

# MILC RUN

MIDSTATE INDEPENDENT LIVING CONSULTANTS

*“Working for persons with disabilities towards empowerment to make informed choices.”*

## The Portage and Wood Counties CCW Book

Club Presents:

**“WE ARE.....”**

Join us for an amazing evening discovering what “We Are”, from artists and musicians, to poets and film makers, to teachers and advocates and athletes. Our Human Library will allow you to network, socialize, learn and have fun!

**DISCOVER THE TRUTH ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH!**

Events include Art, Poetry, Music, Entertainment, the Human Library, the movie Shards of Hope and

**FREE REFRESHMENTS!!!**

Dates/Venue: April 19th at McMillan Library, Wisc. Rapids

April 25th at Portage County Library

Time: 5:30-7:30 both locations

For more information or To request an interpreter, SSP for deaf-blind, by April 1st, contact Robyn at 1-800-382-8484, ext. 228.

**HOPE BEGINS WITH A CONVERSATION!**

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# New Executive Director!



Hi there!

My name is Zoe Nylund and I am the new Executive Director of MILC. I am so grateful to be able to join such a wonderful organization and team of very dedicated staff! My passion has always been to help people of all ages and abilities to live independently. I worked for 5 years in W-2 (state cash assistance) and I worked for over 10 years running a domestic violence shelter. I spend most of my time off with my three girls and my little dog, Cookie. They certainly keep me busy! One of my favorite quotes by the Dalai Lama is "Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible." Please feel free to reach out to me at any time.

## April Is Autism Awareness Month

In the 1970's the Autism Society started a campaign to create awareness, acceptance, and understanding for people in our communities with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The month of April has been designated as "Autism Awareness Month."



Autism affects 1 in 68 people\*. There is no current medical test to diagnosis autism and there is no cure. It is a lifelong disorder and does not go away as an adult. More than half of the people diagnosed with autism are bullied at some point in their lives. It is not only important to spread autism awareness but to also teach *acceptance*.

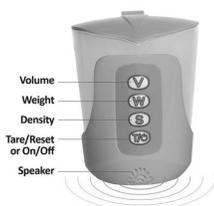
Many people show their support during Autism Awareness Month by wearing puzzle pieces. The puzzle piece reflects the mystery and complexity of autism. Since every puzzle piece is different in some way, a puzzle piece represents the diversity of the individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Contact Midstate Independent Living Consultants for information on autism related programs, assistive technology, and support.

\*<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/prevalence>

By Sandi Walkush ~IL Consultant

## Speaks Volumez



Equipment for low vision or blind: This product measures up to 3 cups in liquid or solid and speaks in weights and volumes. The clear cup is dishwasher, and microwave safe. It requires 2 AAA batteries. Measures weight & volume (cups/oz./ml./grams). \$49.95 from Maxi Aids.



By Adam Lewis ~I&R Specialist

# RAMP UP



Ramp Up Marathon County (RUMC) is a group of dedicated, skilled volunteers who build wheelchair ramps or long-tread, low-rise steps for **Marathon County residents**. Materials are purchased with funds provided by private donations as well as grants from the B. A. and Esther Greenheck Foundation and the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin, and our volunteers donate their time, expertise, and muscle. There is no cost to the recipient, but eligibility requirements must be met. For further information,

please contact Erin Wells at the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin, 715-536-0311, or Nancy Keller, Midstate Independent Living Consultants, Inc., 715-344-4210, extension 211.

RUMC is a program of Midstate Independent Living Consultants, Inc.

## Representative Payee Services



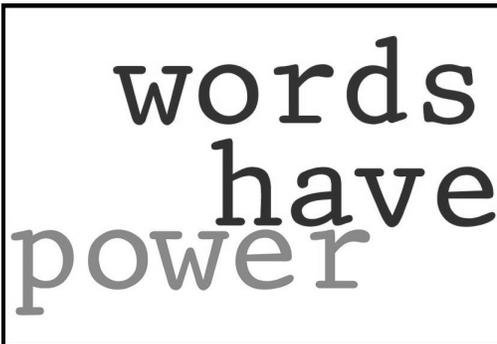
Are you an individual receiving disability benefits who is in need of a Representative Payee or do you know someone who is? If so, Midstate Independent Living Consultants can be of assistance.

As Representative Payee, we provide financial management services for individuals who are 18 years and older and have been identified by the Social Security Administration as needing help managing their Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

Our service differs from other Representative Payee Programs in that our goal for each individual we serve is for them to live as independently as their disability will allow. Therefore, we involve the individuals we serve and/or their guardians in the budgeting and decision making processes. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity and we work hard to achieve that. In addition, the individuals we serve also have access to our Independent Living Program in which information, training and supports are provided to assist people with disabilities in making informed choices about their disability related needs.

Currently, we have openings for new consumers in our Representative Payee Program. If you or someone you know is interested in more information or would like to speak with us regarding a referral for the program, please contact Cindy Groshek at 715-344-4210 ext. 214 or [cgroshek@milc-inc.org](mailto:cgroshek@milc-inc.org).

## Mind Your P's and Q's!



words  
have  
power

**Language affects attitudes. Attitudes impact actions...**this is the sentiment behind the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign. This crusade was launched in 2009 to bring awareness to the negative effects of the 'R-Word', and to shine a light on the positive contributions people with intellectual disabilities make in their communities.

(The trademarked "Spread the Word To End the Word" was created by Soeren Palumbo and Tim Shriver, who are recognized as co-founders of the campaign).

According to the Oxford dictionary, there are more than a quarter of a million commonly used English words. Words convey our desires, disappointments, happiness, and grief. Words can be very powerful; words of encouragement and praise can make someone feel great, but words that are degrading, racist or dehumanizing can be extremely hurtful. Words like retarded, handicapped, and feeble-minded are no longer acceptable. One of the reasons for this is because these words tend to lessen a person's merit, and they convey a sense of negativity.

Some may say we live in a society that is too sensitive, but I don't think that's true. I think we should be careful not to use words that are derogatory or prejudiced, and we should be thoughtful about how our words may affect others. As my mom used to say..."If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything!"

*By Nancy Keller ~IL Consultant*

## Disability Etiquette

When you confront a person who seems different than you, always use people first language. That means to put the person before the disability. Just because a person has a disability, we are not less human. We deserve equal respect and consideration from you that you would give to anyone. For example, use the term; person with an emotional disability rather than "crazy person" or "insane." Also, do not refer to a person who uses a wheelchair as being "confined" to a wheelchair; that wheelchair may represent freedom to an individual with a physical disability.

Some common courtesies mean a lot to a person with a disability, like holding a door for us or pulling out a chair for us. If you do something more than a common courtesy, always leave it up to us. *Offer and wait* for a response first; don't just push a wheelchair for example, *offer and wait for their answer*. Don't take a walker or a cane and move them without getting permission from the user first, even if they aren't using it currently.

This may take some getting used to for some and for some it just comes naturally. Whichever group you belong to, I challenge you to make the effort; it will not go unnoticed.

*By Karalyn Peterson ~Resource Coordinator*

# Aipoly Vision



I was informed about an app for smart phones called Aipoly Vision. This app is designed for people with low vision or blind. This app tells the user information about objects in-front of the camera in real-time. It takes only a couple of seconds to get the item in focus to tell the user the identity. It does work, and potentially well. It was able to correctly identify a loaf of bread, a bottle, the stove, as well as many other things to which I pointed. It did have many errors, as well as many not sure reports. I am only using the free portion of the app which includes general, color, and a couple others. I cannot truly comment too much on how well the color tab works since I am completely blind, but I really like it even if it does not work very well because it already performs much better than the app I was using for colors.

The current cost for a subscription to all the features of this app is \$4.99 a month, and I am considering if the cost would be worth while. I think it is a very handy app to use and also a bit of fun to mess around with, makes me feel like a kid with a new toy. The draw backs are: yes to get all the features it costs money, seems the most useful parts of the app only come with the subscription, and it did tell me that my laptop was a vacuum. Now, sure my laptop might have sucked much of my life away but literally it was wrong, I suppose figuratively it was correct. Still I would prefer an app to not try and be funny "sigh". The currency tab is one of the most unfortunate parts of the app that requires the subscription, and I am very curious on how the animal tab works. The animal tab also requires you to pay, but how are you suppose to get an animal to be still enough for the camera to get a good focus on it and also be able to know where it is if you cannot see very well. I suppose it may be for helping to teach people English, as I heard this app was being used in places like China. I certainly do recommend this app even if you just use it to play around with. Also another benefit with this app is that it does not use a human viewer to tell you what it is picking up in the camera like "tap tap see". This means it could be for situations where you may not want someone else seeing what you are trying to figure out. There are plans to update and add more objects to this app; I cannot wait to see how it is improved.

*By Adam Lewis ~I&R Specialist*

## Action Track Chair!

MILC has a Track Chair for loan!

This all-terrain wheelchair is available to loan, with a focus on loaning to Veterans. Those who would like to participate in disability hunting, fishing, or other events where an all-terrain wheelchair is needed can use the Track Chair.

The Track Chair is equipped with additional supports for the fishing/hunting gear. Those supports can be folded away or removed when not in use.

The Track Chair has it's own hauling trailer, ready to hitch to your vehicle for safe and proper transport.

If you are interested in borrowing the Track Chair, or would like more information, please give MILC a call at 715-344-4210.



# Assistive Technology Review at MILC:

## Talking Microwave



What will they come up with next? Who knew this even existed. I was pretty surprised and excited to learn about this, which is why I wanted to share this with you!

This microwave oven has been enhanced with talking functions in order to increase its accessibility. Person's who are blind or visually impaired can use this with ease. Knowing you are cooking your meal or warming up your coffee without all the guess-work is exactly why this is a must-have item in your kitchen. \$369.95 from Independent Living Aids, LLC.

- Hear spoken prompts for setting time, power level, etc.
- Male voice with adjustable speech volume
- 4 power levels
- 1000 Watts with 1.1 cubic feet
- Measures 20.2 x 12 x 16.7 inches

*By Tiffany Bredlau ~IL Consultant*

## MILC - ICA

### Expansion of IRIS in Florence, Forest, Oneida, and Vilas!



#### **MILC-ICA became a certified IRIS Consulting Agency June 15, 2016**

Since 2000 MILC has served numerous individuals through multiple programs working beside persons with disabilities towards empowerment to make informed choices in Adams, Florence, Forest, Lincoln, Langlade, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Taylor, Vilas, and Wood counties. We are excited to add IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct) as the newest person-centered program.

MILC-ICA has IRIS consultants who understand independent living philosophies and the importance of self-direction. Our IRIS consultants are available to help support and organize resources available to you as an IRIS participant

MILC-ICA will specialize in helping you be as independent as possible while working beside you to achieve your long-term care goals. We will come along beside you to provide resources for services and supports available for you.

Department of Health Services has announced plans to offer Family Care and IRIS to the final seven counties in Wisconsin who do not currently have that option. These counties include: Vilas, Oneida, Florence, and Forest. Family Care and IRIS will expand to these counties beginning April of 2017. The transition will eliminate the wait list of more than 500 adults in counties currently served by Medicaid legacy waivers.

The Family Care and IRIS programs provide long-term care to frail elders, and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, fostering independence and improving quality of life while recognizing the need for support and the desire to self-direct long-term care services.

If you would like to select MILC-ICA as your IRIS consulting agency – you will need to visit your local ADRC and let them know. Please call Jill Walter at 715-344-4210 ext. 212 to request MILC-ICA.



# LOAN PROGRAMS

## What is Wisloan?

Wisloan is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents with a disability, or their families, to purchase adaptive equipment, assistive technology or modify their homes so that they can live more independently. The applicant must be 18 and a resident of Wisconsin who wishes to improve his or her quality of life through the acquisition of items (examples include assistive technology, modified vehicles, etc.).

**Both Telework and Wisloan** loan amounts will depend on the item being purchased and the ability to repay. The current interest rate is 6.5%.

Bad credit, including bankruptcy is not a reason to not apply. The focus is on the ability to make the monthly payments. Reasons for credit issues are taken into consideration by the review board. Contact an IL Consultant at the MILC office for assistance in completing an application.

## What is Telework?

Telework is a statewide, alternative loan program allowing Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from remote sites away from the office, including at home, on the road or at a Telework center. In addition to the purchase of equipment, the loan funds can be used for training to use equipment, extended warranties, the cost of maintenance and repair.

## What is TEPP?

### **Telecommunications, Equipment Purchase Program**

If you are one of the millions of people who have difficulty using a telephone, you should know that help is available through the Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program, or TEPP. The TEPP Program provides funding, (through the Universal Service Fund), for people with disabilities to purchase specialized telephones and related equipment.

The TEPP program issues vouchers, each with different dollar amounts, based on several categories of disability. For example, the Hard of Hearing voucher is \$100, the Deaf/Severely Hard of Hearing voucher is \$800, and the Mobility Impaired voucher is \$1,600. (Vouchers over \$100 require a \$100 co-pay, but there are programs available that may help cover that cost).

If you don't know what kind of phone will work for you, we have several different types of phones that you can borrow from our Wistech Loan and Demonstration Program so you can 'Try before you buy'.



Please contact MILC for further information about the TEPP Program or to schedule an appointment to try a few phones. (We can also assist with the application).

**Midstate Independent Living Consultants  
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**How To Get a Hold of Us:**

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715-344-4210 or 800-382-8484  
milc@milc-inc.org or www.milc-inc.org

Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Strike: I&R Specialist

**To contact the following departments dial:**

Mental Health/Peer Support: Ext. 228  
IL Program: Ext. 232  
PAS Program: Ext. 224  
Human Resources: Ext. 226  
Accounting: Ext. 214

**MOVING?**  
**Let us know so we can keep  
you on our mailing list.**  
**Contact us at milc@milc-inc.org**



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