffic signals in Waterbury [See related article below]. I am honored to be the Community Advocate for this group and to see their wonderful accomplishments.

Again, thank you for your wonderful speech. All our NADR members have voted to support your efforts in any way we can. Independence Northwest is behind your efforts and will continue to remain active in your endeavors and support the great work you are doing.”

Chera Simpson

Also from NADR: Coming Soon - An Audible Pedestrian Signal

Submitted by John A. Casolo (NADR member):

“With the encouragement and support of NADR (Northwest Activists for Disability Rights), along with a well written article in the Waterbury Republican newspaper, there will be an audible pedestrian signal (APS) installed at the corners of Leavenworth and West Main Streets in Waterbury. I would also like to acknowledge the personal involvement of John Waiculonis, Meg Robertson, and Lukas Franck. With their expertise, and the deep concern and interest of Dennis Quevis, the traffic engineer of Waterbury, the project will soon be a reality.

Being totally blind and assisted by my wonderful guide dog Gregger I know only too well the dangers of crossing busy and extremely noisy streets. The addition of the APS at this location will not only make the crossing easier for the blind and visually impaired but it will insure their safety. This has been a thorn in my side for several years, and I feel confident that this is only the beginning for improving safe, independent travel for the blind and visually impaired in our city. My sincere thanks to all.”

From Northeastern Connecticut

The Northeast Regional Network of the Disability Advocacy Collaborative is hosting a program at the Buchanan Center at the Mansfield Library on Saturday, November 19 from 9:30-noon for people with disabilities, families, and advocates. Entitled "Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities: As a Person - Are You Ready? As a State - Are We Ready?" will include presentations by Thomas Gavaghan – Area 3 Coordinator for the State Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security - and John Jackman - Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Town of Mansfield.

Patty Hope, Senior Services Director for the Town of Mansfield, is serving as the regional contact person for the Collaborative. The Northeast Regional Network is one of several regional networks being formed by the Disability Advocacy Collaborative.

Voting Machine Demonstrations and Disability Focus Groups

Connecticut will soon be purchasing new voting machines, and the Office of the Secretary of the State is sponsoring voting machine demonstrations across Connecticut this month. All residents are invited to learn about the machines, try them out and answer survey questions. Responses will be analyzed in a report that will influence the final choice of a new accessible voting system for the state.

As a unique part of the process, the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (P&A) is organizing disability focus groups at four of the five demonstration sites. Transportation is available. After trying out the machines, participants will have the opportunity to offer their in-depth comments and opinions to the group facilitators. In response to statistical research needs, focus groups will be disability-specific. Focus groups will be limited to twelve people, so early registration is necessary to reserve a spot.

You may participate in the demonstration process even if you don't attend a focus group, but participation in a group means that *your detailed opinions as a person with a disability* will be included in the report.

The schedule for demonstrations and focus groups is below. Please note that there will be no focus group held at Buckland Hills Mall and that two focus groups will be held in Woodbridge.

Monday, November 14

Buckland Hills Mall, Manchester (194 Buckland Hills Drive) 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

No disability focus group (but transportation available)

Tuesday, November 15

Eastern CT State University, North Windham (83 North Windham Rd.) 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Focus group for people who have visual disabilities, 5:30 – 7:30

(Accommodation/transportation request date: by 4:00 p.m., Nov. 8)

Wednesday, November 16

Jewish Community Center, Woodbridge (360 Amity Rd.) 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Focus group for people with cognitive/ intellectual disabilities or acquired brain injuries, 3:30 – 5:30

Focus group for people who have mobility disabilities, 5:45 – 7:45

(Accommodation/transportation request date: by 4:00 p.m., Nov. 9)

Thursday, November 17

Bridgeport City Hall (45 Lyon Terrace) 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Focus group for people who are deaf or hearing impaired, 5 – 7
(Accommodation/transportation request date: by 4:00 p.m., Nov. 10)

Friday, November 18,

Southbury Town Hall (501 Main St.) 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Focus group for people who have mobility disabilities, 5 – 7
(Accommodation/transportation request date: by 4:00 p.m., Nov. 14)

No registration is necessary to attend the basic demonstration. To register for a disability focus group and request transportation and/or a communication aid or service, please contact Elanah Sherman at 860-297-4322 (V), 800-842-7303 (V/TTY), 860-297-4380 (TTY) or Elanah.Sherman@po.state.ct.us

Note: The November 17 focus group for people who are deaf or hearing impaired will be sign language interpreted without advance request. Registration, however, is still required.

P.A.T.H.S. Renewal Grant Approved

The University of Connecticut A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Research, and Service has received a renewal grant from the Developmental Disabilities Council for their project entitled P.A.T.H.S. (Plan for the Achievement of Transportation Coordination in Human Services).

The purpose of the grant continues to be partnering with the Department of Transportation and other transportation providers, organizations and individuals to ensure the interests of people with disabilities are represented in the DOT State Action Plan and other transportation services provided in Connecticut. ConnDOT has said they are committed to designing and implementing a responsive, comprehensive, coordinated transportation system for people with low incomes, older adults and people with disabilities. ConnDOT received a grant to develop the State Action Plan from United We Ride in 2005.

Seven regional forums have been held statewide and a Transportation Institute will be held November 30 to educate legislators and transportation providers about the priorities and needs expressed by citizens with disabilities. The Institute will be held at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford from 1 - 4 pm. Stephen Korta, State DOT Commissioner, will speak and the key findings from the seven forums will be explored. The priorities identified include increasing community access, expansion of existing services, collaboration, education of providers and consumers, and safety issues. Pre-registration for the Institute is required.

For more information or to become involved please contact Jayne J. Kleinman, MS, CRC, Transportation Project Facilitator, University of Connecticut A.J.

Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Research, and Service, 263 Farmington Avenue - MC 6222, Farmington, CT 06030-6222, phone: (860) 679-1575, fax: (860) 679-1571, TTY: (860) 679-1502, Toll free: (866) 623-1315.

ADA Coalition Celebrates Thirteen Years!

The ADA Coalition of Connecticut celebrated its thirteenth anniversary at its Annual Meeting on October 24, 2005 at the Farmington Club in Farmington. Elected as officers for the 2005-2006 year were Jan VanTassel – President, Marc Gallucci – Vice President, Carolyn Newcombe –Secretary, and Stan Kosloski – Treasurer. Greetings from Governor M. Jodi Rell were shared and Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz was the keynote speaker. Outgoing President Candace Low was recognized for her four years of dedicated service to the organization.

New Parent Advocacy Group Forms

An energetic new parent advocacy group has formed in New Haven, offering education, training and support to parents of children with disabilities. Named PEETA (Parent Empowerment through Education, Training, and Advocacy), the group is affiliated with the Hartford area parent group AFCAMP. Parents, caregivers, and families who live in the New Haven area are urged to contact Sincilina Beckett, Coordinator, at 203-627-4985 to get involved or to receive more information. Among its activities are the hosting of monthly support group meetings and the provision of support at PPT meetings.

PEETA is sponsoring a support group meeting on the topic of autism on Monday, November 21 from 6-9 pm at the Dixwell Newhallville Mental Health Center on 660 Winchester Avenue in New Haven. Child care and transportation can be provided, and advance registration is required.

And a Veteran Group Continue its Good Works

AFCAMP (African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities) is sponsoring two workshops in November on topics of interest to parents and family advocates, community agencies, and service providers. Both events will be held at the Office of Protection and Advocacy, 60 B Weston Street in Hartford from 9:30 am – 1 pm. Transportation is available for Hartford residents. On November 15, 2005 Part 1 of the training module Understanding Special Education (USE) will be presented, and on November 30 the Part 2 will be offered, with an emphasis on the Least Restriction Environment (LRE) mandate.

In addition, an evening support group meeting for parents raising children with disabilities will be held on Friday, November 18. This event will cover the LRE requirement and will take place at United Cerebral Palsy at 80 Whitney Street in Hartford.

For more information contact AFCAMP at 860-297-4358.

Reading Myths and Realities

Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities, the Special Ed Network of New Canaan, and the New Canaan Public Schools are presenting a workshop on Thursday, November 17 from 8:00 am – 12 noon at the Norwalk Inn and Conference. The speaker will be Margie Gillis, EdD, the Director of the Haskins Laboratories Early Reading Success Program. Her topic is “Reading Myths and Realities: What We Know About Reading and What the Research has to Say”. Cost to attend is \$25 in advance, \$35 at the door. You may register on line by going to www.spednet.org/ReadingMyths.htm.

Discriminated Against at Work? What Can you Do? A Workshop for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is presenting a workshop on employment discrimination for people who have hearing disabilities on Tuesday, November 8, 2005, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Chawla Auditorium at St. Francis Hospital, 114 Woodland Street in Hartford.

Attorney Elizabeth Marcus, Mediator at the Boston EEOC Office will present this workshop, which will be interpreted by EEOC Staff Interpreters. CART will also be provided. Topics will include: what does EEOC do? What constitutes employment discrimination? How to file a complaint with the EEOC?

For more information call toll free 1-800-708-6796 (TDD/Voice). The event is sponsored by the State Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, and Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

"Lessons Learned: A Forum on Disaster Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities"

On December 6, 2005 a forum sponsored by the Developmental Disabilities Network is being held to address concerns about disaster preparedness for persons with disabilities. The forum is titled "Lessons Learned: A Forum on Disaster Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities." The goals of the forum are to learn from hurricane Katrina and other recent disasters, to explore Connecticut's emergency management and disaster preparedness plans, and to learn what people with disabilities and their families can do to prepare for natural or man-made disasters.

The event will be held at the Northeast Utilities Auditorium, 107 Selden Street, Berlin Turnpike in Berlin, and will run from 10 am – 3 pm. For information or to register contact: Jessica Jagger at 860-679-1584 or jjagger@uchc.edu.

The Developmental Disabilities Network is a partnership of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Connecticut Office of Protection & Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, and the UConn Center on disability.

Successful Transitions to College and the Workplace

The Nonverbal Learning Disorders Association is holding a conference on Saturday, November 19, 2005 at the N.E.A.T. Marketplace, 120 Holcomb Street, Hartford. The focus of the event, which will run from 8:30 am – 5:15 pm, will be on common sense, systematic approaches to gaining the skills that work for people with non-verbal learning disorders and related spectrum disorders. Sessions will include valuable information on: Assistive Technology, The Rights and Responsibilities of People with Disabilities, Preparation for College, Post-Secondary Educational Settings, Negotiating Pathways to Productive Employment and Executive Function Skills. The cost of attending is set at \$139. To get more information or to register on-line go to: www.nlda.org.

Council for Persons with Disabilities Seeks New Members

The State Department of Social Services is recruiting new members to serve on its Council for Persons with Disabilities, which serves as an advisory group to the DSS Commissioner. They have received seven applications to date and are continuing the recruitment drive in order to include persons currently on DSS Medicaid Waiver programs as well as representatives of differing ethnic and racial groups. Anyone who has is interested or has suggestions of persons who would be an asset to the Council is encouraged to call (860) 424-5022.

Classical Guitarist to Benefit DeMarasse Memorial Fund

Tim Maynard, classical guitarist, will give a special holiday performance on December 3 (7:30 pm) to benefit the Regina DeMarasse Memorial Fund. He promises to enchant you with holiday favorites and some of his own compositions off his new holiday CD “Brumalia”.

Maynard will be joined by special guest Carolyn Fisher, a uniquely talented soprano. The event will be held in the SBM Charitable Foundation Auditorium at Manchester Community College. “Holidays on Guitar” is a presentation of the MCC Institute on Disability and Community Inclusion. General Admission is \$10, \$5 for students and seniors.

***Murderball* to be Shown at Trinity**

Murderball, a movie featuring fierce rivalry, stopwatch suspense, and larger than life personalities, will be shown at Trinity College's Cinestudio from November 13-15. Winner of the Documentary Audience Award and a Special Jury Prize at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, *Murderball* is a film about tough, highly competitive rugby players who happen to be quadriplegic. An announcement about the movie notes "in addition to smashing chairs, it will smash every stereotype you ever had". *Murderball* will be shown each night at 7:30 pm, and the Monday night showing will be followed by a dialogue with the Connecticut Jammers, Connecticut's quad rugby team.

The showing of *Murderball* is being sponsored by the Disability Awareness Theme Housing Quad at Trinity College.

YLF Seeking Student Applications

The Connecticut Youth Leadership Program has begun recruiting high school students for the eighth annual Youth Leadership Forum, scheduled for July 31 – August 3, 2006 at the University of Connecticut, Storrs campus.

YLF brings together thirty five high school students with disabilities from throughout Connecticut for a four-day forum focusing on enhancing leadership skills. The delegates will explore personal leadership skills, define career goals and leave the forum with a very specific action plan that describes what they will do back in their local communities to enhance the lives of people with disabilities.

It is the goal of the YLF to select students from all regions of Connecticut who represent a wide range of disabilities and ethnic backgrounds. Students must be either sophomores or juniors this year. Students in non-graded programs must be returning to high school for at least one year. Copies of the application can be obtained by logging on to www.ctylf.org.

Anyone with questions about the program should contact Karen Halliday at (860) 633-8403 or KarenH1203@aol.com, or Kathleen Kabara at (860) 713-5231 or kathleen.kabara@po.state.ct.us.

“Improving Access to Services Using Universal Design”

All service providers are faced with the challenge of making the services they offer accessible to the greatest number of people. Universal Design embodies a set of principles to be used to create services and environments that are accessible to all people instead of our current practice of making specific adaptations for each particular population with a different set of needs. Given that 20% of the U.S. population has some level of disability and 9.9% have a severe disability, learning ways to provide services in the most efficient and effective manner is critical for all of our institutions (government agencies, service providers, educational institutions, etc). The workshop noted below will provide useful strategies for agency administrators and direct service staff to help make services available to the greatest number of people.

“Improving Access to Services Using Universal Design”

Instructor: Lauri DiGalbo, M.Ed., CRC, LPC - Consultant, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, State Department of Social Services

Date and Time: November 14, 2005, 9:30 a.m. - noon

Where: MDC Training Facility, 125 Maxim Road, Hartford, CT

Register online at: www.ctclearinghouse.org/registration/ImprovingAccess.asp, or by calling Connecticut Clearinghouse at 800-232-4424. Space is limited.

SRV Events in Massachusetts

The SRV (Social Role Valorization) Implementation Project and the Massachusetts Alliance for Personal Action are offering several events for human services workers over the next several months. The events will lay out a helpful framework for service workers to use in implementing relevant and effective service in the lives of vulnerable, socially devalued people. Four-day workshops on “Introduction to Social Role Valorization” will take place in Massachusetts on February 6-9, 2006, and April 3-6, 2006. A practicum with SRV using the PASSING tool will be held November 13-18, 2005. This 5½ day event, done in teams, will give participants an opportunity to work with the ideas of SRV to craft a vision of good service, and is particularly helpful for those designing services and/or assessing service quality.

For more information call Carl Cignoni at 413-320-5367 (cvcignoni@msn.com) or Jack Yates at 508-946-9718 (yatessns@aol.com).

Movies Offered with Closed Captioning!

The Showcase Cinemas at Buckland Hills in Manchester have begun offering closed captioned movies every day in one of its theaters. National Amusements, the multiplex owners, plans to use the same theater almost exclusively for new releases. This development is good news for individuals with hearing disabilities, as up until recently the Crown Palace Theaters in Hartford were the only local theaters offering closed captionings, but on a much more limited basis.

The technology being used is Rear Window Captioning (RWC) that allows captions to be shown only to people who want them. With RWC, the captions appear in reverse on a display in the back of the theater, and the viewer reads them off a reflector that is attached by a flexible arm to the seat's cup-holder.

New ADA Transportation Guidance from DOT

The Disability Rights and Education Defense Fund (DREDF) reports that four new guidance documents interpreting the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) ADA regulations have been promulgated by DOT. These four documents explain the intent of the ADA and its regulation to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities. For example, one of the documents states that transit agencies must provide paratransit service in a way that goes beyond "curb-to-curb service" if necessary to actually get the passenger from his or her point of origin to his or her destination. The documents are entitled:

- Origin to Destination Service
- Full-Length, Level-Boarding Platforms in New Commuter and Intercity Rail Stations
- Paratransit Requirements for 5311-Funded Fixed-Route Service Operated by Private Entities, and
- Use of "Segways" on Transportation Vehicles.

The new DOT documents can be found at www.fta.gov/ada under the heading "DOT Disability Law Guidance."

New Medicare Drug Plan: A Confusing Mess?

Here are some of the recent reports and e-mails received re: the new Medicare Prescription Drug Plan that goes into effect on January 1:

- Beverly Walton, President of the Mental Health Association of Connecticut, has pointed out the **problems the new plan will present "dual eligibles"** (i.e., people on both Medicare and Medicaid, estimated to be 11.6 percent of Medicare beneficiaries). Individuals that fall in this category may no longer be exempt from co-pays, pharmacies may no longer be required to fill their prescriptions if they cannot afford the co-pays, and they may no longer choose their pharmacy.
- In order to help educate Connecticut legislators and increase the chances of getting a special General Assembly session to meet before January 1 to fix the

- serious drug access gaps under the new Medicare drug benefit, a **public hearing** will be held on November 9 in Room 2C of the Legislative Office Building starting at starting at 10:00 a.m. This hearing is jointly sponsored by four legislative committees: Appropriations, Human Services, Public Health and Aging. Public testimony will be allowed.
- A recent note from Sheldon Taubman, respected New Haven Legal Assistance Attorney, made the following request: “there is concern among legislators about whether the Governor is convinced of the need to act on this immediately, before Jan. 1st (and the next regular legislative session). It is thus very important for the Governor's office to receive lots of calls urging immediate action on this issue. She needs to hear about the urgent need to provide a complete wraparound, before Jan. 1st, so that dual eligible recipients and ConnPACE recipients will not suffer a loss in their drug coverage when the limited Medicare drug benefit goes into effect on that day. Please pick up the phone and **call the Governor** on her toll free number (800-406-1527) and say: PLEASE FIX MEDICARE PART D NOW!”
 - The State chapter of AARP has established a designated AARP CT Prescription Drug Campaign **toll-free hotline** (1-800-777-9210) to enable individuals to contact legislators and request they call the special session. “With your help, we can ensure that no one on ConnPACE or Medicaid receives a reduction in their promised drug benefits when the Medicare Part D coverage begins on Jan. 1, 2006.” If you have any questions or would like additional information, contact John Erlingheuser, AARP Advocacy Director, at 860-548-3165 or jerlingheuser@aarp.org.
 - Seniors are **frustrated with a Medicare help line** that seems to provide little assistance to elders, poor people, and people with disabilities. 89,000 people call the toll free Medicare hotline each day and many are still left with questions and a lack of understanding about Medicare drug coverage. The Government Accountability Office found 29% of callers received inaccurate information and 10% of calls got no answer at all.
 - A recent CNN/Gallup/USA Today poll shows **61% of seniors claim they don't fully understand Medicare Part D**. Only 37% said they had a limited understanding of the new program. This confusion, caused largely by the vast number of providers and overwhelming amount of information, has caused many seniors to decide against signing up for Part D. To make matters worse, regional versions of the coverage guides have some serious errors that could cost seniors money.
 - Justice For All reports **an error occurred in the “Medicare and You” handbook** in the comparison charts listing the Medicare Prescription Drug Plans, beginning with page.97-A. The electronic versions of the handbook are available on www.medicare.gov with the correct information.

NCIL Suggests Updated Housing Policy In Light Of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

NCIL (the National Council on Independent Living) has published a report on the principles that should be a part of a new housing policy that is needed in light of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. To see the report go to www.ncil.org.

Priced Out in 2004: Key Findings

In 2004, the average national rent for a modest one-bedroom housing unit climbed to a record high of \$676 – more than the entire monthly income of people with disabilities who rely on the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program to pay for housing and other basic needs. From 2002 to 2004, the cost of rental housing rose nationally from 105.5 percent to 109.6 percent of monthly SSI payments.” The percent of SSI needed to rent a one-bedroom housing unit in Connecticut? 102.5%.

To download a copy of *Priced Out in 2004* online go to www.tacinc.org and click on “Publications & Links.” *Priced Out in 2004* is listed under “Housing Publications.”

Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) Wants Feedback

The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) wants to focus test several Brain Injury Awareness Month 2006 information booklets designed for individuals with brain injury, family members, and professionals. All focus group participants must sign up using the link below. Participants, who are selected at random, will be asked to review educational materials and will be paid an honorarium. They are looking for:

- Persons with brain injury who may be facing social isolation issues such as loneliness or may be dealing with legal issues or the legal system. Please visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=462031408413>
- Family members Family members of persons with brain injury who are making, about to make or who recently made the transition from high school to college, work, or another post-secondary school option, those who may be dealing with legal issues, and those who may have communication difficulties. Please visit: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=242731408493>
- Professionals and para-professionals who are working with people with brain injury. Please visit: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=924051411320>

Newsline--a Nationwide Newspaper Service for People with Visual Disabilities

The National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut, in a partnership with the Board of Education Services for the Blind and CRIS Radio, sponsors *Newsline*, a nationwide newspaper service for people who are blind or visually impaired. Connecticut residents are now able to pick up a touch tone phone and listen to newspapers by using their phone keys.

This on-demand service enables individuals who cannot access print newspapers throughout the state to gain access to information in newspapers in the same time frame and with the same flexibility as their sighted friends and neighbors. Simply contact the outreach office at 860-289-1971, and you will either be sent an application or one will be filled out for you over the phone.

Information Technology Internships for College Students with Disabilities

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), through partnerships with Microsoft Corporation and the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, is pleased to announce two internship opportunities for college students with disabilities for summer 2006. Undergraduate students interested in pursuing careers in information technology are encouraged to apply. Accepted candidates will work in various agencies in the executive branch of the federal government. Roundtrip air travel and housing will be provided to interns, and each student will receive a stipend. Applications now available from www.aapd.com and must be received by December 12, 2005. If you have questions about the program write: aapdmsintern@aol.com.

Yes I Can! Award

Do you know a child or youth with a disability who has made outstanding achievements? Then nominate him or her for a ... Yes I Can! Award. The Foundation for Exceptional Children established the Yes I Can! International Awards Program in 1981 to acknowledge the achievements of children and youth with disabilities; to overcome barriers caused by public misconceptions; to encourage children and youth with disabilities to seek their highest potential; and to increase public awareness of the abilities, aspirations, and personal qualities of people with disabilities. "Contact <http://yesican.sped.org> or email yesican@cec.sped.org for more information.

Artists with Disabilities

VSA Arts, an international organization founded in 1974, is dedicated to providing opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in the visual, performing, and literary arts. Each year, VSA Arts sponsors juried exhibitions, performances, and festivals across the U.S. and in 60 countries worldwide. For aspiring artists, these events

provide exposure, recognition, and monetary awards that can be invaluable to their careers. Working at the state, national, and international level, VSA Arts reaches out to all artists and encourages them to sign up for their Artist Registry. VSA Arts is an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Registration is free. Visit www.vsarts.org to see what's happening in your area.

Star Wars Exhibition Breaks New Ground in Universal Design

The Museum of Science in Boston breaks new ground in universal design in its upcoming Star Wars: Where Science Meets Imagination exhibition. Universal design highlights include a first-of-its-kind Multimedia Tour and a host of multi-sensory experiences and presentation formats. For more information go to www.mos.org/doc/1073 and www.mos.org/doc/1223. The Museum is wheelchair accessible and offers programs and services for visitors with disabilities.

Please relay this Bulletin to your membership including those who do not have e-mail access. Suggest your membership go to the library and go onto www.kleinmanconsulting.com to view or print a copy. If you would like to see previous issues of the Bulletin, read about the background of the Collaborative or if you would like to be added to the mailing list, you may also go to www.KleinmanConsulting.com.

How can you find your federal Representatives and Senators? Go to www.congress.org and find the box under the heading "Write Elected Officials." Type in your Zip Code and press the "Enter" key. Then, when the names of your elected officials come on the screen, click on the word "Info" under the name of the elected official you want to contact. The telephone number will be listed on the page that comes up next. You may also call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 1-888-818-6641. The best way to contact your Member of Congress is via phone (or ideally in person). The best time to call either in CT or in Washington, D.C. is early in the morning.

"THE OTHER MOVEMENT THAT ROSA PARKS INSPIRED; BY SITTING DOWN, SHE MADE ROOM FOR THE DISABLED."

Charles Wilson, *Washington Post*, Oct.30, 2005

On an unseasonably warm September day in 1984, about a dozen men and women rolled their wheelchairs in front of a city bus that was pulling onto State Street in Chicago. Then they sat there and didn't move. The group had no secret agenda; they simply wanted to make a point. Days before, the Chicago Transit Authority had announced that it was purchasing 363 new public buses -- and that none of them would be equipped with wheelchair lifts to serve disabled passengers because the lifts had been deemed too expensive. This ragtag group of wheelchair riders, who were affiliated with a disability rights organization called ADAPT, or Americans Disabled for Accessible Public Transit, decided to protest that decision by obstructing a bus until the police carted them away. Every one of them wore a simple paper name tag, the sort that you would normally see at a meet-and-greet. They all said: "My name is Rosa Parks."

Rosa Parks' act of courage in Montgomery, Ala., in 1955 did more than dismantle the system of racial segregation on public transportation. Her refusal to give up her seat to a white man also created a legacy she never could have foreseen. It was through Parks' example that the disabled community transformed its own often disorganized cause into a unified disability rights movement. "Had it not been for Parks and the bus boycott, there is no question that the disability rights movement would have been light-years behind, if it would have ever occurred," says Michael Auberger, a disability rights activist who was one of the first to place his wheelchair in front of a bus in the early 1980s. "Her genius was that she saw the bus as the great integrator: It took you to work, it took you to play, it took you to places that you were never before seen. We began to see the bus the same way, too, and it empowered a group of people who had been just as disenfranchised as African Americans.

The disability rights movement could in no sense have been called a movement when Parks refused to yield her seat. At that time, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities reached over 70 percent, and organizations that rallied for rights for people with disabilities focused on solutions that were specific to a single disorder. "The disability community was fragmented," says Bob Kafka, a quadriplegic who broke his neck in 1973 and who was an early organizer for ADAPT. "The deaf community wanted interpreters. People with mobility issues wanted curb cuts. The blind wanted more sensory communication. Everyone saw themselves as a deaf person, or a blind person, or a mental health person. We were tossed salad, not fondue."

Parks' action offered these separate communities a strategy that unified their various wishes. "Rosa Parks energized us in that she was the perfect symbol for when the meek become militant," says Kafka. "She was someone who was willing to cross the line." And the fight for accessible public transportation was to be the single issue that catalyzed disparate disability groups into a common cause.

By the 1960s and '70s, many cities had introduced paratransit services that picked up disabled patients. The officials who controlled city budgets, though, typically stipulated that these buses could be used by an individual only a few times a month and that the buses could be used only by appointment. So, in the late '70s and early '80s, some activists began to extend the logic of Parks' silent act of defiance to their own cause: Buses that divided people into separate categories, they said, were inherently unequal. Disabled people shouldn't be limited to using paratransit buses. They deserved to ride the city buses, just like everyone else.

"How could you go to school, or go on a date, or volunteer somewhere if the only trips deemed worth funding for you were medical trips?" wrote ADAPT member Stephanie Thomas in her introduction to "To Ride the Public's Buses," a collection of articles about the early bus actions that appeared in *Disability Rag*. "How could you get a job if you could only get 3 rides a week? If you were never on time?" Parks' method of dissent -- sitting still -- was well suited to a community in which many people found themselves having to do that very thing all day long. Within two decades of her refusal to give up her seat, disabled people in cities across the country began staging their own "sit-ins" by parking their wheelchairs in front of ill-equipped city buses -- or, alternatively, by ditching their wheelchairs and crawling onto the stairs of the bus vestibules. Some of the sit-ins were individual acts of defiance. In Hartford, Conn., 63-year-old Edith Harris parked her wheelchair in front of 10 separate local buses on a single day after waiting nearly two hours for an accessible bus. Increasingly, though, the sit-ins were organized by ADAPT and involved many wheelchair users at a single location. These actions began to change both how disabled people were perceived and how they perceived themselves. "Without the history of Parks and Martin Luther King, the only argument that the disability community had was the Jerry Lewis Principle," explains Auberger. "The Poor Pathetic Cripple Principle. But if you ask a single disabled person and you show them that they can stop a bus, you've empowered that person. And you've made them feel they had rights."

The sit-ins also began to bring about concrete changes in the policies of urban transportation boards. In 1983, the city of Denver gave up its initial resistance and retrofitted all 250 of its buses with lifts after 45 wheelchair users blocked buses at the downtown intersection of Colfax Avenue and Broadway. Similar moves were made by Washington's Metro board in 1986 and by Chicago's transit authority in 1989. And in 1990, when the landmark Americans With Disabilities Act cleared Congress, the only provisions that went into effect immediately were those that mandated accessible public transportation. If Rosa Parks left a lasting legacy on the disability rights movement, it is important to recognize that it is a legacy that is largely unfinished. A restored version of the bus that Rosa Parks rode in Montgomery recently went on display at the Henry Ford Museum near Detroit, the city where Parks lived her last decades and died last Monday. Detroit's mayor, Kwame Kilpatrick, who is up for reelection on Nov. 8, memorialized Parks by saying that "she stood up by sitting down. I'm only standing here because of her."

Kilpatrick failed to mention a further irony, though: The Justice Department joined a suit against his city in March. It was initially filed in August 2004, by Richard Bernstein, a blind 31-year-old lawyer from the Detroit suburb of Farmington Hills, on behalf of four disabled inner-city clients. His plaintiffs said that they routinely waited three to four hours in severe cold for a bus with a working lift. Their complaint cited evidence that half of the lifts on the city's bus fleet was routinely broken. The complaint did not ask for compensation. It demanded only that the Motor City comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The city recently purchased more accessible buses, but the mayor didn't offer a plan for making sure the buses stayed in good working order. He has publicly disparaged Bernstein on radio as an example of "suburban guys coming into our community trying to raise up the concerns of people when this administration is going to the wall on this issue of disabled riders."

Mayor Kilpatrick is not going to the wall, and neither are many other mayors in this country. A 2002 federal Bureau of Transportation Statistics study found that 6 million Americans with disabilities still have trouble obtaining the transportation they need. Many civic leaders and officials at transit organizations have made arguments about the economic difficulty of installing lifts on buses and maintaining them. But they are seeing only one side of the argument: More people in the disability community would pursue jobs and pay more taxes if they could only trust that they could get to work and back safely.

Public officials who offered elaborate eulogies to Parks' memory last week should evaluate whether they are truly living up to the power of her ideas. During a visit to Detroit in August to speak to disabled transit riders for a project I was working on, I met Robert Harvey, who last winter hurled his wheelchair in front of a bus pulling onto Woodward Avenue after four drivers in a row had passed him by. (He was knocked to the curb.) I met Carolyn Reed, who has spina bifida and had lost a job because she could rarely find a bus that would get her to work on time. Her able-bodied friends had also recently stopped inviting her to the movies. She guessed why: A few times over the past months, they had found themselves waiting late at night with her for hours to catch a bus with a working lift. "I'd say, 'Go ahead, go ahead, I'll be all right,' "she told me. "And they'd say, 'We're not leaving you out here.' "I also met Willie Cochran, a double amputee who once waited six hours in freezing temperatures for a bus that would take him home from dialysis treatment.

None of this should be happening in America. "Rosa Parks could get on the bus to protest," says Roger McCarville, a veteran in Detroit who once chained himself to a bus. "We still can't get on the bus." A true tribute to Parks would be to ensure that every American can.

[Author's e-mail: shepherdstown@gmail.com]. Charles Wilson, a writer who lives in New York City, has been doing research for a book about the disability rights movement.