



DAWN AWAKENINGS

Awaken to Independence

Summer 2006

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- From Exec Director's Desk
- New Jersey Travel Independence Program
- Marc Molde's article – A Lesson in Self-advocacy
- ADA & IT Assistance Seeks Comments

DONATED DENTAL SERVICES

The National Foundation of Dentistry for the Handicapped (NFDH) matches volunteer dentists and labs with pre-screened clients in need of extensive dental care. All they ask in return is: clients keep their appointments; be on time; and remember to thank the volunteer dentist.

Dental care is provided in the offices of volunteer dentists to clients screened by the DDS program. This is not a clinic or student program, nor is it for emergency services or continuous care. If seeking a check-up or minor care, a local clinic may serve you better.

Mostly clients are people who need a great deal of work done to restore or replace their teeth. Qualifying persons are low-income, dentally uninsured, seniors, or any age with a diagnosed disability and/or medically compromising conditions.

View NFDH information or apply on line via the website: www.nfdh.org or by contacting: Gerri Baffuto, Northern New Jersey Coordinator at (732) 940-0055 or (888) 995-0055

EMPLOYMENT TRANSPORTATION

Sussex County Transit began offering demand response bus service to and from work, as an alternative for all in-county commuters (with or without their own cars) in April.

The service is available: Monday – Friday 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
The program is funded through a Jobs Access Reverse Commute Grant.
To learn more or to reserve a trip call: (973) 579-0480.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

When I wrote my article last quarter, I reported many new and exciting changes for DAWN. This quarter I must also bring to light some significant changes to our organization, however, this time it comes to you with a tremendous amount of sadness.

During the last few months, DAWN has lost several of its long time members. Each of those individuals was special to us in their own individual way and they will be missed tremendously. We wish to send our deepest condolences to the families of those who have passed and express our sincerest thanks for all the wonderful gifts each and every one of them brought to this agency.

Mary Brown could be found at most of DAWN's dinners out. She loved to participate in our recreational activities and always had a smile on her face. I recall seeing her several months ago at the Doctor's office and she continued to be upbeat and energetic and told me she was looking forward to joining us for some of our upcoming activities.

Kara Russolesi was very special to this agency but especially to me. I recall meeting Kara for the first time and being overwhelmed by her spirit and attitude. She taught me a lot about living life to the fullest in spite of the many obstacles each of us encounters in our lives. Kara and I spoke to a group of young adults about being their own advocate and aspiring to be all they could be. She was a wonderful speaker, an incredible force and had the sweetest smile I have ever seen. That smile will remain with me forever.

Edward Billington was such a gentleman. Ed was a member of DAWN's Deaf Seniors group and attended those meetings regularly to socialize with his peers. I did not get to know Ed well until very close to his passing. We had worked very hard to ensure Ed has the supports he needed so he could continue to live alone in his apartment. Ed was a pleasure to work with and always had kind words for everyone, especially the women. He will be surely missed.

Aline Campachario was also a member of DAWN's Deaf Seniors group. I did not know Aline; however, Lila spent a great deal of time with Aline giving her companionship and friendship during her time at Lester Senior Housing. Unfortunately, Aline was the only person who was deaf residing at the complex so she had very little personal contact with the residents. She looked forward to Lila's visits so she could have an opportunity to communicate with others. Lila was a tremendous support to her.

Finally, we are all so saddened by the passing of our first and former Board President, Christine Crown-Schnorr. Chris was a founding member of DAWN and truly the force behind this agency's existence. I worked very closely with Chris for many years as a staff person for the agency and then as the Director. Chris was an amazing force behind the success of who we are today. She worked diligently and endlessly to help us to enhance our programs and make this agency the best it could be. In spite of her recent illnesses, she continued to respond to e-mails from myself and other board members and tried to keep up with the agency's work. Personally, Chris was always concerned about the well-being of those she cared about. There was never a conversation I had with her that did not begin with her asking about my daughter. She took a vested interest in people in need and she did everything she could to make sure they were made aware of the resources available to them. Chris's passing was sudden and captured us all by surprise. This agency will not be the same without her, but I will make sure that I remember her in each and every decision that is made. We will continue to move DAWN forward as Chris would have wanted. DAWN will be hosting a memorial service in honor of Chris in September. More details will follow.

Chris, we all love you and will miss you tremendously.
Carmela

PROGRAMS & SERVICES BENEFITING YOU

New Jersey has a number of programs designed to assist eligible residents in receiving needed medical care and adult services. There are varied income and asset limits for most of these programs. For more information on some of these programs, you can visit the official website for the state of New Jersey at www.state.nj.us or contact the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services at NJ EASE toll-free at 1-877-222-3737 or visit www.state.nj.us/health

Some program examples are: Programs for the Aged; Family Health Services; Medical Services for the Aged; Purchased Residential Care and more.

FOR SALE

Quickie P-220, electric powered chair was recently purchased, but never used. It was purchased for slightly under \$6,000, willing to negotiate price. Contact Elaine at: (862) 432-3360 or via e-mail at: choose2hope@yahoo.com

LEGISLATION

Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) is planning to introduce legislation to eliminate Medicare's "in the home" restriction on mobility devices such as wheelchairs and scooters. Currently, Medicare will cover devices needed for use inside the beneficiary's home, but will not pay for devices a beneficiary may need to move beyond their front door and access the community. To fix this discriminatory restriction, Senator Bingaman has drafted a bill that would require Medicare to cover the cost of wheelchairs or scooters that beneficiaries with long term mobility impairments need to be able to participate in "domestic," "vocational," or "community" activities.

Passage of this legislation is one of United Spinal's top priorities.

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CHEERS

- Social Security Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach for having staff specialists trained to help and give expert advice on all the ins and outs of the Social Security's work incentive programs.
- To Greater North Jersey Chapter of NMSS, in conjunction with Hackensack Medical Center for providing weekly conference calls to individuals with MS who are confined to their homes.
- To Clearview Cinemas in Succasunna, Mansfield, Morristown, Kinnelon, Parsippany, for implementing audio descriptive and rear window captioning devices. East Hanover theatre has RWC only.

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM

Since mid-May, NORWESCAP 2-1-1 Center has contracted with the New Jersey State Department of Community Affairs to offer the Homelessness Prevention Program in Sussex and Warren Counties

This program provides temporary assistance to those who have lost, or are in jeopardy of losing, permanent housing due to loss of income (due to unemployment, a medical disability or loss/delay in benefits) or by a natural disaster such as fire or flood. For complete eligibility guidelines, you can call the center's toll free number at (877) 661-4357

NEW JERSEY TRAVEL INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM

Public Transportation can sometimes be a difficult endeavor for some customers with disabilities. The New Jersey Travel Independence Program (NJTIP) New Jersey Transit's newest accessible service offers travel instruction and support to customers with disabilities who are uncertain about using the fixed route system.

NJTIP serves individuals with disabilities who live in Essex, Morris, Somerset and Union counties. The only exception is people who are blind or visually impaired. Participation is completely voluntary and separate from the Access Link service. Riders interested in travel instruction receive a customized NJTIP interview in their home. This is an opportunity to define travel goals and for family members to offer input.

Trip Planning, Route Checking and a Travel Instruction Plan are completed before travel instructions begin. One-on-one instruction is tailored to individual needs and continues until the customer can ride safely and independently.

Upon graduation, customers receive a one-month bus or train pass in recognition of their accomplishment. There is also a 1, 3 and 6-month follow-up to check on progress and offer re-training when needed. To register call (973) 533-1662 ext. 22.

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Spring 2006, Pages 1,3

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Any situation can turn into an emergency (a good example is the recent flooding along the Delaware) and one key to being prepared is in paying attention to everything that is going on around you and not only within your immediate location.

To help lessen your anxiety regarding any emergency situation, learn all you can about emergency preparedness.

Many county/state agencies and local businesses have been involved in the training and education of their local communities in personal preparedness, and have been focusing on the preparedness needs of people with disabilities.

If you have specific needs (medical equipment, mobility issues) register with your local Fire/Emergency/Police Departments.

Contact local agencies and if available register for preparedness training. For check lists or information contact your local Red Cross or go to: www.nod.org

ADA & IT ASSISTANCE SEEKS COMMENTS

The national network of ADA & IT Technical Assistance Centers is seeking your comments on experiences with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Your feedback on experiences in employment, building access, and access to public services will help identify training gaps and issues needing increased technical assistance.

They want to know what has worked for you, what barriers you still encounter and how the ADA has made a difference in your life. The form is short and simple. Comment only on topics of interest or concern to you. Comment as often as you like. Only identification requested is your state of residence. Go to: www.adata.org and select the online comment form.

ADJUSTMENT TO VISION LOSS PROJECT

The Adjustment to Vision Loss Project (APV) is a unique, multi-faceted program that assists residents of northern and central NJ in adjusting to the loss of vision through their involvement in a network of peer support groups, as well as linkage with mental health professionals, hospital staff, and others trained to understanding the special needs of people who are blind or visually impaired.

For more information or to participate in a peer support group contact Susan Vanino, AVL Peer Support Coordinator at (201) 996-9100 extension 26 or e-mail at: svaino.ber@hipcil.org

MEMBER RECEIVES COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Jackie Engel first came to DAWN ten years ago, volunteering in the office two days a week. Today, as a member of the Board of Directors, Jackie brings dedication and pragmatism to all she does.

A nurse for 25 years before losing her eyesight, she is a leader, a participant, and a reliable member of the disability community. Known, recognized and respected by the Board of Chosen Freeholders, Jackie was asked to serve on the Sussex County Transit Advisory Board. Following education and advocacy campaigns for accessible polling places, Jackie was appointed to the Sussex County Board of Elections Advisory Committee.

Jackie and her guide dog Whisper are recognized throughout Sussex County, and serve as an inspiration to all.

A LESSON IN SELF-ADVOCACY

- Marc Moldé

Recently, I traveled to Las Vegas, Nevada for a training titled “Americans with Disabilities Act: Transportation Training.” It was quite informative and exhausting, and I’m not just talking about the training?

Before my departure, I had to be a bit assertive with the car service who took me to Newark airport and back. I am glad I knew enough about my rights at that time to properly advocate for myself.

About a week before my trip, I called State Shuttle for roundtrip transportation to the airport, and pick up upon my return. I mentioned that I was a wheelchair user. They informed me of their “Airport Shuttle,” and quoted me a price of \$51 each way, not including parking costs or gratuity. So, I figured it would cost about \$102 plus parking costs and gratuity. I told the woman who initially took my call that I would get back to them by the end of the day. After calling several other car services, I found that State Shuttle had the best prices in the area, so I called State Shuttle back to reserve a ride to the airport. That was the easy part, but when I again reminded them that I was a wheelchair user, they informed me that their “Airport Shuttle” was not accessible. This was a problem! I then mentioned that I was able to transfer into a car, they then told me that would cost \$93 each way. At this point, my blood started to boil. All that time I wasted trying to find the best deal, and now it is almost double?! NO way!! I then spoke my mind, and told the dispatcher that according to the ADA, if they offer a service to everyone else on this planet, either it must be made accessible to people with disabilities, or a reasonable accommodation must be made at the same price that was initially quoted! The poor dispatcher listened to me silently as I stated my case, and then politely told me that I would need to speak with the manager about this. Well, at this point I was fit to be tied, and had to leave a message since the manager was already gone for the day.

Later that evening, I received a call at home from State Shuttle. They were willing to send me a car for \$51 each way. My assertiveness and understanding of the law truly helped me in this situation. I don’t believe most businesses and people make a conscious effort not to accommodate people with disabilities, they just aren’t aware of the many aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Learn all you can about the ADA, and help educate society. I truly believe that with knowledge comes power. Speak up, and be heard! I did!

Your “friendly” Information & Referral Specialist,
Marc

If you have any questions or comments for me about my recent adventures or on any other topic, feel free to e-mail me at: info@dawncil.org or call me at 1-888-343-3296.

ACTIVE DAWN MEMBERS NEEDED

DAWN was founded in 1996, severing itself from its parent center for independent living, DIAL. Its founders named the new center for independent living Disabled Advocates Working for Northwest. In ten years it has evolved into DAWN Center for Independent Living, still providing core services to the consumers of the three northwestern New Jersey counties, Morris, Warren and Sussex.

DAWN assists the disability community empowering young adults transitioning from school to the community through programs like Youth Mentoring, STEP-UP, SIAL, and the AKTION Club.

DAWN programs for adults with disabilities include the Traumatic Brain Injury program, Nursing Home Transition program, Deaf Seniors of Northwest New Jersey, and the services available through the Warren County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), which is staffed by DAWN.

DAWN consumers use and benefit from programs and services delivered by DAWN's staff. But DAWN's staff needs assistance and support from DAWN Members to extend the organization's effectiveness and influence throughout Morris, Warren, and Sussex Counties. Staff cannot be expected to do all the driving; they need the support and assistance of active members (As the Volkswagen commercials put it, "Drivers Wanted").

Members assist the organization; drive it, by participating in its operation and advocacy. Members attend meetings; not only DAWN membership meetings, but county and municipal meetings – any meetings where issues affecting the disabled community are discussed (for example; meetings of freeholder advisory boards, school boards, town councils, DAWN Board of Directors). Members support other members, new members, going through that same rough patch you once experiences; support them by volunteering to assist the Peer Support Core Service.

DAWN consumers benefit from programs and recreational activities. Active DAWN members are invited to participate in the decision making processes surrounding development and delivery of DAWN programs and services including recreation and education. Members experienced in finance, education, social services, government services are asked to come forward and find your service niche.

DAWN Center for Independent Living is a member-driven organization; members determine, members vote, members govern, members benefit. The majority of members of the DAWN Board of Directors must be disabled members of DAWN. Members who wish to serve on the board are asked to contact Board Secretary, Jackie Engel, who can provide an information packet for candidates for the upcoming election. Members may nominate other members for service on the board and organizational committees. The Nominating Committee will present its slate of candidates to the Board by September 6. The slate will be published after the Board meeting of September 13. Elections will be conducted in October, and new board members will be inducted at DAWN's Annual Membership Meeting on November 15.

DAWN Center for Independent Living is a member-driven organization, Drivers wanted. Get behind the wheel. Get involved.

Bob Panzer, President

E-mail: Rpanzer@dawncil.org

Cell phone: 973.670.1600

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We are seeking volunteers for a Friendly Caller Program. Volunteers will be given space in the DAWN office to make calls to our members.

We are also seeking a volunteer to work on the newsletter: the volunteer will be responsible for layout of the quarterly newsletter and will need some experience with Publisher.

REDUCE UNSOLICITED NATIONAL ADVERTISING (GET OFF MAILING LISTS)

Send "Do Not Mail" request with your name, address, telephone number (optional) to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Assoc., P O Box 643, Carmel, NY 10512 or on-line: www.dmaconsumers.org

CALENDAR

Deaf Seniors:

August 9th 11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Social Meeting at the Food Court in the Rockaway Mall
September 9th 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Meeting to be held at St. Peter's Church

General Membership:

September 6th 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. Meeting topic Financial Planning (Budgeting) to be held at St. Clare's Hospital in Dover
September 14th 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. Dinner Out at Casa Bellissima in Andover
November 15th 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. Annual Meeting and Thanksgiving Dinner at the Mt. Olive Senior Center

Young Adults:

September Theatre – the date, time, and play to be announced at a later date
October 13th 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. Halloween Dance – location to be decided

Aktion Club:

Meetings to be held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month – please call the office if you are interested and to sign up.

Phone: 973-625-1940

Fax: 973-625-1942

TTY: 973-625-1932

Email: info@dawncil.org



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We are on the web!
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DAWN MISSION STATEMENT

DAWN Center for Independent Living empowers people with disabilities to strive for equality and to take control of their own lives by:

- Providing the tools that encourage independence and self-advocacy.
- Promoting public awareness of the needs, desires and rights of individuals living with disabilities.
- Offering community activities that create new experiences and opportunities.
- Creating informed communities that advance the Independent Living Philosophy.

DAWN PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- Information and Referral
- Living Well with a Disability
- Next Chapter Book Club
- Aktion Club (Morris County only)
- Nursing Facility Transition
- Independent Living Skills Training
- School to Adult Life (*STEP-UP* Program)
- Advocacy
- Peer Support
- Recreation
- SAIL
- Care Management