



THE MILC RUN

Midstate Independent Living Consultants

JULY - SEPT 2010

Alternate Format Available: If you are in need of an alternate format contact MILC.

“Working for persons with disabilities towards empowerment to make informed choices.”

Kayak and Cookout at Jordan Park!

A day of fun on the river for persons with disabilities. Family and friends welcome!

When: July 28, 2010

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Lunch from the grill: Noon – 1 p.m.



Pre-registration required

Registration Deadline: July 20th

Contact: Evelyn Buckles at 800-382-8484 or email ebuckles@milc-inc.org

Beginners welcome! Experienced volunteers are available to assist. Participants needing personal care assistance must provide their own care worker. Staff and volunteers are unable to assist with personal cares.



Volunteers from DivePoint and Gateway Program
Hosted by Midstate Independent Living Consultants

ADA Celebrates 20 Years!!! Come Rally July 25th!

Hard to believe it's been twenty years since the law was enacted prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability and setting forth accessibility guidelines. Come celebrate this milestone in disability rights history! **People are gathering in Madison, WI at 11:30 on July 25th for an “Access March”.** Madison's Access to Independence is sponsoring the march and will have safety vehicles available (wheelchair accessible) for those who may have difficulty on the 8/10 of a mile march. *The march will begin at the Library Mall on the UW-Madison Campus, and proceed to the State Capitol.* Create and bring a sign or pick up one of the pre-made signs. Access to Independence is sponsoring the event and would like to know if you're attending (they're organizing, sponsoring the support vehicles, providing water, light snacks, etc.). Please email mpohl@milc-inc.org if you plan to attend as it will help with the planning. You can also leave a message at 1-800-382-8484 ext. 13 for Marlene Pohl to let them know you are coming to:



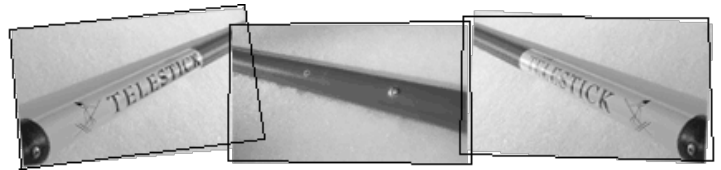
- Access March at 11:30 at Library Mall
- The Rally for Equality at 1:30- South side of State Capitol where N.Carrol, E. Main & S. Hamilton coverage. State and Local Leaders from the disability movement will speak.
- Awards Celebration at 3:00 at the Overture Center- 201 State St. - 2 blocks from rally. Awards, music, hors d'oeuvres, cash bar.

Come to any or all three! Hope to see you there. Please register. Please come! Show the strength of our numbers!

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The TeleStik

By Robyn Siskoff, IL Coordinator



The TeleStik is a wonderful new Grabber that features a sticky tool for picking up papers, as well as a sturdy hook. It is being marketed as “The Lightest, Smallest, and Most Portable Reacher in the World.” The TeleStik collapses into a small handle that fits in the palm of your hand. You can then extend the tool to reach what you need, without having to squeeze triggers or levers!

- If you have limited hand, finger or shoulder strength
- If you have small hands
- If you have cognitive issues
- If you are simply looking for the lightest, smallest, most portable reacher. .

... TeleStik may be your answer!

TeleStik is featherweight (weighing 2.3 ounces to 5.3 ounces) and features length flexibility (8” to 34” or anywhere in between). The TeleStik ranges in price from \$14.95 to \$29.95 depending on the model (you can get the hook, the sticky tool or a combination tool).

Visit their website videos at: www.telestik.com

FOR YOUR INFORMATION



W.A.G.

By Marlene Pohl, IL Consultant

So your wheelchair is about to break and you know it but parts won't be funded until it's actually broken.

You have two children with similar health challenges but only one is approved for medical care.



You have a treatable brain disorder but you can't get healthcare because your local provider hasn't kept up with science and doesn't acknowledge unseen illnesses as able to be managed.

You could live your life out in the home you've always lived in if somehow you could get a few home modifications covered that cost less than a month in the nursing home that keeps sending you brochures.

You could perform amazing feats as an employee if there were a way to demonstrate your talents other than interviews.

You have a great trip planned but hesitate to confirm your arrival time because you're never really sure how "accessible" the rest stops on your route will actually be.

This isn't even the tip of the iceberg of indignities people are faced with when they find that they must now devote a portion of each day to a regime just to remain functional.

Who hasn't had setbacks somewhere along their path when subject to discrimination based solely on their different ability and a desire for equal access? Most often everyday ignorance is tolerated and (hopefully) dismissed. Who has time to fight for their rights when life is busy enough just getting by? If your answer isn't you, then who?

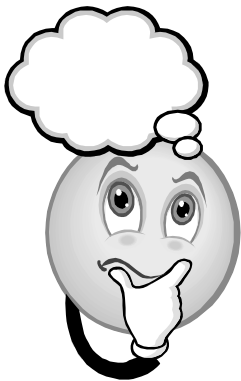
Here at your local ILC, we're trying to rejuvenate our advocacy efforts with some good old-fashioned brain-storming and gathering to try and give some push to issues that affect us. Being a cross-disability organization, deciding which issue needs most addressing is a matter of compromise and patience. It's also trusting in reciprocal efforts. Most importantly, it's remembering that divided we can be parsed to pieces. But united we're probably the largest voice in the nation.

In an effort to strike a few sparks onto our grassroots plains, we've recently formed the Wisconsin Advocacy Group (type exactly that into Facebook Groups and join the conversation). By the time this newsletter goes out, we'll have had our first meeting.

When I asked the State Coordinator of this Grassroots Project how to remind people that speaking out about injustice is a way to enact change, he reminded me "you're either fishing or you're bait". So wiggle your worms onto the W.A.G. Facebook Page and let's figure out which fish to fry first. Unity can make a difference. If you have further questions about the W.A.G. group, call Marlene Pohl at 1-800-382-8484 ext. 13 or email mpohl@milc-inc.org.

Calling All Creative Thinkers!

By Nancy Lee, IL Consultant



I am a woman with physical disabilities. I am not able to bend or twist at the waist. I cannot lift up anything that is more than a few pounds and I cannot squat or kneel down. Besides getting a nanny, I am looking for certified adaptive equipment that will help me safely care for my baby, who my husband and I are hoping will arrive within a year or so. We are also having a home built, and would appreciate ideas for home accessibility as well. Please contact Nancy Lee at MILC, 800-382-8484 ext.11 if you have any ideas for us.

Safelink Wireless

Safelink Wireless is a government supported program that provides a free cell phone and air time each month for income-eligible customers. Wisconsin residents are eligible for a free wireless phone and 60 minutes per month.

<https://www.safelinkwireless.com/EnrollmentPublic/home.aspx>



Phone Numbers: For Enrollment Support: **1-800-977-3768** For Technical Support: **1-800-378-1684**

Correspondence: SafeLink Wireless, Attention: Executive Resolution Department, 9700 N.W. 112th Avenue, Miami, FL 33178.

Hours: Monday – Saturday, 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, EST Sunday, 8:00 AM to 7 PM, EST

What Is Aging In Place? *By MaryBeth Parish, IL Consultant*

Living in a home of your choice safely as circumstances change and parts wear out.

Adapting our living environment for aging in place involves home modifications which can make it safer, more comfortable, and increase the likelihood of remaining independent. Maintaining independence by compensating for reduced function can be achieved by common modifications such as;

- Living quarters on the main floor: bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and laundry
- Adding additional lighting in hallways and stairs
- Replacing knobs with levers on doors and faucets
- Adding handrails and grab bars
- At least one level entry

Environmental design must be individualized to consider one's ability to perform and accomplish any tasks currently as well as projected functioning capabilities whether modifying existing homes or in new construction. The three biggest challenges to consider are the entrances, stairways, and bathrooms. In these areas there are common modifications to keep in mind.

1. Entrances and Exits:

- At least one no step entry with overhead protection
- Walkways 36" wide with little or no slope
- Accessible level doorbell
- Keyless door locks (keypad or remote)
- Sensor lights at entry with nonslip flooring
- Wide doors with lever style handles
- Ramps with railings if needed

2. Stairways:

- Sturdy handrails on both sides of stairways 1 1/4" diameter
- Contrast strips on top and bottom stairs to increase visibility
- Low level lighting
- Stair treads 10-11" depth with no more than 7" from one step to the next
- Stairway width 4ft. minimum to allow space for stair lift chair or ramp
- Stacked closets in multi-story homes to provide pre-framed shaft for future elevator

3. Bathrooms:

- Brace in walls around tub, shower, and toilet for installing grab bars
- Curb-less shower with a minimum 36" width

- Handheld adjustable shower head with 6ft. hose, controls offset from center
- Slip resistant flooring
- Toilet height 17-19 minimum
- Wall-hung sink to accommodate knee space with protected or offset pipes
- Bath tub with door for ease in and out
- Color contrast edges on countertops
- Right height fixtures/appliances for persons who are seated or choose not to bend
- Bathroom with 60” turning radius or 36”x36” t-turn space for wheelchair maneuvering

The good news is that you’ve got options. The home can now serve to maintain independence by compensating for reduced functioning by the growing number of home modification options, care giving, assistive technology, behavioral and environmental adaptations. This process can be made easier by contacting an Independent Living Consultant at Midstate Independent Living Consultants for an assessment and/or resource material.



Summer Time, Summer Time!

By Nancy Lee, IL Consultant

It’s time to break out the skeeter spray and dust off your marshmallow forks! What could be better than camping in Wisconsin?

The Wisconsin Lions Camp and The Easter Seals Camp for Respite and Recreation offer several options for you or loved one to take part in the camping experience. Both organizations have sessions designed exclusively for people with disabilities.

The Lions Camp is located in the heart of Wisconsin on 440 acres of wildlife refuge. They offer fully accessible facilities as well as paved trails and exclusive access to beautiful Lions Lake. They have several options for campers and their families. There is no cost to participate in summer programs, but a refundable fee of \$25.00 is required for the application process. For further information contact the Wisconsin Lions Camp; 715-677-4969 (V), 715-677-6999(TTY), or email them; info@wisconsinlionscamp.com.

The Easter Seals Camp is in Wisconsin Dells. It is situated on 400 acres of land, with miles of paved and unpaved trails winding through the beautiful Wisconsin woods. If you need assistance paying for the Camp for Respite and Recreation, there are funding sources available. For information and a calendar of events, email them at www.eastersealswisconsin.com, or call toll-free; 800-422-2324. Sessions for both camps fill up quickly, so act soon, and have a GREAT SUMMER TIME!

Work At Home Scams: Don’t Be the Next Victim

By Evelyn Buckles, IL Consultant/WIBS

The ratio of non-legitimate work-at-home opportunities to legitimate work-at-home opportunities is now 60:1! Individuals are being scammed of their money, time, and energy.

“Work at home” is not a job title. These words are used by scammers as the “bait” on their hook thrown out to individuals seeking to work from their home. More today than ever before, individuals are looking for ways to increase their monthly income, whether that is from employment, SSI, SSDI, or Unemployment Compensation. Maybe you lost your job and even though you are receiving Unemployment Compensation, it just isn’t enough to cover your monthly expenses. You also know that the unemployment won’t last forever.

Maybe you have been looking for employment and just aren't finding anything and your bills are coming due. Maybe you don't want to leave your house to work for whatever reason but you have to pay your bills somehow.

You are exactly the "catch o' the day" that work-at-home scammers are fishing for. They bait their hook with the words "Make Thousands Working At Home", dangle those words in front of you, and you start to nibble. You call the 800 number just for more information and you are told everything you want to hear. "Unbelievable pay! No experience necessary!" The ad even shows palm trees, a mansion with a view of the ocean, and a nice car parked in the driveway!

How can you spot these scams?

Here are some things to watch for in the work-at-home ad.

1. "For only \$, we will send you all the information you need to get started working at home". Legitimate work-at-home opportunities will not charge you for an inquiry about the position.
2. "No experience needed" and no job description. Legitimate ads will tell you what you need to be able to do and what you are expected to do.
3. "Make \$\$'s working at home!". Exaggerated claims of income are a sure sign the opportunity is a scam!
4. The ad arrives out of nowhere in your email inbox. Unsolicited job offers in your email may be the result of a scammer buying your email address. Move the email into your trash folder. Do not use the "Remove me from this mail list" or "Unsubscribe" link within the email. These links are often used to confirm your email address is active and using them can result in receiving more spam.

What do you do if you have been scammed?

If you believe that you have been scammed, contact the company and ask for a refund. Tell them that you plan to file a complaint and notify law enforcement officials about your experience. File a complaint with:

- Federal Trade Commission. 1-877-382-4357
- Attorney General's office in your state or where the company is located.
- Local consumer protection office.
- The Better Business Bureau.
- Local postmaster. The U.S. Postal Service investigates fraudulent mail practices.
- The advertising manager of the publication that ran the ad you responded to.

Final thought...If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

When does Medicare pay for Durable Medical Equipment (DME)?



DME includes three major categories:

- Durable medical equipment or DME
- Prosthetics and orthotics
- Supplies

Medicare refers to all three of these categories as DME. Medicare will pay for this

equipment if you require the assistance or use of the equipment to function at your best and your physician orders it. The equipment itself must meet certain requirements to be covered by Medicare. It needs to be able to withstand repeated use, primarily used for medical purposes, generally useful only in the presence of illness or injury and appropriate for use in someone's home. Medicare covers 80 percent of its approved amount that has been prescribed by a physician and is purchased or rented from a Medicare-certified supplier. When working with a provider **you should** always ask them if they take assignment. If they do not my recommendation would be to find another provider since you will be responsible for more than the 20 percent co-payment. A provider that takes assignment can not charge you more than the Medicare-approved amount even if the equipment costs more than that.

If you would like to find out if your supplier you are working with takes assignment you can call 1-800-MEDICARE or go to the web at www.medicare.gov.

BENEFITS

Update: BadgerCare+ Core and Basic Plans

By Evelyn Buckles, IL Consultant/WIBS

BadgerCare+ Core Plan for Adults with No Dependent Children is a limited plan that covers basic health care services, including primary and preventive care as well as generic drugs. There is a \$60 application fee as well as co-payment requirements. There is currently a wait list for this plan. If you wish to enroll as space becomes available, go to ACCESS.wi.gov or call the Enrollment Services Center at 1-800-291-2002. You will be asked questions to verify your eligibility for the plan. You will not be asked to pay the \$60 application fee until you are able to enroll in the Core Plan. If your name is added to the waitlist, you will be notified when there is an opening. While your name is on the waitlist, you should report any changes in your contact information such as address and phone number so you can be notified of an opening.

BadgerCare+ Basic Plan for Adults with No Dependent Children is an optional, limited benefit health care plan. Only individuals who are on the Core Plan waitlist will have the option to enroll in the Basic Plan. Enrollment will begin on June 1, 2010 with benefits to begin July 1, 2010. This plan requires a monthly premium of \$130 per person, per month for coverage in the Basic Plan. Which month coverage starts depends on when you pay the first premium. Each month members will get a premium payment slip in the mail. Full premium payment is due on the 5th of each month for coverage the next month. If the premium is not paid in full by the 5th of the month, coverage will end and you cannot re-enroll in the Basic Plan for 12 months.

If you would like to get your name on the Core Plan waitlist or for more information about the Core Plan or the Basic Plan, contact Enrollment Services Center at 1-800-291-2002. You can also apply online at www.access.wi.gov.

Avoid Being a Victim of Medicare and Insurance Scams

By Evelyn Buckles, IL Consultant/WIBC

After receiving an email from a colleague about a consumer who was being scammed by an "insurance agent", I thought I would share with you how to avoid becoming a victim of a scam artist, especially pertaining to insurance and Medicare.

- **VERIFY** salesman is licensed as an agent in Wisconsin. Do this *before* signing anything or giving out any personal information.
Contact: Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
125 South Webster Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703-3474
Toll free 1-800-236-8517
TDD Dial 711 ask for 608-266-3586
Fax 1-608-266-9935
- **BEWARE** of door-to-door salesmen. Agents *cannot* solicit business at your home without an appointment. *Do not let them into your home.*
- **NEVER** give out personal information, such as Social Security number, bank account numbers or credit card numbers to anyone you have not verified is a licensed agent. People are *not allowed* to request such personal information in their marketing activities and cannot ask for payment over the internet*. They *must* send you a bill. Once you decide to purchase a plan and have **verified** that the agent is licensed, you may give the information to assist in enrollment and billing.
- **VERIFY** that the plan is an approved Medicare plan. Call 1-800-MEDICARE.

*If you sign up for a plan through the Medicare.gov website, you will need to provide your Medicare number.

If you suspect fraud, call the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General at 1-800-HHS-TIPS.

Representative Payee Program

By Cindy Groshek, Director of Finance



Beginning July 1, 2009, Midstate Independent Living Consultants began offering Representative Payee Services to persons with disabilities within our service area. The Representative Payee program will provide services for individuals who receive Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) who cannot manage or direct someone else to manage his/her money. Our staff will work closely with each individual consumer to ensure their needs are being met and provide assistance in budget planning, paying bills and money management.

If you know of or are a person with a disability who would benefit from this service and would like more information regarding our Representative Payee program, please call Cindy Groshek at 1-800-382-8484, ext.14.

LOAN PROGRAMS



What is Telework?

Telework is a statewide, alternative loan program allowing Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from remote sites away from the office, including at home, on the road or at a Telework center. In addition to the purchase of equipment, the loan funds can be used for training to use equipment, extended warranties, the cost of maintenance and repairs for example including:

- Computers, printers and software
- Scanners, fax, copiers and office machines
- Tools and equipment or office furniture
- Assistive Technology enabling a person with a disability to work from home
- Home modifications making a home office accessible.

What is WisLoan?

Wisloan is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents or their families with a disability to purchase adaptive equipment, assistive technology or modify their homes so that they can live more independently. The applicant must be 18 and a resident of Wisconsin who wishes to improve his or her quality of life through the acquisition of (examples include):

- Wheelchairs
- Scooters
- Hearing Aids
- Modified Vehicles
- Computers with modifications
- Environmental Controls
- Ramps and home accessibility modifications

Both Telework and Wisloan loan amounts will depend on the item being purchased and the ability to repay. The current interest rate is 6.5%. Bad credit, including bankruptcy is not a reason to not apply. The focus is on the ability to make the monthly payments. Reasons for credit issues are taken into consideration by the review board. MILC staff can answer your questions and take applications for both loan programs. Contact an IL Consultant at either MILC office for assistance in completing an application.

HOUSING INFORMATION



Rental Rules and Fair Housing

By Cheryl Sabin, IL Consultant

Rental agreements must apply to all tenants fairly. The landlord can not discriminate against any protected class by offering different terms or conditions in a rental agreement. Subtle discrimination may take the form of a rule prohibiting children playing in a large common area or prohibiting all pets without making an accommodation for service dogs for renters with disabilities.

Landlords must provide a copy of all rental agreements and rules to prospective tenants before the tenant pays any money or enters any agreement with the landlord. When the tenant signs a rental agreement, the landlord or agent should always be ready to sign immediately and give the tenant a fully signed copy.



Annoying Mail

If you are tired of receiving junk mail there is a way to remove your name. Simply write to: DMA Mail preference Service, PO Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008. Also if you want to stop receiving all of those credit card offers call 1-888-5-OPTOUT or 1-888-567-8688 and stop that unwanted mail.