The wheelchair isn’t the problem. The wheelchair is the *solution*. The lack of accessibility is the problem.
LOCAL EVENTS - Please join us!

Feb 12  - Medicare Workshop presented by SHIBA
          St. Joseph Regional Medical Center room C, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
          Moscow, ID

Feb 13  - Love Yourself - Love Your Life Health & Wellness Fair
          Latah County Fairgrounds, 11:00 am - 5:00 pm
          Moscow, ID

Feb 19  - Healthy Meals on a Budget
          DAC NW Office, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon
          Post Falls, ID

Feb 20  - Autism Spectrum Disorder on the Palouse Support Group
          Pullman Regional Hospital, 5:30 am - 7:30 pm
          Pullman, WA

Feb 20  - Game Night Spokane Youth
          Disability Action Center NW, 5:00 - 8:00 pm
          Spokane, WA

Feb 24  - Head Injury Support Group
          Pullman Regional Hospital, 6:00pm - 8:00 pm
          Pullman, WA

SUCCESS THROUGH ACCESS

March 4, 2020  9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Boise State University

Moving from Accommodations to Universal Design. How you can take theory and put it into practice! Join us at the conference to learn more about universal design and accessibility. Utilize hands-on demonstrations.
https://www.boisestate.edu/accessibility/successthroughaccess/
I have always loved old movies. So when I learned more about Jack Oakie, some of it came as a surprise.

America’s beefy, plump-faced comedian Jack Oakie was one of the funniest top and second banana of the stage, radio, and the golden age of Hollywood films. Born Lewis Delaney Offield in 1903 he changed his name to Jack Oakie, Oakie being his mothers maiden name and Jack was one of the first characters he played on stage. He accomplished so much in his career, 87 films over a 38 year career, and the public never know that he was “functionally deaf” or what they would now call hearing impaired. I learned this fact when I toured the home he purchased from Barbara Stanwyck and lived in for 6 decades in Northridge California.

From the Editor...

His deafness did not affect the output of his work, and seldom were there problems in the profession in accommodating his disability. Director Jules Dassin in fact, made it a point to state that Oakie never caused any delays in the filming of his film noir Thieves’ Highway.

When I think of the assistive technology we have today that would have helped him, I wonder if he would have even bothered with it. From all accounts he was a happy, productive man and his hearing impairments, though they didn’t last his entire life, didn’t hamper him any. I like to think of him as the happy go lucky freshman, just working hard and enjoying life!

Most of his acting was performed primarily by lip reading closely, so he’d be prepared in case of ad-libs. Or when singing and dancing, he would feel the beat of the music even though he couldn’t hear it. And, astoundingly enough, he was able to sing on key. He disliked working with Spencer Tracy because Tracy had the habit of mumbling his lines for a natural effect. Oakie had too hard a time reading his lips in their shared scenes in Looking For Trouble and they never worked together again. Oakie’s pictures were the bread and butter films of the studio. They cost nothing and made millions, and supported the prestige productions that cost millions and made nothing.

The stories on how he became deaf vary — scarlet fever at age 9, or a Wall Street building explosion where he worked at age 17 as a messenger— but it didn’t hamper his performing success in films and also broadway musicals - not an easy task if you can’t hear! He is credited with creating the ‘double’ and ‘triple take’ in comedy. He was the inspiration for later comedians like Jackie Gleason, and a scene stealer with the legendary Charles Chaplin in The Great Dictator. He was dubbed the ‘Worlds Oldest Freshman’ because he was in his 30’s and still asked to play 18 year old seniors in screwball college comedies. And he never wore any makeup under any circumstances - resulting in a fight or two with the cameramen.

If you have something for the newsletter email it to dac@dacnw.org
Events to keep people connected

Sometimes the best connection people can make is with a peer - someone who has been there and can share about it.

In the DAC NW Lewiston office they will be hosting the 8th annual Spring Fling Dance. This all inclusive event is for young adults with disabilities and their friends and families and provides an opportunity for youth to connect. Youth with disabilities often face marginalization and social, economic and civic disparities as compared to others due to a range of factors from stigma to inaccessible environment. This dance is fully accessible and they can dance to music played by a DJ, enjoy games, prizes and more. The dance is free and refreshments will be served. Anyone is welcome, it’s March 13th, 6-8:30 pm at the Lewiston Community Center. For more information you can call Molly at 208-746-9033.

In the Post Falls office we are focusing on helping people be healthier. Due to disability related limitations some people may lack the time, energy, or ability to prepare nutritious meals. They can also be taking medications that can contribute to weight gain. Healthy Meals on a Budget is a FREE workshop being presented on February 19th at 10:00 am. Attendees will learn tips on planning and preparing healthy foods on a budget. They will discuss what foods to eat when you are sick and find a list of healthy foods for around $2. Get free recipe samples and handouts to take home. You can call 208-457-3891 for more information.
Hot Off the Press – HUD Issues

A new publication came out Jan 28th that provides guidance in how housing providers can comply to the Fair Housing Act when assessing a person’s request to have an assistance animal because of a disability.

The Ace requires housing providers to permit a change in rule, a common one is a reasonable accommodation to a no pet policy. A person with a disability that affects a major life activity may require an assistance animal to perform tasks, or a therapeutic emotional support animal. The housing providers may confirm, whether the requested accommodation is needed because of a disability that affects a major life activity and it is a reasonable request.

This will help housing providers by offering a step-by-step set of best practices for complying with the Act when assessing requests involving animals. It lists information the person may need to provide about his or her disability-related need for the accommodation, including providing support information from a health care professional.

“In my many discussions with housing providers and residents,” stated Secretary Ben Carson, “I recognized the necessity for further clarity regarding support animals to provide peace of mind to individuals with disabilities while taking into account the concerns of housing providers.”

With the Assistance Animals Notice, both housing providers and individuals with disabilities will better understand their rights and obligations under the Fair Housing Act regarding assistance animals, particularly emotional support animals.

For housing providers, this is a tool that can be used to help them navigate various sets of complex circumstances to ensure reasonable accommodations are provided where required so that persons with disability-related need for an assistance animal have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their housing. The guidance will help ensure that legal rights are asserted only in appropriate circumstances.

Additionally, this new Assistance Animal Notice provides information on the types of animals that may typically be appropriate and best practices for when the requested animal is not one that is traditionally kept in the home.

For more information about the ADA contact

NWADACENTER.ORG/IDAHO
Dana Gover, MPA, and ACTCP Certification
ADA Training & Technical Assistance
Email: dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com
Phone: Voice & TTD 208-841-9422
Disability Issues in the 2020 Presidential Race

In a shift that has become a political necessity, Democratic presidential hopefuls are giving unprecedented attention to disability issues in the 2020 election. Nearly every contender, including front runners like Joe Biden, Sen. Bernie Sanders, and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, have detailed disability policies in their platforms. The plans touch on how practically all national issues, from health care to immigration and education, affect people with disabilities.

There has been a lot of talk about what group of voters could be crucial to the next election - white women, black or latino voters, working class voters. But people with disabilities have unique needs and are often left out the conversation.

However, people with disabilities deserve credit for raising their visibility through the #CripTheVote social media campaign that started in 2015 along with continuous lobbying for disability rights, advocates say. “In 2017, we showed up in huge numbers to protest efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and cut the Medicaid program,” said Sam Crane, director of public policy at the Autistic Self Advocacy Network. “This sent a message to political candidates that we are engaged, active and passionate about the policy issues that affect us.” If political candidates want to strengthen their campaigns, they should start listening to us.

At the same time, people with disabilities are a diverse constituency, and that requires candidates to listen and engage.

For instance, it’s important that candidates have a system set up where people with disabilities can contact the campaign beforehand to have their accommodation needs met - from transportation to sign language interpreters.

Despite the increased attention, there are still improvements that can be made. Being related to a disabled person is not interchangeable with an actual disabled person’s perspective.

But on the whole, increased visibility “creates an opportunity for Americans with disabilities to bring their talents and skills forward to become part of the solution,” said Philip Kahn-Pauli of RespectAbility, a non-profit that supports disability inclusion. “I also hope that the more public dialogue about people with disabilities, the more people have higher expectations for what people with disabilities can achieve.”

So let’s remember during this year’s campaigns to get out there and have your voice heard. Volunteer for you local candidates campaigns, contact your representatives and potential candidates and find out where they stand. Let’s get out there and #CripTheVote!
Celebrities Call for More Inclusive Casting

Danny DeVito, Bryan Cranston, Mark Ruffalo and Glenn Close are among dozens of Hollywood insiders pressing the entertainment industry to become more inclusive of people with disabilities.

In an open letter, 72 actors, directors and others in the industry say that more needs to be done to cast performers with disabilities.

“The entertainment industry must embrace disability as a key facet of diversity and can help normalize disability, erasing the stigma that surrounds it,” reads the letter organized by the Ruderman Family Foundation, which advocates for disability inclusion.

According to the letter, there have been 61 nominations and 27 Oscar winners for portraying characters with disabilities, but in only two of those cases were the characters played by an actor with a disability themselves. Moreover, 95 percent of television characters with disabilities are portrayed by typically-developing actors.

The Hollywood bigwigs are asking studio, production and network executives to take the Ruderman Foundation’s pledge to audition actors with disabilities and commit to casting qualified performers from this population.

“From greater accessibility and opportunity, talented and high-profile actors with disabilities will emerge,” they wrote. “Infusing the industry with this largely untapped source of talent promises to boost box office and network revenues while opening the market to an even broader audience, as evidenced by all previous diversity-oriented initiatives in entertainment.”

Last year, CBS became the first studio to sign the Ruderman Family Foundation inclusion pledge.

Others who have signed the letter include Marlee Matlin, Edward Norton, Jason Alexander, RJ Mitte, Olivia Munn, Chris Cooper, Tony Shaloub, Jamie-Lynn Sigler, Norman Lear and Eva Longoria.

For more information on disability issues check out DisabilityScoop.com
My name is Fanisee Bias and I am a second-year college student attending the University of San Diego. I grew up in Boise, Idaho where I feel most at home and where my activism and involvement started!

My activism developed when I was diagnosed with a spinal disease called Transverse Myelitis; I had to learn how to advocate for myself and my disability which made me passionate about advocating for others. Throughout junior high and high school, I became involved in clubs, volunteering, and work that unleashed my passions for social justice, advocacy, and working with others! I try to engage in a lot of different opportunities which is why I applied to YLF as soon as I heard about it.

Since I identify as a young leader with a disability, I knew this was the opportunity for me. I had never been to a forum, conference, or even an event that centered on youth with disabilities, so I was nervous yet excited to build community and new friendships. As soon as I walked through the door with my two canes and a backpack, the YLF staff was so welcoming and supportive. I met my roommate who had a similar disability as me which helped me fit right in.

Throughout the forum, I was able to learn a lot of “adulting” things (which is what I call them) like budgeting, money management, saving, goals for my future, how my disability may connect with my career, and, most importantly to me, how to create authentic connections and supportive spaces for leaders with disabilities like me.

I grew so close to all of the staff and participants which is what motivated me to continue my passion for disability justice and bringing awareness to our community. As I attend my university and any other space I encounter, accessibility and accommodations are always at the forefront of what I expect from others.

I created a student organization on campus call the Alliance of Disability Advocates; I attended APRIL which lead me to the new opportunity of being Vice-Chair for their Youth Steering Committee; and I have and will continue to do side projects that uplift people with disabilities and create more awareness to disability justice. I was also recently selected to be an intern for the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) this summer in Washington, D.C.

All of these opportunities motivate me to continue to do the work that I do and fight for my communities. This year I have a lot planned for the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and I hope you do too!
Life Hacks for Disability!

Want to learn some quick and easy life hacks that are easy to do, low cost and save you effort and time? By tweaking little things in your daily life, you can make your life easier and more convenient. Send us a pic of your favorite Life Hack!

You can repurpose a lint brush to be a mini grabber device. These come in a ton of sizes, including pocket size, and are available at any dollar store. Use it to pick up change or other small items you’ve dropped.

Got a runny nose? Use a rubber band to attach an empty tissue box to the one you are using and you have a place to stuff the used ones. Saves you trips to the trash can and is more sanitary!

Use a pants/skirt hanger to hold cookbooks open. And inexpensive way to keep it at eye level without using your hands. Brilliant!
Disaster Preparedness

Natural disasters put everyone in their path at risk. Whether it’s a hurricane, a wildfire, a winter storm, or even a heat wave, lives can hang in the balance. But seniors and people with disabilities are even more at risk. Here are some eye-opening statistics:

- Adults 75 and older made up half of the deaths from Hurricane Katrina
- After a heat wave hit Chicago in 1995, adults 65 and older made up almost two-thirds of fatalities
- People over 85 are four more times likely to die in a wildfire than the total population.

This is due to a number of reasons, including scare financial resources, isolation, mobility issues, making it hard to prepare for disasters. Here are some things for consumers and their assistants to help them prepare.

RESOURCES
Assess the services that might be available in a natural disaster. Get in touch with the local service agency - a good place to start is United Way. One essential service they can help with is transportation. If evacuation becomes recommended or mandatory, many communities provide transportation for those who can’t get away otherwise.

PLANNING
Along with local services, get familiar with what shelters might be nearby and plan what route would be best to get there. Plan what you need to keep on hand in case you have to shelter in place or leave on short notice. Check on routine maintenance to see if the home can

weather a storm. Whether it’s tree trimming or space heaters to keep pipes from freezing, see if there is a way to get this done ahead of time.

AWARENESS
It can be easy for those who are isolated to unaware of local conditions. Assistants can help make sure they are aware of any potential threats and encourage them to take appropriate action.

CONTACT
Once they are aware of an event, assistants should check in often as the situation develops. Staying in touch provides important moral support for what is a trying time. Have a list of phone numbers of people to contact in case of an emergency.

ACCOUNTABILITY
Not all seniors and people with disabilities live on their own. It’s a good idea to check with the people running the facility to see if they have a stock of supplies or transportation they can arrange. This can help the caregiver be ready to fill in any gaps in preparedness.

For more information visit: https://www.aging.com/disaster-preparedness-for-seniors/
Applying for Social Security Disability benefits is a frustrating and time-consuming process. Approaching the application process with full preparation and a complete understanding of the requirements will help. Here are 10 tips for applying.

Becoming disabled is stressful enough. There are many questions and unknowns during this transition. When applying for social security disability benefits, you need to be prepared to answer a number of questions. For a list with some tips on handling the interview process check out this site.
https://blog.ssa.gov/prepare-for-your-disability-interview-tips-from-social-security/

Here are 9 ways to boost your Social Security benefits. You may be entitled to more than you think. For instance, did you know that even divorcees are eligible for as much as 50% of their spousal benefits? Learn the details about how to monitor your benefits.

Are you caring for a disabled spouse? There are opportunities to reduce the burden. There are many tax credits and other tax breaks for disabled individuals and their caretakers. Understand the source of your payments and determine whether they are taxable. Check it out here.

It’s important to understand your Medicare and Social Security benefits post-retirement. You can calculate your full retirement age under the law and see at what percentage your benefits will be reduced if you retire before typical age. Learn how to select the right Medicare plan for your situation.
https://www.aginginplace.org/how-to-select-medicare-social-security/
IDAHO YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

The deadline has been extended to February 15th, 2020 to apply for the Youth Leadership Forum. That means you still have time! The IDYLF is a career and civic leadership program for young adults with disabilities, ages 16-21. IDYLF provides young people with disabilities (delegates) the opportunity to learn full citizenship skills, including advocacy, leadership, community participation, and employment skills. The delegates, who hail from across Idaho, are selected based on the strength of their application, interview, and letters of recommendation. The program includes six days of hands on learning, giving delegates the feel for college life. Delegates leave IDYLF equipped with:

• Leadership plans to implement upon return to their community
• Academic and career goals
• Work ethics and a belief that work is not only a right, but also a social obligation to reach his/her full potential

* A resource development plan in order to attain continued or more complete independence through technology, community support, and peer mentoring.

The Youth Leadership Forum was developed by the California Governor’s Committee for Employment of Persons with Disability in 1992. Since then, more than 35 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have implemented YLF in their state. We’re excited to return in 2020! To download the application, go to:

For more information call or email Jami Davis at 208-334-3800 or

The SILC has moved!

The Idaho State Independent Living Council (SILC) has moved to 120 South Cole Road, Boise, ID 83709.

Our main phone number is the same: 208-334-3800, and our direct lines also remain unchanged. We do not have access to multiple lines at the same time - possibly for several more months. We also have experienced sporadic access to our email, thus delaying our response, but that’s getting better. We will respond to voice messages and correspondence as quickly as possible. We appreciate your patience during this time.

Thank you,

The Idaho SILC
Durable Medical Goods Exchange

Please call an office near you to make donations of durable medical items you no longer use or see if there is something you may need! Explain your needs and our trained staff may know the perfect item that will help you!

James Pickard in Moscow 208-883-0523
Valerie Johnson in Idaho Falls 208-529-8610
Todd Wilder in Boise 208-336-3335

Frida Kahlo—Role Model

Frida Kahlo was a role model for artists and people with disabilities. She had multiple disabilities including polio as a child and spinal and pelvis damage from a car accident. While recovering from that accident, she started to paint. She actually considered becoming a doctor rather than a painter. Some of her art portrays her disability in a gory mixing of fantasy and fact. Her right leg had to be amputated below the knee. Even though she was devastated she tried to make light of the loss, writing “Feet, why do I want them if I have wings to fly?”

Quotes to make you think!

“I know tomorrow is going to be a better day. And if it isn’t, I can make it better”
~ Alec Cabacungan

Alec served as spokesperson for the Shriners Hospitals and currently hosts a YouTube Channel called Smart Alec. Check it out!

SMART ALEC ON COLLEGE BASKETBALL
TECHNOLOGY FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

As-Seen-On-TV products aren’t for “Lazy People” – they make disabled people’s lives easier

Many products, tho not officially marketed specifically to people with disabilities, are incredibly helpful whether they have chronic pain, low mobility, tremors, or other conditions that non-disabled people are rarely asked to think about.

EZ Egg Cracker

Works with the push of a button to open egg shells and prevents bits of shell from getting into your food. Requires only one hand to operate. Also removes shells from hard boiled eggs quickly.

Bed, Bath & Beyond
$9.99

Toothpaste Dispenser

Eliminate the hassle of toothpaste in a tube. Simply touch your toothbrush to the dispenser and get the perfect amount of toothpaste every time. And it allows you to use every last drop of toothpaste and do away with messy tubes forever. Installs in seconds to a wall, tile, or even a mirror. No need to replace the cap on the tube after use. No batteries or electricity required.

Walmart
$34.99