Cerebral palsy (CP) is a group of permanent movement disorders that appear in early childhood, affecting body movement and muscle coordination. There’s no cure for cerebral palsy. Some of those who have it use medications to help control muscles and relax. Physical, occupational, speech and water therapy are used to gain strength, be able to stretch, and improve overall quality of life.
From the Editor....

BY VICKI LEEPER

GARDENING AS THERAPY

I'm delighted that I get to lead a "Lunch & Learn" workshop on the benefits of gardening for health. I started gardening as a child when I asked my Dad for some space for an herb garden. He built a raised bed for me but it had some really bad California clay soil in it and my first foray was far from a success. But that's the beauty of gardening. When you have a failure, the next season comes along and you are renewed in your belief that this time it will be a success!

There are so many benefits to your health when gardening. Not just the physical exercise, but emotional as well. During the pandemic shutdown of 2020, I spent it happily busy working, creating, and enjoying my garden.

QUOTES TO MAKE YOU THINK!

"Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just "one thing well, you are needed by someone." ~ Martina Navratilova, Tennis Player, cancer survivor.
COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR YOU!

FEBRUARY 2023

Mar 8th  - Autism Caregivers Support Group
           615 Thain Rd Suite A, Lewiston, ID

Mar 11th - Tracks to Success
           4004 E Boone Ave, Spokane, WA

Mar 16th - Medicare 101
           Virtual Online Event

Mar 20th - AgriAbility Conference
           Centennial Hotel, Spokane, WA

Mar 23rd - Health & Wellness Fair
           Latah County Fairgrounds, Moscow, ID

Mar 28th - Fibromyalgia/Lupus Support Group
           Pullman, WA

For registration and details of events visit
www.dacnw.org/events/

SAVE THE DATE!!
Walk for Autism Acceptance
April 8th
10am - 2pm
Kootenai County Fairgrounds
Registration: $25
DAC NW - EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

A disaster or emergency that can directly affect your daily life can happen at any time, sometimes without warning. Thankfully, there are things you can do to be prepared, respond safely and help speed your recovery. DAC NW in Post Falls will be presenting free workshops to seniors to help them know what to do before, during and after a disaster or emergency. For residents of senior living facilities, we will be hosting several fire safety trainings to equip people with some basic knowledge on preventing and dealing with fires.

Did you know that at age 65 and older, people are twice as likely to be killed or injured by fires? "This workshop includes steps for preventing fires by removing hazards in the home and car," said Sherri Boelter, Independent Living Advocate in Post Falls office. "And making sure you can open all doors and windows easily to escape a fire in your home." Steps for this include clearing all clutter that may block your escape route or make you trip or fall. Other tips include proper use and maintenance of fire extinguishers, wearing tight fitting sleeves when cooking, preparing a "go bag" in case you have to evacuate, and what to do following an emergency.

The DAC Post Falls office plans to take this workshop into more rural areas where they might have difficulty attending events on safety and emergency preparedness.

YOUR KEY TO INDEPENDENCE!
LINC - EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

This year the rate of employment for Americans with disabilities has reached an all-time high. 21.3% of people with disabilities nationally have a job. The highest rate since they started keeping records in 2008.

Workers with disabilities are more frequently self-employed or more likely to work just part-time than other workers. This is in part because of wanting to keep specific benefits from Medicare/Medicaid.

But even with this record setting trend, people with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed by twice as much.

Of the 80% of people with disabilities who are not working, some estimates are that all but 3% choose not to work at all. There are a number of key factors to why people with disabilities don't want to work. Most cite limited transportation options to get to and from work, and inflexible workplace policies being an issue. Another barrier is mental health. When you have been unemployed for a period of time, depression can set in. Providing mental health services can help a person feel confident and ready to work.

Some of the factors are simply age related, as more older people identify with having a disability and choose that time to retire. But for those that do want to work, discrimination is still prevalent. Workplaces view hiring a person with a disability as being "costly" due to accommodations. Most accommodations, such as allowing for a flexible work schedule or modifying the layout of a workspace, cost nothing. Other accommodations, including screen reader software or sit-stand desks typically cost less than $500. It's time to encourage more businesses to hire someone with a disability!

EMPOWERING INDEPENDENCE
There are lots of support groups for parents and caregivers of children with disabilities. But what if that was reversed? Many parents have a disability themselves, and still meet the needs of their children. Two different support groups are offered through INDEEx to provide that peer support.

**Raising Children While Disabled** is a private group that parents of children of any age can join on Facebook and share thoughts and ideas for how to successfully parent while having a visible or invisible disability or impairment. They will also be meeting in person the 4th Thursday of the month to share resources with others who have lived experience raising their children while disabled.

Another group, **Reigniting the F.L.A.M.E.** (Fathers Living Accessible Meaningful Experiences) will be meeting every fourth Wednesday at the Spokane Public Library. Fathers play a huge role in childhood development and this groups wants to help fathers with a disability parent successfully and take care of themselves in the process. Sharing with others is shown to boost confidence if done in a safe, caring space.

There’s a common misconception that disabled people can’t—or worse, shouldn’t—have babies. But the truth is that pregnancy rates among people with physical disabilities are only slightly lower than in the non-disabled population. Yet parents with disabilities face more stigma around how they parent.

If you would like more information on these and other peer groups will be provided if you call 509-606-4639.
The film “Champions,” follows the story of a professional basketball coach who finds himself on the outs and has to serve community service. As we’ve seen in a number of sports comedies in the past, the community service that he’s forced to serve is as a coach for a Special Olympics basketball team.

No matter the pure intentions that are clearly behind this film starring Woody Harrelson, it’s hard to imagine it being released without some controversy.

The film is directed by Bobby Farrelly, the man behind such raunchy comedies as “Shallow Hal,” “There’s Something About Mary,” “Me, Myself, and Irene,” and “Dumb and Dumber.” Given his track record in the past with sensitive material, such as people with intellectual disabilities, you have to wonder how he plans to navigate the humor of this film. Currently there are opposing views of whether "Special Olympics" is a hero or villain in the world of disability. It was started as a summer camp for kids with intellectual disabilities because in the 1950's, many were institutionalized and of those who remained with their families, few were allowed to attend school. In an inclusive world, a "special" team wouldn't be needed, as kids with disabilities would participate in the same activities as their peers. Perhaps Special Olympics is simply the mirror that reflects society's continuing biases and serve to promote "inspiration porn" and highlights "othering"? The world we are currently living in may still have a place for Special Olympics until more lasting change for inclusion is made.

As for how the actors are portrayed? Take a chance and see it and form your own opinion.
The purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. 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. The ADA's four primary goals include full participation, equal opportunity, independent living and economic self-sufficiency.

It's hard to recognize all of the activists, policy experts, and lawmakers who were responsible for drafting and passing the ADA. But the Administration for Community Living has a three part history of the ADA, from its early origins to final passage. The ADA passed in 1990 with a degree of bipartisan support that would be nearly unthinkable in today's politically polarized climate:

- House vote in favor - 248 Democrats, 155 Republicans, 9 not voting.
- Senate vote in favor - 44 Democrats, 32 Republicans, 16 not voting.

The ADA for the first time required private businesses and employers to individually accommodate people with disabilities and their unique assistance needs in order to provide equal service. Most activity and resources after the law was signed were put into "educating" people and businesses about the ADA, essentially persuading them to comply. Some disabled people today see a law that's over three decades old, with barely any official enforcement, that's treated as a suggestion by some, and as a weird and unfamiliar mandate by others. The ADA's true value is as a catalyst. In 1990 it changed how disabled Americans saw themselves.
An epic fail means "a notable, obvious, and usually public failure." Though perhaps well intentioned, these fails can embarrass, isolate, and even endanger people with disabilities. We work to remove barriers so people with disabilities can live more independently in their own communities.
SELF-DIRECTED PA SERVICES

MOVING INTO YOUR CHILD'S HOME

Deciding to move into your child's home isn't a decision anyone makes lightly, but it's often the most affordable option. Especially with the shortage of in-home caregivers. While this living arrangement can be very rewarding to both the son or daughter and the parent, there are several important pros and cons to this arrangement. On one hand, if the parent is able, they can help in small ways with the kids, housework or finances. On the other hand, if they require constant care due to their disability, the entire family might experience moments of added stress, anxiety and frustration.

That's why you need to weigh options and considerations before moving in. Though there might be heavy emotions surrounding the decision, it could still be the right choice. This guide will help you make that decision by giving you some insight on:

- Helping the family understand how to give the right kind of care.
- Deciding if it is short-term or long term.
- Estimating the costs associated with assisted living facilities versus in-home care.
- Making their home disability-friendly.
- Adjusting the whole household to the lifestyle changes.

Going into this move takes time and planning. You can check out details at the Home Advisor website.

SERVICES YOU CONTROL!
Opinion: Dear Legislature: Can we breathe for a moment?

- By TODD DEVRIES

If I could give just one message to our Legislature, this would be it. Slow down, think and consult with people who share opposing views. Seek consensus, not control. This might be impossible for a Legislature dominated by one party and frequently beholden to the dog whistles of the far right, but a guy can dream, can't he?

Our Legislature generally sits from the beginning of January to the end of March, giving it only three months to conduct state business, approve budgets and address concerns of the moment. This cannot be an easy job under the best of circumstances. It is made more difficult by pressures to conform to an ideology that questions the value of government initiative, stifles dissenting opinions and panders to a minority of the most extreme voters.

Elections in this state are most often decided at the primary level, where extremists are more likely to vote. This bias leads the Legislature into projects that waste the people's time and promote an extremist focus on peripheral culturewar issues and the fantasies of the ultra-right. Here are a few examples:

> The Idaho House passed a resolution to consider eastern Oregon joining Idaho. Does anyone believe this is an issue of merit?

> The House's decision to forward a bill to the Senate removing student ID cards as proof of identity for voting purposes. No evidence that fraud in voting exists, but still we make voting more difficult.

> The Senate Education Committee forwarded a private voucher scheme. Only one senator on the committee broke party lines in an effort to stop this. Rather than being fiscally responsible, committee members ignored the complete lack of accountability for the funds being spent.

One could fill this space with other examples of bills that spring from ideology, not good policy. Fortunately, there is some worthy legislation out there.

One positive example is a proposal, Senate Bill 1081, to allow “undocumented immigrants” to obtain a driver's license. It has the support of business groups and advocacy organizations. It demonstrates that a consensus can be built between groups that do not often agree.

A second example of how groups can work together is House Bill 24, which provides grants to graduating high school seniors to enter technical professions. It barely passed the House but did so through a coalition of both Democratic and Republican members.

We can do this. We can reject destructive ideology and enact laws that enhance the quality of life for all of Idaho’s citizens. But we must slow down, resist the negative stimuli of those offering extremist ideologies and respond in ways that build community and foster conversations.

Now, can we remove the sales tax on food, enact meaningful property tax reform, and allow doctors and patients to make health care decisions without government interference?
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

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