



The independent

Happy Birthday

By Robert Cox/ Executive Director:

On July 26, 2008 the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will turn a little older as it reaches its 28th birthday. The ADA has come a long way and has helped many people over the years in their struggle to remain independent. Over the years the ADA has encountered some set backs but still remains a vital part of society.

The ADA was enacted to ensure that all qualified individuals with disabilities enjoy the same opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities. The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Under the act, an individual with a "disability" is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. Examples of physical impairments include: speech and hearing impairments, visual impairments, epilepsy, heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and mobility impairments. Examples of mental impairments include: learning disabilities and psychological disorders.

The ADA is divided into five titles:

Title I of the act prohibits unreasonable discrimination against qualified individuals based on a disability in all employment activities. An employer may ask disability-related questions and require medical examinations of an applicant only after the applicant has been given a conditional job offer.

Under Title II of the Act, no qualified individual with a disability shall be unreasonably discriminated against, or excluded from participation in or benefits of the services, programs, or activities of state and local government.

Title III prohibits discrimination by public accommodations, that is, a private entity that owns, leases, or operates a place of public accommodations. Such a place is defined as, among other things, services by doctors, lawyers, accountants, restaurants, hotels, theaters, retail stores and other professionals.

Title IV relates to telecommunications. In general make available to all individuals in the United States a rapid, efficient nationwide communication service. To increase the utility of the telephone system of the Nation, the Commission shall ensure that interstate and intrastate telecommunications relay services are available to the extent possible and in the most efficient manner, to assist hearing-impaired and speech-impaired individuals in the United States.

Title V contains miscellaneous provisions.

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The Long Road To Graduation

By: Paul McAuliffe



On May 19th, Lisa Boyd took her wheelchair across the stage at the Bay County Marina Civic Center to receive her diploma from Tom P. Haney Technical Center. She graduated with high honors as a Medical Administration Specialist, with certificates in Medical Transcription, Medical Front Desk Specialist, Medical Office Technology, and Information Technology Assistant. Lisa had to overcome some formidable barriers in order to take her rightful place on the Civic Center stage, and we at DRC are very proud of her.

A native New Yorker, Lisa moved to Florida with her parents in 1965. She later went on to marry and raised three children while working a variety of jobs. In 1991 she was diagnosed with Degenerative Disc Disease. As the condition worsened, she began using a wheelchair in 2003. She managed, in spite of the pain, to keep working up until that time.

Lisa stated, "In 2006, I got tired of feeling sorry for myself and decided to go back to school for re-training. I started out by taking computer classes at the Workforce Center here in Panama City. Employment Counselor Robin Merritt taught the classes, and encouraged me to look into furthering my education at Haney Tech."

Lisa went on: "I took the Bay Town Trolley over to Haney, got enrolled, and started classes in August/06. I attended school 3 days a week, riding the Trolley to and from school. I knew from the beginning that I wanted to be a Medical Transcriptionist, but I began taking classes in all aspects of Medical Administration. I now have the training to work in a Law Office – or any other kind of office, for that matter!"

In 2007 Lisa, who was attending school on a PELL Grant, applied for and was awarded a

scholarship from the Gulf Coast Women's Club that helped pay for books and tuition. Lisa said, "The Women's Club enabled me to take extra classes at Haney during the summer."

In January 2007, Lisa was named Bay Town Trolley Rider of the Year, and was given a free Trolley pass for all of 2007. She also became very active as a Trolley Volunteer, talking to other passengers and taking their suggestions to improve service to the public. Once a month she attended a meeting in which ideas were presented to management. Partially as a result of these meetings, the trolley service hours were extended on weekdays to better accommodate working people.

Two years ago, Lisa was having a really difficult time getting in and out of her home, having to negotiate her front steps. DRC referred her to Tom Gildersleeve and The Hardly Able Crew of Lynn Haven United Methodist Church. Lisa said, "Tom and his crew built me a beautiful wheelchair ramp, free of charge. I can't begin to tell you how much of a help that was!"

Lisa has been volunteering at DRC in her spare time while she was in school, and continues to do so to this day. She worked tirelessly at both of our Annual Sunset Luau Fundraisers. She is currently, with the assistance of Steve Burnett at Goodwill Industries, looking for part-time employment.

We at DRC offer congratulations to Lisa for all of her hard work and outstanding accomplishments, and wish her good luck in all of her future endeavors.

Congratulations Lisa
Keep Up The Good Work!!

Saying Goodbye:

By: Beverly DeMarcus
Paul McAuliffe



This issue of "The Independent" is dedicated to Becky Cadwell. Becky had been an Independent Living Specialist with DRC for four years. She moved to be with her husband Dave, who had found employment in Virginia.

I asked what would she miss the most about DRC. She immediately answered "The

Consumers". Becky went out of her way to help everyone. She would take a vision-impaired consumer to the supermarket for groceries, and others she helped with their Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid questions. She was our expert on ADA regulations, and was not afraid to speak out if she felt anyone with a disability was being treated unfairly.

Becky stated that DRC had come along way in the last four years. We've greatly increased our consumer base and the types of services we are able to provide.

We at DRC wish Becky the best of luck. She will truly be missed.

Disability Etiquette

"Language Tips"

Put the person first, don't make assumptions.

Think before you speak, ask before you help.

Say a person with a disability rather than disabled person.

Avoid outdated terms like handicapped or crippled. Never say confined to a wheelchair or wheelchair bound.

Don't make decisions for people with disabilities about what they can or cannot do.

Upcoming Events

Panama City

Friday Fest 1st. Friday of every Month
(March through November)

Friday July 4 Downtown Marina
Salute to Freedom

Saturday July 12th Downtown
Farmers Market

Saturday July 19th Main Street Striders

Panama City Beach

Pier Park Summer Concert Series:

Thursday July 3rd

Thursday July 10th

Thursday July 24th

Thursday July 31st.

Thursday August 7th

Thursday August 14th


Thursday August 21st.

Thursday August 28th

August 20-24 Grand Lagoon National
Saltwater Fishing Tournament

September 6 Emerald Coast Triathlon

Attention!

Basic sign language class will start sometime in August. For more details you can call Beverly at (850) 769-6890 

Bev's Corner

"Happy Birthday"

Robert Cox (July)

Tamara Williams (July)

Beverly DeMarcus (Aug.)



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Donation

Yes, I want to help the Disability Resource Center continue to advocate for individuals **with** disabilities in our community.

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of:

_____ \$10.00 _____ \$25.00 _____ \$50.00 _____ \$100.00 _____ Other

Please make checks payable and mail to Disability Resource Center, 625 Highway 231
Panama City, Florida 32405

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ CH22143



Disability Resource Center
625 Highway 231
Panama City, Florida 32405

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