

# NEWSLETTER

## Ms. Wheelchair Maryland Receives Council Appointment from Governor

In mid December, Ms. Thomas had been notified that she had received an appointment from Governor O'Malley office to serve on the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation (DORS) are recruiting applicants for membership on the Council.



The Council (mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended) monitors, reviews, and evaluates independent living services provided through the State Plan for Independent Living, developed jointly with the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services. The Council seeks to maintain representation of all disability groups.

## Gazette News Article

Earlier this year Ms. Wheelchair Maryland was featured in the Gazette Newspaper. The article highlighted the pageant and

a general outlook of the reigning Titleholder. The Gazette publishes weekly community newspapers serving Montgomery, Frederick, Prince George's and Carroll counties in Maryland, including a subscription-based weekend edition covering business and politics throughout the state. To read this article go to the Ms. Wheelchair Maryland web site [[www.ms-wheelchair-md.com](http://www.ms-wheelchair-md.com) ], and click on the On the Road page.

## Take Me Out To The Ball Game!!

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Ms. Wheelchair Maryland Program and its current Titleholder will be the honored guests of one of Maryland's top AA baseball teams. The Bowie Baysox are dedicating this evening game to the Ms. Wheelchair Maryland Program. The management of the Baysox had



Read about the

Achievements and community service of the current Titleholder, and wanted to find a way to reward

and acknowledge her. On this immense evening, when the Baysox play against the Reading Phillies, The Program Coordinator and Titleholder will be allowed to meet all of the players before the game. They will also receive memorabilia from the team. Lastly, the Titleholder will be allowed to pitch the first ball of the game. Everyone, please come out to show your support of the Ms. Wheelchair MD Program and enjoy a great game. To see how to purchase tickets, click on the On the Road page of the Ms. Wheelchair Maryland web site.

### **Crowning Events...**

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland continues to be a spokeswoman for individuals whom have disabilities. During the month of January she had participated in a number of events throughout the state. Here is a glimpse at a few of the activities which she has actively become involved in over this period of time.:

### **NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo**

The 15th annual NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo was held Jan. 12-13 at the Washington Convention Center. More than 85,000 people attended the Expo, getting free medical services like vision and cholesterol tests, diabetes and blood pressure screenings, and fun, healthy activities like rock climbing, tennis, golf and even salsa dancing lessons.



*Denise poses in front of the NBC 4 News balloon.*

This was a delightful event which provided a venue to provide outreach for the program.

Denise worked at the Ms. Wheelchair America booth, greeting visitors and sharing information. The convention was an informative and fun event...

### **M.L.K. Parade**

Despite the blistering weather of the day, a number of civic and community organizations gather to celebrate the birthday of one of our country's most prominent civil rights leaders, Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. Ms. Wheelchair Maryland was honored to be invited to take part in this extraordinary event. This was a great opportunity to meet the residences of Baltimore and to showcase the Ms. Wheelchair Maryland program...



*Denise prepares to join in the procession*

### **Meet and Greet at Inwood**

Inwood House is a unique residential community, designed specifically for adults who have a disability. We are an apartment community which rents only to persons who are disabled or elderly. In a world full of choices, we just may be that special place you are looking for! Make us your new home! Or join our team of volunteers who create goodwill and good times. A few of the residence who are interested in participating in the Ms. Wheelchair programs invite Denise to visit with them to discuss this and other.

programs that she is involved. The evening was filled with informal, light hearted conversation and refreshments



*Denise and a few of the residence from Inwood House pose for a group picture after their discussion...*

### **Mardi Gras Party**

DateAble, Inc., Ms. Wheelchair MD and the CP Group collaborated to hold an elegant, celebratory party based on the time honored traditions of Mardi Gras. Attendees wore customary Mardi Gras costumes and accessories. A great time was had by all. This was a time which new and long lasting friendships were developed. There was plenty of food, drink, singing and dancing which lasted to the wee hours past midnight.



*Denise and one of the party goers smile for the camera...*

### **7th Annual CCBC Women's Expo**

Ms. Wheelchair MD was asked to be a speaker at the annual 'Queen for a Day' event sponsored by W.E.A.N. The event took place on the grounds of Catonsville Community College. During this time the college hosted their 7<sup>th</sup> annual Women's Expo, which the Ms. Wheelchair MD Program was a featured exhibitor. The 'Queen for a Day' program was an extraordinary concept of Ms. Janice Jackson. The goal of this great gathering of woman whom have disabilities is to acknowledge that we are first and foremost women, and that our disabilities are a small aspect of our beings. The day was filled with pampering of the ladies in attendance. The ladies then enjoyed a luncheon which they were served by the staff and volunteers of W.E.A.N. After lunch the ladies continued to receive the royal treat-

### **Upcoming Events...**

Here are a few of the future events which Ms. Wheelchair MD will be present. All of the following events are fun outings that can be enjoyed by everyone. For those events marked FUNDRAISER, please contact the MWM Program to speak to someone about the event detailed and the purchase tickets. We would appreciate your support.

***Washington Wizards***

***Ronald McDonald House***

***Bowie Baysox Baseball Club***

***Eggstravaganza***

***Walk MS 20th Anniversary***

***2008 Tux & Tails Gala***

***World of Possibilities Expo***

***Bethesda Literary Festival***

***Preakness Celebration***

ment. They were serenaded throughout lunch by an extremely talented jazz musician.



*[L-R] Denise, Katie O'Malley and Janice*

Afterward the First Lady of Maryland and Ms. Wheelchair Maryland gave speeches of encouragement and presented each lady in attendance with a personalized beauty basket filled with goodies. Lastly, the ladies joined the expo. There they received gifts from the exhibitors. Needless to say this was a truly special moment.

### **8th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade**



*Denise poses with the Leprechauns*

The HARP & SHAMROCK SOCIETY (the Parade Committee) of Gaithersburg in conjunction with The City of Gaithersburg had worked diligently to plan and execute the 6th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade to be held at the Washingtonian Center in Gaithersburg. This year the Ms. Wheelchair Program was one of the excited parade participants.

### **About Us... The Ms.**

Wheelchair Maryland organization emphasizes one's advocacy and public speaking skills, as well as personal perception and projection. The Ms. Wheelchair Maryland "Pageant" is open to all women who use a wheelchair on a daily basis, are permanent residents of Maryland and who are between 14 and 60 years old. The Ms. Wheelchair Maryland program is a sisterhood of dynamic women who are dedicated to promoting disability awareness, education, and empowerment. The person selected to hold the title serves as a spokesperson whose responsibility it is to speak to the general public and the disability community about her life as a person with a disability, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and a platform issue of her choosing. Moreover, Ms. Wheelchair Maryland competes nationally with other state titleholders in the annual Ms. Wheelchair America Program...

**Coming Soon...**

Periodically check the Ms. Wheelchair web site for details of an exciting fundraiser ...



To invite Denise Thomas to speak to your group or organization or to provide sponsorship for her to participate in Ms. Wheelchair America 2009, please contact State Coordinator Robert Watson at (301) 888-1177 ext. 4 or [robert@dateable.org](mailto:robert@dateable.org).

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland is made possible through individual, group, and/or corporate donations. Donations should be sent to Ms. Wheelchair Maryland, Inc. 15520 Bald Eagle School Road Brandywine, MD 20613