

SOYLAND ACCESS TO INDEPENDENT LIVING
SAIL



The Anchor



SUMMER 2013

SAIL REMEMBERS A TRUE ADVOCATE

by Jeri Wooters, Executive Director

Dawn Austin-Briggs knew no fear and exactly what she wanted out of life. In spite of the physical limitations brought on by cerebral palsy, Dawn wanted to be in control of her own life, strive for educational advancements, secure employment and role model the Independent Living Philosophy promoted by all Centers for Independent Living.

I met Dawn the summer I was hired at Soyland Access to Independent Living. She was busy competing in the Miss Wheelchair of Illinois and conducting disability awareness presentations at community events. She was on fire! She had her educational goals set and was attending Richland Community College. She was already living independently in her own apartment and encouraging other SAIL consumers to step out on their own and establish their homes. She was serving on the SAIL Board of Directors. She became a personal friend; someone I could enjoy spending time with while learning the dignity of risk associated with true independence. Dawn married the love of her life and enjoyed five years of marriage before his passing.

As she responded to the results of cerebral palsy on her body and chose the medical procedures best suited to address the conditions, I watched her convince doctors, nurses, medical staff, emergency response teams as well as family and friends that people with disabilities are people first. She would say, "People are just people, a disability does not define you!" She was never "defined" by the medical condition of her body but was known as a determined, powerful force to be respected and followed. Dawn passed on Sunday, July 28th but will always be remembered by those of us who knew her to be a loving, fun and joyful spirit with dreams larger than any life time could fulfill.

CONTACT INFORMATION

<u>Decatur Office</u>	2449 Federal Dr. 217-876-8888 (V/TTY/VP)	Decatur, IL 62526 217-876-7245 (FAX)	1-800-358-8080 (V/TTY/VP) sail@decatur sail.com
<u>Outreach Offices</u> Shelbyville	1810 W. South 3 rd 217-774-4322 (V/TTY)	Shelbyville, IL 62565 217-774-4368 (FAX)	saisel@consolidated.net
Triple C	757 Windsor Rd. 217-345-7245 (V/TTY)	Charleston, IL 61920 217-345-7226 (FAX)	triplec@consolidated.net

POWER IN NUMBERS: A PROFILE OF AMERICAN VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES by Lori Peifer, Program Accommodation Coordinator

The U.S. Census Bureau reports there are nearly 57 million Americans with disabilities – about one in five Americans. The Youth Transitions Collaborative is a membership group comprised of regional and national organizations with a commitment to serving youth and young veterans with disabilities. Facilitated by The HSC Foundation, the Collaborative provides direct services, expertise and guidance for the National Youth Transitions Center. They conducted the first survey of its kind to study the political impact of this large community of people with disabilities, their families and caregivers.

A combined telephone and online survey of 1,008 participants was conducted. Its findings offer a wealth of information about the potential political impact of this community:

- The community considers a candidate's record on supporting people with disabilities in their voting decisions, with 84% of respondents saying that having a record of supporting services and programs for people with disabilities is somewhat or very important.
- Not only is a candidate's record important, the community will actually vote against candidates they otherwise support if that candidate supports cuts to existing government services for people with disabilities. For individuals under the age of 30, this enthusiasm is even higher.
- The community is politically diverse, with party affiliation tracking closely to the general population.

The results clearly show the power and motivation of the disability community – and in particular, a readiness to act on critical issues, regardless of political affiliation. This is an important first step in understanding how Americans with disabilities vote and participate in the political process. To learn more, visit www.thenytc.org.



MID-ILLINOIS SENIOR SERVICES 2013 SENIOR EXPO by Lou Anne Banks, Rural Outreach Advocate

In Sullivan, the Annual Mid-IL Senior Services Senior Expo will be held Tuesday, September 24, 2013 from 8:30 to 11:30 am at the American Legion building in Sullivan. State Representative Adam Brown and Senator Chapin Rose, along with Tim Rose, owner of TNT Pizzeria in Sullivan, will be sponsoring a breakfast. The Senior Expo introduces the businesses and agencies of Moultrie County; allowing seniors an opportunity to learn about the different services and programs available. SAIL invites you to visit our table for information useful to people with disabilities. A variety of independent living devices including several different magnifiers, dressing tools and other assistive equipment will be displayed and demonstrated.

FRAUD

by Dorothy Cox-Stowe, Home Services Advocate

What constitutes fraud within the Home Services Program? There is not one simple answer to this question because there are many facets of fraud; however, oftentimes if we suspect that something is not quite right within a particular situation we should document it and then seek further information from informed sources such as the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services or your local Center for Independent Living. It would be best to have clear and precise information from responsible and reputable sources rather than to continue doing something that you are unsure is appropriate and legal. Listed below are some examples of fraud that happen often within the realm of the Home Services Program, and ironically both the Consumer and the Personal Assistants are involved because they are signing off on the submitted timesheets.

1. Personal Assistants recording work that had been completed in a previous month as work being done in the given month. You cannot work in July and claim it for August!
2. Personal Assistants cannot pay their back-ups from their paychecks. All back-up Personal Assistants should have all required paperwork completed and approved before working for a consumer!
3. Splitting Checks!!! This is illegal and it is being dealt with harshly by the State of Illinois.
4. Family members working as the consumer's Personal Assistants who are not following the consumer's Service Plan and or not working the required hours. The consumer's needs are not being met if the Service Plan is not being followed as written. When this happens signed timesheets are knowingly inaccurate and fraudulent.

Unfortunately these are just a few aspects of fraud within the Home Service Program. Home Services is a much needed program because it provides people with disabilities many necessary services while allowing them to remain or return to their homes. Living independently and being productive, through the assistance of a Personal Assistant, allows a person with a disability to live the lifestyle of their choosing and no longer function as a patient of a facility. If you have any further questions please contact the SAIL Home Services Advocate Dorothy Cox-Stowe.

Consumer direction is the primary component of the Independent Living Philosophy. Along with the one-on-one management assistance available to SAIL consumers; SAIL also offers Personal Assistant Management workshops twice a year. The next workshop is **Tuesday, October 23rd** at **1:00 p.m.** in the **Decatur SAIL office**. It will cover the review of the new DHS Hire Packets. If the Department of Human Services has completed the background check procedure by 2013 then the spring workshop will be a review of that information. For further information about the SAIL Home Services Program you can contact Dorothy Cox-Stowe, Home Services Advocate at 217-876-8888.



RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

by Rich Adams, Visual Services Advocate

Recently a consumer with a visual impairment shared an experience he had visiting an Amish community with his church group. The SAIL Visual Services Program decided to plan the same type of trip for the low vision support groups of Macon, Moultrie and Shelby Counties. The Macon County Low Vision Support Group, a total of 26 people, were welcomed in the home of an Amish family for lunch and then took a trip to a local market and pharmacy. The participants enjoyed learning about the daily Amish lifestyle and sharing the experience. This trip was also an opportunity for participants to get more acquainted with the use of rural public transportation. For more information about future low vision support group topics and events, call Rich Adams at 217-876-8888.

SUCCESSFUL REINTEGRATION STORY

by Felicia Cole, CRP Advocate

At 37 years old, a SAIL consumer unexpectedly had a brain aneurysm which led her to undergo thirteen consecutive emergency surgeries. Her body rejected the skull plate, and the stress from the surgeries resulted in some short term memory loss and diabetes. At the age of 57, the consumer experienced poor leg circulation from diabetes, and was eventually admitted to the hospital to have her left leg amputated below the knee. Unfortunately, she was transferred to a nursing facility and could not return home to her spouse until a ramp or porch lift was attached to her home. She expressed a strong desire to return home to independent living and considered the CRP, Community Reintegration Program.

During her nine month stay in the nursing facility, SAIL assisted in arranging home modifications which included a porch lift. This feature allowed her the needed accessibility to return home. She has been home for four months and is gaining even greater independence through home therapy. She works on walking again, monitoring her medications, folding laundry, preparing baked goods for her grandchildren, sweeping areas of the floor, enjoying the community garden and enjoying her favorite pastime of yodeling karaoke.

This successful consumer expresses her gratitude for the Community Reintegration Program and SAIL. She would like to encourage individuals with disabilities to “never ever give up, there is a good future out there, it may take a while, but never lose hope”. Maybe you know someone who is in a nursing facility and would like to return to independent living in the community. For more information, please free to contact

- Felicia Cole, SAIL CRP Advocate at 217-876-8888 - Macon County
- Betty Watkins, Rural Outreach Coordinator at 217-774-4322 - Moultrie and Shelby Counties
- Amy Corbin, Triple C/CRP Coordinator at 217-345-7245 - Coles, Clark and Cumberland Counties



POSITIVE STEPS

by Sue Smeltzer, Executive Administrative Coordinator

Over the last year Corey Smith, a young man who is hearing impaired, began coming into the SAIL office to use the Video Phone. As time went on, he also began to use one of the computers at SAIL on a regular basis. These devices are available to make communication with others easier and it certainly worked for him!

This is the age of electronics. People depend on electronic devices to communicate socially and professionally. That was true for this young man. The time came when he wanted to reenter the workforce. As he talked through his situation with Program Manager Emily Dobson, he realized that it was in his best interest to apply to more than one establishment. With her assistance, he began filling in online applications and follow-up questionnaires.

The good news is that he has been hired by two local restaurants and will be able to work both jobs! In addition, Independent Living Advocate Samantha McDermith provided him with information about agencies in the community where he could purchase work-appropriate clothes inexpensively. His first day of work was Monday, August 5th. After he got off work, he came into the SAIL office to share his excitement. He is both proud and happy to be working and earning his own way.

NEW METER-EXEMPT PLACARD **by Doug Veach, Program Resource Advocate**

With the passage of HB 5624 (PA 97-0845), a new Meter-Exempt Placard (yellow-and-gray-striped) allows authorized holders to park in spaces reserved for people with disabilities, and exempt them from parking meter fees and time limitations, EXCEPT at meters or signs with time limitations of 30 minutes or less.

The Secretary of State's office will mail current applicants a new certification form with a section for their physician to complete, which determines if the applicant's disability qualifies them for the meter-exempt placard. If the applicant's disability qualifies them for meter-exempt parking, the Secretary of State will issue the new yellow-and-grey-striped placard.

The following placards/plates DO NOT allow meter-exempt parking: Blue (Permanent); Red (Temporary); Green (Organizational); holders of Persons with Disabilities and Disabled Veteran plates are not meter-exempt, UNLESS the yellow-and-gray-striped-Meter-Exempt-Placard is ALSO displayed.

Enforcement of the new provisions begins January 1, 2014. For more information, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

Source: www.cyberdriveillinois.com

RAMP ACCESSIBILITY **by Samantha McDermith, Independent Living Advocate**

The number of people with disabilities is increasing and for many of those people there is a need for a ramp to maintain their independence. However, many people do not know how to build a safe ramp. The Illinois Accessibility Code dictates the requirements to be followed when constructing ramps for public use. Ramps built on personally owned properties are not regulated by federal, state or local building codes but safety is still the key to maintaining independence.

The Illinois Accessibility Code requires public ramps to have a maximum slope of 1:12. That is to say, for every inch of height to be accommodated a foot of ramp (run) is needed. The minimum width of a public ramp is 36 inches and the surfaces are to be stable, firm and slip-resistant. Ramps should have level landings at bottom and top of each ramp and each ramp run. Landings should be at least as wide as the ramp run leading to it. The landing length should be a minimum of 60 inches and should be clear of all possible obstacles. If ramps change direction at landings, the minimum landing size should be 60 inches by 60 inches. Handrails are another important part of a safe accessible ramp. The gripping surfaces should be continuous from the beginning to the end of the ramp. The top of handrail gripping surface should be between 34 to 38 inches above the ramp surface. The ends of handrails should be either rounded or returned smoothly to the floor, wall, or post. Remember edge protection on both sides of a ramp ensures the wheelchair or pedestrian will not fall off the edge of the ramp.

There are other features that should be considered when building of a ramp such as cross slope and surfaces, outdoor conditions, etc. These areas and information written above can be found in the Illinois Accessibility Code at

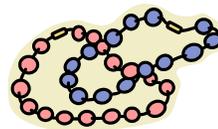
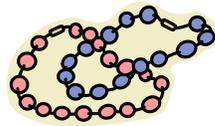
<http://www.illinois.gov/cdb/business/codes/Documents/WebVersionIAC.pdf>

For additional information, feel free to contact the SAIL office nearest you.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION'S TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM by Amy Corbin, Triple C/CRP Coordinator

Many people receive Social Security Disability Insurance, SSDI, or Supplemental Security Income, SSI, and want to return to work. The Ticket to Work Program offered by the Social Security Administration gives people with disabilities that opportunity. This program can assist you with vocational rehabilitation and preparing for a job. Sometimes people receive on the job training and job placement from a participating employer network. Most of the time the Ticket to Work Program lets you keep your cash and medical benefits for a time while you gain work experience. If you are unable to continue working, you can receive your SSI or SSDI benefits again.

The Ticket to Work Program is free and voluntary. For more information about this program, visit their website: <http://www.ssa.gov/work/> or call the Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 (V) or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY). You may also contact your local SAIL office for additional information.



Fall Jewelry Workshops Are Coming SOON!

Friday, Oct. 18th ***and*** ***Saturday, Oct. 19th***
6:00 – 8:00 p.m. ***10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.***

Johnnie & Sue's Creations and SAIL are offering you a unique opportunity to design beautiful jewelry. Start early to make gifts for the upcoming holidays. Make a bracelet, necklace, or earrings from a variety of beads such as ***Black Onyx, Picture Jasper, Angelite, Grey Feldspar, Tiger Eyes (several colors) and Swarovski Crystals (several colors).***

This is a great chance to craft a piece of jewelry reflecting your own taste and style. Fashion a piece of jewelry that will bring you joy for years to come. You may take advantage of this workshop to create jewelry pieces for family members and/or friends as gifts this Christmas or for other special occasions. There will also be jewelry available for immediate purchase at the workshop.

Cost for the workshop is \$5.00. Charges for jewelry supplies are \$1.00 per inch for a necklace, \$12.00 for a bracelet and \$6.00 for a pair of earrings. To reserve your spot at the jewelry workshop; **call Darlene or Sue at 217-876-8888 or 800-358-8080.**

RAISING AWARENESS OF LIVING WITH A DISABILITY



SAIL



Disability Sensitivity/Awareness Activity
Anna Waters Head Start
Pre-Service 2013



The Disability Awareness Team, DAT, at Soyland Access to Independent Living assists people in experiencing and learning about disabilities first hand through simulations, barrier hunts and other activities. DAT has two purposes:

- To educate the general public on people first perception of people with disabilities.
- To raise awareness of disability issues in the community.

The activities provided by the DAT can include information about the history of people with disabilities along with the origin and evolution of the Independent Living Movement.

People of all ages can experience disability awareness through multi-media presentations and hands-on activities. DAT can present in any setting that is accessible.

Each presentation is developed to meet the needs of the group requesting the activity.

If you are interested in scheduling a Disability Awareness Presentation, please contact SAIL Executive Director Jeri Wooters at 217-876-8888, 1-800-358-8080 or jwooters@decatur sail.com. Photos courtesy of Anna Waters Head Start Program.