



Voting Rocks!



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John Fenley 2012

About The Riot...

The Riot! is produced by HSRI in Tualatin, OR.

We work together with self-advocates to develop and write each issue.

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Make the Most With Your Vote

By Teresa Moore

We know that there are physical and emotional barriers that keep people from voting. Here are some of the reasons why people with and without disabilities say they don't vote.

- Think they are not smart enough to vote
- Not sure how it works
- Others say they can't vote
- It's a big responsibility that's confusing
- Afraid of picking the wrong person
- Think they have to know everything on the ballot

Sometimes the issues are not easy to understand. A good question to ask is: "This is what it **says...** but what does it **mean** for people with disabilities?" For example "Tax Cuts" sounds good, right? But, the money for public services that many people with disabilities rely on comes from the taxes we all pay. So, tax cuts could mean cuts to services.



I've heard people say, "If you don't vote, then you can't complain." But more importantly, if you **DO** vote, you have a **stronger voice**. You can call the person you voted for and say, "When I voted for you, you promised to make things better, but that didn't happen." If they don't change, the next time you have the **power to change your vote**.



Vote As If Your Life Depends On It

By Ricky Broussard

Many people do not value their right to vote. This worries me. What if our next President doesn't listen to people with disabilities or care about what happens to us? I don't want to think about it. Instead, I will vote. My life depends on it. Yours does too.

I've been voting since I was 18. When I lived in a facility just for people with disabilities, staff had to take me to vote. That's when I realized voting is one right I want to keep.

The first time I voted, the building was not accessible. A worker brought a

voting machine to the car. This machine punched holes in a card to mark my choices. Later, I worked at the polls. After each person voted, I removed the voting card from the machine, folded it, and put it in a box.

Today voting is much easier. A larger number of public buildings are accessible and in many places, voting is electronic. Voters with disabilities are treated like everyone else. They show their ID, get in line and wait for a turn to vote.

I look forward to voting again this year. I'll listen to what candidates say about issues that affect people with disabilities. Then, I'll vote as if my life depends on it, because it does. I hope you will too.



National Youth Leadership Network

NYLN Rocks the Youth Vote!

NYLN is a youth led organization. Over and over, our members say voting is an important issue.

NYLN created an **8 page voting guide**, written by youth, that explains how voting works. The guide is available in English and Spanish.

Go to www.nyln.org under Resources and click on Youth Information Documents.

Become a member today!



www.siblingleadership.org

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with Disabilities with Information
and Support**

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brothers and sister to join us - it is
free and easy!**

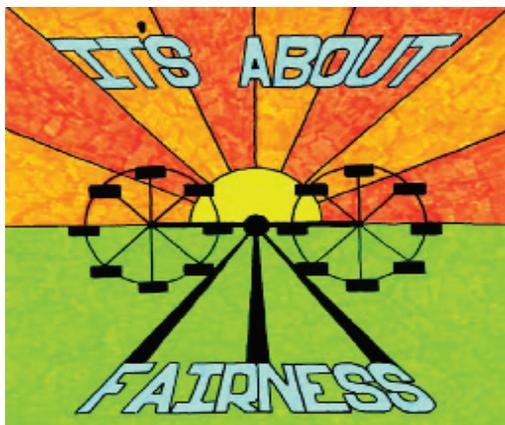
Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered

Save the Date

August 30 - September 2, 2012

Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront Hotel
11 East Kellogg Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 292-1900

For more information, contact ACT at
(651) 641-0297, act@selfadvocacy.org
or visit www.sabeconference2012.com



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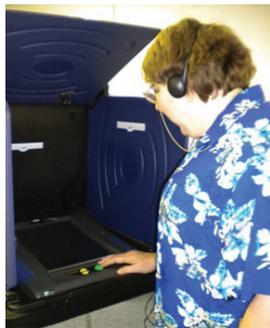
www.theriotrocks.org/products/space-race

We Need Your Vote!

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) wants self-advocates to have the information they need to vote. According to John Britton, SABE Treasurer, it is really important for self-advocates to vote in local and national elections. He says, "If you don't vote, then elected officials won't listen when you complain."

This year the SABE Conference will have break-out sessions on voting and places where people can register to vote. Elections for SABE officers will also take place during the conference. Voters will use iPads or tablets with an accessible program developed by Clemson University that includes photos of candidates.

For over 10 years, SABE has partnered with the National Technical Assistance Center for Voting and Cognitive Access on a project to help people with developmental disabilities to know their voting rights and responsibilities. The project is led by self-advocate leaders who work with state protection and advocacy organizations (P&As). Together, they make sure people with disabilities have better access to training, user-friendly candidate information, polling places and voting equipment that is easier for everyone to use. To find out more about this project, go to www.sabeusa.org and click on "GoVoter."



An updated voter education toolkit for self-advocates will be up on the SABE website in July. The toolkit has general information about voting. Now you can also add information about how voting works in your state.

Step 1. Download the Project Vote! toolkit.

Step 2. Talk with your P&A to make the toolkit about your state.

Step 3. Share the toolkit at your next self-advocacy meeting!

Why Self-Advocates Don't Vote

1. I don't know how

Voting can seem hard if you've never voted before. To learn more about the voting process, ask someone you trust for help or look for resources online at www.sabeusa.org.

2. I don't know who to vote for

Choices are a good thing, but it can be hard to pick is the best person for the job. Learn as much as you can about each person running for office. See how they measure up on issues that are important to you.

3. My vote doesn't count

If you think your vote doesn't count, think again. In some elections, the difference comes down to just a few votes. More importantly, your opinion matters!



4. I can't get to the polling place

There should be a polling place in or near your neighborhood. Ask a friend, family member or someone who supports you to help you get there. You can call your county elections office and ask for an absentee ballot to mail in your vote. You can also call your party and ask if you can get a ride, so plan ahead.

5. My parents won't let me

If you are 18 years old or older, it's your right to vote. Talk to your parents about why it's important to vote.

Why Self-Advocates **DO** Vote

- It's my right!
- To have my voice heard.
- To elect people who care about disability issues.
- To show that people with disabilities can vote.
- To wear the "I voted today" sticker.



iVote



Contributions by Bryon Murray

Oregon became the first state to test iPads to aid voters with disabilities last year. They tested software developed by a company called Everyone Counts. Bryon Murray interviewed Steve Trout, Oregon Elections Director, to find out more.

How did your state get the idea to use technology like iPads to help people vote?

People with disabilities have different needs and no one size fits all for accessible voting. In the past, we used a very expensive machine to vote that did not work for everyone. We started looking at tools that people already use for communicating. The iPads and tablets have accessible features built-in like the ability to make text bigger, read aloud in different languages, and touch screens, which are easier for some people. We are also working on ballots that people can use on home computers.



Are pictures of the candidates on the ballot?

We do not have pictures on the ballot but we produce a voter's pamphlet that is mailed to every household in the state; even people who are not registered to vote. The pamphlet is posted online too so people using devices can see pictures of candidates. In Oregon, we vote entirely by mail.

Is this technology available for all elections?

People can use this technology to vote in local and national elections. This helps Oregon be compliant with HAVA, the Help America Vote Act.

HAVA is a federal law that gives people with disabilities the right to cast their vote independently.

How do people with disabilities who have used electronic voting technology feel about it? Do they like it? Are they afraid of it? Is there help at the polling place using technology?

They really like having this ability. The past few elections allowed many people to independently mark their ballot with whatever tools they have. Older voters love the technology because they can see the ballot in large font, read and mark the ballot themselves.

How come other states have not adopted electronic aids to help people vote?

They will. I get a couple of calls every week. There are several elections conferences this summer and I have been asked to speak. This is a growing trend especially as older voting systems become outdated. Tablets and iPads are easier and cheaper to re-program. They are also useful for poll workers, to show where a person lives, and their correct voting location.

We need people to take a chance and innovate. While this technology does serve voters with disabilities, it also appeals to people who just like using the technology!





Sibling Corner



by Katie Arnold

The Sibling Leadership Network (SLN) is thrilled to contribute to *The Riot*. We are dedicated to partnering with self-advocates to make all of our voices heard regarding issues that affect individuals with disabilities and the important people in their lives. In honor of this month's issue on voting, sisters Stacy and Carrie Coffield of New Jersey share their perspectives on voting and why it's important for all of us to get to the polls and make our voices heard.

Making Our Voices Heard Together Get Out and Vote!

By Stacy Coffield and Carrie Coffield



Stacy's Story "My Right to Vote"

My name is Stacy Coffield. I'm a 29 year old self-advocate. I was 18 the first time I voted. I was still in high school and they had a presentation about

voting. I learned that I could vote because I was old enough. They also brought the voting machines to school for practice. So I registered to vote.

I do not remember who the candidates were or who I voted for, but I had the right to vote and I wanted to try it and see what it was like. Voting made me feel like I had the freedom of speech. I like to vote in each election because it is my right and I get to choose the person I want to vote for. I vote by mail because it is easier for me. I can ask my parents for help reading the ballot if I need to.



Carrie's Story "Having a Voice"

My name is Carrie Coffield and I am 31 years old. Stacy and I also have a younger sister, Julie. I work at The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities in New Jersey. I was also 18 the first time I voted. I vote because it is my right and my responsibility as a citizen of the United States to participate in my government. I like to have a voice and a say in what goes on. It is also a way for me to be sure that the things that are important to me are represented. Voting makes me feel empowered. I vote in person at my local polling place.

Voting is Advocacy in Action

Our parents are also active voters and voting is something that everyone in our family does. Our family talks about the candidates and the issues a lot, and we don't always have the same opinions. That is okay. We don't have to agree or vote for the same person. There is no right or wrong way to vote. It is a personal choice.

Voting is a good way to be an advocate for issues that matter to us. We think that everyone who can vote should vote. People with disabilities can vote, even if they need help reading the ballot or need a different kind of accommodation. There are many resources available to learn about the voting process and about the candidates and issues. Recently, we presented a workshop about voting at a conference for self-advocates in New Jersey. That was a fun day!

The presidential election takes place in November. We're not sure we'll be voting for the same candidate, but we both know that we'll get to the polls to make our voices heard.

To learn more about voting, check out:

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE):
<http://govoter.org/govoter.php?catid=277>

The Arc: We've Got the Power website:
<http://www.thearc.org/page.aspx?pid=3536>



Ask Bill Krebs

Bill "Trouble" Krebs is an advocate from Philadelphia who fights for the rights of people with disabilities

Dear Bill,

I am teaching my high school students to become self-advocates. In meetings, many parents do not listen to student ideas about their own futures. They would rather shelter and protect them. How can I help parents support their children?

Teacher Dee, California

Dear Teacher Dee,

Parents worry because they don't know what can happen to their kids. They need to know that having a disability just means their sons and daughters will need support to reach their dreams and goals. Anything is possible!

Many parents have low expectations about people with disabilities. Teachers and self-advocates are educators. We can work together to raise expectations. Here are some ideas to help parents:



- Invite parents and guest speakers to talk to students about their careers.
- Ask adults with disabilities to talk with students and parents about the importance of self-determination and speaking up for yourself.
- Ask adults with disabilities who have careers to talk to students and parents about how they got to where they are today.

Young people need self-determination skills and goals for the future to be successful. Self-advocacy skills are the best you can have. Speaking up for yourself is important!

Did you know?

Several US Presidents lived with disabilities.



George Washington (1789-1797) had difficulty with spelling and grammar and was thought to have learning disabilities.



James Madison (1809-1817) had epilepsy.



Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865) had severe depression.



Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) had dyslexia.



Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-1945) used a wheelchair.



Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961) had a learning disability.



Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) had a hearing impairment.



William Jefferson Clinton (1993-2001) had a hearing impairment and wore hearing aids.

Summer Horoscopes

A horoscope predicts the future based on the position of the planets and your birthday. Find the sign that fits with your birthday.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19): What is your dream? Set a goal and take one step to reach it.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18): Use your talents to help someone solve a problem.

Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20): You will have a hot summer romance. Hit the pool to stay cool!

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19): Use your fiery voice to ask for what you want in your planning meetings.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20): Get moving! Exercise daily for your health.



Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20): Looking for a real job? Ask for help and don't give up.



Cancer (June 21 - July 22): Save your pennies. Good fortune is coming your way.

Leo (July 23 - Aug 22): Your friends love and respect you. Lean on them for support.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22): Break out of your shell and try something new.

Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22): We want YOU! Volunteer this summer.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21): Make time to spend with your loved ones.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21): We all need help sometimes. Ask for advice from someone you trust.



Need Romance Advice?... Ask Jack & Jill

Dear Jack,

One of my friends has a crush on me. I heard that he wants to ask me out but I am not interested. How do I let him down easy without hurting his feelings?

~ Concerned in Kansas

Dear Concerned,

Treat your friend to a drink. Let them know that you like them just as a friend, and are not looking to get into a relationship with them. Sometimes the other person doesn't want to take no for an answer and can be stubborn. Maybe they'll even change their mind the next day. But if the next day comes and you still want to be just friends, let them know that they are sweet and that you respect them. Then hopefully they will be ok just being friends and you two can still go out and have fun together!

~ Jack



Dear Concerned,

You are in a sticky situation girlfriend! But don't worry. The best answer is to be honest. Especially with people you care about. If he asks you out, gently tell him that you like him as a friend but not as a boyfriend. Talk about what you think his best qualities are or why he is your friend. Tell him that you value his friendship and want to keep being friends. Being honest is hard to do when you are worried about hurting your friend's feelings. In the end, you will be proud of yourself for being a good friend and doing the right thing.



~ Jill



Health Zone Women Be Healthy

Have you seen the YouTube video on breast health? Check it out here:



www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgTrbWUdclg!
This video is for women with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (IDD). It is part of the *Woman Be Healthy* (WBH) project at Brandeis University and the University of North Carolina.



The purpose of WBH is to give women with IDD the skills and information they need to get through breast and cervical cancer screenings. The project

helps women understand why these screenings are important, when to get them, what will happen and how to relax.

WBH also addresses barriers (things that get in the way) of women with disabilities taking care of their health. Can you believe that some doctors and providers think women with disabilities don't need to get cancer screenings? That is silly!



Kira Fisher, WBH Advisory Committee member, takes this topic seriously. "It is my responsibility as a female with a disability to make sure women with disabilities know

they have a right to ask for these screenings and to do the best they can for their health." You rock Kira!

Want to learn more? Join the Women Be Healthy Facebook page. Or, visit WBH at <http://lurie.brandeis.edu/women>.

Here you will find the WBH curriculum and links to more videos. You can also contact project staff to offer workshops in your state.



Celebrating America Puzzle

Find these words. Look up, down, and side to side.

(puzzle answers on page 10)



- Eagle
- Flag
- Freedom
- Picnic
- Fireworks
- Independence
- Summer
- Citizen
- America
- Speech
- Barbecue
- Baseball
- Music
- Vacation
- Sunshine

H	C	P	C	A	B	E	N	C	H	E	C
C	P	E	F	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N
I	I	M	I	D	R	I	E	S	S	E	A
T	C	E	R	G	B	K	H	L	U	D	M
I	N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E
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S	E	S	L	B	E	E	I	V	N	S	A
P	B	A	S	E	B	A	L	L	E	I	C
S	U	M	M	E	R	S	P	E	E	C	H
E	A	G	L	E	F	L	A	G	A	N	E



Craig Says...
"Not living in the community stinks!"

Want to hear a story? In June of 1999, two women with disabilities lived in Georgia. They lived in a state hospital. They didn't like it. That's a crappy story, huh?

Well, it's not just a story. It's a true story. History! Bleh, I hate history. Too many dates and people to remember. History doesn't have anything to do with me, does it?

Lois and Elaine, wanted to live in the community. Their staff wanted that, too. They asked the state of Georgia. Easy, right?

But, guess what? Georgia said, "Nope!" Georgia officials acted like Lois and Elaine's boss! They got a lawyer and she helped them sue Georgia! Wow! This story might be interesting. I don't know, though.

The lawyer went all the way to Washington to the Supreme Court and said, "They can live where they want. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) says so! Everyone can live in the community." The Supreme Court agreed. The decision is called the Olmstead decision.



Does this have anything to do with me and you? Yes! Lois and Elaine were self-advocates too. They wanted freedom so bad they fought for it and won! People shouldn't be forced to live where they don't want to. Food in institutions is yucky.

The law says we can live as we choose. We can take services with us. Lois and Elaine sure were tough. Hey, maybe history isn't so bad. If we remember Lois and Elaine, we can be more like them. We can be brave about speaking up. I still don't like history. Dusty history books make me sneeze. But, I'm glad I learned about Lois and Elaine. Thanks, Lois and Elaine!

Well, I'm off to watch court TV and see who wins. Sure hope they have a good lawyer.



This is how they "rocked" the vote in the Stone Age! We've come a long way in accessible voting.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

H	C	P	C	A	B	E	N	C	H	E	C	
C	P	E	F	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	
		M		D	R	I	E	S	S	E	A	
T	C	E	R	G	B	K	H	L	U	D	N	
		N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E
Z		A	W	I	C	N	L	L	S	R	R	
E	C	N	O	I	U	A	I	S	H	M	I	
N	E	F	R	E	E	D	O	M		U	C	
S	E	S	K	B	E	E	I	V	N	S	A	
P	B	A	S	E	B	A	L	L	E	I	C	
S	U	M	M	E	R	S	P	E	E	C	H	
E	A	G	L	E	F	L	A	G	A	N	E	

Self-Advocates Speak Up! and Speak Out!

Local Voting Matters

There's a big race for president this year, but don't forget that local elections are important, too. Senators, governors, city council and school board members shape policies that affect your life. But who will you vote for? Follow these steps to help you decide. Bring it up at your next self-advocacy meeting and think of ways you can help each other be informed voters!

(*A candidate is someone who is trying to get voted into office like president, senator, representative, city council, etc.)

Step 1: Decide what you are looking for in a candidate. Think about issues that are important to you and the qualities you like to see in a leader.

Step 2: Find out about the candidates. Go to

www.VOTE411.org to

find out who is running for office in your state.



Step 3: Gather materials about the candidates.

Get information through www.VOTE411.org, newspapers, TV, and mailing lists. Watch the speeches and debates.

Step 4: Think about what the candidates say about the issues. Keep a journal of what you learn about each candidate.

Step 5: Learn about the candidates' leadership abilities. Find out about their job history and leadership experience.



Step 6: Learn what others think of the candidates. Ask others who you trust for their opinion of the candidates.

Step 7: Sort it all out! Use the Candidate Report Card (on the back page) to help you make your decision.

** Permission for this one-time use of material from "How to Judge a Candidate" is granted by the League of Women Voters of the United States, www.lwv.org

Talk it up... Have yourselves a regular Riot!



Force of Nature by Jennifer Walter

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Create a Riot! Support an Artist!



CANDIDATE REPORT CARD



Issues - My Priority Issues	My Position	Candidate A	Candidate B	Candidate C
<i>Example:</i> Community Living	More funding for people with disabilities to live in a community they choose	Supports community living for people with mental illness	No position on community living	Community living issue is a top priority

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Common Issues that are Important to Self-Advocates:

- Choice of where I live
- Real jobs for real pay
- People First language
- Include people with disabilities in policymaking
- Social Security and Medicaid issues
- Accessible communities and transportation