



THE INDEPENDENT

Disaster Preparation

By Robert Cox/ Executive Director:

It is now Hurricane Season again and we need to prepare ourselves in the event that we have a hurricane or other disaster. The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. Prepare now for a sudden emergency. Learn how to protect yourself and cope with a disaster by planning ahead. This checklist will help you get started. Discuss these ideas with your family, and then prepare for an emergency plan. Post the plan where everyone will see it—on the refrigerator or on a bulletin board.

Set up a Personal Support Network: Designate someone to check on you in an emergency and to help with evacuation or sheltering-in-place.

Prepare and carry with you an emergency health information card: This will help you to communicate if you are found unconscious or incoherent. Include information about your medications, adaptive equipment, blood type, allergies and sensitivities, insurance numbers, immunization dates, communication difficulties and preferred treatment, as well as contact information for your health providers, personal support network and emergency contacts.

Make Copies of Important Papers: Keep the following information and items in a portable container (bank account numbers, birth certificate, deeds, emergency contact list and phone numbers, immunization records, insur-

ance paper, inventory records of household items if possible, map of the area and phone numbers of places you could go, marriage certificate/divorce papers/ custody order, medical information, doctor/pharmacy contact info, stocks and bonds, wills, power of attorney)

Personal Care Assistance: If you receive assistance from a home healthcare agency or in-home support provider, find out how the provider will respond in an emergency. Designate backup or alternative providers that you can contact in an emergency.

For Persons Using a Wheelchair: Plan for how you will evacuate in an emergency and discuss it with your care providers. If you use a motorized wheelchair, have a manual wheelchair as a backup.

For Persons who are Blind or Visually Impaired: Keep an extra cane by your bed. Attach a whistle; in case you need to attract attention. Exercise caution when moving, paths may have become obstructed.

For Persons who are Hearing Impaired: Keep extra batteries for your hearing aids with emergency supplies. Consider storing your hearing aids in a container attached to your nightstand or bedpost, so you can locate them quickly after a disaster.

For persons with Communication Disabilities: Store paper, writing materials, copies of a word or letter board and preprinted key phrases in your emergency kit, your wallet, purse, etc.

Disability Resource Center, Inc.
625 Highway 231
Panama City, Florida 23405

Sorenson Video Relay Phone

Local Call (850) 387-1800

Toll Free (866) 954-5898

www.drcpc.org

Phone: 850-769-6890

Fax: - 850-769-6891

Are You Prepared

By Lisa Boyd:

On May 7th of this year, Judith Barrett of Ability 1st asked me to be a speaker at their Emergency Preparedness Workshop. Chip Wilson from Florida Emergency Management, who also sports a wheelchair, was to be moderator. The subject of our panel discussion was: Emergencies and Disabilities: How to Cope. We discussed things like what we did to prepare and get through hurricanes, tornadoes and floods with our disabilities to see if we could come up with ways to help others learn from our successes and failures. We did come up with some information I would like to pass onto you.

There are four parts to an emergency preparedness plan:

PLAN

PREPARE

PRACTICE

PARTICIPATE

Much like a home fire escape plan and just as important.

In our area there is a registration program for special needs that will help you determine if a special needs center is where you need to go. Pre-registration is the key. When you sign up with them should an evacuation of your area be necessary, they will call you first to notify you of the evacuation and since they will already know what special needs you have, can make the necessary accommodations for you. At this time you can also let them know if any special needs transportation is needed. Granted it will not be the best, but it will keep you safe until the emergency is over.

Mr. Wilson stressed the preparedness plan. He feels you must go through all four parts of your plan now, when you can change, add, or take away anything needed. It is also important to do the "participate" part of this plan because this is

where the "tweaking" comes in. Such as did you remember toilet paper? What about refrigerated meds? What if there is no electrical power, do you have an alternative plan? Do you have new extra batteries? Candles?

The regional planning council had an interesting suggestion for important papers and such. Katrina made a mess of all kinds of medical records, prescriptions, etc. Make copy of these and any other important papers you deem necessary, put them on a junk drive and send or give it to someone you trust that is not in the area of the storm.

There is also one other resource that is not known in this area, but can be valuable to any of us.

2-1-1 Big Bend

This is a 24hour free community hotline service offering individual, confidential counseling and human service information.

It was founded in 1970, and is an independent, nonprofit organization that is widely respected and recognized as the Big Bend's leading resource for confidential hotline support services.

2-1-1 Big Bend provides help for: relationship issues, domestic violence, disabilities, community information and referrals, employment referrals and more. A free searchable resource database is provided at: www.211bigbend.org.

Although this service is not only statewide but nationwide as well, in our area it is not offered by landline, only Cellular Service. You dial 2-1-1 on your cell phone and it will take you right to this hotline service.

I have always believed you can never have too many resources.



DRC would like to wish a

"Happy Birthday" to

Robert July 15th

Tamara July 17

Beverly August 29th

Shelter Preparedness

By: Beverly DeMarcus:

As you all are aware the hurricane season starts on June 1 and goes through to November 30. DRC wants to make sure you are ready.

This is a **Special Needs Registry** by counties:

Bay County (850) 784-4000

Calhoun County (850) 674-8075

Franklin County (850) 653-8977

Gulf County (850) 229-9111

Holmes County (850) 547-1112

Jackson County (850) 482-5028

Liberty County (850) 643-2339

Washington County (850) 638-6203

Planning before a hurricane or other disasters is essential! A critical part of this planning is knowing how and where to go if you need to evacuate or leave your home. In Florida there are two basic types of shelters.

General: Provides shelter for people who can survive without special medical assistance. It provides a safe haven in the event you have to evacuate your home. The general population shelter provides basics needs such as food, water, and basic first aid. People who evacuate to these types of shelters should bring their own supplies such as blankets, toiletries/hygiene items, medications and clothing.

Special Needs: A shelter for people who have special needs. Someone who during evacuations or emergency requires sheltering assistance due to physical impairment, mental impairment, cognitive impairment or sensory disabilities. To stay in a special needs shelter, eligibility criteria you would have to meet:

You are a person with a special medical need.

2) Your care exceeds the basic first aid provided in a general population shelter.

3) Your impairments/disabilities are medically stable and do not exceed the capacity, staffing and equipment of the special needs shelter to minimize deterioration of your present level of health.

Remember: just because you have a disability does not mean you will require a special needs shelter. The best place to shelter for every Floridian is with family; in a safe structure and outside the evacuation area.

Contact your local Emergency Management to find out if you are a candidate and register in advance.

www.floridadisaster.org

Visit our website at www.drcpc.org

Create a Disaster Plan

A basic disaster plan should include an evacuation plan, a communication plan, and advance collection general disaster supplies. However, as a person with a disability you may need to take **Extra Measures** to assure your safety in a disaster.

For Example: If you are deaf, how will you receive warning information if power is disrupted?

If you have a caregiver or personal care assistant, what will you do if this person is unavailable to assist you?

If you require around the clock medical care, where will you go?

Do you have special privacy concerns as a result of your disability?

These are just a few questions you should ask yourself as you plan for a disaster. For more information you can visit the following sites:

[Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities](#)

[Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities](#)

[National Organization on Disability](#)

American's with Disabilities Act (ADA)

By Maragret McGuinn:

The American's with Disabilities Act (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 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 the following five titles:

Title I – 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.

Title II – 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 relating to public accommodations, that is, a private entity that owns, leases, or operates a

place of business must provide access to the establishment for the disabled. Such establishments include, but are not limited to, doctors, lawyers, accountants, restaurants, hotels, theaters, retail stores and other professionals. On average, accommodation costs are less than \$500.

Title IV – Requires telephone companies services be accessible to people who have impaired hearing or speech. All common carriers must provide nationwide Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS). Relay Services are operator systems that relay conversations between people who use Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDDs), or non voice terminal devices and those who use the general telephone network. Title IV also requires closed captioning for all public service announcements which are provided or funded in whole or part by any federal agency.

Title V – This title captures a variety of issues, including Congress and other agencies of the legislative branch of government, technical assistance plans and reports on wilderness areas.

The Department of Justice offers technical assistance on ADA provisions applying to businesses, non-profit service agencies, and state and local government programs; also provides information on how to file ADA complaints.

ADA Information Line

800-514-0301 (voice)

800-514-0383 (TTY)

Internet address

www.ada.gov

Volunteers Needed!

If you or someone you know would like to volunteer at DRC call Beverly for more Information (850) 769-6890

New Service

By Tamara Williams:

DRC is so excited about becoming a Regional Distribution Center for Florida Telecommunications Relay Inc. We start our week long training June 22, 2009. We plan be ready to distribute equipment and provide demonstrations starting July 1, 2009. These services will be provided from our location at 625 Hwy 231, Panama City. FTRI Hours of operation will be 9 am to 3 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday each week unless the office is closed due to holiday or other emergency. Please call for appointment 850-769-6890. We look forward to helping you with your relay and amplified phone needs.

Trouble Hearing the Phone

By Jonathan Gray:

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc (FTRI) is excited to announce the opening of a new Regional Distribution Center in Panama City. Through a partnership with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), FTRI and DRC are now able to better serve the residents of Panama City and the surrounding counties who have hearing loss and speech disabilities. FTRI, a statewide non-profit organization, was established in 1991 as administrator of the Telecommunications Access Systems Act (TASA Florida Statute 427). TASA law was set up to ensure that Florida residents who were Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf/Blind, and Speech Disabled would have equal access to the telephone system. As the newest Regional Distribution Center, DRC is currently distributing FTRI specialized telephones at absolutely no charge, to individuals in need. These specialized phones are available at no charge because the FTRI program is funded through an eleven cent monthly surcharge on every

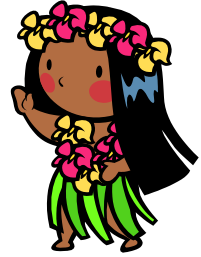
telephone bill (landlines only) throughout the state. "You've already paid the eleven cents, take advantage of the service if you need to," said Roland White, FTRI Outreach Specialist. There are a variety of Amplified and Captioned telephones for the Hard of Hearing to choose from, as well as TTY/TDDs for the Deaf, several phones for individuals with speech disabilities, and even ring signaling devices to alert you that someone is calling. The amplified phones are available in a variety of styles including corded and cordless phones. Some models can even amplify incoming sound up to 53dB (decibels). In addition to the standard phones that FTRI distributes there are also an assortment of phones for individuals with very specific needs such as the TeliTalk phone which has a built in speech aid for *Laryngectomees*, the *RC200* which has a remote control and an air switch for people with hearing loss and mobility issues, and the *Gewa* phone that can connect to a speech generating device to assist with communication.

To qualify to receive a free FTRI phone you must be a Florida resident, over three years of age, and be certified as having a hearing loss or speech disability. Simply have your doctor, audiologist, or even speech pathologist sign the application and bring it to the DRC to receive a phone. If you wear hearing aids you automatically qualify. "These phones change people's lives," said Allen Gray, an FTRI client. "This amplified phone that I received has made all the difference, I can hear my grandchildren." In the state of Florida there are approximately 2.7 million people with hearing loss and FTRI has already served over 450,000. "One of the biggest hurdles to overcome is pride. "A lot of people with hearing loss are in denial. They don't want to admit that they have an issue," said Randa Trexler. So, stop depending on others to answer the phone for you and discover communication freedom. Regain your independence by contacting DRC and receive your FTRI phone today.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER



Would like to take this time to thank the following businesses for the sponsorship and for the donated items for our silent auction; which was a huge success.



Morgan's Archery & Firearms

Dazzel Wear

Chef Imondi's

Target

Hooters

Quiznos (Thomas Drive)

Madies

A Southern Touch

New York's Famous Pizza

Franci Unique Treasures

Starbucks

Leitz Music

Julia Works

Founders Bistro

Donut Island

Cheryl Kellogg

Romo Production

Mary's Beauty

Georgia Tech`

Bayou George Hardware

Jays Guns & Accessories

Carol Heaton

K-Mart (Callaway)

The Red Elephant

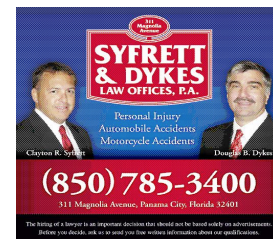
Skull Kitchen Skate Shop

Dayco Construction

Rachel's

The Wine Dog

Sponsorship:



KNOLOGY®



St. George Island Deaf Event

“ Lets Sign in the Sun”

Where: Dr. Julian G. Bruce St. George Island State Park

1900 E. Gulf Beach Drive

St. George Island, Fl. 32328

When: Saturday, July 18

10:00 am. - 3:00 p.m.

Must RSVP by July 1, 2009

Hamburgers and Hotdogs provided

see sign up sheet to bring side items

RSVP to Jennifer Peddie

jenniferpeddie@ability1st.info

(850) 298-879 VP or (850)576-5245 TDD

(850) 575-9621 ext. 120 Voice

This event is hosted by Florida Telecommunications Relay Inc. (FTRI) & Ability 1st

Congratulations to Beverly DeMarcus;
Her daughter Jennifer, gave birth to a
baby boy

Aiden Jericho Wayne Tinsley

June 16, 2009

7lbs. 11oz.



Upcoming Events

If you have an upcoming event or public announcement and you would like to place it in our newsletter you can e-mail me at beverly@drcpc.org, just keep in mind that it gets published quarterly. If you have any questions you can call

Beverly at (850) 769-6890

New Team Member

The DRC would like to welcome to the team Margaret McGinn. Margaret will be our new Financial Coordinator and comes with a lot of financial background working with both government and non government organizations. Margaret grew up in Panama City, Graduated from Gulf Coast Community College and attended FSU-PC (**Go Noles**). She will also be running our new FTRI program in our office.

!Welcome aboard!

Support Groups

Elephant Herds

Date: July 21, 2009

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: Pyramid Inc. 524 Harrison Ave.

For more information call Amanda at

850) 763-5624

Bay County Adult Asperger's Group

Date: July 15, 2009

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: FSU Center for Autism & Related Disabilities

The Center is located in Liberty Square
2611-A West 23rd. St. Panama City

Epilepsy Support Group

Meets every 3rd. Wednesday of the
month, time and place

subject to change for more information
you can call (850) 872-2998

“Great News”

Bay County Teen Court has moved to their new location. 456 east 11th street, across from the Juvenile Justice court house.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE(800 435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION.

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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Administrative Assistant: Beverly DeMarcus

Financial Coordinator: Margaret McGinn

Coordinator: Tamara Williams

Independent Living Specialist: Paul McAuliffe

Independent Living Specialist II: Angie Dyer

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