

# Capital Letters

Volume 14

Sept-Oct-Nov



## Notes from the Director-

### Ellen Weaver

Fall is coming, though I do not think we had summer. Football, changing leaves, back to school and our annual fund drive are right around the corner! These are very challenging economic times for everyone. It seems as if all we hear is bad news. I would like to share some good news from CACIL. Our Academy programs are growing. The Relationships Seminar is so popular we gave it another time slot. We will be adding both beginning sign language and Braille courses for the Fall.

Our PATH (learning to take control of your life instead of a disability or chronic illness controlling you) training went so well that a staff member and consumer were invited to classes to become Master trainers so that CACIL can continue to offer this training.

With the donations from Accident Fund Insurance Company, Comcast, Enterprise and Co-America bank (unrestricted money) and the help of our great partner Habitat for Humanity we have been able to assist in the building of multiple ramps for consumers. CACIL has been able to loan consumers bath benches, wheelchairs, commodes etc. which they could

not afford.

Our two food pantries, one for regular food and one for special diets, is seeing an increase in use. (This also includes personal care items) Our good partners, MRS help with this, but we do limit the usage only to our consumers or their customers. CACIL acts as a job try-out site for MRS and MCB so consumers can become comfortable with the world of work. All this fits into our mission:

The Capital Area Center for Independent Living; “Transforming thinking and creating economic self-sufficiency by connecting people with advocacy, education, resources and promoting accessibility.”

Even though CACIL is a non profit, we need money to keep the doors open, especially unrestricted money so we can put it where it is most needed. So, **Please** when you receive our letter in the mail at Thanksgiving time, think about what we do and invest in people with disabilities. Thank you and have a great fall.

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# Younkers' Fundraiser

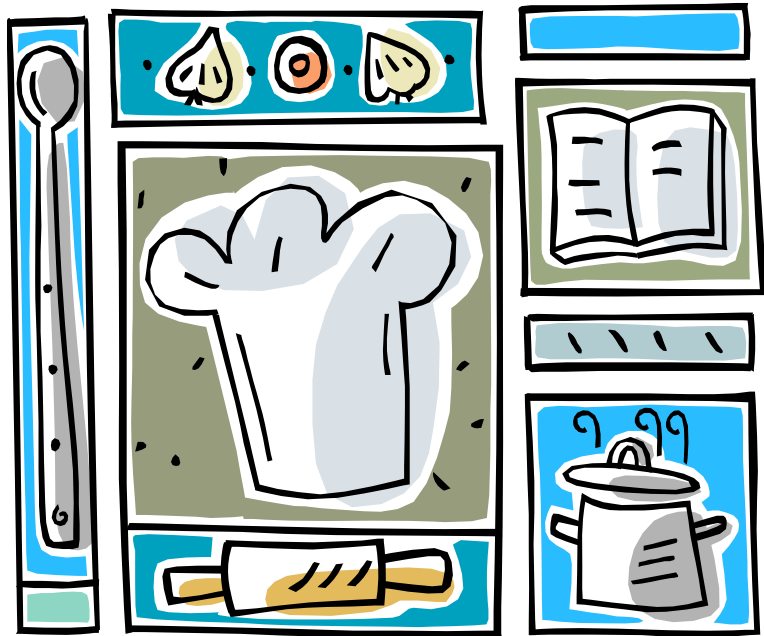
Well ladies, it's almost that time again, November 15th. Pretty soon it will be hunting season. You know that time when your significant other (husband, fiancé, boyfriend, etc.) grows a beard, doesn't shower for the whole weekend, drinks his favorite beverage, and spends a lot of time in the woods.

I have something to keep you busy while he is away. It's the annual Younkers Day. This year it is Saturday November 14th. Here is your chance to "make your day." As in years past, Younkers has their coupon booklet for sale at a poultry \$5. Inside of this little "gold mine" is a coupon for \$10 off of an item that is at least \$10 or more. There are also six 20% off coupons, and one coupon for 30% off. There will be door buster items and many other great bargains. So be sure and get one or more of these little gems. If one booklet is good, then 2, 3, or more is better!!

The great thing about the Younker's fundraiser is that each \$5 goes directly to the Capital Area Center for Independent Living, to help us assist area people with disabilities. With all of the cuts in the State and Federal grants that have affected CACIL and other area service agencies in the mid-Michigan area, fundraisers like this are very important.

How can I get one of these great little coupon booklets you ask? Well you can come to the CACIL office from now until November 13th, or you can come to the Lansing City Market on Saturday September 5, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and purchase one at CACIL's display table.

If you have any questions regarding the Younkers booklets, you can call the CACIL office at 517-241-0393 and ask for Darlene, Teresa or Kellie.



## CACIL COOKBOOK

### DYCEM WITH CACIL

**Now half off!**

Price was \$10.00 a Book, Now Get These Great Recipes at a Great Buy for Only \$5.00- (They make excellent affordable gift!)

*Call 517-241-0393  
to order or pick one up at CACIL.*

### AD SPACE AVAILABLE

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

## Disability.gov Launched -

### New and Redesigned with Social Media

The U.S. Department of Labor this week launched **Disability.gov**, a redesigned federal Web site that connects the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities to thousands of trusted resources on disability-related issues, programs and services. Formerly known as DisabilityInfo.gov, the site has been completely redesigned and updated with new social media tools, such as a blog and a Twitter feed, to encourage feedback and interaction among visitors. Disability.gov is not just for Americans with disabilities, but also for parents of children with disabilities, employers, workforce and human resource professionals, veterans, educators, caregivers and many others.

Disability.gov features comprehensive information from 22 federal agencies, as well as educational institutions, non-profit organizations and state and local governments. Topics covered on the site include: benefits; civil rights; community life; education; emergency preparedness; employment; health; housing; technology; and transportation.

We ask that you please let your constituents know about Disability.gov. You can do this by sending an e-mail to your networks; placing a news item about the site on your Web site, blog or Twitter feed; or by including an article in the next issue of your newsletter. We would be happy to supply you with any additional communications materials you may need. Please let us know if you would like us to send you a press release, fact sheet, talking points, sample Twitter posts or news articles.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are currently linking to [www.DisabilityInfo.gov](http://www.DisabilityInfo.gov) from your Web site, please take a moment to update your link to [www.Disability.gov](http://www.Disability.gov). If you are not currently linking to us, we hope that you'll add this to your Web site. To link to Disability.gov, visit our Link to Us page ([http://www.disability.gov/home/link\\_to\\_us](http://www.disability.gov/home/link_to_us)).

Please let us know if you have any questions. We hope you enjoy the new site and find it useful.

Many thanks for your support!

Katherine DiGiovanni

Concepts Public Relations

## Lansing City Market



How long has it been since you've been to the Lansing City Market? Never been to the City Market??? You are missing a great experience. Not only do they

have fresh fruits and vegetables, but they also have crafts, food booths and a coffee shop, to name a few things you might see.

In July the Lansing City Market asked the Capital Area Center for Independent Living to come one Saturday and set up an information table, so we did. We met many very friendly vendors and many, many great area residents. Some of the people we talked to had not heard about CACIL before, so it was nice to have a chance to let people know what we do.

The great thing about our first visit was that they liked us so much that they have asked us to come back. On Saturday September 5, 2009 Laurie and Teresa will be there, and we are hoping that you can come down and say hi to us and check out the City Market for yourself. We will be there from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We will have information about our services, Younkers' coupon booklets, CACIL cookbooks and lots of entertaining conversation.

If you have any questions about our visit to the Lansing City Market, please feel free to give us a call at 517-241-0393.

CACIL now has flash-drives that have the CACIL logo on them available for purchase for the price of \$15.00 as another CACIL fundraiser. If you are interested in purchasing one, contact Darlene @ 335-0827.

# CACIL ACADEMY-101

For more information contact Justine @ 335-1524

## 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 talk about how our political process works and how we can make a difference in issues that are important to us.

- **Advocacy:** 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.
- **\*\*\*Human Sexuality:** Addressing the physical, emotional and psychological barriers that pose as obstacles to the full human experience.
- **\*\*\*Creative Writing:** Recording our life stories using “The Time Of My Life” program.
- **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 are going to be making pot holders for our kitchen basket that we will be making for the CACIL Auction.
- **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.
- **Computer Training:** Learn different computer programs, about assistive technology for the computer, navigating the internet, etc.

- **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.
- **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!

## Dates to Remember:

**CACIL Board Meeting— 3rd Wednesday every month 5:30-7:00pm**

**RICC— Last Monday of the month 5:00-7:30pm**

## Dates CACIL Closed

**Labor Day-Monday September 7th**

**704 Reporting Day- 9:00-Noon**

**704 Reporting Day- Noon-5:00pm**

**Veterans Day— Wednesday November 11th**

**Thanksgiving Break— CACIL closing at noon on November 25th and will be closed the 26th and 27th.**

## Upcoming Events



**Halloween Costume Party  
Wednesday October 28th 1-3pm**



**CACIL’s Thanksgiving Dinner  
Tuesday November 24th 1-3pm**

Calendars for CACIL Academy-101 will be mailed monthly. If you need one, contact Justine @ 335-1524. You can also call her for further information about these events.

## The Power of a Sincere Apology-How to Say “I’m Sorry” -By Ariane de Bonvoisin

Apologies happen—sometimes multiple times a day. We apologize when we unintentionally say something hurtful, when we make a mistake at work, or when we bump into somebody on the street. And then there are the bigger apologies—those that we should have addressed months or years ago. Maybe we said something to alienate someone we have judged too quickly or did something that we regret. Saying, “I’m sorry”, remains one of the hardest things to do. We justify our actions, we present half-apologies, we blame the one we’ve hurt, or we expect something in return. Yet a true apology can clear the air and potentially heal a relationship. Here’s how to go about making a sincere apology.

**Align Head and Heart:** It’s easy to say “I’m sorry,” but meaning it is another story. A true apology occurs when the heart and head are in alignment, when you intellectually and emotionally accept the responsibility for causing another person pain, even if you’ve done it unintentionally. Becoming accountable for your actions is the foundation of an honest apology.

**Write Before Speaking:** If you are struggling to find the right words, write your apology down first. Writing gives you the space and time to see how you really feel—for instance, you’ll discover whether you are truly sorry or whether you harbor any lingering hostility toward the person. It’s important to deal with these feelings before approaching the one you’ve hurt, or you may reopen the conflict.

**Don’t Expect Anything in Return:** A true apology is a selfless act—an apology is insincere when it is about wanting (forgiveness, attention,) and not about giving. If you hurt a loved one with words or actions, take a moment to accept your role in what has happened and to imagine how you would feel if the same was done to you. At that point you can begin to make an apology that requires nothing from the one who is receiving it. Keep it simple: “I understand that I really hurt you and I want you to know that I am truly sorry.”

**Don’t Respond Defensively:** When you apologize you are tapping into humility by acknowledging your weaknesses and recognizing the grace of another human being. For example, if a friend tells you that you hurt her feelings by saying something insensitive, acknowledge the slip without becoming defensive or blaming (i.e. “I thought you wanted me to be honest with you!” or “You always speak like that to *me*”). When it’s time to apologize experiment with something like this, “I didn’t realize that my words were so hurtful, but I can see now how they must have stung. I truly am sorry that I caused you any pain.”

**Create a Clear Intention:** Be sure to clarify the intention of your apology—even when the person you’ve hurt is not open to receiving your words. Ask yourself if you truly are sorry that you’ve inflicted pain and when the answer is “yes,” work to find the appropriate words to illustrate your feelings. Regardless of the words you choose, your true intention will shine through—so be honest with yourself before approaching another with an apology.

**Be Present:** A sincere apology can be spoken, written, or simply felt strongly (for example, when directed at somebody who has passed on). There is no right way to articulate your feelings of apology. All you need to do is acknowledge your part in the other person’s pain without rushing through the moment.

**Commit to Being Better:** A sincere apology also includes a commitment to become a better person—to avoid making the same mistake again. After acknowledging the ways in which you hurt another, make an effort to express the ways in which you will act differently in the future. For example: “I’m sorry I hurt your feelings. Now that I know that speaking in that tone of voice rubs you the wrong way, I will work to change the way I approach you.”

**Remain Grounded and Accepting:** As you prepare to say you’re sorry—and during the actual apology— stay grounded and strong; be with the uncomfortable feelings that arise within you; and accept whatever reaction you get from the other person.

**Drop Your Justifications:** Our tendency is to take things personally, so personally that our egos and minds convince us that we were justified in acting in a way that hurt another person. We focus on the “why” instead of their feelings. Instead of acknowledging that we’ve contributed to sadness or anger or disappointment in another, we hide behind reasons for doing what we did. An apology is sincere when we are able to recognize the feeling and move past the “why.”

**Release Guilt, Soothe Pain:** Though a true apology is selfless, by nature it is also mutually beneficial. A sincere apology releases the heart from guilt while soothing the pain of another. Guilt robs the soul of joy and inner peace. By making a heartfelt apology, you acknowledge the hurt you’ve inflicted on another, releasing his or her pain while also defusing your guilt. This can also begin the process of restoring the trust that’s been broken.

By making something right with someone else, we are also making things right within ourselves.



# NEWS RELEASE

Capital Area Transportation Authority

August 26, 2008

Contact: Pat Gilbert

## CATA Fall Service Changes

Lansing, MI--CATA's MSU campus bus service will begin operation starting Saturday, August 29, 2009 as CATA resumes its Spartan Service—bus service that operates only during MSU fall and spring semesters. **Routes 34, 35 and 36** will operate from 9AM until 2:30AM on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>. CATA's **Night Owl** service will also resume on Saturday, providing weekend service upon request, from 2AM until 9AM.

Spartan Service will resume in its entirety on Monday, August 31, 2009 with the return of **Routes 30-33** and introduction of **Route 39** on MSU's campus. **Routes 1, 25 and 26** will also provide Spartan Service with more frequent and later evening service. Customers will return to boarding **Route 20 – 25** buses at the Shaw and Farm Boarding Area. These routes will not travel into the MSU-CATA Transportation Center during the semester.

CATA routes with fall service changes:

**Route 1- Downtown Lansing/Meridian Mall-** will have weekday morning time adjustments, evening time adjustments and added morning Capitol Loop trips.

**New route: Route 1, Limited-** provides weekday morning and evening service between Meridian Mall and downtown Lansing. Three trips each morning and evening serve a limited number of bus stops for a faster commute.

**Route 2- S. Washington/Pleasant Grove-** Weekday morning time adjustments.

**Route 3- Willow/Lansing Mall-** Downtown route adjustments en route to CTC, Capitol Loop trips added in the morning and weekend time adjustments.

**Route 5- South Cedar/Edgewood-** Added weekday afternoon trips

**Route 6- Cedar/Jolly Connection-** Added weekday afternoon trips

**Route 8- Pennsylvania/Holt-** Weekday morning time adjustments and added afternoon trips.

**Route 9- S. MLK Jr. Blvd/Miller-** Added weekday afternoon trips and weekday buses travel to Hill Vocational Center on every trip.

**Route 11- Waverly/Colonial Village-** Downtown route adjustment for buses en route to the CTC.

**Route 12- West Michigan/Waverly-** Downtown route adjustment for buses en route to the CTC

**Route 14- N. Grand River/Airport-** Time changes and added weekday morning and afternoon trips.

**Route 26-Abbott/Chandler-** Route change between Shaw and Burcham

**Route 46- Mason, Limited-** Morning service begins at S. Penn. Meijer and travels to Mason before heading to Lansing. Evening service- after arriving in Mason, bus takes expressway to S. Penn Meijer- ending service at CTC- no stops along the way.

**Route 48- Williamston/Webberville, Limited-** Morning service begins at S. Penn Meijer and travels to Webberville before heading to Lansing. Evening service- after arriving in Webberville, bus takes expressway to CTC.

### MSU campus route changes

**Route 30- Wilson- Akers-** Operates until 2AM.

**Route 31- Brody – Hubbard-** Operates until 2AM; routing change on north campus; buses no longer serve University Village

**Route 32B-Commuter Lot Limited** will travel between the Commuter Lot and the MSU-CATA Transportation Center via Hagadorn until Farm Lane construction ends this fall. **Route 32- Commuter Lot-** resumes service on Farm Lane when the road reopens.

**Routes 34, 35 and 36** will no longer operate weeknights. These three routes will run Saturdays and Sundays from 9AM until 2:30AM.

**New route: Route 39-University Village/Spartan Village-** This new route provides service between University Village, Spartan Village and central campus; weekdays, 7AM until 2AM.

For more information, please call CATA's Customer Service Representatives at 517.394.1000 weekdays from 7AM to 7PM and weekends 9AM to 5PM. New bus schedules are available in schedule racks, on CATA buses, and on CATA's website—[www.cata.org](http://www.cata.org).

## Best Protection against the Flu: Vaccination

By Marjorie Sandoval CRRN

Information obtained from Center for Communicable Disease Control website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The single best way to protect yourself and others against influenza is to get a flu vaccination each year. Two kinds of flu vaccine are available in the United States:

- **The "flu shot"** — an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions. See also

- **The nasal-spray flu vaccine** — a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that do not cause the flu (sometimes called LAIV for "live attenuated influenza vaccine" or FluMist®). LAIV (FluMist®) is approved for use in healthy people 2 years to 49 years of age\* who are not pregnant. \*On September 19, 2007 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved use of the nasal influenza vaccine LAIV (FluMist®) for healthy children ages 2-4 years old (24-59 months old) without a history of recurrent wheezing, as well as for healthy persons ages 5-49 years who are not pregnant. Previously, approval was for healthy persons ages 5-49 years who are not pregnant.

October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but getting vaccinated in December or even later can still be beneficial since most influenza activity occurs in January or later in most years. Though it varies, flu season can last as late as May.

### Influenza Symptoms

Influenza (commonly called the "flu") is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. The information below describes common flu symptoms, how to protect yourself and those close to you from getting the flu, and what to do if you get sick with flu-like symptoms.

#### Be Aware of Common Flu Symptoms

Influenza usually starts suddenly and may include the following symptoms:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Tiredness (can be extreme)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches

Diarrhea and vomiting (more common among children than adults)

Having these symptoms does not always mean that you have the flu. Many different illnesses, including the common cold, can have similar symptoms.

### Diagnosing the Flu

It is very difficult to distinguish the flu from other infections on the basis of symptoms alone. A doctor's exam may be needed to tell whether you have developed the flu or a complication of the flu. There are tests that can determine if you have the flu as long as you are tested within the first 2 or 3 days of illness.

If you develop flu-like symptoms and are concerned about your illness, especially if you are at high risk for complications of the flu, you should consult your health-care provider.

Those at high risk for complications include people 65 years or older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, and young children.

### Know the Risks from the Flu

In some people, the flu can cause serious complications, including bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes. Children and adults may develop sinus problems and ear infections.

### People May Have Different Reactions to the Flu

The flu can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. Although most healthy people recover from the flu without complications, some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious complications from the flu.

### Know How the Flu Spreads

The flu usually spreads from person to person in respiratory droplets when people who are infected cough or sneeze. People occasionally may become infected by touching something with influenza virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes.

Healthy adults may be able to infect others **1 day before** getting symptoms and up to **5 days after** getting sick. Therefore, it is possible to give someone the flu before you know you are sick as well as while you are sick.

### Who Should Not Be Vaccinated

There are some people who should not be vaccinated without first consulting a physician. These include

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination.
- People who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine.
- Children less than 6 months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for this age group), and People who have a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever (they should wait until they recover to get vaccinated.)

From: OLMSTEAD DISCUSSION LIST  
[mailto:OLMSTEADMI@LISTSERV.PROSYNERGY.ORG] On Behalf Of  
RoAnne Chaney

## Facts About Health Care Reform

Sharon L. Gire, Director of the Office of Services to the Aging (OSA), has requested that the following four FACTS received from AARP (see below) be shared with you. They address rumors about health care reform that are frightening older adults in our state:

**FACT #1:** Medicare will not be ended, and no benefits or services will be cut.

Your services will not be ended, nor will your benefits be cut. AARP's position on this could not be clearer, and we have sent this message loud and clear to Congress. While the current proposals include savings in Medicare by cutting out fraud, abuse, waste, and inefficiency, we're standing up and making sure benefits for Medicare recipients are not only fully protected, but are improved.

**FACT #2:** No legislation currently in Congress would mandate the rationing of care, period.

Our staff has read all of the legislation circulating in Congress and there are no provisions in these bills that would ration care for our members. None. If any ever did, we would vigorously fight to stop that legislation.

**FACT #3:** There is no provision of any piece of legislation that would promote euthanasia of any kind.

The rumors out there are flat out lies. Right now Medicare does not cover counseling for end-of-life care. The portion of the bill in question would simply provide coverage for optional end-of-life consultations with doctors, so that the patient can be aware of all of the treatment options on the table. It is not mandatory and it has nothing to do with euthanasia.

**FACT #4:** We have not endorsed President Obama's plan.

In fact, we haven't endorsed any plan. We are supporting reform of our health care system, something that AARP has pushed for many years. We're working closely with Republican and Democratic members of Congress to lower health care costs and to ensure quality affordable coverage for older Americans - and we want reform legislation passed and signed by the president this year.

So what is AARP fighting for in health reform?

1. Stopping insurance companies from charging older Americans unaffordable premiums because of their age.
2. Ending the practice of excluding people from insurance because of pre-existing conditions.
3. Holding down health costs and making insurance coverage more affordable for all Americans.
4. Making prescription drugs more affordable by narrowing the Medicare doughnut hole, bringing generics to market faster, and allowing Medicare to negotiate better drug prices.

Find out more and take action at [http://aarp.convio.net/site/R?i=Kka\\_7AuLwJsAGB8swFn6Rg ...](http://aarp.convio.net/site/R?i=Kka_7AuLwJsAGB8swFn6Rg...)

**CONSUMER ALERT  
MIKE COX  
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

The Attorney General provides Consumer Alerts to inform the public of unfair, misleading, or deceptive business practices, and to provide information and guidance on other issues of concern. Consumer Alerts are not legal advice, legal authority, or a binding legal opinion from the Department of Attorney General. The Senior Census – Fact or Fiction? Mailings Targeting Seniors Ask for "Donations" to Send Your Opinions to Your Congressional Representatives Michigan seniors have received mailings informing them of an upcoming "Senior Census". The mailings ask seniors for their opinions on several different issues. The mailings also ask for a "donation" to ensure that the opinions of Michigan seniors are brought to the attention of their Congressional representatives. Before you respond to these mailings, ask yourself – why would I pay someone to make sure my voice is heard? "SENIOR CENSUS" MAILINGS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING FOR YEARS – AND SHOW NO SIGNS OF STOPPING The Indiana Attorney General warned seniors of "senior census" mailings in 2007, and the mailings from 2007 are nearly identical to the mailings being circulated today. Despite the fact that the census asks for the opinions of Michigan seniors on a range of topics, and asks for a "donation" to ensure that these opinions make it all the way to Washington, D.C., the census questions never change, and the opinions of seniors nationwide never appear to make it to our nation's capital. Please keep in mind that your state and federal legislators always wish to hear from you – in fact, their job is to listen to your opinions and translate them into action. State and federal legislators go out of their way to make it easy for you to communicate with them, whether by mail or e-mail, phone or fax, or even a visit to their office. There is absolutely no reason why any constituent should need to pay an organization to make their opinion known – feel free to contact legislators on your own, or as part of a group, but you should never have to pay to make your opinion heard. Michigan Attorney General Consumer Alerts are available at [www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) Toll free 1-877-765-8388

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MICHIGAN LEGISLATORS**

If you would like to contact your state or federal legislator, there are many ways to find their contact information and provide them with your opinion. To find the contact information for your state representatives, please visit the Michigan House website at <http://house.michigan.gov/>, or the Michigan Senate website at <http://senate.michigan.gov/>. To find the contact information for your federal representatives, please visit the website of the United States House of Representatives at <http://www.house.gov/>, or the United States Senate at <http://www.senate.gov/>. **CONTACT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION** If you are aware of a scam targeting Michigan seniors, please file a complaint with the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. You can also call the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division if you would like assistance in obtaining the contact information for your state or federal legislators.

Consumer Protection Division  
P.O. Box 30213  
Lansing, MI 48909  
517-373-1140  
Fax: 517-241-3771  
Toll free: 877-765-8388  
[www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (online complaint form)

“The work continues, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die.”

## **Statement from the National Council on Independent Living on the Passing of Senator Ted Kennedy**

August 26, 2009

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) extends its sympathy to the family of the late Senator Kennedy and joins them in mourning the loss of one of the greatest senators in our nation’s history. Because the most fitting way to honor the Senator’s memory is direct action, we shall pause momentarily to remember his remarkable accomplishments, which have paved the way for freedom and equality for people with disabilities, in order that we may draw inspiration to carry on his legacy and continue fighting for the fulfillment of his dream.

In 2008, NCIL recognized the achievements of Senator Kennedy by presenting him the Frank Harkin Memorial Award. Frank Harkin was a person with a disability who fought for his civil rights many years before the passage of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. His efforts taught his brother, U.S. Senator Tom Harkin, about the discrimination faced by people with disabilities and the importance of civil rights. As the nation looks back on Senator Kennedy’s accomplishments, NCIL is reflecting on his efforts to bring people with disabilities closer to being free and equal citizens. As you read through the following inventory of the achievements for which we are especially grateful, remember the words of Senator Harkin as he accepted on his colleague’s behalf, “Senator Kennedy said one time to me, ‘We’re never going to be a fully integrated society until we fully integrate every person with a disability into every aspect of our American life.’”

Senator Harkin continued: “Talking about Ted Kennedy and his achievements, you kind of quickly exhaust the superlatives. He is the most effective and accomplished senator of the last half century, no doubt about it. He has been known as the lion of the Senate and in particular he has been a lion in his advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities. Ted’s sister, Rosemary, lived 86 years with an intellectual disability and the entire Kennedy family is well acquainted with the joys and struggles of those with disabilities.”

It is that fundamental belief in equality and opportunity that made Senator Kennedy a leader in the Senate on so many disability issues. Here are a few of the accomplishments that have had a lasting impact on people with disabilities:

- In 1975 Senator Kennedy helped to pass the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).
- In 1978 he passed legislation expanding the jurisdiction of the Civil Rights Commission to protect people from discrimination on the basis of disability.
- In 1980, he introduced the Civil Rights for Institutionalized Persons Act protecting the rights of people in government institutions, including seniors and people with intellectual and mental disabilities.
- In 1990, Senator Kennedy was instrumental in the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The New York Times wrote: “*Perhaps his greatest success on civil rights came in 1990 with passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which required employers and public facilities to make “reasonable accommodation” for the disabled. When the law was finally passed, Mr. Kennedy and others told how their views on the bill had been shaped by having relatives with disabilities. Mr. Kennedy cited his mentally disabled sister, Rosemary, and his son who had lost a leg to cancer.*”

And in 2009, his personal contribution to the healthcare reform legislation, the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act (CLASS Act) was included in House legislation, as well as the Senate draft.

NCIL’s Executive Director, Kelly Buckland, recalls his experience working on healthcare reform, twenty years prior to the battle being waged now. “Senator Kennedy flew me out to Washington to testify. He wanted me to talk about the difficulty people in small companies, especially people with disabilities, had getting health insurance. This truly was the ‘Cause of his life.’” As Kelly described his work with the Senator a generation ago, a personally signed note from the Senator, thanking him for his testimony, hung on the wall of his office.

Finally, NCIL would like to reflect on some of the words that Senator Kennedy shared at some major moments in his life. As he conceded the Democratic Nomination for President at the 1980 Democratic Convention, he stated, “*Circumstances may change, but the work of compassion must continue. It is surely correct that we cannot solve problems by throwing money at them, but it is also correct that we dare not throw out our national problems onto a scrap heap of inattention and indifference. The poor may be out of political fashion, but they are not without human needs... For all those whose cares have been our concern, the work goes on. The work continues, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die.*”

NCIL shares the vision that the cause must endure, the hope must live and dreams must never die, and we pledge to continue our fight to ensure the social justice and rights of people with disabilities throughout our nation.

From the National Council on Independent Living, and people with disabilities throughout the country, thank you Senator Kennedy.

Lydia McElrath used to pull her 90-year-old mother's wheelchair up and down two steps leading to the back door of their Lansing home. But today, she'll be able to roll Frances Ewing's wheelchair up a new wooden ramp and deck.

About 20 volunteers built the ramp Monday as part of the Michigan Mobility and Accessibility Partnership, for which Philadelphia-based Comcast Corp. donated \$30,000 to build five wheelchair ramps this summer in Michigan, Comcast spokeswoman Mary Beth Halprin said.

McElrath's mother has used a wheelchair for about a year, has a limited ability to walk on her own and has dementia, she said. McElrath, 43, was born and raised in Ewing's tan, one-story home on Ronald Street, and she and her 20-year-old son live there with Ewing.

"It's been really difficult. I was afraid of losing my footing," McElrath said. "My main concern was getting her in safely without hurting her or hurting myself. I would never forgive myself if I did."

The Capital Area Center for Independent Living selected Ewing as a recipient of Comcast's money based on her financial need and the extent to which a ramp would improve her quality of life, said Ellen Weaver, executive director of the Lansing agency.

Of the approximately \$5,500 allocated for Ewing's project, the partnership spent about \$1,100 on her 14-foot ramp and 8-by-12-foot deck, Weaver said. The Center for Independent Living will use the rest of the funds to construct two other wheelchair ramps at Lansing-area homes and repair a third, she said.

"A ramp goes two ways. It not only lets her get out, but lets her friends who might be wheelchair users come in so they can visit," she said. "It's really neat to see all the volunteers who just give their whole hearts to this."

McElrath said her mother loves to sit at her dining room table and gaze out the window at the backyard.

"This gives her an opportunity to come out and sit in her backyard and enjoy her yard," she said.

Besides building the ramp, volunteers also spruced up Ewing's yard and landscaped the front of her house.

State Sen. Mark Jansen, R-Gaines Township, started the Michigan Mobility and Accessibility Partnership, and it is supported by several other legislators, including Sen. Gretchen Whitmer, D-East Lansing, who helped build the ramp Monday, Halprin said. Habitat for Humanity also helped with the construction.

Center for Independent Living agencies across Michigan selected four other homes for Comcast's project, Weaver said. They are in Rockford, Flint, Monroe and Rochester.

## 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

# Capital Letters

Capital Area Center for Independent Living

1048 Pierpont, Suite 9-10

Lansing, MI 48911 (517) 241-0393

## OBSERVATIONS

My most recent observation (not by choice) is the construction of the storm drain separation that has recently hit my street. It's been all around me for months and the noise was a bother, but I didn't know the full extent until I came home from work one day to find my street missing. The pavement was gone and all that was left was an occasional rock or stray piece of asphalt that had managed to escape. I know it's going to turn into a mud bog when it rains and I don't drive an off road Jeep.

The next day (my day off) I was awakened at 6:30 by what sounded like several giant smoke detectors going off at the same time. Several pieces of heavy equipment were moving onto the block—backing up! Do they back up all the time to make sure everyone in the neighborhood is on time for work? Do they do it just to be annoying? Don't they move forward? I can't answer these questions; I just know that it happens every morning and I don't have my sleep time in by then.

The following day the sewer pipes arrived and at least one was placed in front of each house on the block. I do have to admit that seeing all the different sizes and configurations was kind of interesting, especially the ones that have two little holes to connect to the houses (I think that's what they're for). They make beautiful lawn ornaments and the kids like to skateboard or ride their bikes through them. The little monster next door likes to hide in them and jump out screaming when anyone passes by. If they aren't in the ground by winter, some of them will probably become hotels. Yesterday they became even more interesting because they now have all kinds of notations spray painted

on the outsides.

Next came the orange plastic fencing and wooden slats that were placed around most of the trees on the block. It looks just like the way the trees are protected from the Giraffes at the zoo. The same thing was done on the street before me, but from the sound of the saws going all day, I think they changed their minds on some of them.

This morning the "thing" arrived; this huge, heavy metal thing that looks like a semi-trailer without a top or bottom only made out of much thicker metal. I think it's the same thing that was on the cross street that was sunk into the ground and my guess is that it's to keep the ground from caving in on the workers when they are below ground. When it was in the other location, we had a big rain storm and the "thing" filled up with water and a drain truck had to be called in to pump it out. I was really worried while it was there because all they did was put an orange, plastic fence around it and it's at least 10' deep. I could just imagine finding a kid at the bottom of it.

I don't know what will be there when I get home from work tonight. Maybe my lawn will be dug up, or the tree cut down, or the "thing" sunk into the ground, or the Giraffes will have arrived. Who knows? By the way, I have noticed that two pieces of the heaviest equipment are being driven by women. One of them is a petite, little blond. We are women; hear us roar! Anyway, does anybody want a mud facial?