Voting Issues
by Matthew Daly

The 2012 National Forum on Disability Issues discussed the factors that would impact people with disabilities in the upcoming election. The message was to encourage people with disabilities to be active in the political process. During the 2008 presidential election approximately 131 million people voted and 14.8 million of those voters were people with disabilities. During this forum, representatives of the candidates spoke about the issues that are impacting people with disabilities in the upcoming election.

The democratic representative for Barack Obama stated that, if elected, Obama’s priorities would be to support the Affordable Care Act and the Workforce Investment Act. According to the National Disability Institute, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is a program that allows people with disabilities to set aside money that can help them maintain their independence in the community. The benefit of setting this money aside is that it would be tax exempt and not count towards eligibility for federal programs. He would also expand the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). This program, according to the Working for America Institute, would help all people achieve employment through training, resume preparation, job search assistance, and career counseling.

The republican representative for Mitt Romney stated that, if elected, Romney would support block grants to reform Medicaid. Block grants would change the

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As we all know, the Presidential elections are coming up in the next several weeks. While there is a lot of information on how each candidate feels about issues relating to politics, there is not much on their personal lives and interests. I wanted to do an article on Barack Obama and Mitt Romney to find out more about their personal lives, separate from politics. I wanted to look at them as “regular Americans” and not just politicians. Here are some fun personal facts relating to President Obama and Republican candidate Mitt Romney.

Since I am a big sports fan, I was very interested in Obama’s favorite sports teams and his history of being an athlete. Did you know that the President was an accomplished high school basketball player? At Punahou High School, in Honolulu, Hawaii, he was known as “O-Bomber” due to his scoring record. Our 44th President is also an avid sports fan. His favorite teams are the Chicago Bears, Chicago White Sox, and the Chicago Bulls. His favorite athlete plays none of these sports however. The President’s favorite athlete is none other than Argentine soccer superstar Lionel Messi of Barcelona. He is also a big fan of Muhammad Ali, and he has an autographed pair of his gloves. President Obama has many other interests besides his interests in all things sports. He enjoys listening to a lot of different types of music. Some of his favorite artists are Miles Davis, Bach, and Bob Dylan. His favorite song, however, is “Ready or Not” by the Fugees. His favorite food is First Lady Michelle Obama’s special shrimp linguini dish and the president himself enjoys making chili from time to time. Like many people around America, Obama is a fan of the smash hit book series of “Harry Potter”, but his favorite book is “Moby Dick” by Herman Melville. His favorite painter is Pablo Picasso. Another thing that Obama likes to do when he’s not busy running the country, is to play scrabble and poker. He also enjoys collecting comic books like “Conan the Barbarian” and “Spiderman”. This is my personal favorite fact about Obama because it shows us that, even though he has the most important job in the world, he still takes time to do things that he enjoys, just like the rest of us.

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PCIL Remembers Tom Butterfoss
by Bob Riskamm

I met Tom Butterfoss about 20 years ago. We had both just moved into Project Freedom Robbinsville. One day I ran into his brother Richard and a friend of his. I began speaking to his friend when Tom decided to join in the conversation. Tom was a very quiet person who typically liked to keep to himself, but that day we struck up a good conversation and over the next 20 years we would strike up many more conversations, as neighbors and good friends.

Tom was a very private person who had many interests. His primary interest was his artwork. He was a renowned artist who exhibited art all over the world. Over the last couple years he exhibited artwork at Grounds for Sculpture. He was a modern artist, often using geometric shapes in his pieces. He was an avid collector of music, and was a tremendous Beatles fan. He would often go to see Ringo Starr and his All – Star Band or Paul McCartney whenever they were in the area. Tom also liked to make frequent trips to Atlantic City for relaxation. Tom was an avid movie fan. He would often invite friends over to his home to check out his new releases. Over the years he would occasionally rattle my walls with his sub woofer and stereo. I could always tell when he was home because of the noise from his movies or music.

On September 17, 2012, Tom, who had from Polio, passed away from complications from pneumonia. Tom was a terrific friend, and I will always miss him. I hope all of which Tom has accomplished in his life, despite his health issues, serves as an inspiration to people with disabilities. He never gave up his passions despite his physical limitations. I will miss his spirit as a truly unique individual. Tom was a rare breed of person, and I was fortunate enough to know him.

PCIL Remembers Tom Butterfoss.

Tom Butterfoss is in the middle of the front row; the gentleman in the wheelchair. He will be greatly missed by everyone whose life he has touched and he has touched many lives.
On Wednesday, September 19, 2012 the Progressive Center attended the annual Health and Safety Fair in Somerset, NJ. PCIL went to the fair to assist the staff in providing resources to the occupants of the National Church Residences that include both Willett Manor and South River Landing properties. Since the opening of the first retirement community in 1961, National Church Residences have expanded their services. Their mission now includes the housing needs of seniors, families, adults, homeless individuals, as well as, persons with disabilities. They also help with a host of supportive health care services.

PCIL’s Emergency Preparedness program is designed to address the unique needs of individuals with access and functional needs. Our focus at the Health and Safety Fair was to provide the residents with ways to be prepared in the event of a disaster. Residents and staff who spoke to PCIL received several emergency preparedness tools like; Register Ready brochures, helpful flashcards for all types of seasonal emergencies, and information on how to make their own “go bag”. We also raffled off two “Preparedness Buckets” to help some of this year’s participants get a jump-start on gathering what they may need for an emergency. In addition to attending the annual Health and Safety Fair, PCIL staff visits National Church Residences throughout the year to provide ongoing Emergency Preparedness seminars to reinforce the benefits of preparing for emergencies.

Individuals interested in finding out more information on National Church Residences please call Willett Manor at 732-257-8221 or South River Landing at 732-238-3838 or visit their website at http://nationalchurchresidences.org or to find out more information on our Emergency Preparedness program, visit www.pcil.org or call us at 609-581-4500.
PCIL to Host DA Seminar for Hotels
by Jerry Carbone

The Progressive Center will be hosting a Disabilities Awareness Seminar on Tuesday, October 30th for local hotels. The objective of this training is to help hospitality businesses build awareness of the disability trends that impact their customer service, to help them gain understandings about how people with disabilities evaluate their businesses, and to better their skills when serving customers with disabilities. There will be a discussion on their personal concerns for becoming disabilities friendly as well as discussions on the importance of becoming an accessible business. We will also give an overview of proper and effective communication and interactions with people with disability.

We are hoping this brief two hour program will not only show that the disabled market is one of the hotel industry’s largest missed opportunities but that the industry is also largely impacted by the friends and family members of a person with a disability when the business is not accessible and not disabilities friendly.

As stated, this training will focus on the hotel industry but all industries are welcome to come. There will be a nominal fee of $49.99 per attendee. If you or your organization would like to participate in this program or would like more information on this program please call Jerry Carbone at 609 581 4500 or e-mail jerry.carbone@pcil.org.

National Disability Employment Month
by Matthew Daly

The month of October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the following month is the Presidential Election. So, I am going to take a moment to talk about employing people with disabilities and politics. This interaction was addressed in a presidential candidate questionnaire sent to President Obama by the American Association of People with Disabilities and the National Council of Independent Living.

This questionnaire addressed employing people with disabilities and pointed out one surprising statistic: Only 36% of people with disabilities are currently working, compared to 77% of people

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Even though there is a great deal of information on President Obama, I found it more difficult to find things out about his opponent, former Governor of Massachusetts Mitt Romney. The Republican candidate is different from our current president and his lifestyle and beliefs are much different than mine. I found it interesting to learn about a lifestyle I was not familiar with.

The first thing I was very surprised to learn was that his name is not actually Mitt. Mitt is his middle name. His given first name is Willard. He received his undergraduate degree in 1971 from Brigham Young University in Humanities and later received an joint Juris Doctor and Masters in Business Administration from Harvard University. Romney is a Mormon, and I enjoyed learning about was how being a Mormon directly affects his life. For example, he served as a missionary for a Latter Day Saints church for five years in France. I never knew how being a Mormon affects a person’s life in terms of their diet until I did research on Romney. While our current President is fond of junk food and chili, Romney must obey the strict rules associated with a Mormon diet. He bases his diet on organic foods like vegetables, fruits, and grains. Being a Mormon also forbids him from consuming anything addictive like coffee, alcohol or cigarettes. His favorite sandwich is peanut butter and honey, and his wife Ann’s meatloaf cakes.

I also found several other aspects of Romney’s personal life to be unique. His wife, of 38 years, has Multiple Sclerosis (MS), and spends much of her time raising money for MS research. They have 5 sons and 18 grandchildren. Perhaps the most interesting fact I came across was related to Romney’s personal wealth. Due to his success in the business world, Romney has a net worth of $190-$250 million dollars. By comparison, President Obama’s net worth is $11.8 million dollars with assets worth $8.3 million.

In terms of everyday interests, I found some of the things Romney really likes. One of his favorite celebrities is none other than Jersey Shore star Snooki. He thinks she is a fun and interesting person. He also likes to listen to many different bands and singers. Among them are Toby Keith, Aerosmith, and the Eagles. His current favorite band is The Killers with lead singer, Brandon Flowers. For recreation Romney likes to ride horses with his family.

I had a great time researching and writing my article this quarter because I got to learn some fun facts about these two men, one of which could be running the country that I call home very soon. I hope this article helped you to get to know the candidates running in the 2012 presidential election. No matter which one of the candidates you hope to win, make sure your voice is heard, because your vote does matter.
The definition of transition is a process or period in which something or someone undergoes a change and passes from one state, stage, form or activity, to another. Transition has a second meaning which is a connection of two sections. Transition words and phrases provide the glue that holds ideas together in writing or in spoken language. They help the reader or listener to understand the relationship between ideas and follow the movement of the discussion.

As we slide into a new school year, we find ourselves in transition mode. Our valued and lengthy funding through the Department of Education, Office of Special Education (DOE) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVR) is winding down. The former PSA Program, now REACT, will continue with the help of our schools. The CILs are also working with DVR toward a new fee for service program which will highly benefit the schools and continue to smooth student transition. It should be a very exciting year to share with you.

“Life is the sum of your choices”
- Albert Camus

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Medicaid system from open-ended funding to set funding levels. Each state would also have the right to set their Medicaid rules. This would streamline the system, reduce the federal deficit, and free up state budget funds. He would also support home and community based services. According to the Medicaid website, these funds are used to help people with disabilities to transition from institutional settings into their own homes and community.

The emphasis of this forum was to encourage people with disabilities to become involved with the political process. Regardless of which candidate you support, please express your opinion on Election Day, November 6th, 2012 by casting your vote.
Recreation Update
by Drew Zimmerman

The Community Connections Recreation Program featured several events to wrap up a very active summer. The picnic and pontoon boat ride at Mercer County Park saw over 40 PCIL participants, family members and friends enjoy a beautiful, sun filled day. Fred and Pete’s catering provided delicious burgers, hot dogs, sausage with peppers and salads. Baseball was in full swing for recreation participants with visits to the Trenton Thunder stadium, and two Philadelphia Phillies games. Recently, we started a new social group called the Movie Bunch. Even though the weather was very rainy that night, several people attended dinner at Pizzeria Uno and went to a movie at the AMC Theater next door. Movie Bunch participant Bill Phillips was very happy to attended the evening. After dinner, he took on the bad weather and went to see the horror movie “The Possession”. He stated, “I had a great time, and look forward to the next time we meet.” There will be another Movie Bunch in November, so check your mailboxes for the bright colored recreation flyers. On the horizon is a Princeton Football game, a Halloween themed gathering at Terhune Orchards, a Writer’s Bock meeting, a Dinner Club Event at Charlie Brown’s in Hamilton, and much more as we cool off in the Fall weather.

Also, as we wind down 2012, it’s never too early to prepay for 2013 PCIL membership. In 2012 we saw a record number of members joining, with many new participants taking advantage of family memberships! PCIL memberships are a tremendous value, and help save participants money all year long. Be sure to sign up early so you can take advantage of all recreation benefits and bonuses throughout the year.

Participants enjoy a pontoon ride.

Philadelphia Phillies outing.
In the spirit of the upcoming presidential elections, I thought it might be a nice idea to do a celebrity profile on a current politician who has a disability. Throughout our country’s history there have been a number of politicians with disabilities. More famous ones include former President Franklin D. Roosevelt, former presidential candidate George C. Wallace, and recent Governor of New York David A. Patterson. In this celebrity profile we will be focusing on Rhode Island Congressman James Langevin.

Congressman Langevin has been a U.S. Representative for the 2nd congressional district for Rhode Island since 2001. Congressman Langevin was born in 1964 in Providence, Rhode Island. While he was still in high school, James served as a volunteer on the Warwick Police Department. He was left a paraplegic when a weapon accidently discharged at the police station. However, this accident did not slow him down at all. Langevin went on to receive his education at Rhode Island College and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. After graduating he continued to make it his life’s work to be involved in the political process in Rhode Island.

Since 1986 he has been part of Rhode Island politics, achieving positions like; Secretary of Constitutional Convention, Member of the General Assembly, State Representative, and Secretary of State. His crowning moment in Rhode Island politics came in 2001, when he was elected to the House of Representatives defeating Robert Tingle. Since then, he has won a number of elections defeating challenges in 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012.

Like any other politician, the Congressman has many opinions on topics ranging from the budget, education, the environment, and the economy. What sets him apart from other politicians is his unwavering commitment to issues that affect people with disabilities. Since taking office, he has been involved in many initiatives and supported several laws that improve the lives of people with disabilities. He has worked on the enforcement of the ADA, formed the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus, and worked on improving home and community-based-waivers for Medicaid recipients. He is also an avid supporter of the ABLE Act, which would increase the ability of people with disabilities to save money regardless of their income. He also remains a steadfast supporter of increasing employment of people with disabilities through the use of assistive devices in the workplace.

Congressman Jim Langevin serves as a strong example of someone who followed their life goals despite having

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Emergency Preparedness Update
by Scott Ellis

During this past quarter, I have been a part of a few really good projects that have proven to be exciting and challenging for me. At the beginning of this quarter, I facilitated a workshop at a conference “Real Readiness – Making It Happen” at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayerville in coordination with FEMA and Alianza, a non-profit organization in North Brunswick. There were many representatives from the emergency preparedness community such as the Red Cross, UCP, and many other OEM’s around the state. Some of the guest speakers were; Marcie Roth, the Director of FEMA’s Office of Integration and Coordination and senior advisor to the President; Richard Deyvilder, Senior Advisor on Transportation; and Kelly Rouba, the Communications & Emergency Management Specialist/Ethics Coordinator Division of Developmental Disabilities. A few days later, I was invited to FEMA in New York for a stakeholders meeting. FEMA brought together representatives from around Region 2 to discuss the perceived level of readiness people with disabilities had in the case of a large disaster. Four weeks later we went to Wildwood to advertise our Adaptive Equipment Trainings at the Fireman’s Convention we then headed to the Alliance Center for Independence in Brunswick to provide Emergency Preparedness Training for their staff and volunteers. All and all we had a busy quarter in Emergency Preparedness.

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without disabilities. In a response to this grim statistic, the current administration noted that it plans to strengthened the Workforce Investment Act Rehabilitation section. This Act helps all people to achieve employment through resume preparation, training, job search assistance, and career counseling. This administration has also launched a new program called, Add Us In, which aims to create networks of experts skilled in serving people with disabilities to help improve employment opportunities and outcomes. President Obama also noted that his administration has signed Executive Order 13548, which allows for increased recruitment, hiring, and retention of people with disabilities within Federal employment. Finally, as noted in the response to the presidential candidate questionnaire, the Department of Labor has proposed new rules not yet finalized, which will require federal contractors and subcontractors to have their workforce goal of seven percent people with disabilities.

There are still many steps that need to be taken to improve outcomes for people with disabilities who desire employment, but these steps are a step in the right direction.
On September 14th the Progressive Center headed to Wildwood to attend the New Jersey State Fireman’s Convention. The New Jersey State Fireman’s convention serves as a platform for fireman across the state to come and discuss any issue they may have with other fireman and delegates belonging to the firemen’s association. In addition, they are exposed to various companies that sell trainings for fire personnel, safety equipment, and other such products that help firefighters do their job safely and more effectively.

A few months ago when I started planning this trip I thought, what better venue to sell trainings to first responders than the Firemen’s Convention? At the Convention we had an audience comprised of the largest percentage of New Jersey’s firemen in one location. Our goal was to bring awareness to our Adaptive Equipment Education course for first responders. Our sales staff included Joseph Valatka and myself. During the convention we had the opportunity to talk to a large number of fire departments. They were really interested in the training, noting that they had not thought of those issues before. They were particularly interested in all the different types of adaptive equipment and the securement systems in these vehicles. The Progressive Center is pleased with the response and we are hoping to capitalize on these new connections!

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had a disability thrust upon them at an early age. He has persevered in life, dedicating himself to be a quality public servant for the citizens of Rhode Island. No one can say whether or not his accident has shaped his political views directly, but one thing is for sure, he is a clear advocate for people living with disabilities. I certainly hope that no matter where politics takes James Langevin, he remains a staunch supporter of people with disabilities and continues to work on making our lives better. To learn more about Congressman James Langevin visit his website at http://langevin.house.gov.
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