

# The LINK

Changing Lives.  
Changing Communities.

## A Publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

July 26, 1990 ♦ July 26, 2010

### 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, 1990 President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. The ADA is the landmark civil rights law for people with disabilities. It prohibits discrimination and exclusion based on disability in employment, state and local government, public buildings and services, telecommunications, and more. In 2008, President George W. Bush signed the ADA Amendments Act further clarifying the intent of the ADA and restoring protection to people with disabilities in the area of employment.



### Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the ADA!

Attend the showing of the movie ***Music Within***, the true story of Richard Pimentel, a Vietnam Veteran who played a pivotal role in the development of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Starring Ron Livingston & Michael Sheen, this MGM production is a 94 minute journey every American should take.

**When:** Sunday, July 25, 2010 at 2:00 pm

**Where:** Kalamazoo Valley Museum, 230 N. Rose Street, Kalamazoo MI 49003

This movie is rated R. It will be captioned for the entire audience. ASL interpreter post-show.

If you need a ride to the event from the Kalamazoo area, please call Michele at (269) 345-1516 x 116.

Funded in part by the Michigan ADA Steering Committee, a branch of the Great Lakes ADA Center, through NIDDER grant #H133G060097.

Educating and empowering people with disabilities to create change in their own lives and advocating for social change to create inclusive communities.

This issue is available in alternative format upon request.

[www.dnswm.org](http://www.dnswm.org)

**Disability Network is the first stop for people with disabilities and their families in Southwest Michigan.**

# Support Public Transit in St. Joseph & Van Buren Counties

## Support Public Transit on August 3rd!

We know how important public transit is to the entire community, and to people with disabilities in particular. State and Federal funding for public transit has been shrinking – having local millages are often the only way public transit services can survive. Do your part to support public transit.



## Van Buren County

Voters in Van Buren County will be asked to renew a .248 mil tax for the next four years. Over 65,000 trips were taken this past year in Van Buren County. More information, including a PowerPoint presentation can be found at: <http://www.swmpc.org/pst.asp>.

## St. Joseph County

St. Joseph County voters in August will get a request to renew for four years a 0.33-mill property tax originally approved in 2007. The tax generates \$583,000, about 45 percent of the St. Joseph County Transportation Authority's \$1.3 million budget. The transportation agency provided 64,218 rides during its 2008-09 fiscal year.



Find the latest developmental disability headlines from around the country at [www.disabilityscoop.com](http://www.disabilityscoop.com)!

## SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE SERVICES IN BRANCH AND CALHOUN COUNTIES

Pam Dickinson has been hired as an Independent Living Specialist for **Branch and Calhoun Counties**. Pam is helping people with disabilities with goal-oriented supports that can include finding disability information, applying for disability-related benefits and services, finding appropriate funding for assistive devices, and more.

These services are new as a result of funding provided by the The Guido A. and Elizabeth H. Binda Foundation.

You can reach Pam at [pdickinson@dnswm.org](mailto:pdickinson@dnswm.org) or (269) 968-2438.



## DISABILITY NETWORK STAFF GETS NOD FROM THE GOVERNOR

Governor Jennifer Granholm has recently appointed Miranda Grunwell, Independent Living Program Assistant, to a two-year term on the Statewide



Independent Living Council (SILC). Miranda is just finishing a term on the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, which she was also appointed to by Governor Granholm.



Find us on Facebook!

# Advocacy Alert: The Two Year Wait for Medicare Must End!

## Why do SSDI recipients have to wait so long for health insurance from Medicare?

People with disabilities who qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) also qualify for medical benefits under Medicare. But what people don't know is that after qualifying for SSDI, most individuals have to wait 24 months after their first benefit check before they can receive those Medicare medical benefits.

This often creates medical and financial hardships for individuals and their families. The new Health Care Reform Act does not change this two-year waiting period.



**Take Action:** Tell your legislators that the two year wait for Medicare must end! Ask them to support the bill that would end the two year wait for Medicare coverage. If contacting your senator, refer to *S.700: Ending the Medicare Disability Waiting Period Act of 2009*. If contacting your representative, refer to *H.R. 1708: Ending the Medicare Disability Waiting Period Act of 2009*.

To find your legislator's contact information visit:

[www.senate.michigan.gov](http://www.senate.michigan.gov) (senator) or [www.house.mi.gov](http://www.house.mi.gov) (representative)



## KALAMAZOO SUPPORT GROUPS AT DISABILITY NETWORK

**Blind Starfish:** Meets the 2nd Tuesday of most months at 7:00 PM. Call Ron at 383-1544 for more information.

**Brain Injury Survivors:** Meets every Thursday from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM

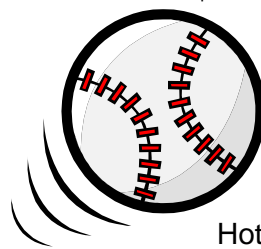
**Women with Disabilities:** Meets every Tuesday from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

**Spinal Cord Injury Group:** Meets periodically throughout the year.

Call (269) 345-1516 for more information.



Disability Network Southwest Michigan is partnering with the Kalamazoo Kings. Buy your ticket for the Thursday, July 29th game from Disability Network and we will receive \$2.50 for each ticket we sell.



**Date: July 29, 2010**

**Time: 7:05 PM**

**Ticket Cost: \$5**

Hot dogs, pop, and beer will all be \$1 each!

Contact Kristen Potts at [kpotts@dnswm.org](mailto:kpotts@dnswm.org) or (269) 345-1516 for tickets.

Sign up to receive this newsletter by e-mail! Contact Michele at [mmcgowen@dnswm.org](mailto:mmcgowen@dnswm.org) or (877) 674-5209.

# Open House for Berrien/Cass Office a Huge Success!

Recently, over 75 community members came to Disability Network's Open House to learn about our services and meet our staff and board members. "We are absolutely delighted to have opened a local office in order to best serve the residents of Berrien and Cass Counties," says Joel Cooper, President and CEO. "Thank you to everyone who came to the Open House."

## Disability Network Southwest Michigan Berrien/Cass Office

2900 Lakeview Avenue

St. Joseph, MI 49085

(269) 985-0111 for Information & Referral

## Meet the outstanding Berrien/Cass office staff!



**Joanne Johnson**  
Program Manager/  
Outreach Advocate



**Jackie Curtis**  
Independent Living  
Program Team Leader



**Ebony Douglas**  
Information & Referral  
Specialist & Independent  
Living Specialist



**Mona Khaled**  
Nursing Facility Transition  
Program Coordinator



**Jenny Wyly**  
Independent Living  
Specialist

**BARRY ♦ BERRIEN ♦ BRANCH ♦ CALHOUN ♦ CASS ♦ KALAMAZOO ♦ ST. JOSEPH ♦ VAN BUREN**



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