

DISABLED WOMAN REFUSED BANK ACCOUNT

A bank has apologised after branding a disabled woman “mentally incompetent.”

18 year old Charlotte Rusher from Ipswich was told by staff that she was not eligible for a bank account with them, effectively because she has Downs Syndrome.



Charlottes mother Wendy told the Ipswich Evening Star: “They can shove their offer of an account now. It's not so much that they just wouldn't let her have an account, but more the attitude towards Charlotte.”

Barclays have their own Disability Issues Unit. An extract from their mission statement reads: “The mission of the unit is to change people's views and perceptions around disability and to provide the expert advice and support required in dealing with the challenges faced by disabled people when using banking services.”

A Barclays Spokesman said:

“We admit we've let the customer down with our service and will be arranging for £100 to be credited into an account in Mrs Rusher's name so she can buy Charlotte a gift.”

MAGISTRATES CLAMP DOWN ON BLUE BADGE FRAUD

A non-disabled motorist from Manchester has been ordered to pay over £900 after he was caught using a fake blue badge.

Chaundry Zaheer from Levenshulme in Manchester was filmed on two occasions parking his Chrysler Voyager at a pay and display meter and using the blue badge.



The offending vehicle was towed away by council officials and the driver was cautioned when he collected it from the pound.

The Chairman of the bench at Manchester Magistrates Court told Mr. Zaheer “You are using something that was never meant to be used in that way and it has got to be stopped.”

WHEELCHAIR USER LEFT STRANDED BY BUS

An investigation has been launched in Blackburn after a bus driver left a wheelchair user stranded in the rain.



Norman Turner aged 42 alleges that the Blackburn Transport driver shut the doors in his face as he attempted to board the bus, claiming he had a bad back.

Mr. Turner was accompanied by his sister and a number of friends when the incident took place in April.

His sister Lorna Scott told the Lancashire Evening Telegraph: "We all boarded and paid and then the driver took one look at Norman, shut the doors and drove off with me aboard and Norman looking horrified."

"I shouted for the driver to stop and said that Norman had wanted to get on but he just ignored me and kept going."

A spokesperson for the DRC expressed outrage, adding "...from December, if this happens, the disabled person will be able to sue the bus company for discrimination under the act's (DDA) new powers."

Michael Monton, Managing Director of Blackburn Travel said: "We are currently investigating this incident and until that process is complete we are unable to comment on this matter further."

In Somerset, bus operator 'First' is also under fire for similar issues after a disabled man couldn't get on the bus.



Bob Hawkins said he was forced to get a taxi home because the driver didn't know how to use the ramps.

The company have apologised saying they are going to retrain all 900 drivers on the team so that this does not happen again.

JAIL FOR TALKING NEWSPAPERS TRUSTEE

The former Treasurer for Taking Newspapers in Liverpool has been jailed for 14 months after stealing over £40,000 from the company accounts.

Peter Harvey from Croxteth in Liverpool became Treasurer for the organisation in March 2004 and was

found guilty of forging the signatures of other trustees and withdrawing funds for personal use.

Harvey was exposed when another trustee wrote a cheque and it bounced due to insufficient funds.

This left the charity which produces newspapers in audio format in thousands of pounds worth of debt.

Mr. Harvey pleaded guilty to twelve counts of theft.

The bank has reimbursed the organisation for the losses.



CHANNEL 4 SLAMMED FOR EXPLOITATION



Big Brother bosses are under fire, accused of exploitation after accepting a man with Tourettes Syndrome into the house.

Pete Bennet aged 24 from Brighton was diagnosed with tourettes syndrome at the age of 14.

Roy Hillard from the Tourettes Association says that the organisation was against Pete going into the house through fears that it could cause viewers to mock others with Tourettes. However he does hope that the programme will raise awareness of the issues.

Without wanting to get medical, Tourettes can cause individuals to have verbal or physical tics such as swearing, eye blinking or tongue clicking.

There is also concern about Pete's welfare as the medical effects of tourettes can increase in stressful situations.

Pete says that he wants to become a "famous touretter" as a result of being on the programme.



A Channel 4 spokesperson said "Pete was chosen solely on the basis of his personality. We think he will make a great housemate."

Big Brother is broadcast daily at 9pm on channel 4.

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In April 2005, the first Visa Paralympic World Cup was established in Manchester. Last month the event came back to the city.

This multi-sports event is targeted at disabled athletes.



The four sports chosen are; wheelchair basketball, swimming, track cycling and athletics. 360 athletes from 41 countries around the world took part in the 2006 championship.

The event continues to omit deaf sportsmen and women apparently because the Paralympics do not have a category for deaf people. Deaf athletes feel discriminated because of this and urge organisers to address the issue.

Deaf UK Athletics told us :

“With expenditure for this World Cup in the region of £1m for a week’s competition, surely it should be able

to accommodate deaf sports people. There is no rule that prevents the organisers from accepting deaf athletes, but without anyone campaigning for the inclusion of deaf people, this discrimination will continue.”



The Visa Paralympics World Cup will again be staged in Manchester in 2007.

The Olympics and the Paralympics are held every 4 years at the same venue and in the same year – with the Paralympics held roughly a month after the Olympics.

The Paralympics are predominately organised by the non disabled people who organise the Olympics. However, the Deaflympics which are also held every 4 years, but fall year after the Olympics/Paralympics, are organised predominately by deaf people for deaf people. The next Deaflympics will be in Taipei, Taiwan in September 2009.

BENEFIT BLUNDER YET AGAIN

Up to 80,000 disabled people could be wrongly denied benefits each year according to an investigation by the BBC.

As many disabled people who are claiming Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefits etc may know, medical assessments are often carried out to check if you are entitled to them.

Now, the people who do these assessments are being criticized because some of their medical reports are inaccurate.

The investigation even makes claims that some handwritten reports have been deliberately altered, and that computerised questionnaires are resulting in "misleading or nonsensical" information.



One benefits advisor in Cumbria dealt with a case where 20 alterations were made to one woman's medical report.

There are several examples of this contained within the BBC report at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/4995078.stm>

The company who carry out the assessments (Atos Origin) on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions has refused to comment about this.



TRAINEE DOCTORS TO BE TAUGHT BSL

Junior doctors in Northern Ireland are being trained in sign language.

A specialist course is being offered during their medical training at Queen's University in Belfast.

The course, which also includes training in deaf awareness, is being run in association with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf.

Research carried out by RNID in 2004 suggested that more than a third of deaf and hearing impaired patients were unclear about their condition because of communication barriers with their GP.

The students will produce a sign language dictionary on topics such as thyroid disease and pregnancy.

The initiative is backed by the RNID. A spokesperson told the BBC "Having doctors who are able to communicate effectively with their deaf and hard of hearing patients is a major step forward in making healthcare services in Northern Ireland accessible."

Extracts taken from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/4799464.stm

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MUSCLE POWER CLOSES DOWN

The national organisation which is ran and controlled by people with Neuromuscular impairment is to wind up after 15 years.

MUSCLE POWER!

A NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF PEOPLE WITH NEUROMUSCULAR IMPAIRMENTS

In a statement Richard Shaw, General Secretary of Muscle Power said:-

“Unfortunately, because of the very nature of many types of neuromuscular impairments, longevity of life is something comparatively rare to us. As a consequence, our organisation has lost many founder and very active members which has had a considerably devastating effect on Muscle Power in a way that few other organisations of disabled people have experienced.”

Muscle power have donated a large sum of money to our Disabled Peoples Movement Archive Project housed by GMCDP and we thank them for their generosity.

Shaw goes onto say “The Disabled Peoples Movement has often been described as the “last civil rights movement.” I believe it is essential for future generations to have accurate material to study and focus upon the unique struggle we have endured over several decades to achieve anything like a degree of

equality with our non disabled peers and how successive Governments, politicians and the general “Great and good” have wilfully denied us our rights to obtain full “Participation and Equality” as outlined by the United Nations in the 1981 International Year of Disabled People.”

GMCDP warmly welcomes contributions from other organisations who wish to support our ambition to establish an Archive to preserve the heritage of the Disabled People’s Movement. For further information, please contact: brian@gmcdp.com.

TEENAGER STRANDED BY CHAIR DELAY

A disabled teenager has been unable to leave her home for 10 months



while she waits for a wheelchair from her local primary care trust.

Kayleigh Tocher, 19, uses a custom made wheelchair to get out. The Craven and Harrogate Trust said she would be assessed by a specialist team.

Miss Tocher said that without her wheelchair to get about she was confined to her bed with limited entertainment in the form of crosswords and daytime television.

"I get very angry sometimes and sometimes I get very depressed because I'm just stuck here," she said.

"I'm nearly 20 now and I want to get out and go places. It's so horrible not being able to just get up and go."

The trust's director of nursing, Janet Probert, said there was a limit to NHS resources and everybody was competing for them.

"I'm absolutely committed to making sure that people like Kayleigh do get their wheelchairs, but that does mean we have to use the resources available," she said.

"Because of the complexity of Kayleigh's case and the fact that she needs support breathing, and things like that, we recognise that Kayleigh's case will have to go to our specialist wheelchair service."

"We have a clinic for that service every month and they've put Kayleigh's name forward to be assessed in that service in June."

Miss Tocher's mother, Ann Wrightson, said it was upsetting to see her daughter getting no support.

"I feel it's hard work getting anything for Kayleigh and a lot of other people will find it exactly the same," she said.

Extracts taken from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/north_yorkshire/4997492.stm

EMERGENCY TEXT SERVICE LAUNCHED IN FIFE

Deaf and speech impaired people will now be able to contact the emergency services by text in a pioneering scheme.

Fife Constabulary launched the innovative service last month for Fife residents who are deaf or speech impaired

One text to the force will put users in touch with all three of the main emergency services.

Registration forms have been sent out to 350 people.

Ch Insp Alistair McKeen said: "This new service fills a gap, particularly in relation to 999 calls."

"It is vital people register as we must know who is contacting us by text. "This could be crucial in the event of an emergency when time is of the essence."



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AND FINALLY...

A deaf dog has been taught sign language in an attempt to find him a new home.

Johnny, a border collie from West Lothian in Scotland, became homeless



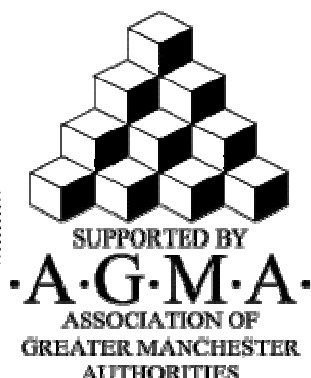
last month after the death of his owner.

The dog's favorite sign is 'thumbs up' which means "Good Boy."

Susan Tonner, Dogs Trust West Calder Rehoming Centre manager, told BBC News:

"He would be perfectly suited to an older, perhaps retired couple who can really get to know this great canine companion."

Supported by



Deadline to submit articles	Mail-out dates
13 January 2006	26 January 2006
14 April 2006	27 April 2006
16 June 2006	29 June 2006
18 August 2006	31 August 2006
13 October 2006	26 October 2006
8 December 2006	21 December 2006

This Information Bulletin is a Service to members of GMCDP and is available in standard print, large print, Braille and on cassette tape. GMCDP does not necessarily support items or organisations which appear in this bulletin, nor have any holidays, job vacancies, adverts etc been "vetted" by GMCDP members.

Comments or queries about the Information Bulletin should be sent to:

GMCDP Information & Advocacy Unit, BEVC, Aked Close, Ardwick, Manchester, M12 4AN.

Email: info@gmcdp.com

Telephone: 0161 273 5137

