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# MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU, ALWAYS!

*By Jude Monson*

2017 was a heck of a year for people with disabilities, veterans, those of us 65 or older and, in general, people who care deeply about one another’s health and economic condition in Montana, the US, and worldwide. It was hard at times to find hope and think positively considering the many new challenges we have faced in the past year. I saw HOPE in your efforts & will see it again.

I will never forget the winter, spring and summer of 2017 when we all worked together to save the immediate, rapid attack on the ACA – our Affordable Care Act. “They” told the world how everything was wrong with the ACA and that it would be wiped out in America. We saw major new national players and heavy political artillery brought in to end the ACA as we knew it. Each of us who contacted the President and our Montana Senators and Representative to speak up about what is right about the ACA made a difference. Telling our personal stories about health prevention, immediate care and ongoing maintenance needs told the importance of ACA. We supported our neighbors’ right to health so every American can live quality lives in his or her chosen home and community. Our Montana band of rebels grew & nationally we became a stronger voice! We became a growing, bonded group who collectively kept the ACA in place!

Summit would like to thank all who made phone calls, wrote emails/letters and protested locally, across Montana, and in DC to our elected officials. Each of us made a difference in holding on to the ACA! Collectively our actions will be archived in disability history, culture and pride for centuries to come! A high five to both NCIL and ADAPT,

our national disability organizers who led the DC protests in July along with our 2000+ sisters and brothers with disabilities, veterans, parents, physicians and others who continue to speak up about what is right about the ACA. A huge Shout out to the two “Warrior Women” Senators from Maine and Alaska who bravely supported the ACA against their party line! And how about Senator McCain, our elder USA statesman and veteran and former POW, who understands dealing with the worst isolating challenges & degrading conditions? He came from the hospital and voted, essentially ending the battle to wipe out the ACA! Last but not never least, thank you to Senator Tester who has diligently been a steadfast Montana champion for equal healthcare benefits and rights for Americans with disabilities, veterans and others who live on low and middle incomes. None of us could have preserved the ACA individually. However, we collectively we made a difference!

There will be many more challenges to come where we must collectively band together to protect the lives of our fellow Americans. I hear the Star Wars theme song playing in the background. I believe in the goodness of liberty and justice for all, not just the wealthy and privileged. Summit asks you to continue to rise up when called upon, as we did last summer and say NO MORE! We did it once, and we can do it again – each of us and collectively. For more information please check out and join Summit’s Action Alert system at: <http://cqrcengage.com/summitilc/>

Breathe in deeply, and “May the Force Be With You, ALWAYS!”

Jude Monson is Summit’s Program Manager

# Community Column

## Resiliency and the Slight Edge

By Shelby Humphreys

It's 7:00 am, and even the tendons hugging my bones ache. It's way too early to go vertical. But I committed to being on-staff, at a conference, in an hour. I roll to my side and yank the bed covers overhead. I remember the day I volunteered for this gig. What was I thinking? I was all confidence and calico kittens then.

I remember sitting in circle at the planning meeting. I raised my hand for the conference registration table. Seriously?! I must have assumed that all those warning bells going off in my head would become an alarm and get me up bright and early. (Yeah, and maybe Rosaur's bakery will start selling donuts with Prozac sprinkles). I rub my eyes. The clock says I have 30 minutes to get there. That's not going to happen. I open my phone, breathe deep, and start to text. "Sorry. I'm ill and can't make it." Send. Relief. And a heavy backlash of crappy self-talk.

Even though I'm not at my best some days, I still want to be a productive member of society. I want to give back. Managing Bi-Polar II makes that a challenge. There's a slope I'm trying so hard not to slide down. It starts small and gets steeper with each disappointment or relapse. When I can't fulfill my commitments, the fallout undercuts my best intentions. I'm shoved from both sides, wanting to help but admitting I cannot be that helpful person at this moment. That's when I have to back down and make self-care a priority. I do what's best for me until I can bounce back.

There's a trending term for this: resiliency. Ironically, my Bi-Polar II disorder has taught me a lot about resiliency. To balance the ups and downs, I've had to get creative. It's all about finding a way. A way to. A way through. A way around, underneath, on top of; whatever direction leads to a solution and, ultimately, to a satisfying life.

Resiliency is robust yet remarkably simple to cultivate. One of my favorite techniques is, "The Slight Edge." First coined by Jeff Olson in his book, *The Slight Edge*,

this principle focuses on a single, simple idea: tiny efforts add up to big results over time. So, I ask myself: what one, little task can I do to aid my health today? If I can't go outside and exercise, can I get up and move around the house? If I can't do that, can I do some gentle stretching? If I can't do that, can I sit and breathe deeply? I keep slicing and slicing until I find that tiny thing that I can do. This way, momentum keeps me afloat. I watch myself edge around obstacles again and again. Layers of resiliency fold into my days. Even though my outward circumstances haven't changed, I actually accomplish a lot. I feel better about myself.

When I feel like myself, then I can rejoin my community and give from a whole heart. That's when my world stretches. Even better, my sense of capability enlarges to fill that new space. I realize my life isn't controlled by my mental health. Managing becomes just one part of a happy, fulfilling day.

Over time, resiliency starts to show on the outside. Last year, I received an invite to join the board of directors of Missoula's leading center for resiliency training, The Learning Center at Red Willow. When I considered the position, I asked, "Why me?" (After all, the conference I bailed on was hosted by Red Willow). Clearly, I am someone who must make managing mental health a priority. The Director responded, "I'm asking you precisely because you are managing it."



**Free Resiliency Workshops at Red Willow**

**Tuesday, January 9, 6:00–8:00 PM**

**Friday, February 16, 11:00 AM–1:00 PM**

**Monday, March 19, 6:00–8:00 PM**

**go to [www.redwillowlearning.org](http://www.redwillowlearning.org) for more information**

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**Independent Living Specialist**  
Betty LaFountain

## NEW SUMMIT STAFF

**Tom Murphy, Independent living Specialist, Kalispell**



Tom joins the Summit team as a staff member in our Kalispell office as an Independent Living Specialist. Tom comes to Summit with over 17 years of experience working in the disability field.

Tom's primary focus will be assisting Summit with our work with students with disabilities throughout the transition process and offering vocational assistance for consumers in the Flathead area.



# Moscow Mondays



**JANUARY 8 FROM 12 - 8P.M.**  
**AT MONTGOMERY DISTILLERY**  
**129 WEST FRONT STREET**

**\$1 FROM EACH DRINK BENEFITS THE EFFORTS OF SUMMIT INDEPENDENT LIVING**



**SUMMIT**  
INDEPENDENT LIVING  
Building Awareness · Advocating Change

# 2018 Social Security & Medicare Changes

## Social Security (Retirement and Disability):

2.0% increase

## For more information on:

**Medicare Part B Monthly Premium:**  
\$134 (or higher depending on your income)

Medicare changes:  
[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

## Supplemental Security Income (SSI):

2.0% increase

Individual - \$750/month    Couple - \$1125/month  
Essential Person - \$376/month

## For more information on adjustments:

[www.ssa.gov/cola](http://www.ssa.gov/cola)

## Substantial Gainful Activity Guidelines:

Blind - \$1970  
Non-blind - \$1180

## To check or create your online Social Security account:

[www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount)

## Trial Work Period Threshold:

\$850

# Montana Budget Reductions

Despite our and your best efforts to stop budget cuts to vital programs during the past year, and during the special legislative session in November 2017, many budget reductions were implemented and will go into effect starting in January 2018. While we were successful in helping to save or lessen the impact on some programs from the proposed budget reductions, many of the budget reductions that will be implemented will make it harder for individuals with disabilities to receive adequate services. Some of the budget reductions that will be implemented include:

- **Community First Choice:** meal preparation limited to 5 hours/week, exercise limited to 30 minutes/day, IADLs limited to 3 hours/week, nonmedical transportation limited to 25 miles/week
- **Big Sky Waiver:** social supervision hours limited to 10 hours/week, nonmedical transportation limited to 25 miles/week
- **Medicaid Rate Reduction:** 2.99% provider rate reductions (this reduction will move forward after the Legislative Interim Committee on Children and Family

Services lifted its objection)

- **Extended Employment:** a \$570,000 reduction
- **Medicaid Dental Services:** a \$7 million reduction
- A \$4 million reduction to Medicaid targeted case management for individuals with developmental disabilities
- A \$4 million rate reduction for incontinence supplies and durable medical equipment
- A \$500,000 reduction to Medicaid mental health outpatient therapy
- An \$8.5 million reduction to targeted case management services for adults with severe disabling mental illness

These are just some of the reductions that will be being implemented starting in January 2008 that will make it harder for individuals with disabilities to get the services they need to remain living as independently as possible in their own communities. As we prepare for the 2019 legislative session we will need all hands on deck to try to restore this funding and ensure our tax dollars are helping, not hurting, all Montanans.



## SUMMIT BOARD

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Steve Hackler    | Mark Cash      |
| Molly Blair      | Joe Stone      |
| Jenny Montgomery | Meg Whicher    |
| Randy Morigeau   | Susanne Meikle |

# Summit Wordsearch

V X T S R L H T M S E X W Q T  
 H J W D D G X X O S E P G V V  
 A S D H J Z K Q U O C M W R O  
 D Z L L E S S U R S U Y U U J  
 U L I F S Y J C R S R P W H Z  
 A C K E N H A U D E P K A T F  
 M Q Z Y P I H W E A S O L R R  
 B H P U B G Z Q D V R E K A Q  
 O R B Q I G A K H A Q S R Z A  
 U L O P Y I F Q N V O X O V X  
 P V S O A N R G A H M R X H E  
 P O K K K S E A T J B E B I B  
 X E I U G S C U A Y T N U O M  
 B G L H X I O H K M K X W Q I  
 S L D D R S H U V T Y I E G I

HIGGINS  
 RESERVE  
 BROADWAY  
 BROOKS  
 RUSSELL  
 ORANGE  
 SOUTH  
 MOUNT  
 ARTHUR  
 SPRUCE



## LOOKING FOR SUMMIT EVENTS?

To make it easier to find Summit events that are being held throughout Western Montana we are now listing all of our events on our website. To find a Summit event or class happening near you please go to:

[www.summitilc.org/calendar](http://www.summitilc.org/calendar)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**Quickie Wheelchair**  
 \$500 OBO. Call Janet (406) 721-3751

**Symmetry Stander**  
 Call Madison (406) 670-9388

**Braun Vangater Wheelchair Lift**  
 Almost new wheelchair lift with 600 LB capacity. \$2000 OBO.  
 Call or text Tyler 406-925-9846

**EZ -Way light hoyer Llift, 3 slide boards, Serta adjustable bed**  
 All the equipment is in working order and slightly used. Information and prices call 493-1000 after 1pm

**Harmar-Summit Stair Lift**  
 Stair Chair Lift, straight up 14 steps/risers or standard stairs, 2 remote call boxes, all wiring and mounting hardware. Lightly used. \$500 OBO.  
 Call TonyO 546-1570

**2014 OpenBook book reader**  
 Never been used and has the camra with it asking \$750 OBO. Contact Larry at ketch1969@gmail.com or 406-633-4036

**Summit Pinnacle Chair stair lift**  
 Gently used, works great. 2 remotes. Straight line - mount rope L. Pick up in Missoula. \$1,300 OBO. Call Diane at 360-4061.

**Garaventa Super-Trac Portable Wheelchair Lift for stairs.** Purchased new for \$12,000 and used only a few times. Will sell for \$5,000 OBO. Contact Jacob Francom, Troy Public Schools, jfrancom@troyk12.org, (406) 295-4520.

**Acorn Stair lift**  
 For going up to 6 stairs while seated. \$750 OBO. Call John at 546-7003.

To get listed contact Tyler Stosich at (406) 728-1630 or email [tstosich@summitilc.org](mailto:tstosich@summitilc.org).

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange:  
<http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/mtdb/>

Summit is funded in part under an agreement with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Any statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department.

## Ravalli County Update - Hamilton Happenings

The 1st part of Oct. the Ravalli County peers put together a scarecrow for the Stevensville contest. It was a great group effort. A very rough wheel chair was made for the scarecrow to sit on surrounded by all kinds of scary things made by the craftsmen at our TGIAF (Thank Goodness it's Activity Friday) We didn't win any of the prizes but it was a fun project.

Also in Oct. the Special Olympic Coordinator for the Bitterroot Stars stepped in and provided a large Halloween party at the Corvallis Methodist Church where we usually have one. A good time was had by all.

Life has been a little crazy with Mickey being ill and Becky on family leave. But we are muddling through. Kwanele attended the My Transitions Conference with a High school student. It sounds like they both had a good time and learned a lot. There were some excellent speakers and they met other students from all over the state.

We have kept up with the Social Security Orientation once a month, People First Aktion Club twice a month, and TGIAF once a week. The peers had their annual Christmas potluck and the Bitterroot Valley People First Aktion Club had a party and gift exchange the week before Christmas.

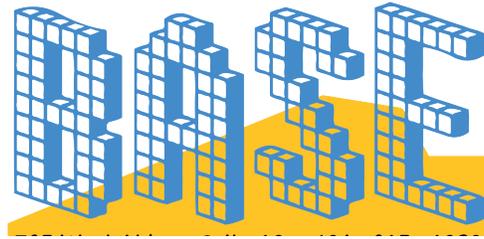
The Hamilton Transitions class started their Soft Skills training the beginning week of December.



## Flathead County Update - Kalispell Happenings

Summit Independent Living in Kalispell: Happy New Year! We have a yoga class planned for January 23rd for those of you interested in learning some yoga moves to do while you are sitting down. RSVP needed.

Along with our activities and classes with our consumers, our office has been busy with classes in the high schools and with setting up YODA (Youth Opening Doors through Advocacy) activities for 2018. If you are between the ages of 14-25 and are interested in joining our YODA group, we have some exciting classes coming up in photography, drama, etc. Call us if you are interested in learning more! 406-257-0048



**725 West Alder, No. 4**

**BASE STANDS FOR HOME BASE, LIKE IN HIDE AND GO SEEK. IN LIFE, YOU HAVE TO ESTABLISH A BASE FIRST, THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN.**



To get involved or to share ideas of new BASE programs, please contact BASE Missoula, by emailing [jhoward@summitilc.org](mailto:jhoward@summitilc.org).

## BASE EVENTS

### **Game Night (GN)**

- Thursdays weekly, 2 p.m.- 6 p.m.

### **Youth Opening Doors through Advocacy (YODA)**

- 2nd & 4th Wed monthly, 3:30p.m. - 6 p.m.

### **Base Art Group (BAG)**

- Fridays weekly, 1p.m. - 5 p.m.

### **Adaptive Yoga**

- Wednesdays 4:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Programs at BASE are open to everyone

For more information visit [www.basemissoula.org](http://www.basemissoula.org)

# SUMMIT INDEPENDENT LIVING

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Missoula, MT 59803

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*Building Awareness, Advocating Change*

THE SUMMIT INDEPENDENT

January 2018

This publication is available in alternative format on request. Please call 1 (800) 398-9002.

## We Are Looking For Research Participants!

- Help UM researchers learn about barriers encountered by people with disabilities.
  - Answer survey questions about how you live in your home and community.
  - Be reimbursed up to \$110 over a 6-month period for completing surveys.



### Participants must:

- Have a physical/mobility disability.
- Be receiving at least one service from Summit Independent Living.
  - Live in the Missoula area.
- Be over the age of 21 and living independently.

For more information, please contact Bronwyn Troutman,  
Community Living Specialist, at Summit.  
Phone: 406-728-1630, ex 121.

You can always sign up to get this newsletter by email by contacting: [missoula@summitilc.org](mailto:missoula@summitilc.org)