

The New eSlate Voting Machines



Photos by Steve Freier

Ribbon-Cutting in the East Palo Universal Voting Center (L-R) E.P.A. Mayor Ruben Abrica, Craig McCulloh of the Commission on Disabilities, San Mateo County Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, Secretary of State Bruce McPherson, and Chief Elections Officer Warren Slocum.

Frank Welte, Vice President of the Council of the Blind, and numerous representatives from disability groups and community agencies, including Steve Freier of CID, were present for a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at the East Palo Alto Civic Center.



Frank Welte said, "I've been waiting for this day for a long time. It's finally arrived!" Welte is seen here casting his vote as one of the first members of the disabled community using the new eSlate machine.

"Accessible eSlates makes it possible for any voter to vote early at any UVC location in the

County," explained Warren Slocum, Chief Elections Officer for San Mateo County. The HAVA compliant eSlate voting devices also feature a voter verifiable paper confirmation of ballot choices, and they deliver ballots in English, Chinese or Spanish, meeting the terms of the federal Voting Rights Act that mandates language accessibility.

Voters who work in Redwood City and live in San Mateo can vote near their workplace—in the morning, on their lunch hour, or after work. "The process of participation in our democracy just became more convenient for voters," said Slocum. All UVCs are secure, accessible and centrally located.

"The last time we purchased a new voting system was 1992. The technology embedded in the new voting equipment makes it possible to support 'anywhere' voting," said Slocum. "What that means is that the new voting equipment has the capa-

(Continued in next column)

From the Executive Director

Kent Mickelson

Director's Report



Back in March 2006 the San Mateo County Elections Department had a major problem. They could not get enough accessible voting machines to comply with federal election laws (HAVA) in time for the primary. This was due to decisions beyond their control at the federal level. To solve their problems they contacted the San Mateo County Commission on Disabilities and asked for help. Because of the late date in getting machine approval, they could only get twenty-five accessible voting machines in time for the June elections. Warren Slocum and his staff agreed to work with a committee of commission members to work out a solution. Carol Marks and Sarah Carrade, from the Elections Department, were designated to work with the committee.

What came out of those meetings was the concept of "early voting centers" or UVCs - Universal Voting Centers. These 9 centers were located all over the county and had the "eSlate" accessible voting machines installed. They were open for 14 days before the June 6th primary election and *any* registered voter could use them to vote. The committees worked very hard to make certain that the UVCs were in accessible locations close to transportation services. The times of operations were planned so that there were morning hours, evening hours, and Saturday hours. Every effort was made to make the centers accessible and convenient for people with disabilities.

The next step was to get the word out about the centers so that people with disabilities could use them. Again, the Elections Department got the help of the Commission on Disabilities. The commission members helped the election officials develop a list of groups to contact about the early voting centers. They also compiled a list of group meetings for the elections officials to attend. Sarah Carrade and friends worked tirelessly to get the word out about UVC early voting centers.

This effort on the UVCs is another example of San Mateo County doing it better. Warren Slocum and his able staff of Carol Marks and Sarah Carrade are to be congratulated for working with the Commission on Disabilities to solve the access problem. Two fine organizations working together to make voting accessible for people with disabilities in San Mateo County!

bility of storing and compiling the precinct information, partisan ballot choices for a primary, alternate language choices and ballot contests from a master ballot. It can provide any registered voter, of any partisan affiliation, including non-partisan, residing in any precinct, requiring any language, to get their specific ballot during the 14 days prior to the election and vote."

"Every voter, including voters with disabilities, should have the ability to cast their ballot privately and independently." The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) guarantees that voters with disabilities be able to cast their ballot independently and in secret, as every other registered American voter does." said Secretary of State Bruce McPherson.

Traveling Tips for People with a Disability

by Elizabeth Palko, CID Receptionist



With the weather finally on the up and up it's traveling season. Accessibility makes it difficult for some of our consumers but there are several helpful websites with tips and suggestions on making travel more manageable. Here are some quick tips:

• Before traveling, talk to your physician about any immunization shots you need, extra prescriptions, medical equipment you need to take, etc.

• If you are traveling by plane, make sure you let the airline know in advance of your needs. Do not pack your medication in your checked baggage and have it readily accessible. Make sure your carry on items have an identification tag on them clearly displayed.

• If traveling by train, make sure your train station and stops are accessible.

• If traveling by ship, ask about accessibility on the ship as well as the destination spots.

• If calling for a cab, make sure you call with enough time since there may be a longer wait for an accessible cab.

• When booking a hotel, try to find ones close to your destination, major hotel chains are more likely to be accessible.

If you have any problems, you can contact the U.S. Department of Transportation hotline 1-800-778-4838 (voice) or 1-800-455-9880 (TTY) for disability related issues.

Here is a listing of some helpful websites:

- **Access Northern California:** traveling tips for the disabled, resources, events, etc. www.accessca.com
- **DisabledTravelers.com:** tips, resources, access guides, travel products, etc. www.disabledtravelers.com
- **Links to destinations and guides in the U.S.** www.disabledtravelers.com/access_guides.htm#unitedstates
- **California Home Page:** List of parks in California by region that are accessible. www.access.parks.ca.gov/
- **Gimponthego.com:** Tips, resources, traveling with special needs (animals, oxygen). www.gimponthego.com
- **Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program:** events around the Bay Area. www.borp.org

INFORMATION & REFERRAL

ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, COPING WITH AIDS, CHRONIC ILLNESS, OR A DISABILITY?

Chicken Soupers is a program of Jewish Family and Children's Services for members of the community who would benefit from delicious home-cooked, home-delivered meals to nourish the body and uplift the spirit.

Family members caring for an adult or child with an illness or disability are also eligible. Preference is given to Jewish clients, however, they do have eligibility for some non-Jewish clients too. If you would like to know more about Chicken Soupers please call Marta at (650)595-0783 ext. 118

The Employment and Disability, Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach Program

We are interested in hearing from consumers in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties who currently receive Social Security benefits and want to increase your full or part-time employment. What are your goals for returning to work? What barriers have you encountered? Are there job search and vocational counseling resources that you found useful? What special training or equipment needs do you have?

We are also interested in hearing from members of minority communities about your efforts to return to work. We would also like to hear from "transition-aged" youth who are just entering the work world.

We can refer you to people who can assist you in applying for SSI and SSDI. We can explain how work earnings effect SSI and SSDI as well as medical insurance benefits.

We can explain other work incentive programs such as the **Plan for Achieving Self-Support**, the **Student Earned Income Exclusion**, and the **Ticket to Work** programs, and provide referrals to vocational counseling and training programs. We can help you plan so that your benefits are maximized as your employment earnings increase.

For more information, in San Mateo County contact David Mon at (650) 595-0783 ext. 127, or in Santa Clara County call Christine Fitzgerald at (408) 246-1178

PREPARING FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

by Jim Stinehoff - Safety & Emergency Services

Current Avian Influenza activity in Asia, Europe, and Africa has raised the red flag that a potential pandemic could be a real disaster. With this urgency in mind, the San Mateo County Health Department has launched pandemic preparations and planning to limit the spread of disease.

If a pandemic occurs, having accurate and reliable information will be critical. Knowing the facts is the best preparation. Identify sources you can count on for providing reliable information.

- Reliable, accurate, and timely information is available at www.PandemicFlu.gov.
- Another source for information on pandemic influenza is the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). This line is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a weeks. TTY: 1-888-232-6348. Questions can be e-mailed to www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov.
- Look for information on your local and state government Web sites. Links are available to each state department of public health at PandemicFlu.gov.
- Talk to your local health care providers and public health officials.
- Listen to local and national radio, watch news reports on television, read newspapers and other sources of printed Web-based information.

As a service to people with disabilities to maintain their independence during any emergency, CID offers a packet of self and home emergency preparedness information, questionnaires, and checklists.

Packets may requested by contacting Jim Stinehoff at (650) 595-0783, x126.



RAY'S CORNER

by Ray Pittsinger,
Program Manager

The Department of Justice reached an agreement with a 12-room motel in Colorado resolving a service animal complaint. The owner agreed to make modifications in the motel's policies to ensure that individuals with disabilities who use service animals have an equal opportunity to use the accommodations of the resort.

Their new policy provides that persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a service animal may not be required to show documents certifying their service animal's status or to equip their animal with a special sign or harness. The owner also agreed to post the new policy in the motel lobby, train staff on carrying out the policy, and pay the complainant \$750 in damages.



NEW DISABILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS ANNOUNCED

by Alexa Johanson
Financial Benefits Counselor



In March of 2006, Social Security Administration Commissioner Jo Anne Barnhart announced the issuance of a new disability determination process. This new rule, known as **Disability Service Improvement**

(DSI), has virtually re-written the entire disability claim process to update and streamline service for applicants.

NEW CLAIM SYSTEM RESPONSE DEADLINE ALERT!

Promptly open all correspondence you may receive from social security administration and take special note to comply with the response deadline given in the letter or form. Certain response times have been shortened to ten (10) calendar days! Be sure to keep your envelope showing the postmark!

The social security representative that I spoke with about these new time-lines stated that there is no provision for any "automatic" additional time extension during phase-in implementation of the new claims process and that responses received after the deadline date will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Therefore, in cases where the claimant has not been able to comply with the deadline date, the claimant or claimant's representative should call their local social security office to advise of the "late" response and have this notification logged into the file. Without this notification, the claim could be closed out for non-response.

If you have questions about the new procedure, please call and we will be happy to be of assistance. Look for more updates in this newsletter. To learn more, you are invited to visit: www.socialsecurity.gov/disability-new-approach.

Contact Alexa Johanson, Financial Benefits Counselor at: (650) 595-0783 ext. 122



Hugs

by Gayle Prytz, Peer Counselor

Hi Folks! I hope everyone is feeling optimistic now that "Mrs. Sun" finally decided to show her warm face and help lift us up out of the post winter blahs. (I love the rain, but even I was ready to start shopping for materials to build an ark.)

Lately I have been listening to people talk about having the energy to do spring cleaning and making plans for "summer fun." That prompted a thought that maybe we should also be thinking about making our own physical and mental checklist.

We must not forget the yearly physical exam and necessary lab work. As women, we need the annual gynecological exam and mammogram. Men, please do not forget the yearly prostate check up. Also, if one is feeling emotionally out of sync, maybe it is time for a check in with a counselor/therapist. We, the disabled, have to be the administrators of our own physical and emotional well-being - Who else is going to?

Also, please do not forget the infamous dental exam. Poor dental hygiene negatively impedes healing and can be detrimental to healthy bodily functions. Dental problems can harmfully impact self esteem, and do not forget about the PAIN decay can cause.

We are the care-takers of many gifts so please always remember: *There is no one more important than you!*

Happy Spring! Hugs! Gayle

FAIR HOUSING IS THE LAW!

Do you know? Tenants with disabilities have the right to make a special request in rental housing. Housing providers have a responsibility to consider all requests and grant them if they are reasonable.

Examples include allowing a disabled tenant to have a service animal, like a Seeing Eye dog, even in a "no pet" rental unit or allowing a tenant on wheelchair to install a ramp.

Please contact Marta 650 595-0783 ext 118 if you have housing concerns.

Family Caregiver Support Program

Additional monies are available for Family Caregivers who meet the following criteria:

1. Any member of a family providing homecare for a family member over age 60, or
2. A grandparent raising a grandchild under the age of 18.

The Housing Accessibility Modification (HAM) Program covers San Mateo County. The HAM program can provide such items as minor home modification such as small ramps, grab bars in tubs, showers and toilet areas, wooden rails in and out of your home, and other safety devices as needed.

An Occupational Therapist may be sent to your home to perform an evaluation. CID has experienced installers who will perform any necessary installations.

The Assistive Technology Program can assist with researching and finding other technologies such as walkie-talkies, assistive computer devices, or other devices that you feel would make your life easier.



NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
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Belmont, CA
94002

Center for Independence of the Disabled
875 O'Neill Avenue
Belmont, CA 94002
TEL: 650-595-0783
TDD: 650-595-0743
FAX: 650-595-0261
<http://www.cidbelmont.org/>

CID NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!

CID needs volunteers to help disabled individuals in San Mateo County with these two programs:

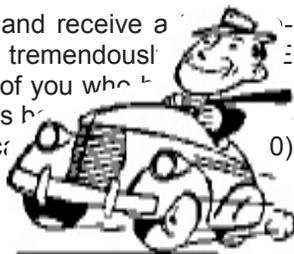
- o **SASH** serves people who are unable to leave their homes or unable to lift or carry groceries. Some people have diminished sight or a physical challenge and cannot lift heavy objects.
- o **VIMM** volunteers are trained to help individuals with basic money management; including help sorting and paying bills and organizing a simple bookkeeping system.

*Please give of your time;
Your efforts WILL be appreciated!*

To become a volunteer please contact **Sally Pierotti**, VIMM/SASH Coordinator at (650) 594-0783 ext.117.

Donate Your Old Car to CID!

Donate Your Old Car to CID and receive a tax deduction. Your donation will help CID tremendously! THANKS goes out to the many of you who have donated! CID is more prosperous because of you! It's really easy and fast. To donate, call (650) 595-0783 ext. 115



Our Late Spring Garden



With the help of CID consumers and staff, we started our late spring garden on Saturday, May 15, 2010.

With the help of the Hillsborough Garden Club and their expert guidance we cleared the garden, weeded, and planned and planted a variety of plants including kinds of tomatoes, three varieties of "pole" beans, along with beets, radishes, carrots, chard, lettuce, basil, Italian parsley, cilantro, green peppers, rosemary and sunflowers.

We're learning that gardening is great exercise, provides a chance to make new friends, the results taste better than anything you buy in the supermarket, and it's fun.

Please ask to see our garden when you visit our agency- the seeds and seedlings are just taking root. Please leave a message for Marta or David if you would like to join us working in the garden.