

WVATS

West Virginia Assistive Technology System Newsletter

Summer Fun for Everyone

Ideas for making outdoor activities
more inclusive – **Page 1**



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Summer Fun for Everyone

The sun is shining and the flowers are blooming. It is time for summer fun!

There are many different types of assistive technology and access methods that can assist individuals in outdoor activities, depending on what you want to do. For example:

- Ergonomic gardening tools
- Raised garden beds
- Cooling clothing
- Accessible swings
- Modified lawn games
- Sport specific wheelchairs
- Alternative bicycles (e.g., hand cycles and tandem bikes)
- Bike trailers
- Swimming pool lifts
- Pools with ramp entrance and rails
- Adaptive kayaks
- Beach wheelchairs and walkers with large inflatable tires
- Accessible walking, biking and beach trails
- Trails made with firm and stable surface materials
- Wheelchair friendly tents
- Wheelchair accessible cots
- Tent cots
- Adaptive fishing rod holders
- Accessible fishing piers and platforms

It is a good idea to do research before choosing what recreation areas to visit. Does the place you want to go have access ramps and accessible bathrooms? Does it have information and signage in braille? Does the business offer adaptive equipment? What other Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant features does it have? You can contact businesses or check out their websites. You can also take a look at “A Guide to Accessible Recreation in West Virginia” at www.wvats.cedwvu.org/recreation. The guide includes an alphabetical site index, as well as both a county index and an activity index to help you find a recreation activity by name, location or type.

For information and ideas on assistive technology for outdoor activities, call WVATS at **800-841-8436**. Enjoy your summer!



Special Conditions in Housing

The Fair Housing Act says you cannot have special conditions for people in protected classes in the sale, rental or financing of housing. This includes people with disabilities. This means everyone must be treated equally.

There was a recent case in West Virginia about a woman who wanted to rent a home for herself and her brother. She called about a house for rent in the newspaper and told the landlord her brother had autism and an intellectual disability. Upon hearing this, the landlord began adding special conditions to the lease because he said he needed to protect his property.

These conditions included requiring the woman to get a note from her brother’s doctor stating that the brother would not pose a liability threat. He also asked the woman to get an insurance policy with \$1 million in liability coverage. And finally, he said he required renters have a \$2,000 monthly income.

The woman did not complete her application to rent the home because she felt it would be denied.

A week later the property was rented to a family who did not have a member with a disability. The landlord did not require this family to purchase liability insurance, did not ask for a doctor’s note and did not require them to meet the monthly income requirement.

The courts ruled the landlord had discriminated against the woman and her brother, by putting special conditions on the lease because a member of the family had a disability.

If this has happened to you, you may be a victim of discrimination. Contact the WV Fair Housing Action Network at **304-296-6091** for more information.

Early Childhood Resource Lending Library

If you are a parent or professional working with children who have special needs, then the Early Childhood Resource Lending Library (ECRLL) may be the place for you. The library has hundreds of resources available to community members, and provides young West Virginians with special needs, their families and service providers an opportunity to “try before you buy.” The library allows individuals to use assistive devices that would otherwise not be available to them. It aims to provide access to technology, which increases mobility, social skills and learning.

If you have a young child with special needs, the ECRLL may have devices to help you. Assistive technology devices can be used to include your child in daily family activities and routine. There are also toys and switches which can help your child have an educational play experience. Communication devices help children to communicate their wants, needs and feelings to family members and others.

If you are in the Charleston area, you can visit the library at 350 Capitol Street, Room 427. Regardless of your location, you can have access to the services by calling **800-642-9704** or through the Virtual Lending Library online at <https://vll.cedwvu.org>.

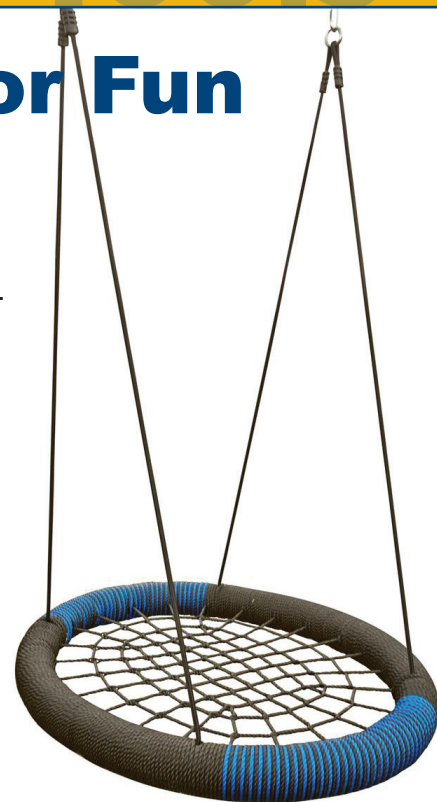


Powerful Tools for Outdoor Fun

Monster Web Swing

The Monster Web Swing is a 42 inch by 33 inch oval swing for inclusive play. The oversized swing base is made of steel tubing wrapped in padding and braided plastic rope. The nest swing design allows a child to feel supported while sitting and swinging alone, with a caregiver or with a friend.

For more information, visit www.swing-n-slide.com or call 800-888-1232.



Giant Garden Games

Giant Garden Games from Tosso are large sized versions of classic games that can be played outside. You can play games like tic tac, toe, dice, checkers, chess, dominoes, jenga or connect 4. These giant outdoor games come with large pieces that can be easier to find and pick up in the yard.

For more information, visit www.tosso.com or call 858-500-3707

Glow Bocce Ball Set

Bocce is an Italian game that is popular at the Special Olympics and around the world. The Glow Bocce Ball Set is a game for two to four players. The colorful balls are plastic and have an LED light inside. You can turn the light on with a water resistant button to make the ball more visible, even in the dark.

For more information, visit www.tosso.com or call 858-500-3707.





Underwater Light Show

The Underwater Light Show is a disco ball you can use in or out of the pool. You can push a button to display four different light patterns/speeds. The toy runs on 3 AA batteries, and has a timer so it can automatically switch off after an hour.

For more information, visit www.toysplash.com or call 877-734-2458.

Tent Cot

The Tent Cot is a raised sleep surface enclosed in a tent for camping. It is available in a single size for one person or double size for two people. The cot is raised 11 inches off the ground by an aluminum frame. It can be converted into a lounge chair for daytime use. The tent has a waterproof coated roof and sides. It comes with overhead zippered windows and rain fly.

For more information, visit www.sportsmansguide.com or call 800-882-2962.



WaterWheels

WaterWheels is a beach wheelchair that floats. It is a lightweight, all-terrain chair designed to help give easier access in sand, soft soil, snow and water. It has yellow floats on the arms and yellow balloon style tires.

For more information about WaterWheels, other beach wheelchairs and beach walkers, visit www.beachwheelchair.com or call 850-478-5765.



Call WVATS Toll Free 800-841-8436

Service Animals for Farmers and Ranchers

“Service Animals for Farmers and Ranchers”, a session by staff from West Virginia Assistive Technology System and WV AgrAbility, was held on April 15 at the National AgrAbility Workshop. Carmen Fullmer and Inetta Fluharty talked about the history of service animals in the United States, service dogs and miniature horses under the Americans with Disabilities Act, task examples and assistive technology for using a service animal as an accommodation on the farm. Fullmer and Fluharty spoke about training resources, highlighting three programs — Hearts of Gold (WV), PHARM Dog (MO) and Zen Clicker Training (NY).



They presented videos that profiled a service dog and miniature horses doing tasks to help their owners. The pair finished by answering questions from a standing room only crowd of about 50 people at the event in Rochester, New York. To schedule this training, or for more information, contact Carmen Fullmer at **304-293-4692**.

Strong Arm Fishing Rod Holder

The Strong Arm Fishing Rod Holder is designed to help people with limited or no grip cast a fishing pole. This leather holder can be worn over or under most clothing, and is available in a right hand or left hand style.

For more information, visit www.adaptiveoutdoorsman.com or call 877-212-9411.



Add-a-Bay-Shade System

Add-a-Bay-Shade Systems come in a variety of sizes. You can also choose between different amounts of shade coverage you want. The system is made of knitted polyethylene shade cloth and a galvanized steel tubing support frame. The shade cloth shields people, animals, plants and vehicles from the sun.

For more information, visit www.farmtek.com or call 800-FarmTek (800-327-6835).

Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints On The Road

Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints brought together professionals from West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS), WV AgrAbility and WVU Extension Service to share the national stage. Carmen Fullmer, Inetta Fluharty and John David Johnson presented a session together at the National AgrAbility Workshop in Rochester, New York. They showcased the success of this accessible gardening program for West Virginians with arthritis and joint limitations. The session focused on how the program grew from the seed of an idea in 2007 to the flourishing, accessible gardening program it is today.

Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints is administered by WVATS. Funding is made possible by the WV Osteoporosis and Arthritis Program, a program of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health.

As of this growing season, Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints has funded 120 accessible gardening projects in 75 percent of the counties in West Virginia. Volunteers are the heart of the gardening projects, who have grown flowers and

healthy food at senior centers, community buildings and parks around the mountain state.

Several past gardening projects were highlighted. Johnson, a WVU extension agent, shared his experiences as project manager of the Jackson County Master Gardener group, which received Green Thumbs funding in 2012 and 2014 and other community support. The group has turned a field into a garden, built raised beds and a high tunnel with a wheelchair accessible walkway. The site has evolved into one of the largest community gardens in West Virginia.

Several audience members from around the country said that they wanted to learn from this accessible gardening model so they could begin similar programs in their home states.

To learn about how your nonprofit organization can apply to the Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints program to make your accessible gardening idea a reality in West Virginia, call **800-841-8436** or visit www.greenthumbs.cedwvu.org.



LGarden

The LGarden was made to allow people to sit or stand while they garden. This raised bed has wheels so you can roll it to another area or lock it in place when it is not rolling. The wooden wedge shaped bed has a vinyl liner that allows you to drain extra water. The frame has a low shelf, and is made of weather resistant coated steel for outdoor use.

For more information, call **414-964-7977** or visit www.elevatedgardening.com.



Contact WVATS

West Virginia University
Center for Excellence in Disabilities
959 Hartman Run Road
Morgantown, WV 26505
304-293-4692
Hotline: 800-841-8436
TTY: 800-518-1448

WVATS Newsletter Editor:

Carmen Fullmer

(cfullmer@hsc.wvu.edu)

Editorial Committee: Melina Danko,

Carmen Fullmer, Melanie Burge

Layout: Brian Pickens

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All printed materials are available in braille, electronic format, CD and large print. WVU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution.

The Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED) is designated as the State's lead agency for assistive technology services.

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Website address: www.wvats.cedwvu.org



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Happy 25th Anniversary, ADA!

On July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. This groundbreaking legislation was designed to stop discrimination on the basis of disability in the areas of employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation and telecommunications. The law was amended in 2008 to further refine its goals and scope.

To raise awareness about the anniversary, the ADA Legacy Tour Bus has been traveling across the country. The bus made a stop at the Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living (NWVCIL) in Morgantown, WV, in May. Individuals with disabilities, the NWVCIL, the Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED) at WVU, the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS), the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) and the general public participated.

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ADA, it is hopeful that the lessons and successes of the past will further pave the way for disability rights protection and equality in the future.

