

NO BARRIERS

A Publication of the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association



WWW.FDOA.ORG

Special points of interest:

- Recreation Assistive Technology Highlight
- Inclusive Recreation

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Need and Purpose of Recreation and Active Leisure for All!

Regular physical activity has been shown to diminish the risks and effects of many health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle including obesity (potentially causing diabetes, heart problems and stroke), as well as many other issues. Physical activity can also reduce overall mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases, several different types of cancers, non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, hypertension, osteoarthritis and osteoporosis. According to the New York State Department of Health website (January 22, 2009),

"Staying fit is especially important for people with disabilities, many of whom live sedentary lifestyles. When you are physically active, you are less likely to develop additional health problems, like heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis or

arthritis; to gain excess weight; or become depressed."

Our current healthcare system does not focus on maintenance and wellness.

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services www.hhs.gov (January 23, 2009),

"Persons with disabilities experience particular challenges to get the health care and wellness services they need. Persons with disabilities of all kinds share many of the same challenges as those without disabilities when it comes to their own health and well-being. Foremost among those challenges is having the tools and the knowledge – and the knowledgeable health care professionals – to help them enjoy and maintain full, healthy lives. A substantially lower percentage of persons with

disabilities than those without disabilities report their health to be excellent or very good (28.4% versus 61.4%) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2004a."

People with disabilities are often excluded from recreational pursuits and active leisure for a number of reasons.

It is for these very reasons that the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association (FDOA) is dedicated to enriching lives through accessible, inclusive recreation and active leisure for all. We hope that our readers will participate in, and benefit from, the recreation and/or leisure pursuit of their choice to enjoy the best quality of life.

Active Leisure for Life!

For further information, contact FDOA info@fdoa.org or (850) 201-2944.

SportsAbility Tallahassee



The next SportsAbility will be held in Tallahassee.

Venues:

- **Thursday, April 15, 2010: 6:30 PM - 9:30 PM**
Doubletree Hotel Tallahassee
Active Leisure for Life Banquet (tickets \$30 pp / \$50 couple)
- **Friday, April 16, 2010: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM**
Tallahassee Community College
Indoor Accessible, Inclusive Recreation Experiences and EXPO
- **Saturday, April 17, 2010: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM**
Ochlochonee River State Park
Outdoor Accessible, Inclusive Recreation Experiences
- **Sunday, April 18, 2010: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**
Miracle Field at Messer Park
Baseball and Power Soccer

More info at www.fdoa.org/sportsability.htm

Executive Director's Report



Laurie LoRe Gussak,
Executive Director,
with her son, Joseph

Recently, I became a mom. As many of you know, this gives you a new perspective on the world. I think constantly about what type of world I want for our son.

What I have come up with is a place where all things are possible for people of all abilities.

Now the question is how do we work toward that? I come back to what

David Jones taught me years ago when I first starting volunteering—make a difference one person at a time.

While SportsAbility programs attract approximately 1,000 people, we hold several other programs where only a few people show up. Recently we held a sailing clinic where we had only one person attend. This may have seemed

disheartening, but the following week she called and said that what our volunteers did changed her life. Wow, nothing is better!

"The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intention."
- Duguet

If each of us can make a small difference, we will affect change in our communities and our world.

Contact FDOA at 850-201-2944 or info@fdoa.org.

Assistive Technology Highlight: Beach Scoot™

Like many assistive technology products, this was a vision from a person with a disability that wanted greater independence. In 1954, at

the age of five, John Sweat had polio over 90% of his body. As an adult, he wanted to experience the beach just as most young people do.

He and his family experimented with a custom push wheelchair and more than one mobility assist vehicle before they came up with the Beach Scoot™.

FDOA participants used this mobility assist vehicle to travel through trails Torreya State Park among other places. Users were amazed at the ease of operation and how well it traveled over any surface. It enabled our participants to go places they could not have gone with their mobility devices.

The manufacturers state,

"Restore your freedom and mobility with our Mobility Assist Vehicle (MAV) beach scooter and off-road wheelchair, which is perfect for navigating through the street, sand, snow, and hunting terrain. The two seater MAV electric scooter lets you live your life to the fullest." Our experience has been that this claim has held true.

FDOA does not receive any compensation from Beach Scoot™. More info at www.beachscoot.com.



Inclusive Recreation

The inclusive recreation training program and efforts continue to leave its mark as we move into year three in a partnership with the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. We have worked tirelessly delivering an inclusive recreation message to many throughout the state for the

past two years. Now we look to the future and to technology to reach the most people possible. FDOA staff is in the process of researching web-based training options to produce inclusive recreation training sessions. This will enable us to reach additional recreation providers and

consumers throughout the state and beyond. Many recreation and park departments have experienced budget cuts limiting continuing education opportunities for staff. This leaves staff unable to stay aware of the latest trends and systems changes throughout the nation.

Through web-based trainings, staff and consumers will have the opportunity to review short and precise sessions on inclusive recreation topics at their leisure while working within their schedules. Watch for web-based training opportunities soon. For further information, contact Kristy Carter (850) 201-2944 x3.

Major Accomplishments this Year

Each year FDOA staff and Advisory Board holds a strategic planning session. We discuss past year accomplishments and plan for the future. This year major accomplishments included:

Partnership was formed with the Pasco County Parks and Recreation to initiate a pilot recreation inclusion program.

Recreation Inclusion program partnerships were renewed with the City of Tallahassee, Leon County and the Capital Regional YMCA.

Partnered with City of Ocala and Marion County Parks and Recreation Departments for Ocala SportsAbility that was held on October 2-3, 2009.

Partnership was formed with Bubel / Aiken National Inclusion Program for

recreation inclusion training in Florida.

The Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program and FFAST partnerships were renewed to continue its efforts on the Recreation Resource Library (information on accessible products, programs, events and destinations) and to enhance knowledge and capacity of community based organizations on adaptive inclusive recreation.

The Tallahassee Orthopedic Clinic partnership was renewed aiding in a vast array of service areas.

The Florida ARF partnership was renewed providing FDOA with an office and associated facilities.

The Miracle Field in Tallahassee was completed

and the Miracle Sports program was initiated with the first year holding baseball, kickball and flag-football seasons.

Technology

Recreation Resource Library is continually updated and enhanced with accessible recreation products, programs/services, events and destinations.

FDOA keeps people informed with continual website updates.

ADA Compliance Efforts

Significantly improved pool access at Capital Region YMCA with the installation of a ramp funded through the FDDC Inclusion Grant

John Pennekamp State Park renovations/improvements continue

Working on no vehicle on beach policy to accept

mobility assist vehicles in many areas of Florida.

In collaboration with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Quota Hunt Program included mobility impaired considerations

Outreach

159 outreach programs were held in fiscal year 2008-09, including training programs, trade show exhibitions, hands-on recreation and active leisure opportunities, education opportunities at the Florida Capitol and other venues and collaborative efforts with recreation and park staff.

All programs strive to improve lives through accessible inclusive active leisure for life.



Membership Application

How can YOU support the efforts of the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association? **Become a member of the FDOA!**

Your assistance is valued and truly appreciated!! When you become a member of the FDOA, you not only support the programs mentioned in this newsletter, but you **ensure their continued success and growth.**

Yes, I want to ensure that FDOA's programs continue! Please accept my support at the following annual dues membership level:

- \$20.00 Individual
- \$50.00 Family
- \$100.00 Not-for-Profit
- \$200.00 Business
- \$1,000.00 Patron
- \$2,500.00 Trustee
- Please accept my additional donation of \$_____.

FDOA is a 501 (c)(3) Not-for-Profit organization and gratefully accepts donations and in-kind gifts. All contributions are tax deductible.

Name _____

Organization _____

Address 1 _____

Address 2 _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

Please indicate any areas in which you would be willing to help.

- Marketing / Promotion
- Fund Raising
- Event Planning
- Finance / Accounting
- Computer Applications / Web Development
- Musician
- On-site assistance at functions
- Other _____

Please go to:
www.fdoa.org/memberships.htm

or mail to:

FDOA
2475 Apalachee Parkway
Suite 205
Tallahassee, FL 32301



SportsAbility Tallahassee
April 15 - 18, 2010

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Tallahassee FL
Permit #834

Active Leisure for Life!

2475 Apalachee Parkway, Suite 205
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Phone: 850-201-2944
Fax: 850-201-2945
Email: info@fdoa.org

CHECK US OUT AT:

WWW.FDOA.ORG

President's Report



*David Jones, FDOA President
and National Therapeutic
Recreation Society (NTRS)
Board of Directors member*

Active Leisure for Life.
More than a slogan. It is
our mantra, our
philosophy, the reason
that we exist.

After surviving an accident in 1988, I did three months in two hospitals and another year of outpatient therapy. I learned first-hand the importance and benefits of Therapeutic Recreation (TR) treatment. I realized later the significance of TR and attribute my successful rehabilitation and return to a meaningful, productive, and enjoyable life to my TR experience.

I founded the FDOA in 1990 to help people get back to work, to play, to living, through the many benefits gained from active leisure. The current healthcare crises has taken away or at least severely limited the availability of TR for most. This is very important to a successful rehabilitation.

Cuts in reimbursements, the pressure to limit the duration of hospital stays, and the lack of rehabilitation coverage by many insurance policies has created a gap in needed services. Survivors leave the system unprepared to

cope and to continue their recovery and adjustment on their own. The FDOA leads the way in Florida by providing community reintegration based on therapeutic recreation type services for brain and spinal cord injury survivors with our RASTA program.

We are helping to address health issues for all people with all types of disabilities with our efforts to advocate for wellness, fitness and good health through prevention instead of the failing current approach to treating the symptoms. We continue to advocate for mental and social health through the many benefits of outdoor recreation.

It is very satisfying to see how the FDOA has been leading the way with our philosophy and innovative

programs.

Experts are now proving with recent research that these benefits are not only valid but are truly the future for health care. We have done wonders with very limited resources and have been able to quickly act and react to our constantly changing world. These two attributes have been part of the reason for our successes.

I look forward to growing our programs to work for families of people with developmental disabilities, vision impairments, our returning servicemen with new disabilities and for people of all ages and abilities who need and deserve "Active Leisure for Life!"