News & Information for the Access-Minded

May — July 2015

AccessLetter

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

RLCs' Funding Threatened—Community Rallies

On March 4, 2015, Massachusetts governor Charlie Baker proposed the upcoming fiscal year budget, cutting Department of Mental Health (DMH) funding for Recovery Learning Communities (RLCs) by 50%. Immediately emails started flying all over the state, among people with mental health challenges served by RLCs, and allies. Rallies were planned, press releases and petitions were drafted, and pleas were posted urging everyone to contact their legislators. The response, from RLC members, allies, and legislators, was resounding, but as of this writing, the funding is still not secure.

At RLCs, people participate in groups and trainings that cover everything from coping with hearing voices to yoga to job-hunting skills. They are peer-run, meaning that their staff members also have struggled or are struggling with mental health challenges. Because of this, "RLCs are able to reach many individuals who…might otherwise not seek help at all," states the RLC press release. RLCs "are unique because there is no referral, intake, or waitlist process," writes Janel Tan, Program Director of the Cambridge-Somerville RLC. "People with psychiatric conditions can have easy access to mental health services when they need it—all for free!" Over 8,000 people were reached by the RLCs in fiscal year 2014.

If the budget is signed as proposed, "These cuts would be disastrous," says Paul Styczko, a peer in recovery and the Director of the Metro Boston RLC. "As it stands now, we have demand for services at tons of places where we haven't been able to meet the need."

(More on RLC Funding Cuts, page 2)

ADA 25 Boston Celebration Set for July 22nd on Boston Common

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is one of the most transformative civil rights laws in US history. Its mandate created equal access and opportunities for persons with disabilities.

To commemorate the historic 25th anniversary of its signing, the New England ADA Center with cooperation of state, city and area organizations is proud to announce that the official 25th Anniversary recognition will occur on Wednesday, July 22nd from 11am-3pm on the Boston Common.

This free family-friendly event is open to the public and will include dignitaries, celebrities, music, demonstrations, education booths, music, games and more. The theme of the event honors the tremendous achievements accomplished in the past 25 years to advance equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities, while rallying the public to forge ahead and take on new challenges.

The event will start with a festive march around Boston Common kicked off by City of Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh.

"Much remains to be done to achieve full inclusion for all Americans with disabilities, but it is a different and better world today thanks to the first 25 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act," said Oce Harrison, Director of the New England Americans with Disabilities Act Center in Boston. "Meet the pioneers of the ADA, as well as young advocates on the Common."

(ADA 25 Celebration, page 3)

RLC Funding Cuts
(continued from page 1)

Six RLCs in Massachusetts operate out of over twenty centers. The Cambridge-Somerville RLC, or CSRLC, serves the Cambridge area. "I [had] never fully been able to accomplish much in the way of Mental Health progress," writes one member, Robert W Steinberg. "Your best bet was to become a Med Zombie on a locked ward or go to a long term facility and that to me was not a solution. It was a prison sentence. I have made more progress in the last year from attending classes and groups at the CSRLC than I have with thirty plus years of seeking help [elsewhere]." Another member says, "I don't know what I would be doing right now without this resource."

"In addition," states the press release, "RLCs have saved taxpayers dollars through peer support phone lines and peer bridge supports by reducing 911 calls, emergency room visits and psychiatric hospital stays."

Advocates rally April 1 at the State House in support of Recovery Learning Communities (RLCs).

On April 1, 150 people turned out for a rally in front of the State House. Supporters came from as far away as Western Massachusetts. Ruthie Poole, Director of Advocacy of the Transformation Center, says, "There was a hopefulness, an energy: Me being here really matters. Straight, gay, transgender, African Americans, White people, Latinos who spoke in Spanish—they talked about how being at the RLC literally saved their lives."

Other organizations, allies of the RLCs, also took up the cause. The Massachusetts chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI Mass) added to its previously-scheduled April 13 Advocacy Day the plea, "Restore the $1.7 Million to 5046-0000 to fully fund the Recovery Learning Communities." Laurie Martinelli, Executive Director of NAMI Mass, says, "We can see the benefits of having the RLCs. It was a dumb idea to cut them—I hope they're figuring that out."

Also on April 13, the Massachusetts Ways and Means Committee heard constituents' input on the proposed budget. Eight panelists spoke on behalf of the RLCs. Here too the wider community supported the RLCs' cause. Colin Killick, community organizer of the Disability Policy Consortium, wore one of the "SAVE THE RLCS" stickers being distributed. "We as an organization are supportive of RLCs and the important work they do," he says.

On April 15, the Ways and Means Committee announced that House Leadership and Rep. Brian Dempsey, Ways and Means Chair, restored to the RLCs their full funding. As this article goes to press, exultant emails are flying among RLC supporters. "GO OUT AND CELEBRATE! Sorry for shouting but I just can't help myself!" writes Justin Brown, Director of the Northeast RLC.

However, the process is not over; the Senate still has not made its position clear. Gov. Baker will sign the completed budget into law on July 1, 2015. Until then, Ruthie Poole says, "We have to keep the pressure on. We'll need every supporter." Janel Tan adds that every call, letter, or email will help. The people of Massachusetts are making their voices heard on this topic.

Ann Burgess, former worker at Northeast RLC, says, "We are people with lived experiences of diagnoses and trauma, and we are out there to promote hope."

--by Valerie Hadden. Valerie writes about many disability issues at Making the Invisible Visible *at valeriehadden.wordpress.com. Contact her at valeriehadden@yahoo.com.*

ADA 25 Celebration

(continued from page 1)

Sign the Pledge to Celebrate and to Recommit to Full Implementation of the ADA at http://adaanniversary.org/pledge, because disability rights are civil rights, and accessibility benefits *everyone*.

The ADA 25 Boston committee is made up of 33 organizations from state, community and non-profit sectors. The committee's goal is to ensure that all are welcome in this celebration.

For more information, visit http://www.newenglandada.org/ada25boston

ADA 25 Boston Media Contact:

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Upcoming Events of Interest to the Disability Community (See end of Calendar for all weekly and recurring events)

May 21 **iPad Communication Training for Parents** – Jennifer Abramson, M.S. CCC-SLP from the Autism Language Program at Boston Children's Hospital Needham will provide an overview of communication possibilities using the iPad. The training will illustrate methods used to promote communication in learners with autism for purposes beyond simple requesting, focusing on the iPad as a comprehensive learning tool. iPad tips and tricks will be shown, as well as various apps and strategies to support language learning and communication. This workshop will be held at The Charles River Center, 59 East Militia Heights Road, Needham. RSVP to Ellen Kilicarslan is required at ekilicarslan@charlesrivercenter.org.

May 22 **All Access Pass Tour of VSA Mass**– Free tour of VSA Mass, a non-profit promoting the involvement of people of all abilities in the cultural life of our communities. Tour will be held from 9-10am at 89 South Street in Boston. Come learn more about our work towards educational and cultural inclusion. We'll share some inspiring stories about how the arts transform our communities and create opportunities for inclusion. To reserve a spot and/or request ASL interpretation or other accommodations please call Charlie Washburn at 617.350.7713, x102, or email cjwashburn@vsamass.org.

May 24 **Autism Awareness Day at Fenway Park** – Red Sox Autism Awareness Day invites the public to support Autism Speaks and the work they do for people with autism spectrum disorders. Join us for an afternoon of baseball at Fenway Park and raise awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders. Portion of proceeds from each ticket purchased will be donated to Autism Speaks. For Groups of 20 or more, please contact Matt Labossiere at 617.226.6834 or mlabossiere@redsox.com. For more information visit, boston.redsox.mlb.com/bos/ticketing/autism_speak.jsp.

May 25 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access** –Morningstar Access offers children with special needs/medical needs the opportunity to visit the Museum from 8-10am, a time when there are only a few other visitors. At these times, there is a limit of 100 guests, so children and their families can explore the Museum with less concern about infections and large crowds. Fee is $7 per person and

registration is required. For more information or to register, visit bostonchildrensmuseum.org/morningstar or email Saki Iwamoto, Health and Wellness Educator at Iwamoto@BostonChildrensMuseum.org or call 617.986.3697.

May 25 **Memorial Day Open House at the MFA** – FREE admission to the Museum of Fine Arts for all! Enjoy engaging art-making activities and tours throughout the day, and don't miss special exhibitions: "Hokusai," "In the Wake: Japanese Photographers Respond to 3/11," "Gordon Parks: Back to Fort Scott," and "Elemental." For more information, visit www.mfa.org/programs/series/memorial-day-open-house.

May 25 **FREE Hike –** Take a free, gentle hike, exploring Fall River/Freetown State Forest with a focus on fun and meeting new people. Assistive equipment, mountain wheelchairs, and sighted guides available. This will be held from 12-4pm and located at Freetown State Forest on 110 Slab Bridge Road, Assonet, MA 02702. Pre-registration is required. Call Stavros Outdoor Access at 413.259.0009 to register.

May 30 **FREE Adaptive Recreation Fair** – Join the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Universal Access Program from 10am-3pm, on the banks of the Charles River at Artesani /Herter Park, 1175 Soldier's Field Road in Brighton for a fun-filled day celebrating accessible outdoor recreation in MassParks (rain or shine). Activities will include cycling, hiking, music, letterboxing, kite flying, face painting, snacks, interpretive programs, and much more! Find out about accessible recreation programs in the Boston area and beyond! Pre-registration is highly recommended. To register or volunteer please call Gigi at 617.626.1294. For more event information visit, www.accessrec.org/event/adaptive-recreation-fair.

June 2 **OCD Massachusetts Lecture Series: Intrusive Thoughts** – Sponsored by OCD Massachusetts and McLean Hospital, the Les Grodberg Memorial Lecture Series presents a series of preeminent speakers in the field of OCD and related disorders. Lee Baer, PhD of Massachusetts General Hospital will be speaking about Intrusive Thoughts from 7-8pm in Room 132 of McLean Hospital's De Marneffe Cafeteria Building. In addition, there are three free support groups available to the public on lecture nights. A professionally led support group for parents of people with OCD meets before each lecture, from 6-7pm, in room 118. After each presentation, from 8:15-9:15pm, there are two self-help groups: a GOALS group for people with OCD and their friends and family that meets in room 132 and a support group for people with OCD that meets in room 118. For more information, please contact Denise Egan Stack at 617.872.0935. The identity of participants and content of group discussion must remain confidential. Furthermore, if desired, you may remain anonymous. We remind participants to be open and supportive to the views of all those who take part in the support groups. Please check www.ocdmassachusetts.org for information on changes to the schedule or cancellations.

June 10 **Adaptive Hike in Carlisle** – Take a gentle hike at Great Brook Farm State Park, 165 North Rd., Carlisle, MA with a focus on fun and meeting new people. Assistive equipment, mountain wheelchairs, and sighted guides will be available. The cost is $3 for individuals, $5 for families and $25 for groups. Time is still to be determined, and registration is required by calling Stavros Outdoor Access at 413.259.0009.

June 10 **Adaptive Hike in Milton** – Take a gentle hike at Blue Hills State Reservation, 840 Hillside St. in Milton. Same details (except location) as the June 10 Carlisle hike.

June 11 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** – meets in the 2nd floor Conference Room at 51 Inman Street from 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY), or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.

June 17 **Adaptive Hike** – Take a gentle hike at Halibut Point State Park, Gott Ave. Rockport, MA with a focus on fun and meeting new people. Assistive equipment, mountain wheelchairs, and sighted guides will be available. The cost is $3 for individuals, $5 for families and $25 for groups. Time is still to be determined, and registration is required by calling Stavros Outdoor Access at 413.259.0009.

June 18 **All Access Pass Tour of VSA Mass**– Free tour of the state organization on arts and disability from 12-1pm at 89 South Street in Boston. See May 22 listing for details, including registration information.

June 24 **BSA Access Committee** –Boston Society of Architects (BSA) works hard to ensure building regulations and codes to maximize accessibility. The Access Committee meeting is free and open to public from 12-1:30pm at BSA Space, 290 Congress Street in Boston. For more information, visit www.architects.org/committees/access-committee.

June 26 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access** –Morningstar Access offers children with special needs/medical needs the opportunity to visit the Museum from 8-10am. See the May 25 listing for details, including registration information.

June 27 **Open Captioned (OC) Performance of NEWSIES** – OC will be provided at this 2pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Tickets start at $43 and may be purchased online, at the Boston Opera House Box Office (539 Washington Street in Boston) or by phone at 617.880.2419. Be sure to request OC seating. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit http://boston.broadway.com/accessible_services/.

June 28 **Audio Described (AD) Performance of NEWSIES** – AD will be provided at this 1pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Be sure to request AD when purchasing tickets. See June 27 listing for the remaining details.

July 2 **American Sign Language Performance of NEWSIES** – ASL will be provided at this 7:30pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Be sure to request ASL seating. See June 27 listing for the remaining details.

July 12 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access: Evening Edition!** – Morningstar Access offers children with special needs/medical needs the opportunity to visit the Museum at a time when there are only a few other visitors. At these times, there is a limit of 100 guests, so children and their families can explore the Museum with less concern about infections and large crowds. While typically held in the mornings before the museum opens, this session will be held in the evening from 6-8pm. Fee is $7 per person and registration is required. For more information or to register, visit www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/morningstar or email Saki Iwamoto, Health and Wellness Educator at Iwamoto@BostonChildrensMuseum.org or call 617.986.3697.

July 13 **Kayaking at Walden Pond State Reservation** – Offered by All Out Adventures, adaptations and support available as needed, allowing you to experience flat-water kayaking on historic Walden Pond. Sign up for an hour-long paddle between 9:45am and 3:15pm at Walden Pond State Reservation Boat Launch, 915 Walden St. Concord, MA! Cost is $5 per paddle or $35 for a summer pass. Registration is required by calling Call All Out Adventures at 413.584.2052.

July 16 **Beginner Kayaking on The Charles River** – Strengthen your kayak skills by joining Waypoint Adventure during a two-hour exploration of a beautiful section of the Charles River (1-3pm)! Cost is $10 per person and registration is required by calling Waypoint Adventure at 617.244.5472. Call for details, including exact location.

July 16 **Adaptive Cycling at Artesani Park** – Join All Out Adventures from 11am to 3pm at Artesani/Herter Park (1175 Soldiers Field Road in Brighton) and explore a wide variety of adaptive bikes for adults and kids, including hand cycles, trikes, tandems, and recumbent bikes! Cost is $3 per person. Registration is required by calling All Out Adventures at 413.584.2052.

July 20 **Kayaking at Walden Pond State Reservation** – See July 13 listing for details.

July 21 **Beginner Kayaking on The Charles River** – See July 16 listing for details.

July 22 **ADA 25th Anniversary Celebration on the Boston Common** – Join the New England ADA Center and many others from 11am-3:00pm on the Boston Common to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Help us mark this important milestone kicked off with a march (everyone is welcome to join!), great performers, speakers, and tons of family-friendly activities in the heart of Boston! This event is FREE and no registration is required. For more information, visit www.newenglandada.org/ada25boston.

ADA 25 years
Celebrate the Americans with Disabilities Act
Boston Common July 22, 2015

July 23 **Beginner Kayaking on The Charles River** – See July 16 listing for details.

July 26 **25th Anniversary of the Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act!** – This landmark civil rights legislation was signed into law by President George HW Bush on July 26, 1990. Visit www.adalegacy.org/ada25 for the countdown, to track the ADA Legacy Bus Tour (which started in July, 2014!), and for more information about this exciting anniversary! Sign the pledge to celebrate this milestone and to recommit at http://adaanniversary.org.

July 27 **Kayaking at Walden Pond State Reservation** – See July 13 listing for details.

Weekly & Recurring Events

Access to Art tours – the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of visitor centered, interactive tours designed for groups with disabilities or if persons with disabilities prefer an individual tour with a companion or care partner. There is no fee for these tours but most require pre-registration. Contact us for a sighted guide or other access accommodation: Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189 (voice), 617.369.3395 (TTY), or email maccess@mfa.org. The MFA is located at 465 Huntington Avenue and is accessible by the Green line "Museum of Fine Arts" stop, or the Orange line "Ruggles" stop. Please visit www.mfa.org for more information.

Injured Worker Support Meetings – Meetings are scheduled by appointment, often the 1st Wednesday of the month, 5:15 - 6:45 pm, but other times can be arranged. Appointments usually take place at 650 Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, Boston, 4th Floor Conference Room. RSI Action volunteers answer questions and provide resources and support to people with RSIs (Repetitive Strain Injuries) or other workplace injuries. To set up a meeting or more info, call 617.247.6827, or visit www.rsiaction.org.

Mondays

FREE Basic Yoga for Women – Offered by the Cambridge Women's Center at 46 Pleasant Street, this group meets each Monday from 6-7pm and uses basic breath work and poses to relax and rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit. Space is limited, so pre-registration is required at 617.354.6394 or maddybeauregard@gmail.com.

NAMI Support Group for Caregivers – Free support group sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, for family members, friends and other caregivers of persons with mental illness who provide understanding, comfort, hope and help. This group meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 7:30pm at the Cambridge Hospital Learning Center, Conference Room A, 3rd Floor, 1493 Cambridge Street. For more information, www.namimass.org/programs, or call Elizabeth at 781.646.0397.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group – meets biweekly on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 7-8:30pm at the Friends Meeting House, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge. This group is open to anyone with OCD or related disorder and is a casual, open discussion of the trials and triumphs! of living with OCD. Suggested donation $5. For more information e-mail ocdgroupcambridge@gmail.com.

Tuesdays

Computer Lab Open to Public – Every Tuesday from 3-5:45 pm Cambridge Community Television at 438 Massachusetts Avenue offers free computer access, plus assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, online job applications, basic computer skills, and much more. This drop-in time is open to the public and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Call 617.661.6900 for more information.

Wednesdays

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT) meets 1 – 3 p.m. at the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, 2nd floor Conference Room #2 and 3 on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Call 617.973.7507 (voice) or 617.973.7089 (TTY) or email aact@ctps.org to request interpreters.

Amputee Support Group – Offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, all amputees, their family and friends are invited to socialize and discuss common areas of interest, including accessibility and resources, as well as to provide support and share coping strategies. Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 1-2:30pm on the 5th floor, in the Lantern Room 5, at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 &93). For more information, see www.spauldingrehab.org/events/supportgroupevents or contact Sally Johnson, LICSW at 617.952.6254 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or by email at sejohnson@partners.org.

Assistive Technology Resource Center (ARTC) Open House – The ATRC, which helps people with disabilities in Eastern Massachusetts make informed decisions about assistive technology they can use to increase their independence at home, on the job or in school, holds an open house on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 8:30am-4:30pm. These FREE monthly open houses provide an opportunity to see what kinds of assistive technology products are available, and to try them out. The ARTC is located at the Boston

Easter Seals office, 89 South Street (one block from MBTA South Station). Visit www.eastersealsma.org, call 61 7.226.2634, or email ATRC@eastersealsma.org for more information.

Carroll Center for the Blind Information Day – Learn more about Carroll Center programs and our visual impairment services the 1st Wednesday of every month (except in January and July). See the campus, learn from rehabilitation instructors, and talk to graduates about their experience in adult and senior rehabilitation and technology programs. And lunch is provided free of charge! Sessions start promptly at 10am and end at 2pm. *Special dates are offered tours about summer offerings for youth.* Staff loves the chance to help participants become informed, relaxed, and motivated! To make a reservation (required), email maureen.foley@carroll.org or call 1.800.852.3131 ext. 225 w. the name of each guest attending. Family and friends are welcome. The Carroll Center is located at 770 Centre Street in Newton.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group meets every Wednesday from 7-9pm in the cafeteria in de Marneffe Building at McLean Hospital in Belmont. On the 2nd and 4th Wednesday there is a lecture from 7-8pm, then group from 8-9pm. Call 617.855.2795 or visit www.dbsaboston.org for more information.

Free tour of MFA in American Sign Language (ASL) – for visitors and their family and friends who are fluent in ASL. Monthly offering at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston, the tour explores a different part of the Museum each month. These tours will start at 6:30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. No pre-registration is required; meet at the Sharf Visitor Center in the MFA. For more information about accessible programs call 617.369.3302 (voice), 617.369.3395 (TTY) or e-mail access@mfa.org.

HOLLAoffline: We've Got Your Back! – Join the Cambridge Women's Center on the last Wednesday of every month for a free street harassment support and discussion group, open to all who identify as women. We're here as a resource and we've got your back! 7-8pm at the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street in Cambridge. For more information, email boston@ihollaback.com.

Life Changes Support Group for Women – Change happens in life whether we choose it or whether it catches us by surprise. Either way, you don't have to be alone. Whatever new or different thing you're dealing with, whether the start of something new, an ending or a changing situation, come and let us hold your hand through it. Together we'll pool our wisdom; we'll look at what got you here, offer some tools for getting through and guidance for next steps. We'll use some writing, art, a little ritual but mostly good old fashioned support. This group is held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month from 6:30-8pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street. For more information, email Susan at changegroup26@gmail.com.

NAMI Connection – Support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets every Wednesday and Friday 10:30-12:00 at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center, 35 Medford Street, Suite 201 in Somerville. The group is free and open to all who self-identify as having a mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. For more information, contact Janel Tan at 617.863.5388 or tanj@vinfen.org. *We are moving to the first floor, exact room# tba.*

Open Support Group for Adults on the Autism Spectrum – Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, 7-8:30 pm at the offices of the Asperger's Association of New England (AANE), 85 Main St., Suite 101, Watertown, MA. A $5 donation is suggested. RSVP to 617.393.3824, x310 or Jamie.Freed@aane.org.

Senior Support Group for Caregivers over 60 – meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Family Resource Center, 20 Gould Street in Reading. Share and learn with other seniors who have adult family members with developmental disabilities. For meeting times or more information, contact Judy Santa Maria at 781.942.4888, x4022 or familysupport@theemarc.org.

Spaulding Stroke Support Group – This community-based support group offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital (SRH) provides socialization and education for stroke survivors, meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 3-4:30pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). Contact Karen Halfon at 617.952.6560 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or e-mail at khalfon@partners.org. Visit us at www.spauldingrehab.org.

Thursdays

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting – generally meets on the 2nd Thursday, at 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY) or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group – meets at Mass. General Hospital every Thursday, 7 - 9 p.m. in the Schiff Conference Center Room, Suite 4A on the 4th floor in the Yawkey Building. Follow the signs. Meetings are free and open to public. For more information call 617.855.2795 or e-mail mghgroup@dbsaboston.org.

Ladies, Let's Talk About It: Women's Narcotic Anonymous (NA) Meeting – meets every Thursday at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, from 6:30-8pm. This is a support group for women recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. For more information, call 617.354.8807

One-on-One for Women with Nurse Pat – Held on the 3rd Thursday from 12:45-1:30pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street. Need any health related support or questions answered? Sign up in advance or walk in for a 15-min individual consulting time with Pat Maher, Nurse Practitioner from Cambridge Health Alliance. For more information or to sign up, call 617.591.6731

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Support Group – Offered by the Greater Boston Chapter, National Spinal Cord Injury Association. Weekly support group meets every Thursday from 4-5pm, is for anyone affected by SCI, to help and inspire the newly injured through role models and peer mentors, and to support individuals and family members as they begin their post-injury journeys. This group is held at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, 6th floor, Lantern Room, 300 First Ave, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). E-mail sciboston@aol.com for more information.

Fridays

Free Fun Fridays is Back! – Every Friday from June 26-August 28. Free admission at designated cultural attractions throughout Massachusetts, such as Boston Children's Museum, JFK Library, Franklin Park Zoo, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and many more – this year's schedule includes 70 different cultural venues! Visit www.highlandstreet.org for the Free Fun Fridays schedule or call 617.969.8900.

NAMI Connection – a support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets every Wednesday and Friday 10:30am-12:00pm at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center. See Wednesday listing for details.

Second Fridays are FREE at the MIT Museum – Jump-start your weekend with the MIT Museum! Get up close and personal with Kismet the Robot, or see the world in 3-D through our one-of-a-kind holography exhibit. Enjoy performances, demonstrations, and lectures throughout our galleries. Mix and mingle; relax and unwind. Museum admission, including the galleries and additional activities, is free from 5-8pm on the 2nd Friday of every month. The Museum is located in Building N51 at 265 Massachusetts Avenue,

Cambridge. See www.web.mit.edu/museum/programs/secondfridays.html or call 617.253.5927 for more information.

Saturdays

Boston Acquired Brain Injury Support Group (BABIS) – The mission of this free support group is to provide a positive forum for peer socialization, hope and education for people with acquired brain injury, their family and friends. This group is held on the 1st Saturday of the month, from 10am-12pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 &93). No registration required, just show up! For more information, call Sally Johnson, LICSW at 617.573.2539 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), e-mail babisgroup@hotmail.com, or visit www.babis.info.

Beyond the Spectrum: Adventures in Art for Children with Autism – Offered by the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), Artful Adventures offers a specially designed program for children ages 8-12 on the Autism Spectrum, including Asperger's Syndrome, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Upon arrival children will be divided into groups by age and/or needs. The program meets on the 1st Saturday of each month from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Each class lasts an hour and a half and combines gallery exploration with an art-making activity. Pre-registration is required by the prior Tuesday. The cost is $9.50 per child (includes materials and museum admission), and one adult is admitted free with each child ticket, which also includes discounted parking. The program meets in the Education Center in Druker Family Pavilion, Room 159 at 10:20am before the start of each class. For more information, or to pre-register, go to www.mfa.org/programs/community-programs/beyond-the-spectrum, call 617.369.3303 or email artfuladventures@mfa.org.

Access to Art: Second Saturdays -- For individuals with memory loss or dementia, and their care partners. Second Saturdays meet at 10am on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register for a tour please call 617.369.3302 (voice) or email: access@mfa.org.

Sundays

Computer Lab Open to Public – Every Sunday from 4-5:30pm Cambridge Community Television at 438 Massachusetts Avenue offers free computer access, plus assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, online job applications, basic computer skills, and much more. This drop-in time is open to the public and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Call 617.661.6900 for more information.

Wenham Museum Spectrum Express -- Welcomes families with members on the autism spectrum to come enjoy the model railroad trains and their other favorite exhibits the 1st Sunday of each month at 9am at regular admission prices or free for members. The museum opens to the general public at 10am. Visit www.wenhammuseum.org/youth_families.html or call our Welcome Desk at 978.468.2377 with any questions.

Feeling for Form Tours of MFA for blind & low vision visitors -- The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of guided tours for visitors who are blind or have low vision who want to build a deeper relationship with the Museum. Each monthly session focuses on a different collection and includes wayfinding and verbal description of spaces. The Sunday tours are held on the 1st Sunday of the month at 1pm, with the exception of some holiday weekends, and require pre-registration at least one week in advance. Call 617.369.3302 to register. Family and friends are invited to come along. Guided tours can also be scheduled on request, please contact Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189 or access@mfa.org for more information.

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