

ADA
AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT
1990-2015
25

Access to Opportunity

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990



OPENING DOORS TO THE COMMUNITY



Sponsored By:

LAKETRAN

Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities • Lake Metroparks • Lake Metropolitan Housing Authority
Services for Independent Living Inc. • Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities • Veterans Service Commission
Council on Aging • Lakeland Community College • Brookdale

Lake Metroparks offers award-winning adapted experiences!

Lake Metroparks' adapted boating program took first place honors in the special populations category of the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association's 2014 Annual Awards of Distinction. The program was also selected as one of three finalists for the 2014 Governor's Award for Parks and Recreation, which recognizes the one park and recreation program or project in Ohio that had the most significant impact on quality of life in the preceding year.

Year-round adventure and social experiences are offered through Lake Metroparks' adapted programming. These high-quality recreational activities are designed to meet the needs and interests of individuals with disabilities in specialized environments. Programs are intended to develop leisure skills and enhance socialization. These activities are modified to fit the needs and skills of people with physical, sensory or developmental disabilities. Visit bit.ly/lmadapted for current program offerings. In addition, adapted programming promotes participation in general (inclusive) recreation programs through advocacy and support services.



Want to help participants with disabilities enjoy Lake Metroparks' programs and special events? Volunteers are always welcome, and are matched with a participant who needs assistance. All that is required is a small time commitment, patience and lots of enthusiasm. Learn a new skill, make a friend, or simply share a leisure activity. For more information, contact Merle Walker at 440-585-3041 x6418 or mwalker@lakemetroparks.com.

Veterans – Precursor to the ADA



**Submitted by
Jonathan R.
Warmeling, Lake
County Veterans
Service Commission**

The origins of the American with Disabilities Act are far too numerous to mention.

The organizations and people involved worked tirelessly to eventually win a long, hard fought battle. But where did it all begin? It can easily be argued that the initial premise of the ADA began with action by veterans of the United States Armed Services. And Ohio, as it still does today, played a part!

In 1899, after the Spanish American War of 1898, groups of veterans began to

form, and Ohio's veterans formed one of the first Chapters of Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. After World Wars I and II came more veterans' organizations: The American Legion in 1919, American Veterans in 1948, and at a 1920 Christmas party right here in Ohio the formation of Disabled American Veterans took root, officially organized in 1921.

In general terms, these organizations of American heroes formed to ensure war weary comrades, or their widows and orphans, were not forgotten; that their needs were met. The lessons learned from our past wars have led to many technological advances in surgical procedures, medicine, and very importantly in this day and age, prosthetics and other medical devices. Veterans have fought

long and hard to take care of their own, and ensure our Nation does so with the dignity and honor they deserve. These organizations fight for veterans daily in Washington, D.C., and Columbus, Ohio.

In fact, lawsuits and arguments by the Paralyzed Veterans of America brought to light the inequities faced by Americans with disabilities in simply boarding airplanes, seating on airplanes, and the failure of some to understand the importance of wheelchair lift on public transportation.

Our Nation's Veterans: At the front then; leading the way now! Congratulations ADA on 25 years!

**For more information about
Lake County Veteran Services,
call 440-350-2904.**



LAKETRAN



Hop on...We'll Drive.

1(888)525-3872 • www.laketrans.com

- P** Park-n-Ride operates Monday - Friday
18 daily departures to Cleveland from six different Lake County Park-n-Ride locations.
- L** Local Routes operate Monday - Friday
6:00am - 8:00pm; Saturday 8:00am - 7:00pm.
- D** Dial-a-Ride operates Monday - Friday
5:00am - 8:00pm; Saturday 8:00am - 7:00pm.
Reservations required. Call (440) 354 - 6100.

Lake County's Aging & Disability Resource Center: Helping you to understand your options

The Council on Aging is home to Lake County's Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and is part of a five county initiative coordinated by the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA). The ADRC is the starting point for answers to questions about available long-term care services and supports. Figuring out how to obtain long term services and supports can be confusing and difficult to navigate. Our professional staff is trained to present an array of options, creating choices individuals may not have known existed. We recognize that everyone's situation is unique and requires personal attention. We want to provide you with the information and guidance needed to empower you to make informed decisions that support your independence and quality of life. The ADRC has the following services available:

Information & Assistance: Links you to the information and support you need to improve your health, independence, and quality of life by providing information and assistance related to things such as: in home support, transportation, health care options, nutrition, counseling, home repair, and more.

Benefits Assistance: Screens you for state and federal assistance programs including the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicare Savings Programs, and Medicaid. We will help you to apply and assist you throughout the application process. In addition, the Benefits Assistance program provides objective information and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 >

Millennials and the ADA: A generation growing up after the ADA

By Kerry Keyes

Andrew was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at 3 years old, but he has not let that diagnosis slow him down. Today, Andrew is 28 years old and uses a wheelchair, but still is able to maintain his independence because of resources and regulations put into place by the ADA.

Andrew is a great example of the younger generation who has grown up their entire lives with the ADA in place. "The ADA has improved accessibility greatly for me. I am able to do all sorts of things on my own and luckily, I have not had to face many barriers that those living with a disability before the ADA had to face," explains Andrew.

Without the ADA, Andrew would be relying on others for help with a lot of everyday tasks. Needing rides to and from work, opening doors, and getting in and out of buildings, are just a few examples. Maintaining his independence is something Andrew is very proud of and he would not have these opportunities without the ADA.

Andrew received an Associate's degree from Lakeland Community College and then graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies from Edinboro University in Pennsylvania. Recently, he accepted a full-time job in Mentor. He uses Laketrans every day to get to and from work; he also uses Laketrans to get to the mall, the store, or anywhere else he likes to go and have fun with friends.

When asked about challenges he has faced and how he has overcome them Andrew shared, "I never complain, I just live my life one day at a time. I already graduated college and have my first full-time job. My next goal is to get married and have a family."



RESOURCE CENTER

FROM PAGE 2

counseling in an effort to help you better understand your Medicare options.

Options Counseling: Assists you and your support system in making informed decisions about long term care services and supports. The program provides information on the range of long term care services & supports, both public and private, explores short and/or long term support options, helps you weigh the pros and cons of decisions and considers your values and preferences. Our Options Counselor will meet with you and your support system (if desired) on your terms and where you are most comfortable.

For more information please contact the Council on Aging at (440)205-8111 or toll free at (855) 585-2376. All services are free and available to individuals aged 60 and over and disabled adults aged 18 and over, regardless of income.

METZENBAUM CENTER

The Geauga County Board Of Developmental Disabilities

Helping Individuals Live, Learn & Earn In
Our Community

CHILDREN SERVICES

Early Intervention
Help Me Grow
Preschool and School Age
Gauga County Local Schools
Amish Schools

ADULT SERVICES

Community Employment
Work Related Activities
Job Workshops
Seniors/Enrichment

CASE MANAGEMENT

Residential
Recreation
Community Homes

859 local individuals served in 2014

440.729.9406

8200 Cedar Rd, Chesterland, OH 44026

www.geaugadd.org

Lakeland's Student Accommodation Center gives students with disabilities support and tools for success

Rachele Whipple is a Lakeland student who uses a wheelchair to go from class to class.

Now that she's familiar with the routine of getting around on campus, she has found her comfort zone. How did she get there? Like other students with disabilities at Lakeland, her first stop was the Student Accommodation Center.

There, she met with counselors who coordinate support services for eligible students with physical, psychological or learning disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA).

Because of the right tools and support that she receives, this early childhood major looks forward to a fulfilling career. She is currently a student worker in the Teaching Learning Center, Lakeland's day school for children 16 months to pre-K, where she is able to apply what she learns in the classroom. "I chose this major because I always loved children. I enjoy playing with them, watching them grow, and learn new things," she said. Because of the strides made by the ADA throughout the past 25 years,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 >

Shifting public perception and living life to the fullest

By Kerry Keyes

Kim Stenger has worked hard to get where she is today. The 36 year old is a proud graduate of Kent State University and Case Western Reserve University School of Law. Kim is now employed as a Legal Researcher at the Lake County Prosecutor's Office and also volunteers regularly at organizations across Lake County.

Born with Congenital Sensory Neuropathy, Kim's sensory nervous system never fully developed. She uses a wheelchair and has no sense of touch or feeling anywhere on her body. In spite of Kim's disability, she has worked hard to overcome obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities available to her because of the ADA.

Kim attended Kent State University, and because the ADA requires all public



buildings be accessible, was able to live on campus by herself. Kim also chose to attend Law School at Case Western Reserve University School of Law. According to Kim, graduating Law School has been her greatest accomplishment so far.

"Before the ADA, I think there was a public perception that people with disabilities didn't want to or wouldn't be able to work full time jobs or attend college," explains Kim. "But since the ADA the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 >

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Lakeland Community College

proudly supports the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing a variety of services that empower students to be successful in college.

Lakeland
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

7700 Clocktower Drive
Kirtland, OH 44094

lakelandcc.edu

LAKE METROPARKS award-winning ADAPTED PROGRAMMING

Try out Lake Metroparks' award-winning adapted boating programs! Other programs also include dancing, fishing, sports, recreation and more! Programs are designed specifically for individuals with special needs.

For more information, visit bit.ly/lmadapted or call the Lake Metroparks Registration Department at 440-358-7275 or 800-669-9226.



LAKEMETROPARKS.COM

A successful route reaching the Skye

By Lynnmarie Landwei-Phillips

Jim Wilson has worked at Skye Restaurant for over 4 years through the Community Employment Services Program at Lake County Board of DD/Deepwood. On a warm Friday afternoon Jim was hard at work peeling potatoes for the evening meal. He knows his daily routines and can independently complete all of his job duties quickly. Jim works Monday through Friday, 9-1:30 in the kitchen doing dishes and a variety of odd jobs. After Community Employment Services (CES) connected Jim and Skye restaurant, a job coach helped him learn his job for the first few days, and then faded out. Now a job coach is available to support Jim if there are changes in the work place. With Jim's skill, strength and experience the job coach is rarely needed.

The successful working relationship between Jim and Michael Arsham, Managing Partner at Skye is a perfect example of ADA at work. Michael Arsham says that 'It's the right thing to do,' in reference to opening Skye's door to employ Jim and two other individuals through the Community Employment Services Program. While he likes to give back to the community, these employees provide a stable workforce. They complete their assigned duties on a daily basis.

Jim enjoys his job and uses his pay check to pay his bills. Prior to working at Skye he worked at another restaurant on Mentor Avenue for over 15 years. He chooses his jobs and apartments on or near the Laketrans Route bus because that is how he gets 'back

and forth to work.' He told me 'it gets you here quicker, no 30 minute window and if I work late, I can catch the next bus.' Jim also uses Laketrans route buses for small shopping trips. His roommate also uses the route buses to go to work, stores and travel throughout the community for leisure and recreation activities.

Jim looks forward to working at least another 5 years, then he can think about retiring. Thanks to ADA, Laketrans and Lake County Board of DD, he will use the Laketrans Route buses to get back and forth to work until then.

For more information about Vocational Programs through the Lake County Board of DD/Deepwood go to our website at lakebdd.org/services or www.deepwoodindustries.com.



Come See What's New

Join us for our official opening.

Introducing Brookdale Mentor
Formerly Emeritus® at Mentor

Thursday, August 13 | 5 to 7 p.m.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at 5 p.m.

For reservations or more information, call (440) 354-5499.

 **BROOKDALE**
— SENIOR LIVING SOLUTIONS —

Brookdale Mentor

Assisted Living | Alzheimer's & Dementia Care
5700 Emerald Court | Mentor, OH 44060

brookdale.com



Building Foundations for Families

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Lake MHA is currently seeking landlords to partner with to facilitate housing of eligible applicants. Increasing our database of available properties will enable participants to more quickly move into a Lake County home of their choice!

Benefits to landlords include:

- (1) On-time direct deposit of rental payments,
- (2) applicant background checks, and
- (3) annual inspections to ensure that both the landlord and the resident maintain clean and safe living conditions.

**Please contact our office at 440-354-3347
for more information.**

Currently accepting applications for public housing only. The waiting list for Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) is closed.

Your Key To Maintaining Independence!



EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

1 Call Pat at 440.350.1064 to schedule a **Seniors on the Go** program for yourself or a senior group.

2 Learn about all the affordable travel options Laketran has to offer in the choice of a group setting or the convenience of your own home.

3 Travel with confidence using safe, reliable transportation! Laketran gets you where you need to go!

**SENIORS
ON THE GO**



Hop On...We'll Drive.

Learn More About Transportation
Options for Lake County Seniors

LAKETRAN

1.888.LAKETRAN
www.laketran.com

HERE FOR YOU...WHEN YOU NEED US

You should know your options. A loved one or caregiver isn't always available to help get where you need to go. Fortunately, Laketran transportation services are here for you when you need us.

With Laketran's **Seniors on the Go** Travel Training program, you'll gain valuable information on how to make the most of our services.

Becoming an advocate for yourself and others

By Kerry Keyes

In January of this year, Ann Pimley and her husband moved to Lake County from Fairfax County, Virginia. Ann is totally blind and often relies on public transportation to get to and from her destinations. Before moving to Lake County, Ann and her husband researched Laketrans' Dial-a-Ride service and made sure she would have access to her community through Laketrans' ADA services.

Ann went blind when she was 51 years old. She gradually lost sight in her left eye, and then overnight lost sight in her right eye due to a blood clot. Ann says she sees herself as lucky going blind later in life because she already developed everyday life skills, "All of the skills I already had, I didn't lose them when I went blind, I just had to make some adjustments," explained Ann. "When you become disabled, you need to have the confidence to make adjustments and try new things. If you at least try, often you will succeed. If I didn't succeed, I just tried harder until I did."

After Ann lost her vision, she spent five months in a rehabilitation facility learning new skills and adjusting to this lifestyle change. She learned cane skills, computer skills, recreation skills, cooking skills, braille, and perhaps most importantly, the



rehabilitation center taught her about the ADA and her civil rights as a person with a disability.

Since then, Ann has done a large amount of research on the ADA and has become an advocate for all people with disabilities, not only those who are blind. She joined the American Council of the Blind, and sat on many county boards and committees while living in Fairfax County including: the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board, the Fairfax County Trails and Sidewalk Committee, and the Fairfax County Transportation Advisory Commission, where she was able to be a voice for those with disabilities.

Ann looks forward to using her knowledge and expertise to improve accessibility here in Lake County as well, and she has already made an impact. At Ann's request, the Lake County Council on Aging's quarterly newspaper, The Bridge, is now fully accessible online for those who are blind or have vision impairments.

"When you are disabled transportation, education, and technology are what opens up the world to you. It is essential that these opportunities are made available to all persons with a disability," Ann shares of her passion for advocacy. "A lot has been done thanks to the ADA, but there is still a lot more to do."

Resources quickly emerged after the ADA

By Julia Schick

"The first time I found the ADA working for me was in the early 1990's when my employer, Euclid High School, made accommodations for me to retain my employment as a traveling music teacher within the district by paying for taxis to transport me between schools throughout the day."

Meet Joel Sarich, a 67 year old retired band teacher, who was born with a visual impairment because he was born eight weeks premature.

Joel grew up in Euclid and was bounced around schools, sometimes multiple schools each year, as school districts often grouped together kids with disabilities.

"It was tough moving around schools making it difficult to make friends, but I think it really helped me learn how to prepare myself to work hard to become independent," said Joel.

"Music was my outlet and a passion of mine and even after graduating from the Conservatory at Baldwin-Wallace College, I had difficulty being hired by an orchestra. Using screen readers and magnifiers didn't always fit the etiquette of concert orchestras," shared Joel of his difficulties finding employment. "But that was before the ADA."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 >



Transportation for Independent Living helps passengers access their communities



TS was enjoying his birthday taking a ride on his motorcycle when he was hit by a drunk driver. He awoke only to be told he should be prepared to spend the rest of his young life in a nursing home, as a quadriplegic. Months later, TS discovered Services for Independent Living (SIL) and a program that was offered at SIL called the HOME Choice program. Our Transition Coordinator worked with TS to help him achieve his goal of independence and living in the community. TS is now living on his own, enjoying his freedom and is currently in a job training program.

Transportation for Independent Living (TIL) strives to ensure that all passengers served are able to access their community of choice. The following is a description of a particular case of a young man in the transition from high school to adulthood. Unfortunately, during this crucial time of transition, this young man had several barriers (financial, access, and safety) that were preventing him from participat-

ing in life skill development classes. Financial, due to the enormous amount asked for by various transportation companies to provide transportation for the 19 miles required to attend the classes. Access, because many of the transportation companies did not offer door-to-door services. Due to the individual's disability, walking to the curb without the aid of a driver was difficult enough to not participate. Safety, in the sense of anxiety over standing at a bus stop alone because many of the transportation companies operate on a fixed route. The family learned about TIL's services (operating on a non-fixed route, door-to-door service, cross county lines with no additional charge, low rate of \$1.95 per mile, and drivers able to provide accommodations) the family and individual were very excited, TIL was breaking down barriers for their family. Finally, this young man is able to attend the Life Skill classes he needs to ensure his transition into adulthood is successful. This individual has been utilizing TIL services for 3 months 2 to 4 times a week. TIL drivers have developed a relationship with the young man and have already seen improvement in his social interaction.

The Civil Rights Fight for the ADA

By Donna P. McNamee,
Laketran Board of Trustees

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is rooted in the fight for people with disabilities' right to access the community. Prior to the ADA, people with disabilities found themselves without educational opportunities, without jobs, often without appropriate healthcare, and relegated to the restrictions of life in a nursing home as opposed to a more viable, active lifestyle in their own house or apartment in the community. Fortunately the ADA did much to change that by finally organizing the disabled community's right to access the community including public transportation, public buildings, commercial facilities, telecommunications, and more recently developments for access to website and digital services.

Three major pieces of civil rights legislation were passed by the Congress during the 1960s - the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which covers fair housing for minorities. None of these acts protected people with disabilities. Discrimination against people with disabilities would not be addressed until 1973 when Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 became law, and later still in 1990 when the ADA was passed.

The Fair Housing Act was amended in 1988 to add two new classes, people with disabilities and families with children.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits

discrimination on the basis of disability in federal programs and by recipients of federal financial assistance. But Section 504 did not protect people with disabilities from discrimination in many employment situations or public accommodations in the private sector. It took the ADA to address these areas not covered by Section 504.

The ADA, as we know it today, went through numerous drafts, revisions, negotiations, and amendments since the first version was introduced in 1988. The ADA was signed into law on July 26, 1990, by President George H.W. Bush. The ADA is

one of America's most comprehensive pieces of civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life -- to enjoy employment, access public and private facilities, participate in state and local government programs and services, access telecommunications; and is currently working on access to website information and digital services.

Titles II and III of the ADA address access to transportation, the key component to opening doors for the disability community, as the law required transit agencies to accommodate people with disabilities, to allow them to utilize buses to travel as freely as their able-bodied counterparts and offer them access to opportunities offered in their communities. Coupled with the removal of architectural barriers, also mandated by the ADA, the infrastructure of America has gradually become a more accessible place to live, work, and play.

As a result, people with disabilities are successfully employed and fully integrated into society; however, as a group, the majority of people with disabilities still face disproportionate poverty and unemployment compared to their non-disabled counterparts. The 2010 U.S. Census reported 57 million Americans living with a disability. In 2015, U.S. Department of Labor figures reveal 20 percent of non-institutionalized people with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are employed compared to 69.1 percent of their non-disabled counterparts. There are many societal factors that prevent the employment of people with disabilities with one of the most significant being a lack of transportation.

As we celebrate the ADA's 25th Anniversary, there is a generation of Americans who do not remember life prior to the ADA without the law's fundamental civil rights protections. The ADA means that people with disabilities are no longer out of sight and out of mind and accommodating a person with a disability is no longer a matter of charity but instead a basic issue of civil rights. The ADA is based on a basic presumption that people with disabilities are capable of working and being active members of the communities and that exclusion and segregation cannot be tolerated. That is the success of the ADA.

**For people with disabilities,
public transportation has
represented the difference
between being able to work or
being relegated to dependence
on social welfare programs.**



About the Author: Donna P. McNamee

Donna McNamee, of Willoughby, has devoted her life to improving public policies which impact the lives of people with disabilities and older adults. She is nationally recognized for her advocacy work in giving a voice to those who need a voice in government. For 25 years, Ms. McNamee has worked on health care, employment and transportation issues on behalf of people with disabilities.

McNamee played a critical role in the nationwide effort to pass the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. This reform enables millions of people with disabilities nationwide the opportunity to be gainfully employed without losing their critical health care coverage under Medicare and Medicaid.

Throughout her career, McNamee has served on numerous boards and committees nationwide. She currently serves on the Laketran Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee of the American Public Transportation Association and has served as chair of Easter Seals Project ACTION National Steering Committee. Recently, Ms. McNamee led the development of the book, "ADA Essentials for Transit Board Members." That is being used industry-wide as an orientation tool for transit board members about the ADA's public policy and public transit applications.

McNamee is a graduate of Willoughby South High School, Lakeland Community College and Ursuline College. She earned a bachelor's and two associates degrees, respectively, majoring in business administration, management, and accounting.

McNamee has been recognized for her work on numerous occasions, most notably, with the Wall Street Journal Award; the National Hall of Fame for Persons with Disabilities, and the Lakeland Community College Alumni Hall of Fame.



Access means you can keep going even when there are challenges

By Julia Schick

Born with Spina bifida, Shannon Carson, was able to walk until her early twenties when she began using a cane, then progressed to a walker and has now spent the last 12 years of her life using a wheelchair.

“After you start using a wheelchair you become aware of the ADA and everything it does for you—you need larger doorways, curb cuts, and ramps and not just where you live, but everywhere in the community. The ADA is access to the community,” explained Shannon about her appreciation for the ADA.

When Shannon moved to Lake County in 2010, she had a non-accessible van that meant she crawled through the sliding side door and then lifted her wheelchair into the van from awkward seated positions which was not very practical, nor safe. Then the van broke down.

“I lived for 4-5 months without a vehicle. I easily became isolated. I didn’t want to strain my friendships constantly

asking people for rides, so I spent a lot of time at home which led to depression. It was a big step for me to consider public transportation but finally, I called Laketrans,” shared Shannon on her transition to becoming a non-driver. Today, Shannon uses Laketrans’ ADA Dial-a-Ride service get to and from work at New Life Church & Academy in Perry where she’s an administrative assistant. Recently, she began using the Route 4 local bus in Madison for grocery shopping and errands. In the evenings, she can take the bus shopping or to outings with her 14 year old daughter.

“I am able to drive, but I chose to use the bus because it is a great improvement to my transportation experience. I hope to one day own an accessible vehicle, but would not replace taking the bus completely as there is also the aspect of the help the drivers provide with carrying my shopping bags and the helping me to and from my house,” shares Shannon of her abilities and preferences.

“I usually take the bus about 6-8 times.



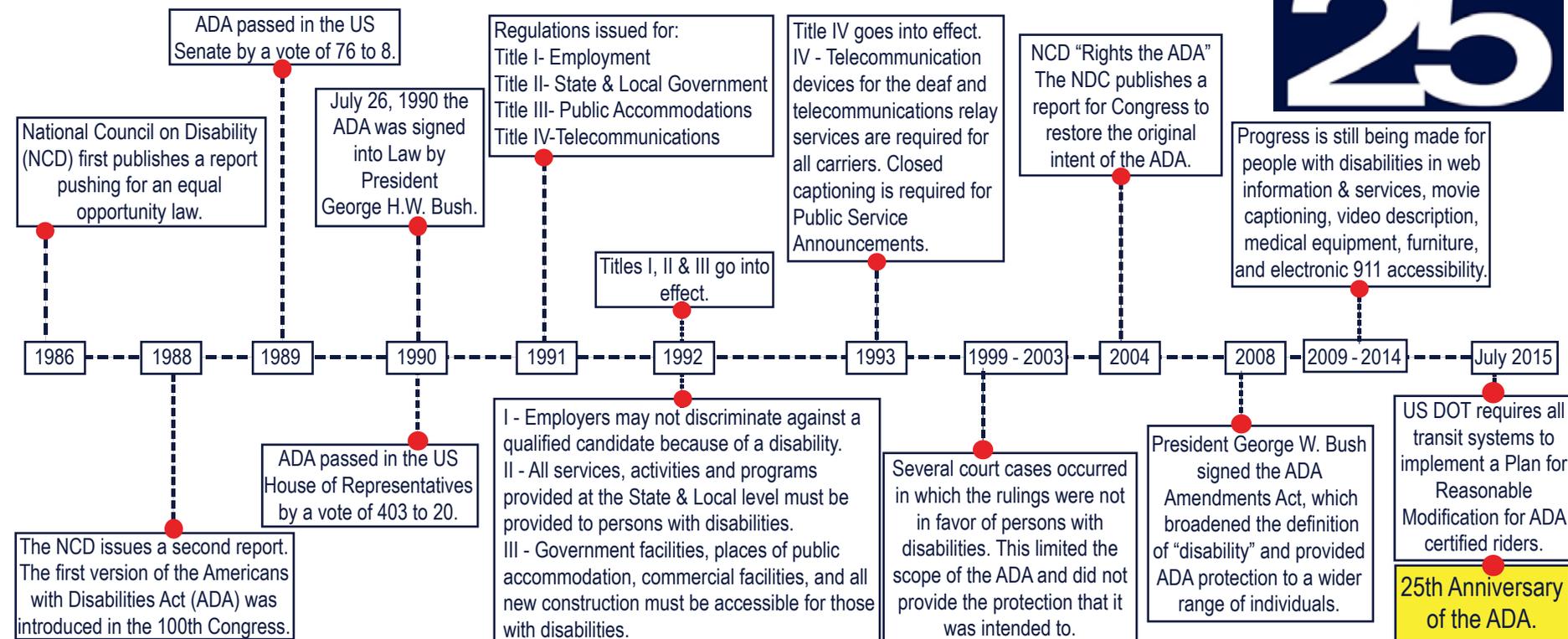
And now, I have a circle of friends and Laketrans is part of my support system. The drivers know my daughter and they’re always asking about how she’s doing. They really want what’s best for us,” continued Shannon.

Shannon shared that her greatest

achievement that has been possible due to ADA is being an example to her daughter.

“Although life can be harder, with accessible communities you can keep going even when there are challenges,” she said confidently.

25 years: A timeline of the Americans with Disabilities Act and its effect on life today



Laketrans Passenger Advisory Committee listens to customers concerns and takes action

Laketrans Communications Specialist Kerry Keyes had the opportunity to sit down with a group of Laketrans riders at the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Willoughby Workshop location.

Included in the group was John Hamm, a lifelong Lake County resident and loyal Laketrans rider for 30 years and his speech pathologist Katherine Smith. John is a founding member of the Laketrans Passenger Advisory Committee (LPAC), which provides feedback on Laketrans day-to-day service, policies, and procedures from the riders' perspective.

Having a passenger advisory committee is a regulation for all public transit systems put in place by the ADA. Laketrans formed their passenger advisory committee in 1991 and John has served as an advocate for the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities' consumers ever since.

Kerry Keyes: How long have you been riding Laketrans and where do you usually take Laketrans?

John Hamm: I have been taking Laketrans since 1985. I take Laketrans every day to get to work.

KEYES: If Laketrans was not available to you, what would you do?

HAMM: If Laketrans was not there I would have to get rides to work from other people. Or I would have to take the

yellow bus to work. I choose to take Laketrans instead of the yellow bus because I feel that the yellow bus is for kids. I like to take Laketrans because I am an adult going to work.

KEYES: When did you join LPAC?

HAMM: I went to the first LPAC meeting on July 22, 1991.

KEYES: Why did you join LPAC and why is LPAC important to you?

HAMM: Laketrans invited the Lake County Board of DD to select a few of us to attend the first meeting in July 1991. I have been on LPAC ever since. It is important because we talk about Laketrans services, the concerns people have, and suggestions on how to make things better. Before every LPAC meeting I go around the workshop and ask all my co-workers if they have any concerns they want me to talk about at the meeting.

KEYES: What are some fun memories you have of LPAC?

HAMM: The meetings are fun. We also get to volunteer at community events. We have had lunch with the Laketrans drivers before, and we also got to be a part of the grand opening when Laketrans opened their building years ago.

KEYES: What are some suggestions that you have made to Laketrans that have been listened to?

HAMM: I suggested seatbelts on the Dial-a-Ride buses and they added them. I



also have had concerns in the past about drivers and customer service representatives not being patient when working with or speaking to people with disabilities. I know that Laketrans addressed these concerns and trains their employees to be patient because everyone is so helpful now. I like to share my concerns and the

concerns of others because I want to make sure all people are treated with respect.

Laketrans Passenger Advisory Committee meetings are held quarterly and open to the public. To join LPAC, call Laketrans' LPAC Coordinator Kerry Keyes at 440-350-1008 or email kkeyes@laketrans.com.



Board President Brian Falkowski presents Ona Labadie with the 20 Millionth Rider Certificate

Laketrans' 20 millionth rider a perfect role model for Seniors on the Go

By Kerry Keyes

On Thursday, May 28, 2015, Laketrans surprised Ona Labadie, a Dial-a-Ride rider, as the 20 millionth rider in the history of Laketrans. Ona participated in Laketrans' Seniors on the Go program and has been using Laketrans as her primary source of transportation for the past three years. Ona credits Laketrans for providing the means to improve her health by regaining her independence that has allowed her to stay active.

In 2012, Ona moved to Lake County to

live with her son after she stopped driving because of a visual impairment. After a few months of passing the days inside the house, Ona and her daughter-in-law decided she needed to get out and about. "I was just watching TV all day at my son's house and honestly started getting a little depressed so my daughter-in-law looked up Laketrans online," Ona explained. "I got connected with Pat Pryatel and their outreach program and learned about how to ride Laketrans."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 >

LAKETRAN'S 20 MILLIONTH RIDER FROM PAGE 10

Now, Ona uses Laketran almost daily to get to the Eastlake JFK Senior Center where she volunteers at the center's kitchen, participates in Zumba, aerobics, Bingo, and other social and recreational classes. She also uses Dial-a-Ride to get to her senior bowling league, to visit friends and to get to occasional doctor's appointments.

To celebrate the achievement, Laketran Trustees, staff, and Commissioner Kevin Malecek surprised Ona on her pick-up with balloons and flowers and awarded her a certificate recognizing her as the 20 Millionth Laketran Rider, along with a \$50 gift card, one year of free bowling donated by Game of Mentor, over \$100 worth of area restaurant gift certificates donated by WINT 1330 AM and a \$100 Laketran Smart Card to be used for future bus trips.

"Ona is the perfect role model for seniors looking to be independent and active. By taking advantage of Laketran's Seniors on the Go program, Ona has access to recreation, medical trips, visiting friends, volunteering in the community, and enjoying a quality lifestyle," expressed Laketran general manager Ray Jurkowski.

Laketran offers home visits for first-time riders and caregivers to explain services and special programs for seniors, veterans, Medicaid recipients, and people with disabilities. **For a home visit or individualized support call 1-888-525-3872 or 440-354-6100 and ask for Pat Pryatel, Laketran's Customer Outreach Specialist. Group trainings are also available for local senior center, churches, retirement groups, or other agencies.**

Magnifiers & More

Low Vision & Blindness Products



Happy 25th
Anniversary
ADA!

7775 Mentor Avenue, Mentor
(440) 946-3363

Store Hours: Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri., Sat. 9:30 – 5:30
Sunday & Wednesday: Closed
www.magnifiersandmore.net

Yet Another Reason to 

Saturday!

LAKETRAN

Hop on...We'll Drive.

1(888)525-3872 • www.laketran.com



D Dial-a-Ride
Saturday Services

8:00am - 6:00pm



L Local Route Buses
Saturday Services

8:00am - 7:00pm

ADA guarantees access

By Julia Schick

Before a fall at work that led to two torn ACLs in his knees requiring six surgeries, Don Briganti never thought the ADA would be important to him. Due to seizures, Don was never able to drive so he was already familiar with public transportation.

“I lived in Painesville and taking the bus was simply a way of life going to and from work, shopping or wherever and I never thought too much of it until I spent two years of my life using a cane or crutches while in casts. Then bus lifts, accessible ramps and the kneeling buses became important to me to be able to ride the bus,” he shared.

Since then, Don has had a roller coaster of medical issues that has landed him into a 12 week cardiac rehabilitation program that is three times a week at Lake Health's West Medical Center. Don moved to Mentor and lives within perimeters of Laketrans ADA Dial-a-Ride service, which is ¾ mile of a local route bus, which guarantees him access to door-to-door transportation.

“Sometimes I have up to 5 medical appointments in a week and with the ADA

service, I can make next day trips, which can come up when appointments get moved around,” explains Don.

Laketrans Dial-a-Ride service operates in many ways above and beyond the federal requirements of the ADA, such as allowing anyone regardless of being disabled to ride Dial-a-Ride, but there are a few benefits that assist people with disabilities who are ADA-certified to guarantee equitable access to public transportation.

The benefits of becoming ADA-certified at Laketrans include:

- Scheduling for next day appointments
- A personal care attendant can accompany you for free
- ADA Dial-a-Ride bus fare is only \$2.50 per trip

Don is progressing well in his cardiac rehabilitation program and on nice summer days, he can now even walk to Route 3 bus stop about half mile from his home, but prefers to rely on Dial-a-Ride for his medical appointments.

To apply for Laketrans ADA Dial-a-Ride service, you can request an application by contacting Laketrans ADA Coordinator, Pat Pryatel at 440-350-1064 or email ppryatel@laketrans.com. Residents completing the ADA application may have to complete a medical evaluation to determine eligibility.



Brookdale Mentor enriching lives

If something seems a little different to you the next time you are near Emeritus at Mentor, don't be surprised. Its new name of Brookdale Mentor will reflect its connection to the Brookdale senior living family and the large network of services it provides for senior adults. Not only is Emeritus at Mentor changing its name, so are other Brookdale communities across Ohio.

“We are very excited about this change,” said Melinda Knapp, Executive Director of Emeritus at Mentor. “Becoming a part of Brookdale shows that we are a part of something bigger and that we are engaged in a nationwide mission to provide seniors with the highest quality care, service and living accommodations.”

Brookdale, headquartered near Nashville, is the nation's largest operator of senior living services. With approximately 1,150 communities in 46 states, Brookdale operates independent living, assisted living, and dementia-care communities and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 >

Laketrans' Nationally Recognized Dial-a-Ride Service

Laketrans' Dial-a-Ride is nationally recognized for going Above & Beyond for people with disabilities.

• Dial-a-Ride will take you anywhere in Lake County, where most transit systems restrict travel to within 3/4 miles of local bus routes as mandated by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA.)

• Laketrans provides Dial-a-Ride service to anyone in Lake County, but is only federally mandated to serve people with disabilities for paratransit services.

• Laketrans provides door-through-door service, but is only federally mandated to offer curb-to-curb service.

• Laketrans allows senior citizens to ride for a discount at age 60, while most transit systems nationwide require seniors to be 65 for a reduced fare.

• Laketrans offers a reduced Dial-a-Ride fare, even though we can charge double the regular local

route bus fare for ADA trips (\$1.75 x 2 = \$3.50 fare, but not us. We only charge \$2.50 each way.)

• Laketrans offers reasonable modifications to make using Laketrans easier to use on passengers.

• Laketrans drivers assist passengers with groceries and packages to their front door, while many transit systems do not assist with packages. This allows fewer trips to the store helping our customers save money and time.

• Laketrans offers home visits to discuss services with you and your caregivers to help you understand programs, discounts, and benefits that individually assist each passenger. Check out Travel Training and Seniors On the Go at www.laketrans.com.

• On July 13, 2015, Laketrans implemented a federally mandated Reasonable Modification Plan for people with disabilities. Laketrans riders have been able to request modifications for better access to services since the inception of Laketrans' Dial-a-Ride service in 1986.



Accessible housing can be hard to find

By Kerry Keyes

Accessible housing is another challenge that many people with disabilities face. Thanks to the ADA's building regulations, any new construction after 1990 must be ADA accessible; any buildings built prior to 1990 needed to be updated to meet ADA regulations.

Here in Lake County, Lake Metropolitan Housing Authority (Lake MHA) recently completed renovations on their first new property since the ADA went into effect. The ParkView Place Apartments in Willoughby have 6 ground floor units that have been fully renovated to the specifications of the ADA. Linn Atkinson and his girlfriend Donna, are two of the residents.

Linn is 61 years old and uses a wheelchair. For him, the new fully accessible units at ParkView Place are a dream come true. Donna, who uses a walker, was just as thrilled when they were able to move out of their small home in Mentor-on-the-Lake and into the larger fully accessible first floor unit.

The couple explained that they were searching for a place to move for over a year, when luckily, their homecare services worker found out that ParkView Place was opening and was able to help them secure one of the six accessible units. Linn says that the new unit is complete with a walk-in shower, large doorways for him to maneuver through with his chair, and his favorite part – a nice large bathroom. Donna says her favorite part of the unit is the large bedroom and that there are no steps or ramps to worry about.

“Lake MHA's original housing units were all built in 1973. This property is the first Lake MHA site with fully accessible units,” Lake MHA Executive Director Melissa Winfield explains. “People with disabilities often struggle to find housing that meets their needs. Giving them this option was a priority for us. We have filled all six accessible units and the tenants are all settling in to their new homes.”

For more information about Lake MHA, or ParkView Place Apartments visit <http://www.lakehousing.org> or call 440-354-3347.



Donna and Linn with Lake MHA Executive Director, Melissa Winfield

BROOKDALE MENTOR FROM PAGE 12

continuing care retirement centers.

“At a Brookdale community, you know the people who work there have a passion for helping seniors and finding them solutions to the needs in their lives,” Knapp continued. “Our associates have always provided exemplary care for our residents and that will not change. We are proud of the care we have provided in Lake County in the past and look forward to continuing to provide and elevating that level of care in the future as part of the Brookdale family.”

Care is what we do, and we do it well. Many associates

have been with our community over 14 years assisting residents with daily care needs that they are no longer able to do themselves as the result of a disability caused by a medical condition or life occurrence. At Brookdale Mentor, enriching the lives of those we serve through compassion, respect, excellence and integrity is not only our mission statement it's our way of life.

Join us for our ribbon cutting and 1940's Welcome Home party on August 13 from 5- 7 pm to see all the places life can go. Brookdale Mentor is located at 5700 Emerald Ct., Mentor, OH. If you would like to attend please RSVP at 440-354-5499.

SHIFTING PUBLIC PERCEPTION FROM PAGE 4

public perception has changed. The public sees people with disabilities excelling in many fields and contributing to society. The ADA has allowed people with disabilities to live life like everyone else.”

Kim is truly living her life to the fullest. She uses Laketran's Dial-a-Ride service to get to work, volunteering, and doctor's appointments. She also enjoys social activities like going shopping, to the movies, or a friend's house for a visit. However, Kim acknowledges that there are still many challenges and still more to be done regarding the ADA.

“I face logistical challenges any time I go somewhere new, such as making sure locations are physically accessible, have adequate bathrooms, etc. It takes a lot of advance planning and not being afraid to ask questions,” Kim explains. “Another challenge I often face are people's preconceived notions of what I can or cannot do. I overcome this through my actions. Showing people how I live life just like everyone else speaks a lot louder than telling people.”

RESOURCES QUICKLY EMERGED FROM PAGE 7

Today, there is an industry working for people with disabilities. Joel, who now also uses a walker, talked about the how advances in technology, print magnification, computer software, and screen readers has allowed people with vision impairments many more opportunities to work, enjoy recreational activities, and simply be more independent. More recently, his need for buildings with larger doors, bus lifts, and elevators has become equally important for his independence.

The ADA continues to protect rights for people with disabilities to have access to the community and continues to develop regulations guarantee access to new technologies.

“I'm happily married, retired from a great career, and have lots of hobbies that I can enjoy. Plus, I can get where I need to go like the Great Lakes Mall for their mall walking program and doctor appointments without relying on my wife or friends,” shares Joel of life today.

Lake County's Aging & Disability Resource Center

Providing Service & Support to Lake County residents 60+ and disabled adults 18+



*Celebrating 25 Years
of the Americans with
Disabilities Act*

Services Provided:

- Information & Assistance
- Options Counseling
- Benefits Assistance
- Care Management
- Geriatric Care Management
- Meals on Wheels/
Congregate Meals
- Homemaker Service
- Home Maintenance,
Modification & Repair
- Health Equipment Lending
Program
- Volunteer Opportunities

Lake County Council on Aging

8520 East Avenue • Mentor, Ohio 44060

440-205-8111 • www.lccoa.org

Proud to be a partner with Laketran in serving Lake County residents!



Celebrating 25 Years of ADA

Partners in opening doors breaking down barriers, and providing access to employment, community and public services, Laketrans and the Lake County Board of DD/Deepwood are dedicated to making Lake County more accessible to people with disabilities.



www.lakebdd.org



A Day of Mud and Sensory Fun!

The Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Play Learn and Grow group recently enjoyed a fun (and messy!) day of sensory activities. Each month, Play Learn and Grow hosts a sensory exploration day, allowing children aged 18 months through three years to embrace a variety of sensory experiences that life has to offer. Mud Day provided these children the opportunity to get messy and experience different textures and activities they wouldn't typically get to experience.

Play, Learn and Grow is just one of the many groups made available through the Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Through partnerships with private providers and other community groups, individuals from infancy to senior citizens are offered opportunities to live, learn and earn in their community!

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION CENTER FROM PAGE 4

Rachele will join the ranks of hundreds of students with disabilities who have earned their college degree at Lakeland and gone on to transfer to a four-year college or found work in their fields of study.

Although Rachele is just rounding out her first year at Lakeland, she's motivated and eager to make it to the finish line.

"I anticipate graduating hopefully in 2019 - maybe sooner! If you really want something, then you work for it - nothing comes easy. Take your time and ask for help if needed and use the resources provided."

To learn more about being a student with disabilities at Lakeland, visit <http://bit.ly/1LyNSM>.

DO YOU LOVE A VETERAN?

If so, PLEASE READ THIS!

Do you know if your veteran is receiving all the benefits they may have earned by virtue of serving their Country?

The Lake County Veterans Service Office has six accredited and certified Service Officers who can help you answer this question. In 2014, these Service Officers helped Lake County's veterans and their families and survivors receive more than 44 MILLION DOLLARS in VA compensation and pension benefits by virtue of injuries, illnesses or diseases incurred while on active duty in the military.

CALL TODAY FOR MORE INFORMATION!

440-350-2904/2567





Services for Independent Living Inc.

~Celebrating 35 years of Service

We are non-profit Center for Independent Living dedicated to providing consumer driven services and advocacy which empower individuals with disabilities to lead self-directed and inclusive lives in the community.

Services Offered

- * Information & Referral
- * Peer Support: 1:1 Support & Training, Mentoring & Support Groups
- * Independent Living Skills Training *Advocacy: Self, Individual, & Systems
- *Nursing Home Relocation
- * Community Support Coaching * ADA/Accessibility Evaluations & Workshops

~For more information please call 216/731-1529. We look forward to working with you.

Services for Independent Living Inc.

Proudly announces

Transportation for Independent Living

~Ensuring community connections for full inclusion, resulting in transportation without boundaries.~



Transportation for Independent Living (TIL), a service of SIL provides transportation services for people living in **Lorain, Cuyahoga, Lake & Geauga Counties**. TIL provides transportation to: Non-Emergency Medical Appointments, Employment, School, Community Resources and Social/Recreational Activities. We provide door-to-door service on non-fixed route lines, out of county access and affordable fares.

Service Hours: Mon-Fri 6:00 a.m.-6 p.m.

For more information or to schedule a ride please call 216/731-RIDE (7433)

EVERY LAKETRAN BUS IS FULL OF OPPORTUNITY



FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN'T DRIVE, LIFE STARTS WHERE WE STOP.

You have to get up, get to work, stop at the bank, pick-up a prescription, and visit a relative. Not being able to drive shouldn't restrict your independence. Last year alone, Laketrans provided more than 250,000 Dial-a-Ride trips supporting people with disabilities and the elderly. To get them to work, to shop for essentials, go to medical appointments and to connect with friends and family. Our buses provide more than a ride, they provide the opportunity for a better life for you and your loved ones.

OPPORTUNITY IS OUR DESTINATION.



LAKETRAN
www.laketrans.com | 1.888.LAKETRAN