

A monthly publication of THE
OKLAHOMANS for
INDEPENDENT LIVING

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Of all the things you wear,
your expression is the most
important.



MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS GROUP RE-FORMING

The community group is re-forming and will be meeting at OIL on August 10th from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Please come and tell what you would like to see in a support group. For more information or phone support call Patty Gesin at 918 916-7657.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH CONFERENCE

On August 4th and 5th the Department of Rehabilitation Services is hosting the second annual Education and Outreach EXPO. It will be held on August 4th from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm and August 5th from 9:00 am – 3:30 pm at the Oklahoma School for the Blind in Muskogee. The EXPO is open to the public including all DRS employees, potential employees, DRS consumers, educational and medical providers, community

partners, advocates, parents and students. The theme for 2010 is “A Treasure Chest of Knowledge”. Services offered by the various DRS Divisions

and their partners will be highlighted, providing the public with information on issues faced within the disability community. Educational workshops relating to disability awareness will be offered. Training credits and CEU’s will be available. For more information contact DRS at 800-845-8476.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SURVEY

The Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council is asking parents, people with disabilities, self advocates, caregivers and providers are invited to offer input into the council’s 2010 state planning process through a survey. You can take the survey through August 15th at www.okddc.ok.gov/ or by calling 1 800 836-4470.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER SURVEY

Oklahomans who are a parent of a child below the

age of six years who has been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), please assist in sharing your experience with speech-language intervention and your child. En Espanol:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/D863LGJ>

In English:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/H7WN388>

MEDICARE AND THE NEW HEALTH CARE LAW

The Affordable Care Act passed by Congress this year will provide you and your family greater savings and increased quality health care. Here are just a few highlights;
IMPROVEMENTS YOU WILL SEE RIGHT AWAY
More Affordable Prescription Drugs

*If you enter the Part D “donut hole” this year, you will receive a one time, \$250 rebate check if you are not already receiving Medicare Extra Help. These checks began mailing in mid June and will continue monthly throughout the year as beneficiaries enter the coverage gap.

*Next year, if you reach the coverage gap, you will receive a 50% discount when buying Part

D covered brand-name prescription drugs.

*Over the next ten years, you will receive additional savings until the coverage gap is closed in 2020.

Important New Benefits to Help You Stay Healthy

*Next year you can get free preventative services like colorectal cancer screening, mammograms, and an annual physical.

IMPROVEMENTS YOU WILL SEE SOON

Better access to Care

*Your choice of doctor will be preserved and there will be an increase in the number of primary care doctors, nurses, and physician assistants.

IMPROVEMENTS BEYOND MEDICARE THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY CAN BE COUNTED ON

Helps People with Pre-existing Conditions

*The new law provides affordable health insurance through a transitional high-risk pool program for people without insurance due to a pre-existing condition.

*Insurance companies will be prohibited from denying coverage due to a pre-existing condition for children starting in September and for adults in 2014.

*Insurance companies will be banned from establishing lifetime limits on your coverage and the use of annual limits will be limited starting in September.

Expands Health Coverage for Young People

*Young people up to age 26 can remain on their parents' health insurance policy starting in September.

Helps Early Retirees

*It will help offset the cost of employer-based retiree health plans, the new law creates a program to preserve those plans and help people who retire before age 65 get the affordable care they need.

Improves Long-Term Care Choices

*The law creates a new voluntary insurance program called CLASS to help pay for long-term care and support at home.

*Individuals on Medicaid will receive improved home and community-based care options, and spouses of people receiving home and community-based services through Medicaid will no longer be forced into poverty.

For more information about the new health care law visit www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

GE

NE THERAPY TO PREVENT

BLINDNESS There is good news for those who live with retinitis pigments. In a June, 2010 release, scientists have discovered how to deliver gene [therapy](#) directly to the cells affected by this eye disease and thus prevent blindness.

The discovery was the result of a collaborative effort between researchers at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and colleagues in Cleveland and Buffalo. They hope the results of the study will be instrumental in generating a cure for the debilitating blindness associated with retinitis pigments and other

inherited and acquired retinal diseases.

Forms of retinitis pigments and related diseases include [Leer's congenital amaurosis](#), Usher syndrome, and Rod-cone disease, among others.

This latest study from the OU utilized nanoparticle technology to deliver genetic therapy inside cells of the retina. The microscopic capsule created by scientists to transport the [therapies](#) has been very effective, arriving at the designated location in the eye within 15 minutes of delivery and quickly sending its contents to nearby cells. An ophthalmologist at the Dean McGee Eye Institute in Oklahoma City called the work "an incredible breakthrough" and said that "outside of gene therapy, we are at a loss to be able to treat these patients."

The study is only the beginning for people with retinitis pigmentosa and other diseases. Already the discovery is being used to develop new treatments for macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness. The microscopic capsule has also been tested in animals with the potential of treating diseases ranging from [bladder cancer](#) to [diabetes](#).

ACCESSIBLE VIDEO GAMES

Playing a video game is usually not a physically intensive activity as the only motion necessary for most console systems and PC games is pushing a button.

Ease of play, stunning sound, and gorgeous graphics provide much of video games' allure.

However, for people with disabilities, even the relatively simple act of playing a video game is a struggle. Those with a learning disability cannot read impossible-to-slow text fast enough to understand it. Those with hearing impairments cannot hear the auditory cues that save the game's hero from death. Those with neurological disorders often cannot navigate complex controls. Those with visually impairments have fairly obvious difficulties. Games often do not indicate how accessible they are to the disabled. However, the specialized controllers that can make video gaming possible for people with disabilities, may not work for all games.

www.broadenedhorizons.com/videogaming.htm

In recent years, however, game developers have tried to accommodate the needs by making accommodations such as; alternative pointing devices, such as head and eye tracking systems, on-screen keyboards, speech recognition, screen readers, screen magnifiers. Developers have also begun including accommodations, such as closed captioning, in their games.

Kids are kids, whether they are blind, have multiple disabilities or not. And most kids want to play video games!

Check out accessible video games with some being free,

speech friendly, pc dos, and window games. See if you can find something that you will enjoy!



Top 25 sites for gamers who are visually impaired, blind, and motion impaired can go to www.7128.com

MOVIE NIGHT AT OIL

We will meet on August 3rd at 5:30 p.m. Bring your favorite movie and we will take a vote on which one to watch.

WATER PARK TRIP

On Friday, August 6th, we will be going to the River Country Family Water Park in Muskogee. The bus will leave OIL around 9:00 a.m. with the transportation cost being \$5. Please bring enough money for your lunch at a restaurant or for the food concession at the Water Park. The entrance costs are; Adults \$6, Children aged 3-15 yrs., \$5, and 2 yrs. & under are free.



Are you eligible for the ADVantage Program?

Are you a person with a disability who is at least 21 years of age?

If you said "Yes" then answer the following:

Do you require assistance?

1. On a daily basis in order to live, such as eating, toileting, grooming, bathing, dressing, and moving about to accomplish the task
2. In order to maintain or support daily functioning such as taking medication, preparing meals, paying bills, shopping, laundry, transportation, etc.
3. Are you at risk for nursing home placement?

The ADVantage Program may be able to help. Contact any OIL ADVantage case manager at 426-6220 V/TDD.

GATOR'S WHARF LUNCHEON

On Wednesday, August 18th, the women's group will be going to Eufaula for a nice relaxing lunch by the water. Gator's Wharf overlooks the Lake and you can feed the fish or ducks right off the deck of the Restaurant so bring some bread if you would like. The transportation cost is \$2.50 and of course your meal is on you.



*Prices are subject to change.

SATURDAY TRANSPORTATION

OIL will take individuals anywhere in the McAlester area whether to visit friends/family, to a matinee movie or just to go shopping. The cost is \$1 per stop. The dates are set for August 14th and 28th.

Transportation

OIL provides lift-equipped transportation in McAlester and the surrounding area, Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30. A twenty-four hour minimum notice is required. The cost is \$2 round trip in McAlester and \$4 for Krebs and Frink Chambers. Outside this area, fees are based on actual costs of gasoline needed to provide the service.

