



Arizona Spinal Cord  
Injury Association

# AZSCIA E-NEWS

September 2007

*"A monthly update  
on the happenings  
and upcoming  
events in the  
association."*

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We're on the Web!  
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## Basha's Thanks A Million For Friends and Neighbors

It's time to Ready, Set...SHOP! The 2007-2008 Basha's Thanks A Million for Friends and Neighbors program is about to begin. Starting in September, you can have a portion of your shopping dollars set aside for the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association.

This year's Thanks A Million program begins September 1, 2007 and will run through March 31, 2008. The first time you shop at Basha's beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>, please ask the cashier to link our group ID number, **23188**, to your Basha's Thank You Card. You only have to link your number *once* during the program, and the link remains active until March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Last year, local non-profits like ours earned \$298,000+ with the Thanks A Million program! You can help us earn funds every time you shop at Basha's with your Thank You Card.

This is our second year partnering with Basha's and the program can only continue with your support. Thank you for participating in this program.

## Arizona's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Spinal Cord Injury Educational Conference

Battling Back: Balancing Chronic Pain & Prescription Medications

Please save the dates for Friday, October 26, 2007 and Saturday, October 27, 2007. On Friday, the conference will be held at Banner Good Samaritan Hospital, 1111 E McDowell Road in Phoenix, Sandstone Conference Room. On Saturday, the conference will be held at the Banner Good Samaritan Rehab Institute, 1012 E Willetta Street in Phoenix.

The educational conference is free to person with a spinal cord injury, family members or a caregiver of a person with a spinal cord injury.

We are currently working on the brochure. Please visit the Calendar section of our website at <http://www.azspinal.org/calendar.aspx> for information. Conference information will be continuously updated so please check back periodically.

## Mathematica® Launches Center for Studying Disability Policy

*Center Unites Staff from Mathematica with Researchers from Cornell University Institute for Policy Research*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 31, 2007)--Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., announces the launch of its new Center for Studying Disability Policy. The center merges disability researchers from the Cornell University Institute for Policy Research and Mathematica. The mission of the new center is to inform disability policy formation with rigorous, objective research and data collected from the people disability policy aims to serve.

For some time, the two organizations have collaborated on large-scale studies of Social Security disability programs that seek to improve the employment and economic independence of people who receive disability benefits. Staff members at both organizations also conduct research into many other disability-related issues, including ways to facilitate consumer choice, care coordination, long-term care, health insurance coverage, children with special needs, and mental health services research. Looking to the future, the center will disseminate its work through a new website and issue brief series as well as through continued publication in professional journals.

Since its inception in 1968, Mathematica has been conducting innovative research and data collection related to public policies in the health and human services area. Since the early 1980s, the firm has conducted many significant disability studies, including some of the first rigorous evaluations of employment supports for people with severe disabilities and the largest surveys of people with disabilities. More than 30 staff continue this pioneering work today through a wide range of innovative disability research and data collection.

Staff members at the Cornell University Institute for Policy Research, located in Washington, D.C., have published widely on disability-related topics, including employment trends for people with disabilities and ways to improve support for people with severe impairments. Three prominent disability researchers from the institute have joined the new center: David Stapleton, Gina Livermore, and Bonnie O'Day. All are well known for their disability research, particularly in the areas of employment, income support, and health. Stapleton, who directed Cornell's institute, is the director of the new center.

"The aging of the population, potential shortages of workers, rising program costs, and other social trends will increase the need for effective disability programs and policies in the future. However, the nation is in a poor position to develop and monitor new policies because of the paucity of rigorous policy research to guide action," said Craig Thornton, senior vice president at Mathematica Policy Research. "Mathematica's new Center for Studying Disability Policy will help address this situation by fusing the deep disability policy and research expertise from two preeminent research organizations with our historically strong expertise in the fields of education, welfare, child development, health services research, and employment policy. We look to synthesize lessons and data from all these areas to develop new approaches for assisting people with disabilities to live fuller lives."

Stapleton says the Center "will make a significant contribution to the evidence base needed to support the ongoing transition of disability policies.

Our center will help society move beyond the era when people with significant physical and mental impairments were expected to be highly dependent on others. We think that rigorous research can help leverage ongoing technological advancements and changing social norms to produce an environment where people with disabilities can obtain much more control over their own lives and a high level of economic independence."

Paul Decker, president of Mathematica Policy Research, said, "Generating better information to inform policy development requires strong conceptual, methodological, and empirical studies. Mathematica's new Center for Studying Disability Policy will bring new ideas and energy to disability policy while helping the nation build a better evidence base for decision making."

Mathematica, a nonpartisan firm, conducts policy research and surveys for federal and state governments, foundations, and private-sector clients. The employee-owned company, with offices in Princeton, N.J., Washington, D.C., and Cambridge, Mass., strives to improve public well-being by bringing the highest standards of quality, objectivity, and excellence to bear on the provision of information collection and analysis to its clients.

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Gina Livermore is a family member.

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## Paralyzed Man Survives 2<sup>nd</sup> Brush With Death On Collapsing Bridge

From Gary Tuchman and Jordana Miller  
CNN

**MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota (CNN)** -- Seven years ago, police in North Carolina covered shooting victim Marcelo Cruz with a tarp, believing he was dead. He wasn't. Cruz survived the street fight shooting, but was left paralyzed from the waist down.

The Mexican native rebuilt his life, and at 26, was living in Minneapolis, driving a specially equipped van so he could get around the city.

That's what he was doing Wednesday when he drove onto the Interstate 35W bridge just after 6 p.m., only to see the bridge in front of him start to shake - and in a few short seconds, tumble down.

Cruz saw 10 or 20 cars in front of him plunge into the water. He applied the brakes, but on the now-sloping bridge deck, he couldn't stop. "I thought I was going to die," he told CNN.

But he wasn't afraid, he said. He just thought about what he needed to do and how to do it. How to stop a car if the brakes don't do the job?

Cruz swerved, and plowed his van into the concrete guard rail. It worked -- the van stopped, less than 15 feet from what was now the end of the bridge before it dropped into the Mississippi River.

Now trapped in his van on the bridge -- unable get out because of the sharp angle -- Cruz said he heard a woman screaming from below. Then she stopped. "I really felt hopeless because I couldn't do anything," he said.

Finally, two rescue workers saw him and helped him reach safety. About 15 minutes after the bridge collapse, he called his mother, Ignacia Cruz, and told her to turn on the television. He just wanted her to know he was OK.

Ignacia Cruz spoke to CNN quietly in her native Spanish. "God and the Virgin Mary saved my son, because otherwise he would have tumbled into the water with all the other cars," she said. "I began to cry and cry, because this was the second time he was saved." On Thursday, after surviving his second brush with death, Cruz was stoic.

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## Monthly Spasticity Screenings

Tight, Stiff Muscles?

You might have a condition known as **spasticity**. If left untreated, spasticity can become painful and affect your activities of daily living, many times resulting in unwanted orthopedic surgery.

To help prevent these issues we are now offering participants **FREE monthly multi-disciplinary spasticity screenings** by neuro therapy teams. You may pre-register for this screening event via phone. There are five programs throughout Arizona. Please call the location most convenient for you.

### **Valley of the Sun Rehabilitation Hospital**

13460 N. 67<sup>th</sup> Ave ., Glendale, AZ 85304

Call Eric Muse, PT at 623-334-5470

### **Scottsdale Rehabilitation Hospital**

9630 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ85260

Call Julie Barth, OT at 480-551-5447

### **Yuma Rehabilitation Hospital**

901 W. 24<sup>th</sup> St., Yuma, AZ 85364

Call Out-patient Therapy at

928-314-8812

### **Rehabilitation Hospital of Southern Arizona**

1921 W Hospital Dr., Tucson, AZ 85704

Call Michael at 520-544-5289

### **Mountain Valley Regional Rehab Hospital**

3700 N. Windsong Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

Call Anamarie at 928-775-7783

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## Daring Adventures Fall 2007 Activities

### **Cycling**

Come and enjoy the thrill of cycling through the beautiful Phoenix bike paths. All levels of cycling experience are welcome. We provide hand-cycles, tandem bikes and recumbent tricycles, as well as all safety and adaptive equipment. After completing this program, you will be able to rent the cycles on your own for a nominal fee. Friends and family are welcome to bring their own bikes and join us. Tuesdays: September 11—October 16; 5:30 pm—7:00 pm at Rose Mofford Sports Complex, East 9850 N. 23th Ave, just south of Peoria (Map available upon request). The \$25 program fee includes use and maintenance of equipment.

### **Kayaking**

Come experience the fun of kayaking. You'll learn to paddle a kayak while enjoying the beauty of Lake Pleasant. The \$75 fee covers use of the equipment and roundtrip transportation from Telephone Pioneer Park to Lake

Pleasant. Join us on the following Saturdays: September 22, 29, October 6, 13, 20 and an all-day paddle on October 27. Departure from Telephone Pioneer Park, 1946 West Morningside, will be at 9:00 am, returning at 3:00 pm. Selected participants will be notified of the mandatory orientation date and location.

### **Hiking**

Join us as we explore trails in the Phoenix Mountain Preserves and county parks. Hikes are scheduled for Saturday Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 8, 15 at 9:00 am. Plan to join us at the mandatory orientation to discuss equipment needs, hike locations and "Summit Challenge " information prior to the first hike, Sat. November 3 at 9 am, at North Mountain Park: 7th St. and Peoria. Hiking will follow orientation. All trails will be wheelchair accessible. There is a \$25 program fee. Those interested in challenging themselves can join us for the "Summit Challenge" on Sunday. Nov. 11.

### **Registration**

SPACE IS LIMITED, Register today by contacting TJ at 602-495-5222 (voice), 602-534-2491 (TTY) or at [tj.penkoff@phoenix.gov](mailto:tj.penkoff@phoenix.gov) (E-mail). Registering does not mean you are selected for the program. You will be contacted prior to the event. Family members are welcome to register space permitting. Ask about our Volunteer Service Exchange to help offset program fees. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED.** Please contact TJ to see how you can help with Daring Adventures or other Adaptive Recreation programs at 602-495-5222 (voice), 602-534-2491 (TTY) or at [tj.penkoff@phoenix.gov](mailto:tj.penkoff@phoenix.gov).

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## **Local athletes representing U.S. in Parapan Games**

From Susan Rossi

480-644-5702 or visit [www.arizonadisabledsports.com](http://www.arizonadisabledsports.com)

Erik Hightower and Troy Davis, track athletes with the City of Mesa's Adaptive Sports Program and Arizona Disabled Sports, are currently representing the United States at the 2007 Parapan American Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Games, taking place August 12-19th, got underway with the track & field competition before a stadium of cheering fans. It wasn't long before the hardware started to add up.

Reports from Brazil claim the second silver of the day was won by Troy Davis (Queen Creek, Ariz.) in the men's T53 100m. The 2000 U.S. Paralympian said his time was slower than he would have liked, but he's happy with the hardware.

"I had a bad start, didn't recover and made a mental mistake at the end, thinking the finish line was right there, but it wasn't, so I slowed too early," said Davis. "Hat's off to the Brazilian (Ariosvaldo Silva)... he caught me and pulled it off for the gold."

Davis, who recently was named Coach of the year by Arizona Disabled Sports, was a member of the 2000 U. S. Paralympic Team. He currently holds the National Record in the 200-meters and he held the 100-meter U.S. record in his classification until 2006 when Hightower, one of the athletes he coaches, broke it.

Wheelchair racer Erik Hightower (Glendale, Ariz.) also won bronze - in the men's T54 200m in 26.66. "I felt good out there today, although I false started first thing and that got me nervous because I didn't want to do it again," said Hightower. "I really felt good - much better than yesterday. I

really felt like I worked all of the kinks out."

Hightower is the current world record holder for 100-meters in his classification and won the silver medal as part of the 4x100-meter relay team for the U.S. at the 2006 World Championships in the Netherlands. The 20-year old also holds Junior records in the 100 and 200 meters.

A total of 28 men and 17 women make up the U.S track team. The Parapan American Games will serve as a qualifier for the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing. For continued results, visit [www.usparalympics.org](http://www.usparalympics.org).

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## Upcoming e-news information.....

If there is anything that you would like to share with your fellow members, please contact Vangie Mortenson. She will ensure that the information will be posted on the e-news.

**THANK YOU!**