

Capital Letters

Volume 13

May/June Issue 3



Notes from the Director- Ellen Weaver

Happy Spring! The newsletter will be published before our annual dinner and auction so many thanks in advance for all you do to help. A more detailed thank you will be in our next addition. There are so many events happening around the center.

CACIL's Enhanced Fitness Program continues to grow as do the classes on "Why We Do What We Do" and "Positive Thinking." The men's and women's group has been replaced with a group call "Hot Topics." We are also offering computer basics and emergency planning.

A word on Emergency planning. After the Katrina disaster where most of the dead were person's with disabilities or their caregivers, CACIL stepped up. CACIL has been on Lansing Emergency management committee for four years and through them, we are outreaching to all our counties. We are excited that through a partnership with the Emergency Management office, a grant from Homeland Security was obtained that enabled the purchases of two emergency trailers that will have our logo on them but more important will have equipment that a person with a disability needs.

Another grant is going to be written so we will be able to obtain more equipment. These trailers can be moved to the open shelters and equipment set up. Our goal is to have four trailers so they can go to shelters at the four corners of Lansing. These also will be available to other venues if disaster strikes just one area.

CACIL supports the statement that everyone should have at least three days of supplies on hand. We are involved with Do-1-Thing and working with our consumers to take responsibility and be prepared.

You can take control of your preparedness by doing just one thing!



Note:

Because this issue of the newsletter is going out at the end of April, we do not have a full report from our auction on May 14th. Look in the July/August issue for a full report of the 7th annual "Price Is Write Silent Auction and Dinner." And if you still need tickets for the event on May 14th, contact Peggy Jones @ 517-241-0432

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Get the Tissues..... This is a tear jerker.

This is one of the kindest things I've ever experienced. I have no way to know who sent it, but there is a beautiful soul working in the dead letter office of the US Postal Service. Our 14 year old dog, Abbey, died last month. The day after she died, my 4 year old daughter Meredith was crying and talking about how much she missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a letter to God so that when Abbey got to heaven, God would recognize her. I told her that I thought we could so she dictated these words:

Dear God,
Will you please take care of my dog? She died yesterday and is with you in heaven. I miss her very much. I am happy that you let me have her as my dog even though she got sick. I hope you will play with her. She likes to play with balls and to swim. I am sending a picture of her so when you see her, you will know that she is my dog. I really miss her.

Love,
Meredith.



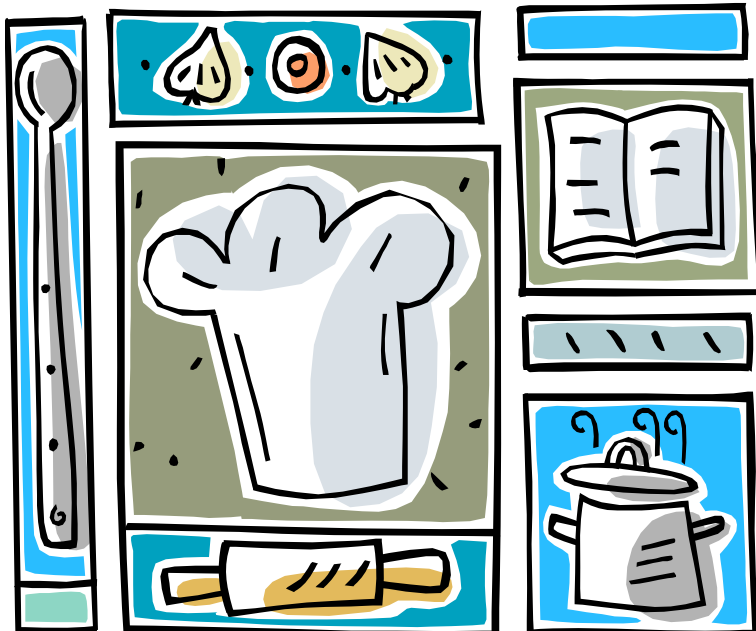
We put the letter in an envelope with a picture of Abbey and Meredith and addressed it to God/Heaven. We put our return address on it.

Then Meredith pasted several stamps on the front of the envelope because she said it would take lots of stamps to get the letter all the way to heaven. That afternoon she dropped it into the letter box at the post office. A few days later, she asked if God had gotten the letter yet. I told her that I thought He had.

Yesterday, there was a package wrapped in gold paper on our front porch addressed, 'To Meredith,' in an unfamiliar hand. Meredith opened it. Inside was a book by Mr. Rogers called, 'When a Pet Dies.' Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God in its opened envelope. On the opposite page was the picture of Abbey & Meredith and this note:

Dear Meredith,
Abbey arrived safely in heaven. Having the picture was a big help. I recognized Abbey right away.
Abbey isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me just like it stays in your heart. Abbey loved being your dog. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets to keep your picture in, so I am sending it back to you in this little book for you to keep and have something to remember Abbey by.
Thank you for the beautiful letter and thank your mother for helping you write it and sending it to me. What a wonderful mother you have.
I picked her especially for you.
I send my blessings every day and remember that I love you very much. By the way, I'm easy to find, I am wherever there is love.

Love,
God



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\$10.00

Call 517-241-0393

to order

AD SPACE AVAILABLE

**Place a business card size ad here.
\$10.00 will buy this ad space for 3
bi-monthly issues, or for 6months.**

Sports Today -By: Emily Hudson

First a brief introduction: Emily Hudson has just recently moved to the area from Royal Oak and has joined the CACIL Academy-101 program. Emily's goal in life is to be a sports writer. So, to help Emily achieve her goal, she is going to be writing a sports article for the Capital Letters newsletter. So, without further delay, here is Emily's first article:

Hi all! My name is Emily Hudson. I am probably the biggest sports fan in the world! I love all sports but recently I have been following the MSU's Women's Basketball team.

I'm a huge fan of the new head-coach Susie Merchant. When she was named head-coach, I wrote her a letter welcoming her to East Lansing. From there I've had the opportunity of meeting Susie in person at the games and I also see her at Reno's Sports Bar every Wednesday for her talk show.

I recently made a request for an interview with Susie for the newsletter. Susie was wonderful enough to grant my request and following is from that interview.

Emily: "I would like to hear your thoughts about coaching at the MAC and in the Big Ten? What is the same and what is different?"

Susie: "I believe basketball is basketball and a very physical game no matter where you're playing."

Emily: "What are the dates we should be aware of for the upcoming fall season?"

Susie: "October 15th is our first practice and November 14th is our 1st game."

Emily: "What are your expectations for the new season?"

Susie: "A lot great things to come. We all have high expectations for a championship next year. Coaching at MSU is a lot of fun!"

***Note from the Editor:**

Congratulations on your first article Emily. You did a wonderful job in completing your assignment in getting an interview Susie Merchant. We all look forward to your next sports piece...

*****CACIL wishes to extend a grateful Thank-You to Angela in Blue Water...**

What's In Your Mental Junk Drawer?

-from an article from Beliefnet.com

Are you familiar with the computer term, GIGO? It means "garbage in, garbage out." I learned this term from a computer-geek friend of mine who was commenting on my rant on the Brittney coverage. My friend said, "Why are you watching that junk? It's pure GIGO." You need to clean out your mental junk drawer."

We make such a valiant effort to eat healthy and be positive, yet we allow our minds to be bombarded with an unending stream of negative thoughts and violent images. Our mental junk drawers are jam packed with trashy talk shows, negative news stories, violent movies and nasty gossip.

How do we spring clean our mental junk drawer?

1. ***Do not watch the news, violent movies or empty-calorie television shows first thing in the morning or before going to bed.*** Try reading a good book, exercising or listening to some music.
2. ***Do not hold on to old grudges and hurts.*** Let it go and move on!
3. ***Do not focus on your problems.*** Shift your energy to helping someone else. This can help put your problems in perspective and restore a lost sense of control.
4. ***Do read inspirational and motivational books or magazines.*** Keep your mind awash in positivity.
5. ***Do spend some time solving crossword puzzles or number games.*** They exercise your brain, giving you a sharp mental edge.
6. ***Do not worry.*** There's no point to it and worrying is a real buzz kill.
7. ***Do sit quiet,*** all by yourself. Ahhhhh.....
8. ***Do use the term "It's pure GIGO."*** Let's coin this catchy phrase and whenever you hear anything negative, simply say, "It's pure GIGO."

A new point of view: A clean mental-junk drawer in conjunction with a clean diet promotes permanent fat removal!

CACIL ACADEMY-101

-Jesse Lathers 335-1524

You must RSVP if you plan to attend any of the of the activities to Jesse Lathers @ 335-1524, or to Marsha Moers if you plan to attend People 1st, The Advocacy Team or the RICC at 241-0399.

Class Descriptions:

- **RICC & People First -**

Regional Interagency Consumer Committee—what is it? We call it the RICC. An organization of people with disabilities. We work to create change in our community, to learn about programs and services and to enjoy the company of good friends over dinner.

The Capital Area RICC has three components— the Lansing group, the Mason Insiders and the People First. The Lansing Group and the Mason Insiders meet monthly to work on projects; People First meets every Thursday morning from 10:30 to 11:30. We have been learning the Bill of Rights and what each of the first 10 Amendments talks about. During the year we have been doing advocacy for Medicaid funding.

- **Advocacy:** (With Marsha Moers) Learn what issues are affecting your life everyday! Stop letting others decide what course your life will take. Learn how you can make a difference.
- **Traveling Café:** A chance to learn of gathering places in our community. The group will be working on issues like money management, rating accessibility and service in the community, etc.
- **Positive Thinking:** Feeling down? Does it seem like everything is just bad news? Join our group and get a lift out of life.
- Keep in mind, this is an election year. The RICC, Advocacy Team, People 1st and the CACIL Academy will be looking at how to vote, voter registration, the candidates and the issues.

- **Music Therapy:** Using music in our lives to relieve stress, alter moods and just learn to appreciate music in general. These classes also work with fine and gross motor skills.
- **Micro-Enterprise:** We have begun make bags for the back of wheelchairs. And they do look awesome.!
- **The Explorers Group:** Learn of places to meet new people and build new relationships. A great chance to get more involved in your community! It could be a chance to discover possible pre-vocational opportunities.
- **Why We Do What We Do:** Figuring out why we are who we are and do some of the things we do. Then exploring ways of reducing non-productive thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
- *****Enhanced Fitness:** An adaptive exercise program for all including wheelchair users. Please wear comfortable clothing. All water bottles/drink containers must have a secure lid or top. Instructed by fitness instructors from the YMCA.
- **Computer Training:** Learn different computer programs, about assistive technology for the computer, navigating the internet, etc.
- **Hot Topics!!!-** Open discussions on aging gracefully, stress management, relationships, personal grooming, racism, etc. We'll talk about everything under the sun!
- **Artists A Bloomin':** Is a program of creativity for everybody! You absolutely do NOT have to be an artist to enjoy the making of art. That's what art is all about— the enjoyment of the process of making it!
- **Mini-Series Events:** Various topics such as: budgeting, emergency planning, health and nutrition, human sexuality, etc.

May 2008



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Artists Bloomin' 1:30 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3 - 4	2
5 Enhance Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 Advocacy 2-4pm	6 Enhance Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 Micro Enterprise (Finishing Quilt & Auction Basket) 1:00 - 4:00	7 Why We Do What We Do 2 - 4 pm	8 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Hot Topics!!! 2 - 3pm Positive Thinking 3 - 4pm	9
12 *Music Therapy @ St. Lawrence- Behavioral Health Bldg (door with green awning) 3:15-4:30 No Groups at CACIL Today	13 No CACIL Academy-101	14 No CACIL Academy-101 The "Price is Write" Dinner/Silent Auction 5-10pm	15 No CACIL Academy-101 CACIL Closed	16 No CACIL Academy-101
19 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Consumer Board Meeting 1:45- 3:15 Computer Basics 1:1 Question time with jesse 3:15-4pm	20 Micro Enterprise 1:30 - 4:00	21 Why We Do What We Do 2 - 4 pm CACIL Board Meeting 5:30-7:30pm	22 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Money Matters 1:30 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 - 4:00	23 Staff Meeting No CACIL Activities
26 Memorial Day CACIL Closed RICC ??? 5:00 - 7:30 Call Marsha @ 241-0399 for details	27 Scrapebooking 2-4pm	28 BigBy Coffee 270 W. Grand River East Lansing 2-4pm	29 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Emergency Planning 1:30 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 - 4:00	30 Enhance Fitness 10-11:00am

Unless otherwise stated, all CACIL Academy-101 activities will meet at 1048 Pierpont, Suite 9-10. in Lansing

Please call Jesse Lathers at the Capitol Area Center For Independent Living at 517-335-1524 if you have any questions, or if you need more information.

Please RSVP if you plan on attending any of the activities. RSVP to either Jesse Lathers @ 335-1524

*Note: For those planning to attend Music Therapy, You must arrive before 3:25 or you will not be able to attend.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2 Enhance Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 Advocacy 2-4pm	3 Micro Enterprise 1:45 - 4:00	4 Why We Do What We Do 2-4pm	5 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Artists Bloomin' 1:30 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3 - 4	6 Enhance Fitness 10-11:00am
9 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Music Therapy 3:15-4:30 St. Lawrence-Behavioral Health Bldg (door with green awning)	10 Micro Enterprise 1:45 - 4:00	11 Traveling Café Location to be Determined Call Jesse in June for Details	12 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Hot Topics 1:30 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 - 4:00	13 Enhance Fitness 10-11:00am
16 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Consumer Board Meeting 1:45- 3:15 Computer Basics 1:1 Question time with Jesse 3:15-4pm	17 No CACIL Academy Explorer's Day on Saturday	18 Why We Do What We Do 2 - 4 pm CACIL Board Meeting 5:30-7:30pm	19 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 TBD 1:30 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 - 4:00	20 Enhance Fitness 10-11:00am 21 Riverbank Traditional Pow Wow Saturday @ Riverfront Park call Jesse for details
23 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Music Therapy 3:15-4:30 St. Lawrence-Behavioral Health Bldg (door with green awning) RICC 5:00 - 7:30	24 Micro Enterprise 1:45 - 4:00	25 Arts & Crafts 2-4pm	26 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhance Fitness 12:30-1:30 Emergency Planning 1:45 - 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 - 4:00	27 Enhance Fitness 10-11:00am
30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Game Day & Computer 1:1 With Jesse 1:45-4pm RICC 5-7:30pm				

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Be Healthy Stay Healthy

To Use Or Not To Use That Is The Question : By Marjorie Sandoval, CRRN



Apparently the National Toxicology Program put out a new report that upgrades the concerns about bisphenol-A an ingredient in plastic products. The Today Show got hold of the report. Now my friend who reads everything about health and also believes everything she reads “after all, it is in print” will be unbearable to live with saying “I told you so. I told you so”. Yes, she is really like that, grown woman or not, she loves to be able to say that. She has already thrown out all of the plastic dishes in her house from the last scare.

In self defense I researched different sites on the internet. Thank goodness for the internet. Although you can't always trust the internet according to another friend; you must cross reference the information you are finding for accuracy. In other words, if you find facts on the internet she instructs all of her students to cross check the information against two (or is it three?) other information sites or hard copy i.e., checking the library, dictionaries or encyclopedias. (Hmmm isn't the advantage of using the Internet it's speediness in obtaining information. I digress.)

So I did.

Researched.

On the Internet.

Talk about confusing.

I checked the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy Food and Health Program which had tips of safer food use of plastics. And recommends going back to choosing less polluting products to store our foods.

I checked the web site sponsored by the [Polycarbonate/BPA Global Group](#) which is organized by the [American Chemistry Council](#), [PlasticsEurope](#) and the [Japan Chemical Industry Association](#). Sounds impressive. They are a resource for environmental, health and safety information about BPA used “primarily to make polycarbonate plastic and epoxy resins-both of which are used in countless applications that make our lives easier, healthier and safer, each and every day.”

[The American Chemistry Council](#) (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. And I quote “ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people's lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®, common sense

advocacy designed to address major public policy issues, and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a \$635 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation's economy. (Here we go, the Almighty Bottom Line) It is one of the nation's largest exporters, accounting for ten cents out of every dollar in U.S. exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation's critical infrastructure. (Don't you wonder what that really means? “Working closely with government agencies... yada yada yada...defend the nation's critical infrastructure.”?)

One site had 22 references to back up their points and the other site had 27 references to back up their point. So when in doubt do as one doc I worked with said, “When you don't know what to do, drop back 10 and punt.” Yeah, I didn't know what he meant either. Many scientists say the verdict is still out on plastic bottle safety.

So my recommendation: when in doubt, don't.

Until scientists are clearer about the situation, limit your exposure.

Don't microwave in plastic containers...oh, oh, that means I have to stop nuking my baked potatoes in those sandwich bags. Nuts.

Start using the waxed papers instead of cling-type wrap, you know, that stuff that sticks to your arm when you try pulling it out of the box to wrap around a dish? I remember wax paper around peanut butter and jelly sandwiches....by lunch time, dry, dry, dry.

Warm or heat your liquids in glass...or the old-fashioned way...use the stove. Personally, I only have a kitchen because it came with the house....I love Maxine's plattitudes.

You know what puzzles me? The information I am finding includes latex...now if that were the case, don't you suppose the medical profession would be in the forefront throwing out warnings? Very puzzling.



Dealing with hostile/angry clients:

Clients can react with anger because of difficulty in finding help with their situations, emotional pain or discomfort, or fear and anxiety about the results of your visit.

- React and respond to the client in a calm but firm manner.
- To help the client define their anger, verbally acknowledge it. "I understand that you are upset" or "It sounds like you're really angry about this."
- Reinforce the positive long-term benefits of your assistance, your commitment to their best interests, and your role as their ally.
- A lower volume of voice can help the client calm down.
- Encourage the client to sit down.
- Rehearse ahead of time what you'd say or do to these situations.
- If situation appears dangerous, leave and call 911.

*****Do 1 Thing*****

Disasters happen. We've seen images of the devastation caused by the hurricanes in the gulf states, the tsunami and the events of 9/11.

We all know that we should prepare ourselves, our families and our businesses to cope with disaster situations. Do1thing is a program designed to help individuals, families and businesses take small steps toward being prepared for a disaster. By breaking preparedness into small steps it is easier to get started and easier to stick with. Each month the do1thing program will focus on a different preparedness topic and present easy, and often inexpensive ways to become better prepared. The do1thing website (www.do1thing.us) will have information on the monthly topic and will also have information on prior month's topics so you can progress at your own pace. You can take control of your preparedness by just doing one thing! (You can also visit CACIL and ask Kim for a fact sheet.)

May- Food

June- Special Items (like pet or baby needs)

On December 3 the Advocacy Team hosted a viewing and discussion of the movie SICKO. We were pleased to have Michael Harp (representing the insurance industry), Todd Tennis, Ingham County Commissioner, and Marjorie Sandoval, and Ellen Weaver, rehabilitation nurses from CACIL, to assist in our discussion of health care in mid-Michigan and what we can do to improve health care opportunities in the United States.

There were many statements in the movie which gave us direction, my favorite was something like:

"A country that can afford to go to war can afford health care for all of its people..."

No one knows exactly how many people in the United States do not have health care. More insidious is the question of how many people have health care that will not work when they need it. SICKO is about, some people who have health insurance, or thought they did; people who lost their homes, lost their children and lost each other. These stories are not confined to Michael Moore's movie. They are our stories, we live them every day. What we can do to create change depends on how much we want to create change.

A second favorite statement:

"...with democracy, power moved from wealth to the polls..." 2008 is a major election-year in this country. There are candidates who want to be councilmen/women, school board members, state senators, congressional representatives, United States senators and president of the United States. What do they know of our stories? Will you allow someone to be elected, to represent you, who doesn't know our story? And when they are elected, what will they do about your story, and my story, and all the stories we know so well? So far, we seem to have a lot of question marks. Before we can get answers from our representatives, we need to let them know what it is that we want. We need to tell our stories, and this is one place we can do that.

In the weeks and months leading up to the November election we are going to introduce you to a family. This family is you and me. They face all the problems that everyday people face in this country. They get sick, they go to doctors, they take medicine, they pay for medicine -- -- sometimes paying for medicine leads to only bad choices. They need a place to live. Can they afford it? They need a job -- with benefits. Will it pay enough? What if they get sick? What if the bus doesn't go there? Are there good schools for the children? Is there enough food for the children? I don't want the children to ask Santa Claus for pajamas to wear so they'll be warm, or food so they won't be hungry. We can do better. We must remind the candidates-- with democracy, power moved from wealth to the polls.

**WE HAVE THE POWER--HERE ARE OUR STORIES...
The OTHER AMERICAN STORY**

Tatiana met Leo when she was 18. Three children and 53 years later when she looks at him she still sees the same strong man whose pride and love can overcome all obstacles, well, most obstacles. That five o'clock traffic -- that's a hard one. For herself, when she looks in the mirror it is time that she sees, time in her bright blue eyes, and that strong, determined jaw, time that melts her long graceful neck into her gentle sloping shoulders. Tatiana, she would often say, you are not 18 anymore.

Holding on to pieces of furniture she moves through the house, arranging papers and pillows, picking up towels or socks for the laundry and straightening the beds, making sure her house is in order, as it has always been.

Noon and lunch, it used to be so important. She remembered thinking that when Leo retired they would sit down together and enjoy a

Continued on next page...

slow, lingering meal. It never happened. At first there was too much to do, and now, insulin lunches and heart smart meals don't lend themselves to gentle conversations of yesterdays and tomorrows.

March 2008.

LET'S TALK POLITICS

So much has happened since last we talked, and so little has changed.

It would seem that Jon McCain has become the front runner and a Republican presidential race, or maybe not. Mike Huckabee continues to inform us that "this is a two-man race."

The Democrats definitely have a two-person race. Hillary Clinton and Barak Obama seem to be equally dividing all of the delegate votes. Some people figured that from this point on, we should have identified a party candidates and are very disturbed and that the race continues among these four people. I think this offers us a great opportunity. We have several months to find out just what each candidate means and what each plan will involve. Tell me what we're going to do in Iraq, how we resolve the economy, and what kind of health care will I end up with? We need to be sure that the questions get asked, and the answers are clear and understandable. This is such a great opportunity for us to really find out what our presidential candidates are about, before they are our presidential candidates.

Meanwhile, our small family, Tatiana and Leo, have been dealing with some small crises of their own. I wish I could tell you they were unique and their experiences, but it's just not true. The holidays have been hard for many people. Go to file II.

A car pulled into the driveway and the brakes squealed with delight. A few minutes later Leo entered, hung up his coat behind the door, turned to Tatiana and broadly smiled. "I made it home for lunch." he said, walking to the refrigerator and taking out a bottle of beer. Tatiana rolled her eyes. 53 years could not change some things, and at 79 why try?

"Have you heard from Sherona? I hope she and the little one can make it this year for Christmas." Leo stated. Tatiana placed a tureen of vegetable soup on the table. She ladled bright orange of chunks of home-grown carrots, green beans and corn into his bowl, walked to the oven, removed a loaf of fresh baked bread and put a slice on the dish beside him. ",he is so far away, I wish she could be closer. It would be nice to see her and the children." Tatiana responded. They ate in comfortable silence. Tatiana looked over to Leo. A small stream of broth trickled down the side of his mouth and he made little gasping, choking sounds. "Leo, Leo. Are you okay? Leo, do you hear me? What is the matter?" She began to panic as she looked into his glassy eyes focused on -- -- nothing. She rose to her feet, almost effortlessly. She ran her hand down the side of his face. "Leo, Leo. Oh my Go, Leo. Talk to me, say something. Oh no, oh no! Call Ahmed, no, call 911." She moved to the phone, and her stiff, unyielding fingers almost nimbly dialed numbers to bring him help.

Ahmed arrived just as the paramedics were removing his father from the House. His mother's frantic call had actually scared this oldest son. He had never heard her get so upset and he knew something terrible must have happened. He got out of the car and walked toward the ambulance. From the corner of his eye he saw his mother appear on the back porch. He turned to meet her as she walked down the steps. "Mom, it's going to be okay." They walked to the ambulance and the drivers said, "It looks like a stroke, we will meet you at the hospital." Tatiana begin to cry, her small shoulders shaking violently. Ahmed put his arms around her. He felt so helpless -- so helpless. They walked to the car and he drove in silence.

Community & Human

Services...

**Unsure Of Who To Call?
Call 211**

**Capital Area United Way
517-337-8211**

**Cristo Rey Community Center
517-372-4700**

**Lutheran Social Services
517-321-7663**

**Michigan Association for Deaf &
Hard Of Hearing
1-800-968-7327**

**St. Vincent Catholic Charities
517-323-4734**

**Black Child & Family Institute
517-487-3775**

**Poison Control
1-800-222-1222**

**The Salvation Army (South Lansing)
517-394-6945**

**Alzheimer's Disease
1-800-272-3900**

**National Arthritis Foundation
1-800-283-7800**

**National Domestic Violence Hot Line
1-800-799-7233**

**National Suicide Hot Line
1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**American Council for the Blind
1-800-424-8666**

**Department of Veterans Affairs
1-800-827-1000**

**Medicare Information
1-800-392-3070**

**Social Security Administration
1-800-772-1213**



Contact for statewide program: **Leah March, Loan Fund Manager 1.800.828.2714**

United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan

Local program: **Capital Area Center for Independent Living**

PRESS RELEASE

Attn: Community News Editors

LOAN PROGRAM HELPS PROVIDE AFFORDABLE INDEPENDENCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Capital Area Center for Independent Living is assisting with an innovative program in the Ingham, Eaton, Clinton and Shiawassee areas that makes it easier for people with disabilities to buy assistive technology equipment and devices.

The Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund (AT Loan Fund) is a joint effort of United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan, Disability Network agencies throughout the state, and Option 1 Credit Union in East Lansing.

The program provides low cost, fixed-rate loans to qualified applicants to finance the purchase of assistive technology devices and/or services. To participate in the program, applicants must be individuals with disabilities or parents or guardians of individuals with disabilities.

“This program will help people with disabilities buy adapted computers, make modifications to their automobiles or homes, buy hearing and communication devices and much, much more” said Kim McDonald. “With these devices individuals will increase their independence and improve their quality of life.”

The AT Loan Fund was developed as a result of the difficulty people often have when trying to obtain conventional financing to purchase assistive technology equipment. Lenders often will not take such devices as collateral or the amount of the device may be below the minimum amount lent by an institution. The Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund has no minimum limits but has a maximum of \$30,000.

To obtain an application, contact Kim McDonald-(Program Coordinator, Capital Area Center for Independent Living) or visit the Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund website at www.michiganloanfunds.org.

Digital Switch Could Cost Cable Customers

-An Article Printed in the LSJ on April 13th, 2008

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Transition affects those with analog, smaller companies.

Washington—For months, TV viewers have been told by government, by industry and by media that if they already subscribe to cable, there's no need to worry about the coming transition to digital broadcasting. So cable customer Doris Spurk was surprised to learn that thanks to the transition, she would have to rent a converter box for \$5.95 per month, per television set, plus pay for a \$60.00 service call to install it. With five televisions in her home, the conversion would increase her bill by 75 percent.

"It really ticks me off," the 63-year-old central Florida resident said. "If they are in the right and can do this—charge these prices—then the educational effort that the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) is doing is really misleading everybody."

Thus far, government and the broadcast industry have focused their consumer-education efforts regarding the transition on viewers of over-the-air television programming. But information about how the transition will affect cable subscribers has been scant.

The congressionally mandated transition requires all full-power television stations to broadcast only in a digital format starting in mid-February. Anyone with a non-digital television who uses an antenna will need a converter box. The government is giving out two \$40 coupons per household to subsidize the cost of the boxes, and about 10 million coupons have been requested so far.

What hasn't been widely publicized is that the transition will affect some cable subscribers.

There are about 65 million basic cable subscribers in the United States, according to the National Cable and Telecommunications Associations. About 37 million of them are digital subscribers, meaning they most likely have a set-top box. Those customers will not be affected by the broadcast transition, regardless of the age of their television.

But the 28 million customers who receive analog service—meaning they probably plug their cable wire straight into the back of their set and do not have a set-top box—may have reason to worry.

Cable companies have two options for dealing with their analog customers when broadcasters turn off their non-digital signals.

They can either convert the digital broadcast signal to analog at the transmission source referred to as the "head end"; or they can make their systems all-digital

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and supply customers with a set-top box that will convert the signal back to analog for viewing on older TVs.

The government-subsidized converter boxes, meant for use on televisions that get signals through an antenna will be of no help in this situation.

Big cable companies like Comcast Corp., the nation's largest, are expected to take the first option and pump both digital and analog signals through their systems. "There won't be changes in prices because the broadcast channels are going digital," said Comcast spokeswoman Sena Fitzmaurice. "But there may be changes in prices and services for other reasons."

Cable companies may move some programming from the analog tier to digital, as they have been doing increasingly; but FCC rules require that local broadcast channels remain viewable to analog customers.

Smaller cable systems are expected to have a more difficult time with the transition.

Jess King is president of Cablevision of Marion County LLC, which is about 40 miles south of Gainesville, Fla. King recently spoke to a gathering of residents of an "over-55" retirement community, including Spurk.

"My decision was, whether I continue to try to muddle along here with all of my channel space being used up with a few analog channels or whether I would go all digital," King said. "So I got an FCC variance to go all digital."

The digital conversion will allow broadcasters to offer a better picture. It will also free up parts of the broadcast spectrum for commercial users and emergency responders. Last month, the FCC wrapped up an auction that drew more than \$19 billion in bids for airwaves that will be freed up by the transition.

King said the primary purpose of the meeting was to educate consumers about the limitations of the government coupon program.

Whether cable companies like King's can pass on costs related to the transition to customers is a subject the industry and the FCC generally avoid.

The FCC's digital transition website says if a cable company goes all digital and requires customers to get a set-top box, "any costs related to it will be determined by the cable company."

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OBSERVATIONS: STOLEN PURSE -by Paula Rehner

I have observed one huge thing since the last newsletter; what happens when your purse is stolen. A few weeks ago it was either taken from the Laundromat or fell off my basket of clothes when I took it out of the car.

Before I even realized that it was gone, someone had charged almost \$3,000 on my credit cards and during the next week another \$1,000 on gas credit cards I only kept for emergencies and forgot I even had in my purse. I filed a police report and was told that the chances of catching the thief were very low even though I had all the charges and where and when they were made.

It has been a real nightmare and a great deal of running around. First I had to have the locks changed at the house and because I had business cards in my purse we had to have them changed here at CACIL too. I had to go to the bank and get a new debit/Visa card and stop all checks between certain numbers, get a new driver's license, go back to the police twice to update the report, make a ton of telephone calls, complete a stack of paper work..... But it was nice to know that I don't have to pay the money back. Oh, and then I received a call from one credit card company saying that someone had tried to open an account using all my information, but they had not opened it as there was a fraud alert with the three credit bureaus. They had all the information they needed since I had stopped at the bank on my way to do the laundry and had a paycheck stub in the purse.

What have I learned from all this and what gems do I have to pass on to you? First of all, don't put your purse on top of something that you are carrying into the house and keep it with you at all times when out of the house. The credit card companies and the banks are very nice about helping you settle things. You only have to call one of the credit reporting agencies to tell them of the theft and they contact the others. Never carry a check stub in your purse even for a very short time and ask your employer if he can stop putting your whole social security number on your stubs (some places now only list the last four digits). Do file a police report; you have to for the credit card companies. Make photocopies of all the things you carry in your wallet including your insurance cards and try your best not to look at everyone in the neighborhood as the possible thief. I admit that has been hard and my faith in people has been a bit shaken. I'm pretty sure that the purse was taken from the driveway and it would have been so easy to just bring it up to the door. As they say, live and learn. As one of the tenants of an assertive personality states, don't let how other people act decide how you see the world.

Now, go take everything you don't need to carry out of your purse or for you men your wallet and make copies of everything. Even though it's a long shot that this will ever happen to you, as we learned in Scouts, be prepared.