

Friends of WVSILC:

- 2 Anne Weeks
- 3 WVSILC Board
- 4 Youth Leadership Forum
- 4 Disability Expo
- 6 NWVCIL

THE SILC EDGE
 WINTER 2020 - WVSILC - PO Box 625 - Institute, WV 25112

SILC UPDATE

The WV State Legislative Session began on January 8th and things are moving! We are watching closely to see what bills, good and bad, will affect people with disabilities. One bill on a fast track, SB 94 should make it possible for people with physical disabilities who can't vote in person to have full access to vote by absentee ballot electronically as soon as the Primary Election this year!. The Secretary of State's Office has made this a priority and worked closely with disability advocates on this bill. At the Federal level, the budget for FY 2020 has passed with level funding for independent living program – which is far better than cuts. The President's budget for FY 2021 should be released soon but no news on what it will look like.

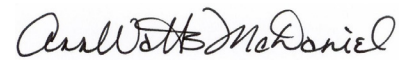
Be sure to reach out to legislators and Congressional representatives to let them know who you are and why you care about disability issues. Be a resource to them – share what you know – share your personal experiences – let them know how to get more information – they need you! And if you are not a member of the Fair Shake Network (FSN) – you should be! FSN is the unified voice of the disability community at the Legislature and they need your support – go to www.fairshake.org today and join!

The new State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for 2021-2021 is currently being drafted using input gathered from many of you at focus groups held last year. The draft plan will be available in April – it will be posted on our website www.wvsilc.org – and it will be available in any other format you need if you request it by e-mailing wvsilc@wvsilc.org or calling the SILC office at 1-855-855-9743. Please take time to look at the draft SPIL and tell us what you think – all suggestions will be considered before the plan is finalized – we want to hear from you!

MISSION

“To ensure persons who have disabilities have access to community-based resources that promote personal choice and facilitate the achievement of their independent living goals.”

From the desk of:



Ann McDaniel
 Executive Director

IN THIS EDITION:



Mountain State Conference on Disabilities p.3



Doll with disability named 2020 'Girl of the Year' p.8



Voters with Disabilities Test Accessible Voting Machines p.7



Transportation Department Looks To Increase Airline Accessibility p.9

WV Centers for Independent Living

Appalachian CIL
 Elk Office Center
 4710 Chimney Dr.
 Charleston, WV 25302
 1-800-642-3003

Northern WV CIL
 601-603 East Brockway Ave.
 Suite A & B
 Morgantown, WV 26505
 1-800-834-6408

109 Randolph Ave.
 Elkins, WV 26241
 304-636-0143

Mountain State CIL
 821 Fourth Ave.
 Huntington, WV 25701
 1-866-687-8245

329 Prince St.
 Beckley, WV 25801
 304-255-0122





Habitat for Humanity Builds Home for MTSTCIL Consumer Creating Another New Homeowner

Teresa Colton, a lifelong Huntington resident, and a long time consumer of Mountain State Centers for Independent Living in Huntington, received the keys to her new two-bedroom home that stands on what used to be a vacant lot on the 300 block of 18th Street West in Huntington, during a home dedication ceremony held by Habitat for Humanity of the Tri-State on November 22, 2019.

Colton was also given a gift certificate to the Habitat for Humanity Restore to help furnish the home. The Facing Hunger Food Bank in Huntington also donated food so Colton's refrigerator and kitchen cabinets were full when she moved in.

"I'd like to thank all the volunteers, Habitat for Humanity. . . and thank you for my house," said Colton. ■



Anne Weeks, new SILC Chairperson

West Virginia SILC Elects New Officers

Source: MTSTCIL

On October 2, 2019, the SILC elected new officers/ Executive Committee members for FY 2020. Anne Weeks, President/CEO of Mountain State Centers for Independent Living was elected Chairperson. Anne served as the first Chairperson of the SILC when it was formed in 1993, providing guidance and leadership in how the SILC was structured, where the SILC was located, and ensuring members received training on their roles, responsibilities and the law. This Anne's third time serving as Chair and she feels the highest priority is the development of the new State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

The full results of the elections are:

- Chairperson – Anne Weeks, Huntington, WV
- Vice-Chairperson – Mark Fordyce, Charlton Heights, WV
- Secretary – Ardella Cottrill, Fairmont, WV
- Treasurer – William Blosser, Fort Ashby, WV
- At-Large – Cara Price, Phillipi, WV
- At-Large – Michelle Norweck, Barboursville, WV

Beverly Jones will continue to serve on the Executive Committee as the Immediate Past Chair. Thank You to Beverly for your service as Chairperson and for your continued service on the Executive Committee and as a member of the Council! And Congratulations to all and thank you for your willingness to serve! ■



Candidate's Forum

Mountain State Centers for Independent Living is planning Forums for late in April. One in Huntington and one in Beckley. Local candidates will be invited and attendees will be able to ask questions and hear from them in order to be prepared for the Primary Elections on May 5, 2020.

Huntington and Beckley consumers will have a training in early spring to be prepared for the Forum.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MTSTCIL or check your emails for more information. ■

Note: If pending legislation (SB94) passes, eligible voters with disabilities will be able to vote an absentee ballot electronically by this year's primary elections!



The Mountain State Conference on Disabilities

Journey to the Top

April 14-15, 2020 Canaan Valley Resort

Save the Date!

Source: [Conference on Disabilities](#)

The Mountain State Conference on Disabilities is hosted by disability partners across the state including the WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities, West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council, Disability Rights of WV and the West Virginia Autism Training Center at Marshall University. This year's theme "Journey to the top" reflects the services, supports and work being done to help individuals with disabilities on their journey.

The two day conference will provide cutting edge, best practice and evidence-based sessions for professionals while offering applied skill-based workshops for individuals on how to navigate through educational, medical and other journeys they may experience.

CEU's will be available for medicine, nursing, psychology, social work, speech language pathology, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

The conference is being held at Canaan Valley Resort & Conference Center in beautiful Davis, West Virginia.

A Block of Rooms have been reserved at the reduced rate of \$78/night plus taxes.

We are hoping to offer scholarships and travel stipends for individuals and families. More info coming soon!

For registration information, visit The Mountain State Conference on Disabilities' website at: <https://cpd.confex.com/cpd/cedwvu20/meetingapp.cgi/Home/0>. ■

WV Statewide Independent Living Council Recruiting for new Members

Are you a person with a disability who wants to get involved and make a difference? Do you have a family member with a disability or do you work to improve life for people with disabilities? The West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (the Council) is recruiting new members to fill vacancies for terms beginning July 1, 2020 and you should apply!

This federally mandated Council works closely with the Centers for Independent Living and monitors, reviews, and evaluates the implementation of the State Plan for Independent Living.

The Council seeks to maintain diversity of representation including disability, age, ethnicity, and life experiences. If you or someone you know would like to apply for membership on the Council, please return a completed application form by February 14, 2020.

Please feel free to duplicate this notice and the application form and share them with as many individuals as you wish. This information is also available on the SILC Web site and you may complete and submit your application at: <http://www.wvsilc.org/wvsilcapp.htm>

Please review the responsibilities carefully and apply only if you are willing to fulfill them.

All applications will be reviewed and considered. Nominations selected by the Council will be nominated for appointment by Governor Jim Justice. This process can be lengthy and new members are not always appointed before the terms begin in July.

We appreciate your patience. If you have questions or need further information or assistance, please feel free to contact the WVSILC office at (304) 766-4624 or (855) 855-9743. ■





2020 LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Source: [WV Legislature](#)

First Day - January 8, 2020: First day of session. ([WV Const. Art. VI, §18](#))

Twentieth Day - January 27, 2020: Submission of Legislative Rule-Making Review bills due. ([WV Code §29A-3-12](#))

Thirty-fifth Day - February 11, 2020: Last day to introduce bills in the House. ([House Rule 91a](#)) Does not apply to originating or supplementary appropriation bills. Does not apply to House resolutions or concurrent resolutions.

Forty-first Day - February 17, 2020: Last day to introduce bills in the Senate. ([Senate Rule 14](#)) Does not apply to originating or supplementary appropriation bills. Does not apply to Senate resolutions or concurrent resolutions.

Forty-seventh Day - February 23, 2020: Bills due out of committees in house of origin to ensure three full days for readings.

Fiftieth Day - February 26, 2020: Last day to consider bill on third reading in house of origin. Does not include budget or supplementary appropriation bills. ([Joint Rule 5, paragraph b](#))

Sixtieth Day - March 7, 2020: Adjournment at Midnight. ([WV Const. Art. VI, §22](#)) ■

WV Youth Leadership Forum

Source: [WVSILC](#)



The WV Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a statewide training and leadership development event for students (Delegates) with all types of disabilities, high school juniors & seniors and college freshmen, who are transitioning to adulthood. The YLF will be held on the campus of West Virginia State University in Institute, WV on June 22-25, 2020.

The YLF will provide a variety of activities, learning opportunities, and a chance to make new friends.

Learn about the history of disability and the disability rights movement in America, national leaders, and your place in the movement and disability culture. Be a part of something much bigger than yourself!

Twenty-five youth (Delegates) will be selected to attend the YLF - at no cost - make sure you are one of them!

For more information call 304-766-4624 or toll free at 855-855-9743. You may also apply online, via our website at <http://www.wvsilc.org/ylfapp.htm> ■

Mark Your Calendar Now!



One4All Disability Expo 2020

April 4, 2020

10am-2pm

**Huntington High School Gymnasium
#1 Highlander Way. Huntington, WV
Accessible Facility and Parking**

**Growing to include resources for everyone.
Committed to meeting the needs
in our community.**

**For an updated listing of
vendors, resources, and activities in your area-
please check our website often!**

www.one4alldisabilities.org

Meet the blind actress cast in Waterloo Community Playhouse's thriller 'Wait Until Dark'

Source: [The courier](#)

WATERLOO — In the Jeffrey Hatcher adaptation of the thriller "Wait Until Dark," Susan, a newly blind woman, finds herself trapped in her Greenwich Village basement apartment by a trio of thugs. Her blindness may be the key to her escape from the criminals, if only she can hold out until dark.

Kelsi Hansen is making her debut in the role of Susan in the Waterloo Community Playhouse production that opens Jan. 24 on the Hope Martin Theatre stage.

Hansen is blind.



"I expected memorizing lines and learning how to move around the stage. What I didn't anticipate is how much I love and enjoy it," says Hansen, 28, who is an independent living teacher for the Iowa Department for the Blind.

She lost her sight over a period of two weeks when she was 12 years old after battling cancer and a brain tumor.

"There are misconceptions about blindness, and a lot of stuff in the media portrays blindness the way they think it is. I'm trying to put accuracy into the role. What's been a unique challenge to me is that I've been blind for 16 years, so I have to take myself back to what it was like when I'd only been blind for a 1 1/2 years to accurately portray Susan's blindness. She's not as oriented or as comfortable with her blindness or using her other senses as I am," Hansen explains.

Director Greg Holt said Hansen has been generous in sharing her own story with the six-member cast. "I feel fortunate that someone so capable is cast in the role of Susan. Kelsi is very talented, an upbeat and positive person to work with and very straightforward about her blindness. She's written some notes in the program separating truth from fiction," he explained.

Hansen has never performed on stage before, but she's always had an interest
(See Blind next column)

Tee Shirts For Sale

Fair Shake Network tee shirts are now available for sale at the cost of \$10 for members and \$12 for non-members. The cost of shipping is \$3 if you need the shirt to be mailed to you. The shirts are available in 3XL, 2XL, XL, M, L and S. They are red and have the FSN logo in the center of the shirt. You can go online and order at www.fairshake.org or call 304-766-0061. ■



(Blind continued from previous column)

Joe Frenna and Natalie Lindaman. Shelby Davis is Hansen's assistant and under-study. "Everyone has been very supportive. I don't think Greg could have found a better cast. We help each other out," Hansen said.

"Wait Until Dark" also is technically challenging, filled with special effects and unusual lighting techniques designed by Mike Ingraham.

"We tried to create a tight, confined space, and the windows are high like you'd find in a basement apartment. There are bars on the window, and you can see the legs of people as they walk past. There's a fire, knives thrown at a wall ... a lot of different tricks are being used in this show," Holt said.

Hansen is having the time of her life. "This is my first show which is very exciting. I'm kind of nervous, but my biggest struggle has been and will continue to be not smiling because I'm having so much fun." ■



Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living



Consumer is racking in hours at Animal Shelter

Source: Brenda Dasher

Jim became a consumer in the Elkins Office approximately 2 years ago and was looking for a place to live independently while trying to find some services that might help him.

The Center for Independent Living was able to help him find an apartment and get his first month's rent plus security deposit paid by working with the Homeless Shelter.

After Jim moved into his apartment, we went to the DHHR and helped him get SNAP benefits as well as help with his heating bill. He also applied for HUD and after receiving it is now living comfortably.



Jim said that he would like to do something with his time to help people. He used to deliver newspapers in our area to many people and walked many miles a day. I believe that he was a "favorite" in our area!

Jim and I started talking about how he loved animals and he would someday like to have another cat. We visited the Randolph County Animal Shelter to see if they needed volunteers. They did and liked Jim right away. Jim signed his volunteer paper and has only missed one day in about 6 months of walking and loving on the dogs. He knows them by name and I feel sure they know him.

It was time for Jim to adopt a cat. He saved his money and bought all the things he needed for his new furry family member to be happy. The couple that runs the shelter gave Jim two Rubber maid totes of goodies for the cat. A bed, all kinds of food, toys, blankets and even a Hershey kiss for Jim.

Tiger is loving his new home, but mostly loving his new dad Jim. Congratulations Jim and Tiger. ■

Voters with Disabilities Test Accessibility of New Voting Machines

Source: [Berks Weekly](#)

Representatives from Abilities in Motion visited the Pennsylvania Capitol Complex on Tuesday to test the accessibility of new voting machines for the Department of State. Participants provided feedback to help make voting more accessible for all, and therefore make elections more equitable.

A voting systems analyst from the PA Bureau of Election Security and Technology invited representatives from Abilities in Motion to help test the new voting machines for accessibility.

Examiners representing the Center for Civic Design, a leading authority on usability and accessibility for ballot design, ballot standards, and voting systems, conducted the testing and evaluation.

"We bring civic design skills in research, usability, design, accessibility, and plain language to improve the voting experience, make elections easier to administer, and encourage participation in elections," the Center for Civic Design, a non-profit educational research organization, states on their website.

Through the testing process, the examiners received feedback from voters who use accessible devices during voting. The testing process required participants to mark, verify, and cast a sample ballot with any assistive features they would normally use; provide input about the experience and identify any issues experienced; and suggest ways the system can be set up to be easier for use.

Laura Szweda, Disability Integration Specialist, elected to use the voting machine with audio description and an accessibility pad. The pad allows the user to navigate around the voting machine with large buttons of different shapes. She has only ever voted by absentee ballot.



For Laura, who is blind, the audio instructions provided too much information for her to retain at one time. When she attempted to locate the buttons described in the audio, Laura expressed frustration as she explained that "having all these extra buttons is a tactile nightmare." She suggested that a more simplified version of the accessibility pad would making the voting process more intuitive.

Data Entry Clerk Michael Hill, who has low vision, opted out of the audio and chose to move closer to the screen to read through the process. While he was able to read the screen up close and use the touch screen functions, he told the examiner that he would benefit from larger text.

He also identified other barriers to understanding the voting process, like not understanding the correct way to make a selection. "Do I click on the name or in the box?" Michael asked when he had difficulty selecting a candidate.

Laura also remarked on how the machine could be confusing for a first-time voter, so it's important for the machines to be accessible in terms of ease of use, not just for voters with disabilities, but for many others who face educational, cultural, and political barriers and may benefit from a simplified

Saliva Test For Autism Hits Market

Source: [Disability Scoop](#)

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — A saliva test designed to quickly diagnose autism in toddlers has hit the market after seven years of research at SUNY Upstate Medical University and Penn State.

The researchers hope the test will help doctors detect autism faster and get children help sooner, when it can be most effective.

The test was released in December by Quadrant Biosciences Inc., a company located on Upstate's Syracuse campus. The company partners with Upstate through the state's StartUp NY program which gives new and expanding businesses tax breaks and access to university researchers.

"Saliva is a treasure trove for molecules that might reflect brain function," said Frank Middleton, an Upstate associate professor and co-lead investigator on the research behind the test.

The prevalence of autism is soaring. An estimated 1 in 59 U.S. children are diagnosed with the disorder, up from 1 in 125 in 2008. Autism is a developmental disability that affects learning, communication and interaction with others.

The test, called Clarifi ASD, is one of the first medical tests to diagnose autism. A Wisconsin company introduced a blood test in 2018 to identify autism.

Health care professionals diagnose autism by observing a child's behavior. Families often face long wait times for autism evaluations. While it's possible to diagnose kids as young as 18 months, the average age of diagnosis in the U.S. exceeds 4 years old.

"Our overarching mission is to move the average age of diagnosis from over four years of age to the second year of life, and get these children into behavioral therapies earlier," said Richard Uhlig, founder and CEO of Quadrant.

The test has been approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services which regulates clinical laboratories. It's available in all states except New York, which requires state Health Department approval. The company expects to get state approval this year.

The test costs \$989 and is not yet covered by health insurance. The National Institutes of Health is working with Quadrant to get the test covered by Medicaid and private insurers. The NIH provided a \$2 million grant to help fund research behind the test.

The test is available by prescription only and must be ordered and administered by a health care provider. Saliva is collected by swabbing a child's mouth. Test results are available in three to six weeks.

Researchers from Upstate and Penn State identified certain short strands of ribonucleic acid found in saliva that differentiates children with autism from kids who are neurotypical or have non-autistic developmental delays. A published peer-reviewed research study involving 450 children ages 18 months to 6 years found the test was 85 percent accurate in identifying kids with autism.

The test is supposed to be used in conjunction with developmental and
(See Autism p8)

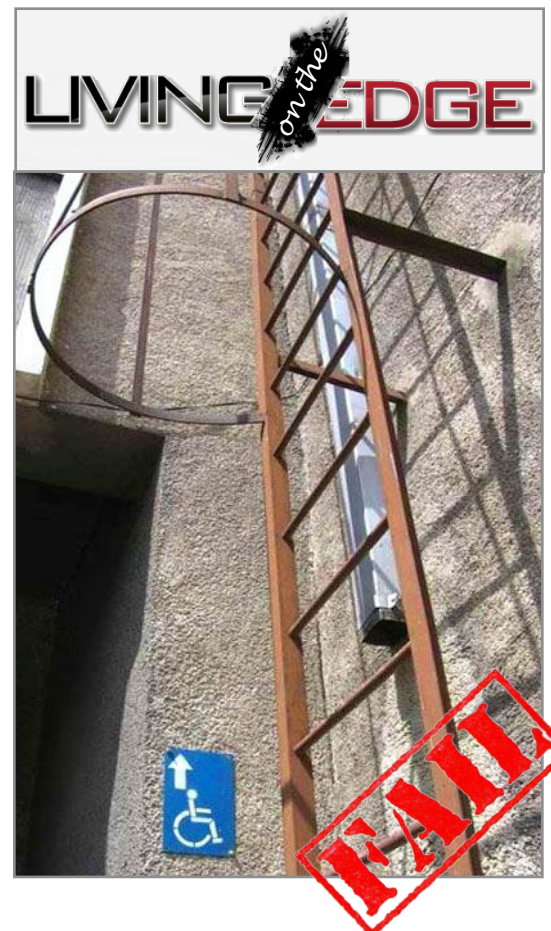
(Voters continued from p6)

and intuitive process.

According to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, more than 35 million Americans with disabilities, who make up about one-sixth of the total electorate, are eligible to vote. Yet turnout for voters with disabilities is significantly lower than that of voters without disabilities.

The American Association of People with Disabilities asserts that promoting voting rights for people with disabilities requires education of voters and poll workers, accessibility of polling locations, and available accessible voting technology.

Abilities in Motion retains a Voter Educator on staff who offers informative workshops on accessibility rights at the polls, new polling locations, how to register to vote by absentee ballot, how to fill out forms, and how to use the new voting machines. To request a voter education workshop, call Abilities in Motion at 610-376-0010 ext. 142. ■





American Girl names doll with disability as 2020 ‘Girl of the Year’

Source: [The Hill](#)



Joss Kendrick is depicted as a Huntington Beach, Calif., surfer who uses a hearing aid.

American Girl has named a doll with a visible physical disability as its “Girl of the Year” for the first time ever, according to USA Today.

Joss Kendrick, the company’s Girl of the Year for 2020, is depicted as a 10-year-old surfer from Huntington Beach, California, who wears a hearing aid. A previous Girl of the Year, McKenna, was depicted as having learning disabilities, while another, 2018’s Gabriella, has a stutter.

“She has congenital hearing loss. She was born deaf in her left ear and can hear a little bit in her right ear,” American Girl president Jamie Cygielman told the newspaper, adding that while the company has previously produced dolls that can be fitted with assistive technology such as hearing aids and wheelchairs, Joss is the first to be canonically disabled.

The company partnered with the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), which advocates for the deaf and hard of hearing, on creating the character, according to USA Today.

“If you have a child with any type of disability or any type of difference or wearing a hearing

Trump Signs 5-Month Extension Of Program Helping People Leave Institutions

Source: [Disability Scoop](#)

For the fourth time in a year, lawmakers acted to keep alive a program that moves people with disabilities from institutions into the community, but its long-term fate remains in jeopardy.

Money Follows the Person will stay afloat until May 22 under a plan that was included within a larger federal appropriations package signed by President Donald Trump just before the close of 2019.

The Medicaid program provides funding to states to cover employment supports, housing and other services so that individuals with disabilities can transition from nursing homes and other institutional facilities to homes in the community. It officially expired in 2016 and has been in limbo ever since as Congress has repeatedly passed short-term extensions.

Disability advocates were optimistic when a bipartisan agreement was reached in December to make Money Follows the Person permanent. At the time, they thought the plan would pass before the end of 2019. Instead, however, time ran short and with funding for the program set to end before the start of the new year, a five-month extension was inserted into the budget bill.

“While this is a disappointing turn of events, we have our marching orders for 2020 — advocate, advocate, advocate for a permanent commitment to Money Follows the Person,” said Peter Berns, CEO of The Arc.

Advocates said that the timing sets up Money Follows the Person to be included in a larger health care package that Congress is expected to pass in May.

Since 2006, states have received nearly \$3.7 billion to transition more than 91,000 people into the community through Money Follows the Person. These transitions have led to better quality of life outcomes and yielded an average of 20 percent savings in monthly costs to Medicaid per beneficiary, according to The Arc.

“There is widespread, bipartisan support for this successful program,” Berns said. “If we are going to achieve the goal of bringing people out of the dark shadows of institutions to live meaningful, independent lives in the communities of their choice among their family members and peers, with appropriate supports and services, then Congress has to step up.” ■

(Autism continued from p7)

behavioral assessments. The company said a test that shows a high probability of autism may give clinicians more confidence to make the diagnosis and start early intervention services, instead of putting the child on a long waiting list.

Quadrant also is conducting research to develop saliva tests to diagnose concussions and Parkinson’s disease. ■

Transportation Department Looks To Increase Airline Accessibility

Source: [Disability Scoop](#)



Airlines would be required to improve accessibility for travelers with disabilities on more of their planes under a new federal proposal.

The U.S. Department of Transportation is seeking public comment on a plan calling for all new, single-aisle aircraft to feature accessible lavatories.

Current rules only mandate accessible restrooms on planes with more than one aisle. But the federal agency said that single-aisle aircraft are increasingly being used on long-haul flights.

“The inability to use the lavatory on long flights can present significant challenges to passengers with disabilities, and poses a deterrent for some passengers with disabilities to traveling by air,” notes the Transportation Department proposal released Monday.

The agency is looking to amend its existing Air Carrier Access Act regulation. Under the plan, new single-aisle aircraft that seat 125 or more passengers must have lavatories with accessible toilet seats, assist handles, faucets, attendant call buttons and door locks, among other features. Airlines would also be required to have an onboard wheelchair with improved safety and maneuverability that could provide entry into the aircraft lavatory.

The proposed rule stipulates that flight attendants be trained to assist individuals with disabilities to get from their seat to the lavatory using the onboard wheelchair. What’s more, information about the accessibility of an aircraft’s lavatories would be available on airline websites, on the plane and upon request so that travelers can plan accordingly, the Transportation Department said.

With the notice issued Monday, federal officials are not requesting any change to the physical size of lavatories on single-aisle aircraft. But, they said that an advance notice of proposed rulemaking is expected in the near future to solicit feedback on the idea of mandating that lavatories on new single-aisle aircraft match the larger size found on planes with two aisles.

The Transportation Department estimates that it would cost \$1,000 per lavatory to make the improvements the agency is seeking.

The current proposal will be up for public comment for 60 days. ■

(Doll continued from p8)

aid, to have a doll that mirrors that image I think goes a long way to help with the stigma and the stereotypes,” HLAA executive director Barbara Kelley told the newspaper.

“We’re proud to welcome Joss Kendrick, whose stories are sure to instill confidence and character in girls who are learning to think about the possibilities in their own lives,” Cygielman said in a press release.

“Working with Olympic hopeful surfer Caroline Marks adds real-world inspiration about what can happen when you go ‘all in’ on your dreams,” she added.

In addition to Marks and the HLAA, the company touts input from several other experts in the creation of the character, including Crystal DaSilva, a Women’s Deaf Shortboard champion, and Dr. Sharon Pajka, a professor of English at Gallaudet University who specializes in fictional portrayals of deaf characters.

“As a person with hearing loss and as someone who loved American Girl dolls as a kid, I find myself actually wanting to buy Joss,” Emily Ladau, editor-in-chief of the disability rights website Rooted in Rights, told Changing America.

“The only doll I had that supposedly looked like me was Mattel’s Share-A-Smile Becky, who used a wheelchair like I do. But I always wished for a collection of dolls with any sort of bodily diversity. Joss is yet another step in the right direction to bring disability representation to the mainstream,” she added.

Mattel has made an increased push to incorporate disability representation and accessibility in its products over the past year, including adding wheelchair users and dolls with prosthetic legs to its Barbie Fashionistas line as well as adding Braille to UNO cards. ■





Herbed Chicken Marsala

Source; [Food Network](#)

Smothered in low calorie sauteed mushrooms and sun dried tomatoes, this dish is both healthy and satisfying. A little bit of butter goes a long way in the sauce - just a touch adds creamy richness.

Cook Time	Servings
35 Min	4

Ingredients

- Four 4-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breast cutlets
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3/4 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes (not packed in oil; not rehydrated), finely chopped or very thinly sliced
- 1/2 teaspoon finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 10 ounces white button or cremini (baby bella) mushrooms, sliced
- 1/3 cup sweet marsala wine
- 2 teaspoons unsalted butter
- 1 to 2 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Preparation

1. Place the chicken cutlets between 2 pieces of plastic wrap and pound with a meat mallet until about 1/3 inch thick. Sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.
2. Put the flour on a medium plate. Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Dredge the chicken in the flour to fully coat, shaking off any excess. Add the chicken to the skillet and fry until fully cooked and golden brown, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a platter and tent with foil to keep warm.
3. Add 1/2 cup of the broth, the sun-dried tomatoes and rosemary to any remaining

A Swimmer Thrived After an Amputation. Then She Needed Another.

Source: [The New York Times](#)



Morgan Stickney at the United States Olympic and Paralympic Training Center in February. She set remarkable times in the 100- and 400-meter freestyle months after a below-the-knee amputation of her left leg. Credit...Rachel Woolf for The New York Times

Morgan Stickney began training for the Paralympics after having her left leg amputated below the knee. But a familiar pain struck again.

Something awful happened to Morgan Stickney on her way to joining the world of Paralympic swimming.

Stickney had been a young distance swimmer with dreams of Olympic glory until a foot ailment forced her to have her left leg amputated below the knee in May 2018, when she was only 20. But

with an unyielding determination that has become her trademark, Stickney made the best of her situation: As The New York Times wrote in March, the amputation meant an end to five years of severe foot pain and dependence on opioid painkillers, and it enabled her to get back into the pool.

Within a few months, Stickney set remarkable times in the 100- and 400-meter freestyle and was invited to train at the United States Olympic and Paralympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. A new dream formed for Stickney, as a Paralympian in Tokyo next summer.

But then one day after training, she felt pain in her right foot. X-rays revealed fractures, and doctors said they would heal. Stickney dreaded something much worse, however.

She was right. The pain endured for weeks, and in June she had to leave the training center and move back home to Bedford, N.H., while a team of doctors tried to discover the root cause for her slowly dying right foot.

"I thought swimming was over forever, this time," she said. "For two or three weeks, I just cried every night."

For her father, Tony Stickney, the day he went to Colorado Springs to pack up Morgan's things and take her home was one of the saddest of his life. His daughter had endured so much pain and isolation in her late teenage years, but once she got off opioids and back into the pool, the old, happy Morgan resurfaced. And then all that was gone again.

On the plane ride home, Tony Stickney wept.

"I knew the happiness I felt eight months earlier was over," Tony Stickney said. "I was bawling my eyes out."

But it would get much worse.

Morgan's pain was intense, and she grew dependent on opioids again, sometimes taking as many as 20 pills to get through a day. Her parents feared

(Swimmer continued from p10)

an overdose.

She saw a series of doctors over several months until it was finally determined that a cardiovascular abnormality was preventing blood from flowing to her lower legs. An angiogram showed blood stalled after reaching her calf. There was no blood circulation in her remaining foot, and the bones were dying.

The diagnosis also explained why a broken bone in her left foot had never healed — necessitating the first amputation.

Reluctantly, all her physicians agreed there was no alternative. At age 22, Stickney would need to have her other leg amputated, again below the knee. Terrified, she summoned all her strength to go through with it, and on Oct. 8, as she was wheeled into surgery, Stickney asked the nurses to pull back the sheet so she could get one last look at her foot.

Immediately after the surgery, Stickney and her family went through three days of unfathomable torment when her epidural did not work. For hours at a time, Stickney endured the excruciating pain of an amputation without a pain blocker while doctors tried to balance her medication and fix the epidural.

“It was brutal,” Tony Stickney said. “At one point I mumbled a prayer to myself, ‘God, where are you?’”

Over the next two days, Morgan fell in and out of consciousness, sweat pouring off her face as her screams echoed down the corridor while she squeezed her father’s hand so tightly, they wondered if she had crushed his bones.

Late one night, Morgan tapped out a short text to an acquaintance: “I can’t do this,” she wrote.

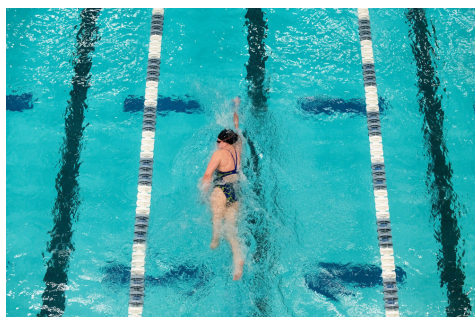
“It was pure torture,” she said in an interview in November. “If I had one leg to get up with, I would have jumped out a window. I’m not exaggerating.”

Finally a nerve blocker, a more targeted form of pain relief, was inserted on Oct. 12, and the pain was brought under control. Her father snapped a photograph of his daughter actually smiling again, and from that moment forward, Stickney began the process that she hopes will get her back in the swimming pool and onto the medal stand.

She spent the next three weeks at a rehabilitation facility in Boston learning the initial stages of life without lower legs, starting with how to sit up in bed. Ten days after the operation, Stickney said, she stopped taking all opioids.

By early November, Stickney returned home to begin what she calls “my new normal.” Until she can be fitted with a prosthesis, she has three wheelchairs — one on each of the two floors of her house and one to get to the car. She scoots up and down stairs sitting down, and her father carries her around piggyback.

Through it all, Stickney has been taking college courses online and still hopes



Stickney had to leave the training center in Colorado Springs in June after weeks of pain in her right foot. Credit...Rachel Woolf for The New York Times

(Swimmer continued from previous column)

for a career in medicine. But first, there is swimming to do. A crowdfunding page had yielded more than \$117,000 in donations by late Christmas week, and Stickney used some of the money to buy a Vasa machine — an out-of-pool apparatus used by swimmers to train their upper bodies.

There is a long way to go, but Stickney still plans to compete for a spot at the 2024 Paralympics, and perhaps even sooner. She has been invited to the Indianapolis Paralympic World Series in April. If she can get ready in time, she could return to Colorado Springs and be chosen for the 2020 United States Paralympic team in Tokyo.

Stickney is reluctant to talk about that possibility. For now, she wants to learn how to walk again.

“I’ve been through hell the last few years, but I’m stronger because of it,” she said. “Hopefully I can show others that, although life isn’t perfect, you can still find happiness.”



Some people think their life is over after amputation, I like to prove all the haters wrong and do the impossible 🙌

A text message that Stickney sent to the reporter David Waldstein this month.

(Chicken continued from p10)

drippings in the skillet and cook, stirring frequently, for 1 minute to plump the tomatoes. Add the mushrooms, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and cook until the mushrooms are soft, about 5 minutes. Add the marsala and bring to a boil. Add the remaining 1/4 cup broth and the butter and simmer until the butter is fully melted, about 30 seconds.

3.Spoon the mushroom mixture and sauce over the chicken, sprinkle with the parsley and serve. ■

WVSILC
P.O. Box 625
Institute, WV 25112-0625

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
INSTITUTE, WV
Permit No. 6

UPCOMING EVENTS

Disability Advocacy Day

WV State Capitol
January 22, 2020

Rally

9:30am

Attorney General Rotunda

For more information contact:

Paul Smith
Fair Shake Network
fsn@fairshake.org
(304) 766-0061

WV Deaf Awareness Day

WV State Capitol
February 12, 2020 9am - 3pm

WVCDHH

405 Capitol Street, Suite 800
Charleston, WV 25301

For more information contact:

Sarah Lowther
(304) 558-1675
sarah.b.lowther@wv.gov

WVSILC Executive Committee

WV SILC Office
5010D Fairlawn Avenue
Institute, WV 2510

March 4, 2020

1:00 PM

May 6, 2020

1:00 PM

WVSILC Board Meeting

February 5, 2020
9:00 AM

WVDRS District Office
4701 MacCorkle Ave SE,
Charleston, WV 25304

April 1, 2020

9:00 AM

Location TBA

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to WVSILC. To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device and choose WV Statewide Independent Living Council

 **facebook** Like us: www.facebook.com/wvsilc

 Follow us @wvsilc