



*disAbility*  
CONNECTIONS, INC.

409 LINDEN AVENUE JACKSON MI 49203

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

Newsletter 2 – April / May 2013



*Supporting*  
people with disabilities

in their efforts to lead

*Independent,*

fulfilling, productive lives

*Since 1925*



# 2013 Volume 2

*Thank You!*

We have had such a great outpouring of “atta-boys” for the new version of our online newsletter. We hope that by coming to you when the information is timely, we are better meeting your needs! Again we urge you to forward information or share topic ideas with us that you would like to see in the newsletter. Drop me an email at [hollyp@disabilityconnect.org](mailto:hollyp@disabilityconnect.org) or give me a call anytime at 782-6054 ext. 223!

*Holly*

kudos!

- ◆ Kudos - **Saint Vincent DePaul**, **Advance Care - Brown's** and **Allegiance Home Medical** thanks for being a part of the team for Nursing Facility Transition. You all have gone above and beyond! Submitted by: *Carmon Yeloushan*
- ◆ Kudos to **Shonnie Albert from the Salvation Army** for going above and beyond for a Nursing Facility Transition Consumer from our agency! Submitted by: *Dana Vance*
- ◆ Kudos to the staff at **Lyle Tarrant Center** for hosting our GOGO Talent show and Family Potluck! Everyone from **Sharon** the principal, **Shell, Karen and Mellissa** -Staff, **Kevin** – Music Maestro and **Gary** -Maintenance were on hand to assist! Also to **Lora** (for photos), **Lesia** and **Al** from DC and our many GOGO family volunteers! Submitted by: *Holly Peterson*
- ◆ Kudos to **Jackie Walker** for the outstanding “wheel and hub job” on our wheelchairs! Submitted by: *Jim Cyphers and Perry Stahl*





*Service with a*  
***SMILE!***

**Join us on May 31st  
from 10 AM to 2 PM  
to celebrate the opening of**

***fix-dis***

**405 Prospect Street - Jackson MI 49203**

- We will celebrate with a good old-fashioned “*check-up and wash*” for your wheelchairs, walkers and other medical equipment.
  - Plant a “Garden to Go”!
- Refreshments, Tours, Door-Prize Drawings

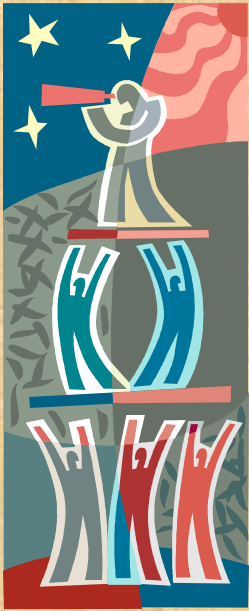


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# Featured Support Groups

## **Alzheimer's Association Support Group**

**Contact Information:** alz.org/mglc or call 800.272.3900.

An Alzheimer's Association support group is a safe place to learn, offer and receive helpful tips, and meet others coping with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia.

- JACKSON - APRIL 9 2nd Tuesday of each month 6:30 - 8:30 pm  
John Ganton's Countryside Retirement Community, 3637 McCain Road
- JACKSON - APRIL 12 2nd Friday each month 1:00 - 3:00 pm  
The Village of Spring Meadows 3501 Cherry Blossom Dr., 1st Floor  
Community Room

## **APRIL is AUTISM AWARENESS Month...**

Light It Up Blue! Please show your support of Autism by purchasing blue light bulbs and put them in the outside lights of your home. For the 3rd year, Jackson County will light up the Jackson County Tower building blue for Autism Awareness. *Thank you Jackson County for showing your support!*



## **Jackson Autism Support Network – JASN**

**Contact Information:** jasn\_mi@hotmail.com or call Shelly Lewis (517) 812-4303

Families meet together to share challenges and support one another. JASN is led by a group of parents/caregivers who have children with autism. They provide both group and individual support to parents in areas such as education, behavioral, health and emotional issues. JASN coordinates social activities/outings for children with autism and their siblings. Occasional guest speakers on hand along with group knowledge of the new Autism Insurance Bill. Free childcare is provided. (Childcare RSVP preferred).

Meets the second Tuesday of each month from 6:00-8:00 pm at The First Church of the Nazarene - 3905 Clinton Rd , Jackson. Childcare is Provided (Childcare RSVP preferred )

Save The Date - July 20th JASN will be hosting a Walk for Autism at Cascades.

## **Autism Support Meeting: Behavioral Health Services / Allegiance**

**Contact Information:** Kathleen.Mahoney @AllegianceHealth.org (517) 788-4730/ EXT. 5099

An Allegiance Hospital Behavioral Health Services sponsored formal, therapist led support group. Group will use a co-leader as well as outpatient clinical therapist which will enable them to offer participants individual attention as the need arises. The program also offers the ability to connect participants with the appropriate services immediately should they be identified (i.e. any type of therapy).

Meets second Thursday of each month 6:00 -7:30 PM at Allegiance Neuro-muscular / Skeletal Building— 1201 E Michigan Avenue - second floor conference room.



# ADVOCACY **EMPOWERMENT**



## Legislative Action

April 19, 2013 - Freddie Dancy, disAbility Connections Board President, Lori Neu, disAbility Connections consumer and Lesia Pikaart, Executive Director, made a short trip to Lansing. disAbility Connections was pleased to testify before the Senate Appropriations Committee for Department of Human Services. Lori testified about her experiences and how disAbility Connections and Michigan Rehabilitation Services have supported her through major changes in her life. Lori's story inspired several attendees to approach and thank her after the hearing. Lesia provided information on how disAbility Connections, and the other Centers for Independent Living, hoped to enhance their supports to underserved counties, offering opportunities to people living in more rural areas.



Senator Bruce Caswell, Chair of the Committee, took time to meet with Freddie, Lori and Lesia after the hearing. He was encouraging of our efforts to involve his constituents and welcomed input from his district.

Disability Network of Michigan is planning a Legislative Day for Centers for Independent Living on April 25th in Lansing. Several people are planning to make appointments with their legislators and participating in the day. If you're interested in learning more about working with our legislators, contact Lesia at [lesia@disabilityconnect.org](mailto:lesia@disabilityconnect.org) or call 517-998-3082.

Photos: Top: Lori Neu with Senator Caswell. Bottom: Lesia -Director DC, Freddie Dancy -DC Board President and Lori Neu.

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## Michiganders:

***Give us diverse transportation solutions!***

**Forum participants tell policymakers they want better bus, train, pedestrian options**



JACKSON, MI - Michiganders across the state, and in Jackson, want state legislators to diversify our state transportation system with more options – from high speed trains to more walkable communities.

In late October 2011, Governor Rick Snyder announced his intention to reverse years of lacking investment in Michigan's transportation system. Trans4M went on a mission to find out what kind of transportation system Michigan wanted. A series of 18 Community Forums were hosted by local groups all over the state throughout 2012, and attended by hundreds of people from Detroit to St. Joseph, and all the way up to Houghton.

## ATTENTION ALL RESPITE FAMILIES:

A recent survey was sent out to all respite families, many of you have responded and we thank you. This is a reminder for those who haven't returned the survey and the updated paperwork. We strive to have both current and accurate information on all of our Respite Clients/Families. Please contact the Respite Coordinator; Carole Briggs at 782-6054 EXT 242 if you have not received a form, have misplaced it or have any further questions. HAPPY SPRING/SUMMER RESPITE !

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## MAY PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP MEETING:

May 14, 2013, Tuesday 6:15 pm-7:45 pm

*Speakers: Speech Therapists, Julie Pratt & Sherry Riedel  
from Comprehensive Speech & Language Center, Inc.  
"Helpful Hints & Exercises for People with Parkinson's"*

Social ½ hour with refreshments – 45 min program with time for Q & A

Join us for fun, fellowship, sharing & education - Contact Carole Briggs - 782-6054 EXT 242

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**SAVE THE DATE!**



**9th Annual Walk a Mile in My Shoes  
Rally for Mental Health Awareness**

Wednesday, May 8, 2013 · State Capitol, Lansing

To stay up-to-date on Walk-A-Mile and other LifeWays events, visit [www.lifewayscmh.org](http://www.lifewayscmh.org)





## **THE GOGOS Family Potluck and Talent Show was BIG HIT!**

*The family potluck was attended by over 85 people and the Talent Show featured 27 performers, and a group song.*

*From singing, dancing, sound effects, dramatic interpretations and sharing medals, to performing with relatives, sharing art and work... the GOGOs never cease to amaze!*







**Have you been considering being a volunteer? Perhaps you have just a half day each week, maybe more? Most everyone has skills that are helpful and believe me - we have opportunities!**

**Seeking volunteer to set up, run and tear down WII games system**

First Friday of the month through November. Need 1 ½ hours of volunteer's time anytime between 1:15 to 4:15. Call Brenda 782-6054 Ext 444.



**Needed! Front Desk Volunteers ...to answer phones, and assist staff and clients—some experience helpful!**

Several shifts available, training provided! Call Lesia 998-3082

**Looking for FUN, Reliable Volunteers for monthly GOGO Social Events and 3 day Summer Camp**

Assist with activities, dances, snacks, arts and crafts and social interaction for GOGOs group. Monthly evening events and upcoming summer camp in July. Call Holly 782-6054 Ext 223.



**TEEN VOLUNTEERS  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

How lucky we are to have volunteers like Matt and Zach! **Matt Bundas** comes to the office once a week to assist staff with projects - from organizing, to computer work, to copying. **Zach Bigcraft** has joined us for several GOGO events assisting with activities and having fun in the process, he has become a friend to many!



**Zach Bigcraft**



**Matt Bundas**



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*Are you beginning to think about some spring and summer activities?  
From waterfalls and lighthouses to camp grounds and museums...  
start planning now. If you are concerned about accessibility,  
a little research can help to put you on the right path!*

*Written by: Holly Peterson*

**Ocqueoc Falls** in Presque Isle County is the first universally accessible waterfall in the nation.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OJzmiO1EWO](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OJzmiO1EWO)



Looking for accessibility of all **Michigan Historical Museums?**

Check online at: [www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-54463-51060--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-54463-51060--,00.html)



I read a great article **“Wheelchair Getaways in Michigan”** on [eHow.com](http://eHow.com) giving information and contacts for trails, trains, bed and breakfasts and tours. Check it out!

A personal favorite of the Peterson family is the **Beach at Grand Haven** where beach wheelchairs are available to check out free of charge in the beach house!



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### *Meetings:*

- ◆ dC Board Meeting - Wednesday, April 24th 5-6 PM at DC
- ◆ GOGOs Swim Party at Lyle Torrant Center - Thursday, April 25th 6:30 - 8 PM
- ◆ disAbility Awareness Dinner Committee Meeting - Wednesday, May 1st 10:30 - 11:30 AM at dC
- ◆ Parkinson's Support Group Tuesday, May 14th 6:15pm-7:45pm at dC



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*Board of Directors  
2012-2013*

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President	Freddie Dancy
Vice President	Brad Williams
Past President /Treasurer	George Page
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Chair of Joint Marketing	Sarah Ermatinger
Secretary	JoAnn Lucas

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James Egan, Dave Fleming, Jim Grose  
Lysle Hall, Mike Jaska, Jerry Jenkins  
Andy Kalahar, Philip Moilanen, Chester Radabaugh  
Mark Schmidt, Al Walker

*disAbility Connections*

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Vice President	Kathie Martin
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Lysle Hall, Charles Nelson, Karyn Rice  
Jason Valente

Executive Director - Lesia Pikaart

Associate Director /Secretary  
JoAnn Lucas

*Staff and Phone Extensions*

Lesia Pikaart -Executive Director  
Direct Line - 998-3082

JoAnn Lucas - 225  
Associate Director / Therapist

Lora Bigcraft - 236  
Resource Manager

Brenda Bobon - 444  
Independent Living Counselor

Carole Briggs - 242  
Respite Coordinator

Norman Bunce - Equipment Assistant

Cyd Collins - 226 Data Entry

Jim Cyphers - 224  
Independent Living Specialist

Angel Futrell  
Customer Relations Specialist

Cathy Heins - 238  
MAF - Parent Mentor

Alan Lewis - DME Sanitation

Holly Peterson - 223 PERC Coordinator,  
Newsletter, GOGOs

Dan Ramey - 240  
Nursing Facility Transition/ Veterans

Parrish Stahl - 239  
P/R, Community Outreach

Dana Vance - 247  
Nursing Facility Transition/ Veterans

Carmon Yeloushan - 231  
Nursing Facility Transition Coordinator

Cathy Yori - 227 Accountant

*Special thanks to our weekly Volunteers!*

Dodie & Herb Botsford and The "Little Red Truck", Matt Bundas, John Conley, Chuck Dillon, Jeff Guillemette,  
Desmond Herbert, Deborah Johnson, Marilyn Johnson, Pat Shipley, Jackie Walker

**We would love to put... Your Name Here!!!!**