CommunicAbility

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR DISABILITY COMMUNITY

"The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold a man's foot long enough to enable him to put the other somewhat higher."

~Thomas Henry Huxley~
Life and Letters of Thomas Huxley

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New Horizons Un-Limited Inc. (NHU) is a non-profit organization based in Milwaukee with a mission to make information and life experiences more accessible to people with lifelong disabilities, their families and caregivers. To learn more about our mission and activities, please visit the NHU website at **www.new-horizons.org**.

Emergency Preparedness

Don't have an emergency plan? Now is the time to make one!

With the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita still fresh in our minds, we thought it timely to remind you how very important it is to have a plan in place in the event of a natural or other disaster. Your health and safety during such an emergency depend upon your preparedness. Following are a few bits of advice and resources to help you develop an emergency plan of your own. (The following has been derived from American Red Cross' prepare.org):

Know your Environment. What kind of disasters could strike your area? How could such disasters impact your ability to escape?

Complete a Personal Assessment. What type of assistance will you need before, during and after a disaster?

Create a Personal Support Network. Which of your family, friends, relatives, neighbors, or co-workers could assist you at a moment's notice? If feasible, do not rely on just one person; always have several back-ups in place.

Make an Emergency Contact List. Who should others call in case of emergency? Be sure to include the names and numbers of out-of-town contacts, as well as everyone in your network.

Compile a Medical Information List. What is your specific Medical condition? Which medication and dosage do you require? Do you require adaptive equipment? Also, be sure to include the names and numbers of your doctors.

Other Medical Issues. Always keep at least a seven-day supply of medications on hand. If you undergo treatments administered by a clinic or hospital, ask your provider how to prepare for a disruption caused by a disaster.

Know your Home. Identify all potential evacuation routes out of your home as well as any safe places in your home you could go during a disaster. Identify the main utility cutoff valves in your home and learn how and when to disconnect them during an emergency.

Prepare your Home. Clear hallways, stairwells, doorways, and windows of any obstructions that may prevent you from leaving your home quickly.

Prepare a Disaster Supply Kit. This kit should include essentials such as food, water, a first aid kit, adaptive equipment, batteries, supplies for your pets or service animals, etc. You may also want to consider including some form of ID. You may wish to prepare a kit for each location you regularly spend time (home, work, car, etc.).

Complete a Plan Summary and Distribute to everyone in your Support Network. Make sure everyone in your support network is on the same page. Include all details, including evacuation routes, medical information, and any other important instructions.

For more practical tips, visit the American Red Cross online at **www.prepare.org/disabilities/disabilities.htm**.

You may also wish to visit the Department of Homeland Security Emergencies and Disasters Disability Preparedness Resource Center, which includes even more practical information: **www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/editorial/ editorial_0660.xml**.

Check it Out!

Computer freeware: The Hidden Jewel of Computer Software

Did you know that there are thousands of free software programs just waiting for you to download? Freeware is software that is written by program enthusiasts and distributed free of charge, generally via websites. While Freeware is no doubt a wonderful discovery, you must download such software with care. It is not uncommon for such downloads to include viruses, which can wreak havoc on your computer. Before downloading anything from the Internet, please take special care in evaluating the source of the download and remember, never download anything without having a properly updated virus protection program. Following are a few safe sites from which you can download numerous, free and safe, software titles.

FreewareFiles.com
This website features **free** and **safe** downloads of thousands of Freeware titles. You will find everything from card and strategy games to graphic design and web development programs to business applications, including address books and personal finance tools. Check out all of the fantastic, free programs at **www.freewarefiles.com**/.

OpenOffice.org
The Open Office Software Suite is a product of Sun Microsystems. This free software suite includes a word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation and drawing program, all of which are compatible with the leading Windows office program, Microsoft Office. To download your free Open Office Suite, visit **www.openoffice.org**/.

Typing Master – Free Demo
TypingMaster has developed software for typing training and testing since 1992. Via their website they offer a free download of a demo version of their software. This demo version features various, timed typing exercises which measure speed and accuracy. To download this free demo version, visit **www.typingmaster.com**/ and click on Free Demo.

It's Time to "Mousercise"

Are you or someone you know just getting started on a computer? If so, following is a great online resource that takes you through the basics of working with a computer mouse. Using the mouse is often one of the greatest challenges for beginners. This "mousercise" will put you at ease with the mouse. Visit Palm Beach Public Library: Mousing Around: **www.pbclibrary.org**/**mousing**/.

National News

2006 Disability Policy Seminar

Save the date - February 6-8, 2006! The Disability Policy Collaboration, a joint initiative of The ARC and United Cerebral Palsy, will be hosting their 2006 Disability Policy Seminar at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington DC on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, February 6th –8th.

Seminar participants will learn what is really happening in national politics, particularly on policies that impact people with disabilities. The first two days will feature discussions that will provide answers to the following tough questions:
* Is Medicaid on the budgetary chopping block?
* Will Social Security reform and privatization be on the table for Congress?
* What is going on with the new Medicare prescription drug coverage?
* What programs/services are being funded (or de-funded) in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget?

Other possible issues to be discussed include Tax, Reform Employment, Disability Rights, Housing and, Transportation, among others.

The third day of the seminar will present participants with an opportunity to spend a day on Capitol Hill to educate Members of Congress and their staff on these and other issues important to the disability community.

For more information, e-mail Richard Price, Director of Communications and Grassroots Advocacy, at **price@thedpc.org** or call The ARC at (202) 783-2229 or UCP at 800-872-5827.

Lifeline Program Can Make Cellular Service More Affordable

Did you know that Lifeline, the Federal Universal Fund program, which makes telephone service more affordable for qualified low-income households, also applies to cellular service? At this time, a leading cellular service company is extending the program to residents of Iowa, Maine, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin. Those who qualify for Lifeline will receive discounted monthly service, which includes free nationwide long distance, and have the activation fee waived. Participants may also purchase a phone for just 1 penny. If you are located in one of the above states, call (800) 447-1339 to learn how Lifeline can help you obtain cellular service.

If you are not in one of the states listed above, contact your local cellular provider to learn if they offer this program.

National Disability Mentoring Day

If you have been dreaming of a particular career but are not quite sure of all the details, here is your opportunity to learn more. Spearheaded by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), "Disability Mentoring Day (DMD): Career Development for the 21st Century," will be commemorated on Wednesday, October 19, 2005 as the official kick-off for a year-round effort.

According to Andrew Imparato, AAPD president and CEO, Disability mentoring day "builds relationships between mentees and mentors working in fields that interest them and building a year-round career exploration program. [This day] helps to create a pipeline of qualified workers and gives people with disabilities greater direction and motivation." DMD offers students and job seekers with disabilities an opportunity to evaluate personal goals, target career skills for improvement, explore possible career paths, and develop lasting mentor relationships while spending their day visiting with a volunteer mentor from a business or government agency that matches their interests.

To learn more, contact your local Disability Mentoring Day coordinator. To locate your coordinator, contact the American Association of People with Disabilities at (800) 840-8844 or visit their DMD website at **www.dmd-aapd.org**/.

Wisconsin News

"Dare to Dream" About Your Future as a Wisconsinite with a Disability

The Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities is in the process of developing their 5-year State Plan, which will outline important goals and activities that will improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. To ensure that their plan meets your needs, the Council will be hosting a series of "Dare to Dream Cafés," which are modeled after a typical coffee shop café, where people come to discuss topics of interest. In this case the topic of the day will be people with disabilities. People who attend each Café will be asked two questions: (1) Imagine Wisconsin five years from now. What changes do you most want to see for people with disabilities by then?; (2) Specifically, what are some things the DD Council can do over the next five years to make the changes you want happen?

Several events remain for the month of October:

Milwaukee
Thursday, October 20, 2005, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee Center for Independence
202 W. Wells Street

Stevens Point
Saturday, October 29, 2005,12:00-3:30 p.m.
People First of Wisconsin Board Meeting
Midstate Technical College
933 Michigan Avenue, Room 133
Use North entrance– door #3.

Participation is free, but reservations are required. Please allow adequate time to process special accommodation requests. To reserve your attendance, contact Helen at the WCDD office by e-mail at **hartmha@dhfs.state.wi.us** or by telephone at (608) 266-3047.

30th Annual TASH Conference in Milwaukee

TASH, a national non-profit organization working for equity, opportunity and inclusion for people with disabilities, will be hosting their annual conference on November 9-12, 2005 at the Midwest Airlines Center in Milwaukee. The conference features three inspirational keynote speakers from diverse backgrounds who will share their experiences in an effort to energize attendees towards their personal best. The conference also features workshops that focus on inclusion in education and employment. Also offered are full day Saturday Institutes, which include discussions on advocacy, raising and nurturing children with disabilities, and ensuring meaningful academic outcomes for children with significant disabilities. Beyond the presentations, attendees will also have an opportunity to browse through the many exhibitor booths.

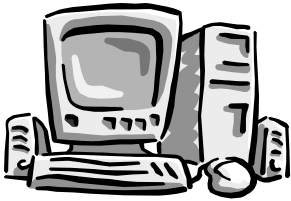For more information, visit the TASH Conference website at **www.tash.org/tash2005** or call TASH at (410) 828-8274.

New Accessible Trail opens in Harrington Beach State Park

The Quarry Lake Hiking Trail, a new wheelchair accessible hiking trail has opened at Harrington Beach State Park in Belgium, Wisconsin. The 636-acre park, which is just 30 miles North of Milwaukee, offers a mile-long Lake Michigan beach and opportunities for hiking, fishing, picnicking, nature watching and cross-country skiing.

For more information, call (262) 285-3015.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Fall Computer Classes

Come and learn all there is to do with a computer!

Starting October 18, 2005 New Horizons Un-Limited will be offering regularly scheduled computer classes at our downtown office located at, 811 E. Wisconsin Avenue. Classes are designed to give an introductory overview of the most commonly used functions of the computer. We will offer everything from mouse and keyboard exercises to basic e-mail and word processing instruction. These classes are perfect for those just getting started on a computer.

Classes will take place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and early afternoons. As outlined on the schedule to the right, each day features four 1¼-hour cumulative sessions. Students may choose to attend all 4 sessions in one day or spread the sessions over several weeks. Each day costs just $5 for as many sessions as you wish to attend.

The lab will feature several adaptive devices, including a Big Keys Keyboard, a Trackball, and a Head mouse. You will also have an opportunity to explore the built in accessibility features of Microsoft Windows 2000, including the narrator, magnifier, and on-screen keyboard.

Sign up early, as class size is limited. Individual, advanced instruction is also available by appointment. For more information or to request a registration form, please call (414) 299-0124.

Weekly Tuesday Schedule

Session 1: Just the Basics (Self-paced)   9:00 a.m.
- Students will work at their own pace while completing a variety of typing exercises.
- Students will learn the basics of the mouse and how to interact with the computer using the mouse.

Session 2: Hardware and Software   10:30 a.m.
- Students will learn how to "hook up" a computer.
- Students will come to understand each peripheral and its function, including the PC and all of its disk drives.
- Students will come to understand the importance of system and applications software.
- Students will learn how to install/download software.

Session 3: Navigating the Computer   12:00 p.m.
- Students will be introduced to the Desktop and Start Menu
- Students will be introduced to My Computer and learn more about accessing the PCs storage drives.
- Students will learn how to maintain their computers.

Session 4: Creating / Opening Documents and Folders   1:30 p.m
- Students will create and save a text document using Open Office
- Students will create personal folders on a floppy disk.
- Students will learn how to access previously saved documents.

Weekly Thursday Schedule

Session 1: An Introduction to Word Processing   9:00 a.m.
- Students will learn how to create and format a letter.
- Students will learn how to edit a document.
- Students will learn how to save and print a text document.

Session 2: More on Word Processing   10:30 a.m
- Students will learn how to change the format of the page
- Students will learn how to format the text

Session 3: Introduction to the Internet   12:00 p.m.
- Students will learn how to connect their computer to the Internet.
- Students will be introduced to the web browser Internet Explorer.
- Students will learn how to search the web.
- Students will learn how to protect their computer from viruses.

Session 4: Introduction to E-mail   1:30 p.m.
- Students will create a new Yahoo e-mail account.
- Students will learn how to access and send e-mail.
- Students will learn how to protect their computer from viruses.