

COMMUNICABILITY



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR DISABILITY COMMUNITY

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"The act of voting is one opportunity for us to remember that our whole way of life is predicated on the capacity of ordinary people to judge carefully and well."


US Politician

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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.

If you do not have access to the Internet and cannot visit the websites listed in this newsletter, please contact New Horizons Un-Limited directly at (414) 299-0124 and we would be happy to mail you the information available online.

2008 Presidential Election

Your Vote: Your Future

Sixty-four percent of voting aged citizens voted in the 2004 presidential election. That means **36% of eligible voters, more than 45 million people, went unheard in 2004.** 45 million people left their futures in the hands of others. Are you among the unheard?

No matter if you self-identify as an individual with a disability, as African American, Caucasian, Hispanic, rich, impoverished, man, woman or countless other categorizations, **we would like you to understand the importance of your vote.**

On November 4, 2008 we will have the opportunity to decide who will lead us into the future; which candidate will best represent our needs and the needs of our nation as a whole. Which candidate will sign legislation and support initiatives that will strengthen our economy, protect our civil rights, create more jobs, improve health care, eliminate barriers, provide help where help is needed most.

The fact of the matter is the next president of the United States will make decisions that will impact your life. They will sign or veto legislation that could improve your life or make it more difficult. They will lead us, our country, into the future; a future we, as voters can decide.

With so much at stake, how can you not cast a ballot on November 4th? **How can you not have a say in your future?**

If you have never voted before, please consider doing so on Tuesday, November 4th. It is not too late to register and/or request an absentee ballot.

The Voting Process

Step 1: Register to Vote

If you have voted within the last four years and have stayed in the same voting district you will not have to register again.

In a number of states you must register to vote as far as 30 days in advance of the election. Others will allow you to register at the polling place on the day of the election. A number of states will accept the National Voter Registration form. You may complete this form online, print it and mail it to the appropriate office by visiting Congress.org's Election Guide online: https://ssl.congress.org/congressorg/election/register_vote

Keep in mind that you must be registered with the municipality in which you live. To learn more about your state's voter registration guidelines, visit Project Vote Smart: Voter Registration online: www.votesmart.org/voter_registration_resources.php

Step 2: Educate Yourself on the Candidates

Do not simply rely on the campaign commercials splashed across your television screen; read up on the candidates' stances on the issues, check out their voting records, get to know them inside and out. We have provided a number of links through which you can learn more via our 2008 Presidential Election web page: www.new-horizons.org/elec08.html

Step 3: Cast Your Vote

Absentee Voting

As an individual with a disability, you can vote via the mail with an Absentee Ballot. You will want to request an Absentee Ballot at least several weeks before the election to ensure that you are able to return it by November 4th. To learn more about your state's absentee ballot guidelines, visit Project Vote Smart: Voter Registration online: www.votesmart.org/voter_registration_resources.php

Polling Place Assistance

If you plan to vote at the polls on Election Day, assistance is available. The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires that all polling places have at least one accessible voting machine to enable people to vote privately and independently. You may also bring an individual to assist you, provided they are not an officer or agent of your employer or union. Assistance is also available at your polling place.

To locate your polling place, visit Vote411.org online: www.vote411.org

National Interest

ADA Amendments Act passes - expands protection for Americans with disabilities

On September 17, 2008, thanks to a tremendous grassroots advocacy effort, Congress passed the ADA Amendments Act. Originally introduced in 2007, the Act faced fierce, misguided opposition from a number of associations. After a concerted effort of advocates and legislators to correct mischaracterizations of the bill, the act gained tremendous bipartisan support.

The ADA Amendments Act clarifies Congress' original intent and restates language of the 1990 American's With Disabilities Act (ADA) to better protect the rights of people with disabilities. Over the years, the courts have whittled away at the ADA's intended, broad protections, continuously ruling against people with disabilities.

There was particular bias when looking at employment discrimination cases. Courts had ruled in favor of employers 97% of the time, often before the person had a chance to show that the employer treated them unfairly, stating that the individual was not disabled enough to be covered by the Act.

With passage of the Amendments Act a greater number of individuals with disabilities will have access to the accommodations they need to pursue employment and life as an equal member of society.

For more on the act, visit Securing the Promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act online: www.adabill.com

The ADA and You

The ADA is only as effective as your knowledge of it. If you do not know how the law protects you, then it will not do you much good. The ADA includes four (4) Titles:

Title I: Employers with 15 or more employees must not discriminate on the basis of disability during the periods of recruitment, hiring, or employment and must provide reasonable accommodations to facilitate employment.

Title II: State and local governments must give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all of their programs, services, and activities (e.g. public education, employment, public transportation, recreation, health care, social services, courts, voting, etc.).

Title III: All new construction and modification of existing public accommodations, including restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and general use facilities, must be accessible to the disabled. For existing facilities, barriers to services must be removed.

Title IV: Telephone and television access must be usable by people with hearing and speech disabilities. Telephone companies must offer telecommunications relay services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

There are a number of helpful websites and publications that explain the ADA further. Please, educate yourself on the provisions of this law.

On the Web:

ADA Home Page: www.ada.gov

At the Library:

Oceana's Law for the Layperson: Americans With Disabilities Act, *Second Edition*, By Margaret C Jasper

By Phone:

ADA Information Line:
1-800-514-0301 (Voice), 1-800-514-0383 (TTY)

AbilityJobs links employers to qualified job seekers with disabilities

As a job seeker with a disability it is important that you find an employer that is eager to accept and accommodate your disability. This task can be difficult as there continues to be misconceptions and unfounded fears among many employers. While the recent passage of the ADA Amendments Act has taken us a step forward, it is even more encouraging to see employers come together to actively recruit talented individuals with disabilities.

Ability Jobs brings employers that are eager to employ people with disabilities together "under one roof". Hundreds of employers throughout the United States have posted jobs for such positions as customer service, clerical, human resources, information technology, and sales, among others.

Job seekers can post their resumes, create a career profile, search for current positions and sign up for e-mail job alerts.

Check out Ability Jobs online: www.abilityjobs.com

Voting in Wisconsin

Casting your ballot in Wisconsin is easier than you may think

In Wisconsin you can register to vote at the polls on Election Day and cast your ballot immediately after. When registering to vote you will need to complete a voter registration form and provide proof that you live in the voting district. This proof can include a recent utility bill, credit card bill or other identification with your current address. (*If you have voted within the last four years and stay in the same voting district you will not have to register again.*)

You may also register to vote via the mail if you do so by October 15th. Additionally, if you cannot make it to the polls on November 4th, you may request an absentee ballot and submit your ballot via the mail.

To request a voter registration form and/or an absentee ballot, contact your city, village or town clerk's office. A complete list of offices is available at: elections.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=10506&locid=47

To learn more about voting as an individual with a disability in Wisconsin, call the Wisconsin Disability Vote Project at (608) 231-3859 or visit them online: www.disabilityvote.org

Autumn in Milwaukee: Your Guide to Local Events & Activities

As the weather cools and the days shorten we find ourselves cooped up indoors much too often. We encourage you to take advantage of the last few months of comfortable weather and check out the following events.

Act/React Interactive Art Exhibit, presented by the Milwaukee Art Museum, is a first of its kind exhibition featuring artwork that responds/reacts to the physical actions of the visitor.

Your movements could create brushstrokes on a wall, cause colorful forms to reconfigure in your wake or bring sound from a seemingly inanimate object. Among the works featured are talking tables, virtual snowstorms, and glowing pools of organic patterns.

The exhibition opens October 4, 2008 and runs through, January 11, 2009. Tickets, which include general admission to the museum, cost \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors (65+) and \$10 for students. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call (414) 224-3200.

Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition, presented by The Milwaukee Public Museum, retells the stories of this legendary ship's passengers, through hundreds of authentic artifacts and extensive room re-creations. Visitors begin their chronological journey through the life of the *Titanic*, moving through the ship's construction, to life on board, to the ill-fated sinking and amazing artifact rescue efforts.

This exhibit opens October 10, 2008 and is wheelchair accessible. Weekday tickets cost \$21 for adults, \$18 for seniors or students and \$13 for children (3-12 years old). For more information or to purchase tickets, please call (414) 223-4676.

The L.I.F.E Program offered by the Milwaukee Center for Independence offers more than 200 activities to people with and without disabilities. You can partake in everything from dance class to pumpkin carving to dinner outings to a Halloween costume dance.

For a complete calendar of events and activities, visit the MCFI website at www.mcfi.net or call (414) 937-2095.

Your Online Shopping Supports New Horizons Un-Limited

With **GoodShop**, you can earn funds for NHU simply by shopping at your favorite online retailers!

Step 1: Visit **www.goodshop.com**.

Step 2: Type New Horizons Un-Limited in the "Who do you GoodShop for?" box.

Step 3: Click the Verify button. New Horizons Un-Limited (Milwaukee, WI) will appear.

Step 4: Select your favorite online retailer from the drop down "Store Name" menu, located in the left column of the page. An information page will open.

Step 5: Click on the Yellow "GoodShop This Store" Button.

Step 6: Repeat! Be sure to click on your favorite retailers from the GoodShop site every time you plan to make an online purchase.

The amount donated is different for each retailer but averages approximately 3% of the total sale and can go up to 20% and beyond.