



# News

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1985

## THE TEXAS PARALYZED VETERANS ASSN. (TPVA) FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST CITY OF FORT WORTH AND FORT WORTH TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY.

The Texas Paralyzed Veterans Assn. (TPVA) filed a lawsuit against the City of Fort Worth, Fort Worth Transportation Authority and the Mobility Impaired Transportation Services. The suit was filed in the U.S. District Court Northern District of Texas.

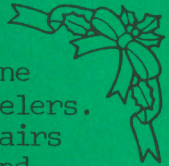
The basis of the suit is that the "seperate and unequal" Mobility Impaired Transportation Service (MITS) is insufficient to meet the actual transportation needs of the disabled community and that the City of Fort Worth put back into service the 29 mainline buses that presently have lifts. TPVA brings this suit with the West Texas Legal Services assistance to stop the City of Fort Worth from denying disabled veterans access to public transportation.

TPVA's position is that public dollars are being spent on every bus and disabled veterans who have served their country are being denied access to mainline transportation in Fort Worth and throughout Texas. TPVA believes the "civil rights" of disabled persons are being violated when they are forced to utilize a seperate and inefficient transportation system.

TPVA wants all new buses purchased in Fort Worth and throughout the state of Texas to be lift equipped.

TPVA is joining with other organizations throughout the state demanding access to mainline transportation.

## AIR TRAVEL



Efforts are being made to make airline travel more comfortable for disabled travelers. The new Boeing 767s carry onboard wheelchairs small enough to pass through the aisles and some seats and lavatories are designed for mobility-impaired passengers. Similar features are available on Boeing 757s, DC-10s, Lockheed L-1011s and the European A-300s. And as older aircrafts are being refurbished, changes are being made.

An industry-wide survey completed by Rehabilitation International U.S.A. found that, since 1982, 58% of respondents had introduced new equipment, such as special airport staircases; an all-weather module with fork-lift to accomodate 14 disabled persons at once; onboard wheelchairs; removable armrests, stretcher fittings for B-767s; accessible lavatory features; stoma masks for laryngectomees; braille information booklets and TTY equipment.

## AMTRAK OFFERS ACCESSIBLE SERVICE

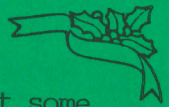
By Tom Pugh



I recently discovered an old way of travel with a twist. The means of travel? The passenger train. The twist? Wheelchair accessible. That's right. In contrast to the discriminatory policies and hassles of traveling by air, Amtrak offers a non-discriminatory policy and wheelchair access; in some cars you can choose to stay in your chair or transfer into one of theirs.

I've been on the train and found an accessible bathroom, a place to park my wheelchair out of the aisle, and a bed which is easy to transfer into.

So, if you are a wheelchair user and plan to travel in the future, then check Amtrack. is possible they may be going your way.



Vacations away from home can present some very special problems for those who must consider wheelchair accessibility. While hotels and resorts are anxious to please, many are just not set up to provide easy-access facilities. How can your clients locate the ones that are? There are numerous resources. One is Moss Rehabilitation Hospital in Philadelphia, P.A. Moss has a Travel Information Center for Disabled Individuals.

While Moss doesn't have time to plan trips or make reservations, they are happy to provide a wealth of information on the availability and locations of facilities designed for the disabled. Most of their information focuses on wheelchair accessibility, because it's what most people want to know. Call for information: (215) 329-5715, or write to Travel Information Center, Moss Rehabilitation Hospital, 12th Street, and Tabor Road Philadelphia., PA 19141.

Other Travel Resources Are:



Access to the World: a travel guide for the disabled. For information, write to: ACCENT Special Publications, P.O. Box 700, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped (SATH), an association of travel agents interested in accessible travel. Write to SATH, 26 Court St., Suite 1110, Brooklyn, New York 11242.

The Itinerary, The Magazine for Travelers with Physical Disabilities, P.O. Box 1084, Bayonne, NJ 07002-1084. Phone: (201) 858-3400.

Amtrak offers tours accessible to individuals with disabilities. For information and travel brochures, write to AMTRAK; Distribution Center, P.O. Box 7717, Itasca, IL 60143. Specify area(s) of interest.

## Transportation Services We'd Like to See More Often

It looks like disabled people are becoming more recognized as important customers with special needs. Avis car rentals has a brochure out called "Avis, A Very Special Place to Rent a Car," which lists services to meet disabled persons' special needs. It includes:

- 1) Hand-controlled vehicles- At all corporate Avis locations and participating licenses, you can rent hand controls. Make reservations as far in advance as you can. They attempt to honor all requests with a 24-hour notice. No additional charge. You can also request cars with power options.
- 2) Special reservation equipment for hearing/speech impaired persons - People with speech/hearing handicaps can call Avis at a toll-free number for assistance with reservations. A TTD allows reservation agents to communicate via printed messages.
- 3) Rental privileges for visually-impaired persons - Any person who is unable to drive due to a visual impairment can still rent a car provided certain requirements are met; they must meet standard Avis requirements for personal and financial responsibility and be accompanied by a duly-licensed person who meets standards for additional drivers.
- 4) Signs and ramps - When you rent a car from Avis, they give orthopedically-disabled persons a special sign to hang from the rearview mirror. It can be used with your personal ID to identify you for any parking privileges you may be entitled to. Also, at many Avis locations, there are ramps and electronically-controlled doors for convenience.

The information in this brochure shows that companies are becoming more aware of the potential market disabled customers represent and it is gradually turning into a buyer's and not a seller's market.

AVIS Toll-free number: 1-800331-1212.



### AIR SAFETY CARDS IN BRAILLE

American Airlines, Inc., and the American Foundation for the Blind have announced the design of a new Air Safety Card in Braille. The card, which is now on all AA aircraft, allows blind and visually impaired passengers to read the safety instructions and find for themselves the features of an aircraft like the nearest exit, oxygen masks, vests, and overhead storage compartments.

### ALERTING THE HEARING IMPAIRED

By the end of next year, 90% of the Nation's Holiday Inns will have instituted a program using strobe-light units which notify hearing impaired guests if a fire alarm is sounding, if someone is knocking on the door, or if the phone is ringing. The visual-alert system flashes a strobe-light when the phone rings four times or more, if an alarm is sounded for longer than 20 seconds, or whenever someone knocks at the door.



## Supreme Court to Rule in Case of Handicapped Travelers' Rights

An action by the United States Supreme Court has called into question, again, the Administration's commitment to achieving full civil rights for all Americans, states R. Jack Powell, executive director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Powell's comment came in response to a Supreme Court announcement that it has agreed to hear arguments presented by the Department of Justice and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) in a case involving the right of handicapped travelers to have equal access to commercial aircraft.

"It is appalling to us", states Powell, "that the Administration is asking the Supreme Court to hear this case, after a lower court has ruled that handicapped travelers have the same rights as everyone else."

"What is perplexing to us is that the Department of Transportation had requested, unsuccessfully, to have the Department of Justice approve rules for handicapped travelers, which we also supported. Why the Justice Department has chosen to challenge another Federal agency--which is much closer to the situation than itself--defies any logic," states Powell.

In essence, continues Powell, the situation facing a handicapped traveler is one of facing an arbitrary "invisible barricade". He states that Federal law in this country has mandated that handicapped travelers have access to accessible ground transportation which will allow them to get to an airport; all airports and airport facilities can handle handicapped travelers; yet, if the Department of Transportation's position is upheld, handicapped travelers will face an invisible barricade and lose their civil

rights if they try to board a commercial air carrier.

On January 18, 1985, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia ruled that federal non-discrimination statutes applied to commercial air carriers. The effect of that ruling was to allow handicapped travelers to use, without arbitrary restrictions, commercial air carriers.

"We are truly appalled that the Administration has chosen to take this case to the Supreme Court for review. On one hand the Administration says that it actively supports getting handicapped citizens back into the mainstream of society, while, at the same time, it pursues policies designed to do just the opposite," continues Powell.

"We hope that the Supreme Court will see the inequality of the Administration's position and uphold the ruling of the Circuit Court of Appeals," Powell concluded.



## "NETWORKING"

The National Organization for Rare Disorders offers a program called "Networking". This project matches people who have an interest in the same or similar disorder(s). Each participant is asked to give his/her permission to be contacted by others with the same illness. For further information, contact: Allison Brooks, National Organization for Rare Disorders, 1182 Broadway, Suite 402, York, NY 10001.

MAGAZINE PROMOTES JOB OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Unemployment and underemployment are common to millions of disabled Americans. Despite the vast rehabilitation and job placement resources of the United States, disabled people continue to be a largely untapped resource for skilled, unskilled and professional workers.

But progress is being made, and Disabled USA, a 36-page, quarterly magazine published by the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, reports on new developments in rehabilitating and employing disabled individuals.

Disabled USA focuses on the increasing number of job opportunities being created for disabled persons through technological advances, traditional and innovative rehabilitation programs, service organizations, private sector employers, and entrepreneurial efforts of disabled people.

The magazine also features stories about the experiences of disabled people who live independently, raise families, and enjoy recreations; plus thoughtful articles on the image of disability in contemporary society and how to eliminate both attitudinal and architectural barriers.

Disabled USA is available from: Superintendent of Documents, Dept. 36-BQ, Washington, D.C. 20402 at a cost of \$11.00 for an annual subscription (domestic).

Orders should include payment by check, money order, VISA, or MasterCard, and should reference stock number 041-000-80001-1.





ho, ho, ho...

Happy  
Holidays  
from

C.T.D.

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bob kalika

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Stephanie Thomas

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"In here is where our newsletter is created."

CTD's Editor's Note:

The CTD News is edited and published monthly by the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, a state-wide cross disability consumer group. Any member who wishes to submit future articles for publication should send them to: CTD, P.O. Box 4709, Austin, Texas 78765. The deadline for submitting articles is the first of each month for that month's edition.





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