The Sleeping Giant just outside of Helena is not the only one in Montana. According to articles from NPR, CNN, the Washington Post and the New York Times, all based in part on a recently released study from Rutgers University (http://smlr.rutgers.edu/about-smlr/projecting-number-of-eligible-voters-with-disabilities-in-november-2016-elections-report), the number of voters with disabilities is growing faster than those without disabilities. The Rutgers study projects that 1 out of every 6 voters in the fall election will be a person with a disability.

This new focus on disabled voters as a distinct voting bloc also prompted a study from the Pew Research Center, “A Political Profile of Disabled Americans.” The Center found that disabled voters span the political spectrum, thus making them important to every political party wishing to increase the number of votes it garners in the upcoming election.

What all this means is that if people with disabilities vote at the same rate as people without disabilities in November, there will be 3 million more disabled voters at the ballot box, a number that could make the difference in many of this fall’s contests.

To assure that the sleeping giant disability voting sector reaches that goal, the national disability community has been hard at work for the past year on Get Out The Vote (GOTV) activities. Here in Montana disability organizations have been involved in a number of the national efforts, including the REV UP (#RevUp) initiative.

REV UP stands for Register, Educate, Vote and Use your Power.

It is a GOTV project coordinated by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). REV UP has focused on state-by-state organizing, and currently has over 26 state affiliates actively engaged in voter registration efforts. In Montana, REV UP has been spearheaded by the state’s four Centers for Independent Living; Summit Independent Living in Missoula, North Central Independent Living Services (NCILS) in Great Falls, Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT) in Billings, and Montana Independent Living Project (MILP) in Helena. In addition to their main offices, these CILs have a number of branch offices in various other communities ready to assist disabled voters.

Three other national disability organizations with Montana ties are also participating in REV UP-- the Association of Programs in Rural Independent Living (APRIL), the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), and the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN).

National REV UP has been conducting online trainings, and offers voter registration and GOTV tools and resources at

Continued on Page 5...
UPCOMING EVENTS
MISSOULA COUNTY

Missoula Office Closed
- November 11, 24, 25 December 23 - 26

Summit Orientation
- First Friday monthly, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

SSA Orientation
- Sept 9, Oct 14, Nov 11, Dec 9 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Sept 20, Oct 25, Nov 22, Dec 20 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

People First
- Oct 5, Oct 19, Nov 11, Nov 22, Dec 9, Dec 20, 4 p.m.- 5 p.m.

WRAP - Wellness Recovery Action Plan
- Sept. 12 to Nov. 21, Mondays weekly 1 p.m.- 3 p.m.

Working Well with a Disability
- Sept. 13 to Nov. 11, Tuesdays weekly 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Work Soft Skills
- Sept. 15 to Nov. 3, Thursdays weekly, 10 a.m-12 p.m.

Alzheimer’s Support Group
- Second Wednesday monthly, 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Blind Low Vision Support Group
- Second Tuesday monthly, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Epilepsy Support Group
- First Monday monthly, 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Unless otherwise noted, classes and groups meet at:
Summit ILC, Summit’s Conference Room
700 SW Higgins, Suite 101, Missoula
Call Kathy, (406) 728-1630, for more information or to register.

Game Night (GN)
- Thursdays weekly, 2 p.m.- 6 p.m.

Youth Opening Doors through Advocacy (YODA)
- Second and fourth Wednesdays monthly, 3:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Base Art Group (BAG)
- Fridays weekly, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

For other upcoming BASE events, visit: www.facebook.com/base725

Summit Board
Steve Hackler
Larry Riley
Jenny Montgomery
Randy Morigueau
Mark Cash
Joe Stone
Meg Whicher
Suzanne Meikle
Upcoming Events

Flathead County

Flathead Office Closed
- November 11, 24, 25 December 23 - 26

Social Security Orientation
- Second and fourth Wednesdays monthly. Please call 257-0048 ext. 141, to register and get location.

YODA
- Youth group meets once a month.

Living Well with a Disability
- Call Lynae to sign up.

Social Activities
- We get together quarterly for social activities. Call the office to put your name on the mailing list so you won’t miss the next fun and exciting adventure!

Unless otherwise noted, classes and groups meet at:
Gateway Community Center
1203 Hwy 2 West, Kalispell
Call Lynae, (406) 257-0048, ext. 142, for more information or to register.

Ravalli County

299 Fairgrounds Road #4, Hamilton

Ravalli Office Closed
- November 11, 24, 25 December 23 - 26

Social Security Orientations
- October 5, 1 p.m.- 3 p.m.
- Starting in November First Tuesday Monthly 1 p.m.- 3 p.m.

Man Cave Cookout
- Third Thursday monthly

People First
- Tuesdays weekly, 3 p.m.- 4 p.m.
- Annual Halloween party October 25th, 5:30 pm, at Corvallis United Methodist Church. Costume contest, food and prizes.
- Annual Christmas Party in December, (date yet to be determined)

Women on the Move
- Third Wednesday monthly

TGIAD - Thank Goodness It’s Activity Day
- Mondays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and Fridays, 1 p.m.- 3 p.m.

Unless otherwise noted, classes and groups meet at:
The Refuge, 317 N 3rd St., Hamilton
Call Becky or Mary, (406) 363-5242, for more information or to register.
2016 Voter Checklist

Confirm voter registration
Check the My Voter page at https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/ for your current registration status. Ensure residential and mailing addresses are correct.

Options for convenient voting
Apply for an absentee ballot, if you wish to, at http://www.sos.mt.gov/elections/.
Absentee voting allows voters to receive their ballots via mail, which in turn give the elector time to study and research their ballot. Absentee ballots may be picked up at the Missoula County Fairgrounds in person 30 days prior to election.

ID requirements at the polls
Know what to bring to the polls on Election Day.
Montana law requires a form of photo ID or government document with name and address.

Late registration
The deadline to register as a voter in Montana is 30 days prior to Election Day. However, Montana law permits an elector to register or change the elector’s voter registration information after the close of regular registration and vote in the election beginning 29 days prior to the election. Late registration is open from Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. On the Monday before the Election, late registration closes at noon and reopens on Election day from 7 a.m. until close of polls at 8 p.m. If you are a late registrant, contact your county election office at http://www.sos.mt.gov/elections/Forms/elections/electionadministrators.pdf to find out how you can receive an absentee ballot.

To avoid lines, do not wait until Election Day to register to vote!

Know your polling places
If voting at the polls on Election Day, know where to go ahead of time.

Know polling place hours of operations
Polling places are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day

Accessible voting
Polling places are ADA accessible and equipped with AutoMark voting machines, allowing individuals to independently mark their ballot. Other forms of accessible voting also exist such as requesting an electronic ballot or designating an agent to help you throughout the voting process. To learn more about your accessible voting options, please visit http://www.sos.mt.gov/elections/Disabilities/index.asp.

Become acquainted with issues and candidates on the ballot
Ballots can be reviewed prior to Election Day. Review the sample ballot online in order to familiarize yourself with layout and selection. Quick Tip: Print a sample ballot & mark it before going to the polls. This will shorten your time in the booth and help keep polling center lines moving. To view the 2016 Montana Voter Information Pamphlet, please visit http://www.sos.mt.gov/Elections/VIP/index.asp. The pamphlet will also be available in audio format in October 2016.

Important Election Calendar Dates

October 11 - Close of regular voter registration
October 12 - Late voter registration begins
November 8 - Election Day!

Not registered to vote yet?
You can register at any Summit office!
October 2016

The Summit Independent

Summit Staff
Missoula County
Executive Director
Mike Mayer
Program Manager
Jude Monson
Program Support Specialist
Mike Giddings
SDPAS Coordinator
Beth Anderson
SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator
Betsy Ames
SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator
Carrie Dyrud
SD-CFC/PAS Assistant/Insurance
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Travis Hoffman
Employment Specialist
Vacant
Peer Advocacy Coordinator
Chris Clasby
People First Advisor/IL Specialist
Andrea Dahl
IL Specialist
Tyler Stosich
Youth Coordinator
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Youth Specialist
Cara Wherley
Secretary
Kathy Boyer
Bookkeeper
Libby Miller
Assistant Bookkeeper
Victoria Lahr

Flathead County
County Coordinator
Flo Kiewel
IL Specialist
Lynae West
IL Specialist
Vacant
SD-CFC/PAS Specialist
Aleyna Raymond

Ravalli County
County Coordinator
Becky Burke Boykin
Benefits Specialist
Kathy Kimzey
People First Advisor/IL Specialist
Mary Millin

Lake County
County Coordinator
Susan Morris
IL Specialist
Michelle Williamson
IL Specialist
Betty LaFountain

In our last newsletter we introduced you to our all new Montana Centers for Independent Living Action Alert System, which you can find online at http://cqrcengage.com/summitilc. On the Action Alert site you will find many opportunities to get involved, follow our advocacy efforts, as well as look up and contact your elected officials.

With the 2017 Montana Legislative Session fast approaching it is vitally important for you, your loved ones, and your friends to get involved with protecting the programs and services that thousands of Montanans with disabilities depend on to live active and productive lives and provide the basis for individuals to be involved in their communities.

By signing up as an advocate on our Action Alert site you will be able to stay up to date on the many issues that affect the lives of Montanans with disabilities that arise during the legislative session. You will also be able to take action on those issues right from our Action Alert website. It’s that simple. No more trying to hunt down contact information for your legislator as we provide that for you.

To become an advocate, just navigate to http://cqrcengage.com/summitilc/app/register?1&m=152685, fill in your contact information, check the email opt-in box, and congratulations, you’re now an advocate!
Lessons in Managing with Alternative Medications
By Shelby Humphreys

Since being diagnosed with Clinical Depression/Bi-Polar II twenty years ago, I’ve endured my share of frustrations with prescription meds. I’ve come to expect the eventual petering out of whatever designer drug has worked. Every four or five years, my doctor stoically suggests a “transition.” Time to be a guinea pig again. Trying new meds is mostly a wait-and-see game with few guarantees. Multiple transitions over the years have escalated my prescriptions. What started as docile doses of your average antidepressant have ramped up to pills classified as “anti-psychotics.” (Which comes in handy during marital spats: “Honey, don’t go there; you know I can go psycho. I got the script to prove it!”) Seriously though, even Lithium -- the gold standard med for Bi-Polar -- still requires regular toxicity testing.

All this combined, I’m a fan of exploring alternatives. I’ve never ditched prescribed meds, but I’ve dappled in supplementing them to soften symptoms. Some things worked; others didn’t. I hope to save you time, money, and brain cells by sharing a few lessons from managing with alternative medications.

Lesson #1: Alternative Is Not for Amateurs
I once rushed to the emergency room in a storm of symptoms which doctors couldn’t reconcile. When we arrived, the receptionist took one look at me, grabbed a wheelchair, and almost popped a wheelie propelling me down the hall and into a cramped exam room. Doctors jammed fiery shots into my arms. Techs skidded in with a mobile X-ray machine. After stabilizing me, the doctor pulled hubby aside to admit they still didn’t know what to do next. If they kept up with steroids to calm my anaphylactic shock, that would interfere with the antibiotics needed to douse my double-pneumonia. “We just don’t know what caused this,” he confided.

Later, in ICU, an infectious disease specialist sat down bedside to fill in the blanks. His crossed legs tangled with tubes. My chart balanced on a clipboard atop his knee. “So, what meds are you taking?” he asked with eyes to chart ready to write. “Um, Lithium,” I answered. “OK.” (Pen scratch.) “And some vitamins,” I added. “Uh-huh.” (Checkmark the chart.) “A probiotic,” I continued. “Hmmm.” (Impressed raise of the brow and longer pen scratch.) “Oh, and DHEA.” “DHEA?!” His hand slapped the clipboard. “I thought it would help,” I squirmed in defense. From the look on his face, I thought he might slam the call button and recruit a nurse for restraint while he spanked me with my chart.

I learned my lesson. Now, I seek a professional for alternatives. I found a local Naturopathic Doctor who prescribes quality supplements from trusted labs, and – this is my favorite part – most meds we try prove themselves in days, rather than weeks. At one follow-up visit, I arrived bouncing in a lit-up tutu and purple wig. (In my defense, it was almost Halloween.) After chuckling, we settled into a report of my progress. After hearing my good news, she surmised, “Well, sounds like you’re doing well.” “Yep!” I chirped. She put her pen down with a careful look. “I worry that we’re pushing you towards manic, though.” “Huh,” I said. Then, shooting a sideways stare, I asked, “You’re not saying that just ‘cuz my hair is purple?”

Lesson #2: Meds Tend to Multiply
I need to nurture a healthy hope to handle the rollercoaster that is mental health. If that hope comes in a bottle, so much the easier, right? Well, not so fast and not so safe. My morning cocktail of capsules might be a breakfast of champions, but when it becomes the lunch and bedtime snack, too, it’s time to practice restraint.

However, moderation is not so simple now that we have options. Two hundred years ago, self-medicating probably would have left me a tortured artist with a dramatic story and early ending. I’m grateful for today’s choices. Still, it’s easy to get carried away. I knew a woman who dived daily into her stash of plastic bottles filled with promises. Her own mini-pharmacy covered the counter top. We could’ve played checkers with all those child-proof caps. I worried for her safety. (“Did I ever tell you
Summit Community Forums

Summit Independent Living has recently launched a new way for people with disabilities to connect.

The Summit community forums are a place where people can talk about issues, search for roommates and friends, post equipment to trade, and engage in a variety of other topics.

Simply go to: www.summitilc.org/forums/, register, and go!

Remember to follow rules of web safety and manners, like not using your full name, harassing others, or getting off-topic.

While Summit will moderate the forums, we won't be able to verify every item posted and we might miss some posts that are offensive or that you don't agree with. Use your best judgement!
Bitterroot Valley People First Aktion Club Update

Bitterroot Valley People First Aktion Club members have been busy, including working on a project with the University of Montana. For the past three years, Aktion Club President Lisa Howard, Secretary Olivia Kincaid, and Advisory Mary Millin have served as advisors on the Community Advisory Board (CAB) of the Safety Project. This research activity supervised by Dr. Rosemary Hughes of the UM Rural Institute models “Nothing about us without us” by including only participants with intellectual disabilities on the CAB.

With help from the participant CAB, the Safety Project has developed a skills training course to help those with intellectual challenges protect themselves from abuse. As it comes to a close, Dr. Hughes has been asked to present on this research to a UM class, and she has asked Olivia Kincaid to assist. The Bitterroot Valley People First Aktion Club members are excited to see their members’ work be productive and to see one of their own help with a university class.

Meet Summit’s New Ravalli County Coordinator

My name is Becky Boykin and I am the new Ravalli County Coordinator here at Summit ILC. I am a fourth generation Montanan and love living in the Bitterroot Valley. I have been a lifelong advocate for myself as well as other people with disabilities. I am so glad to be back with Summit! For those of you who may not know, I was the Peer Coordinator in Missoula from 2003-2005. I have a Master’s Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and I am a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). I have been married for over 9 years to my husband, Mickey Boykin, who has been active as a Ravalli County peer. We met through an adaptive sports organization in North Carolina and we both love exploring the outdoors in our power chairs. Anywhere there is an accessible trail you might find us. We are avid basketball fans and plan to cheer on the Griz this season!
Summit is pleased to welcome John Howard, who Summit has contracted with to help coordinate youth job shadows, add new programming, and assist with daily operations at BASE. John is the Director of Missoula's Homegrown Comedy, and also leads the BASEment Improv class at BASE on Thursdays 6:30-8 PM. John looks forward to working with the BASE community and helping it to grow.

New additions to BASE programming include the weekly 4Real dance class and the biweekly BASE Talks podcast. 4Real is led by 18-year-old Building Advocacy & Learning Leadership Skills (BALLS) alumni Kirsten Neihart and teaches everyone of all ages and abilities to move and dance. Join them to get your groove on Thursdays 4-5 PM.

The BASE Talks podcast offers young people a forum to share their voices and discuss how they see the world. Discussion topics include BASE events, disabilities, contemporary topics, and movies. You can find the podcast on Soundcloud, and watch for a new episode every other week. Wes Schneider, media advisor at BASE, is the co-host and sound producer of BASE Talks. He came to us through the BALLS program at Big Sky High School. Wes adds a unique perspective on 80’s & 90’s music, comic book movies, guitars, and tattoos. Wes describes the show as, “all over the place; never a dull moment.” Maddy Holland is another great host. He is a recent graduate of Big Sky High School, as well as an amateur comic. Maddy and Devin Lofthouse, another great guest, share stories and unique perspectives on living with CP (Cerebral Palsy) and using power wheelchairs. Long-time Summit employee Michael Beers occasionally drops by the show to share his point of view and make everyone laugh.

Other upcoming programs at BASE include a cooking class, a youth-led beauty class, smoothie making, and all-access yoga.

BASE continues to offer Poetry on Mondays, 4-6 PM and Game Night on Thursdays, 2-6 PM. Recently, there has been a push to offer healthier snack options at Game Night, such as chili, vegetarian sloppy joes, and asparagus wraps.

At BASE we’re always up for new programming, so contact us on Facebook to suggest new classes or activities. Youth with disabilities ages 13-24 years interested in a job shadow experience should contact Summit Independent Living. Community businesses interested in hosting youth for job shadow opportunities, please email John at jhoward@summitilc.org.

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2014 OpenBook book reader
Never been used and has the camera 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. Great for accessibility where lifts or ramps cannot be installed. Can accommodate all types of wheelchairs. 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.

View more classifieds at: www.summitilc.org/newsletter/classified-ads/

Have something you want to sell or give away or are you looking for a hard-to-find piece of equipment?

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

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange: http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/mtdb/
The Summit Independent

October 2016

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

IMPORTANT!

If you are receiving a hardcopy of our newsletter, you must call Summit at 1 (800) 398-9002 or email missoula@summitilc.org to renew your subscription if you have not already done so.

Any subscriptions that are not renewed will be automatically discontinued Dec. 31, 2016.

We strongly encourage people to subscribe to the electronic copy when possible, as more information about upcoming events is able to be sent electronically throughout the year.

If you are already an electronic subscriber, you need do nothing. Thank you.

Remember, you can always sign up for the electronic newsletter by contacting: missoula@summitilc.org