



# The Edge News Journal

Special events:  
DOC's First Annual Christmas party will be held this month in honor of those who've supported the organization in first year of operation.

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Handi Van Inc. is giving riders like this other transportation options.

## Could a van service increase options for the disabled?

By Deborah De Vos

When the Utah Transit Authority decided to redesign bus routes throughout the Salt Lake Valley, concerned riders turned out in numbers to learn about the impact it would have on their commutes. But some disabled men and women are finding that the bus route cuts would also impact the paratransit routes.

"It's been a big concern for us," said Mark Miller, disability outreach committee chairman. "I use public transportation and before the cuts my average trip took about an hour -- the cuts have increased my travel times to almost two hours."

Miller also said he's still able to pick up his bus outside of the apartments where he lives but has known some who have to travel up to two miles to receive the same service.

"The disabled rely on public transportation and are not likely to have personal vehicles so it may seem like a block or two difference to someone with a vehicle," Miller said. "But for someone in a non-powered wheelchair you might as well say it's a marathon in distance."

The redesigned routes had cut 98 of the bus routes down to about 80 and UTA plans to raise fares 50 cents by 2009 for both buses and TRAX light rail services. Miller said he thinks the increase fares further cut into the fixed incomes of disabled riders and the redesigned routes have left many stranded.

UTA General Manager John English said that route cuts were to increase the reliability, speed and access of transportation in the valley. The UTA redesign budget shows an annual savings of about \$627,136; which UTA plans to use to add bus service in areas where routes are needed most.

However under the Federal disability law, a bus company does not have to provide a Paratransit service if a regular bus route does not run within three-quarters of a mile from a person's home or destination.

"There has to be a solution to help those who depend on these services and allow UTA to stay within their budgets," Miller said. "Everything keeps going up in price because gas continues to go up but in the end we need to get to and from the places we have to go -- the question is how can we all work together to balance it."

The Sandy City Council is looking to revisit the bus cuts and try to find a way to help the disabled in their community.

"I don't remember anyone from UTA discussing paratransit and how it would change," said Councilmember Scott Cowdell. "I understand if a line had to be cut because there wasn't enough rider ship but I was unaware of the affect it has had on the paratransit lines."

UTA has been invited by the Sandy City Council to come back and discuss the issue, as they search for answers to the problem.

Miller said that if UTA is unable to fix the problem because of budget constraints, there are other options available that may help to fill the gaps UTA's redesign has left open. "There are van services that specialize in helping the disable to get around the valley," he said. "The key is finding a way to make them more affordable for those on fixed incomes."

One company Miller said The Disability Outreach Committee has looked at is Handi Van Inc., a company that provides transportation services for the disabled. "If a smaller more localized company could fill in the gaps that would be at the least one solution but it would require participation from cities to make it an affordable option."

Miller said he, on behalf of The Disability Outreach Committee, is going to contact Sandy City and see if they are willing to hear about some possible solutions.

"The more options that are offered then the more likely a solution are found," Miller said. "If Sandy City is able to help in providing better transportation for the disabled then it's also likely that other cities will follow suit."



## Healthcare reform headed to Utah's legislature

Health care reform is going to be a top priority in the 2008 Utah legislative session and your concerns, suggestions, criticisms and preferences should be heard. Many fear they are one major illness or injury away from financial ruin due to the skyrocketing costs of the current system. What are your thoughts?

United Way of Salt Lake City convened a group of civic leaders, legislators, business executives and religious representatives to form proposals on health care, financial security and other issues. They are seeking public input on these ideas at [www.uw.org](http://www.uw.org). Just click on one of the topics on the right side of the page to be directed to a place where your comments can be entered. We believe Utahans need to be part of any health care reform effort.

AARP Utah is also part of a nationwide effort called "Divided We Fail," (DWF) along with the Business Roundtable and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to amplify the voices of millions of Americans who believe that health care and lifetime financial security are the most pressing domestic issues facing our nation. Americans deserve

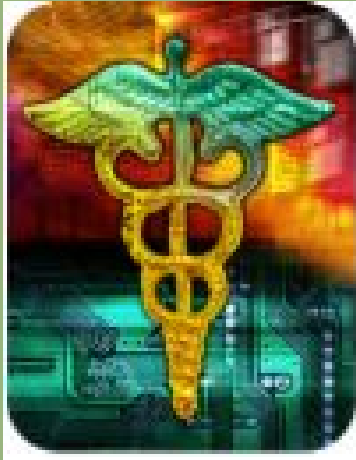
the right to know where our candidates for public office stand on these issues. How do they plan to:

Ensure affordable, quality health care for all?

Encourage personal responsibility by making it easier to save for retirement?

Work to bring people together to break partisan gridlock and find bipartisan ways to achieve solutions to these problems?

For more information on DWF and to help join this campaign, go to [www.dividedwefail.org](http://www.dividedwefail.org).



## DOC makes Veterans Day special for Magna community

By Deborah De Vos

Call it old glory, stars and stripes or the star-spangled banner, the United States flag rose in honor on a day for remembering past heroes at the Pleasant Green Villa Apartments, 2971 S. 8400 W., when The Disability Outreach Committee presented veterans a flag of their own.

The flag raising ceremony was held in the PGV courtyard on Nov. 11 with about 50 people in attendance and included special guest speakers Stacey Adams, Salt Lake County's community relations specialist and DOC Chairman Mark Miller.

"Tradition is the thread that binds us all," Miller said. "If we fail to keep up these traditions then the service these men and women gave would be forgotten and we just can't have that."

It was the first flagpole to be placed in the community and everything was donated by local businesses, Miller said. The flagpole by Shane Thompson and Bill LaRochelle of HSM Security, Lowell Taylor of CobbleCreek Electric installed the spotlight and the Salt Lake County Deputy Sheriff Association gave the flag.

Miller said it's through the ceremonies like these that help veterans to get through difficult times. "A lot can be gained when veterans can feel the tremendous support from their community," he said. "This flag, this ceremony and all who've help make this possible, makes it impossible for this community to forget the sacrifice that was made for our freedom."



DOC Chairman Mark Miller is proud of the new flag that hangs in Pleasant Green Villa.



Figure 1 from left to right: Barry Christensen and John Hutchins VFW Magna Garfield post performed the flag ceremony.



Figure 2 Mark Miller speaks to those in attendance at the Nov. 11 flag ceremony held in honor of Veterans Day.



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## *A special message from DOC Chairman*

The Disability Outreach Committee has had a wonderful first year. We've begun to network and establish ourselves as a well-known non profit organization in the Salt Lake Valley.

DOC's goal is about creating a forum for the disabled to access news and information that is impacting their lives.

Focusing our community projects close to our home office DOC spent the past year enriching the lives of disabled veterans living in the Pleasant Green Villa apartments, Magna, which included adding new computers to their clubhouse and providing holiday meals.

For Veterans Day we supplied PGV residents with a new flagpole and asked the local VFW to perform the flag ceremony.

DOC is very grateful to Shane Thompson and Bill LaRoche of HSM Security for installing the flagpole; and Lowell Taylor of CobbleCreek Electric for installing the spotlight. The flag was generously donated by the Salt Lake County Deputy Sheriff Association.

We also want to give a special thank you to the Salt Lake County Housing Authority for allowing the flag to be installed on community grounds and hold the inducting ceremony.

As the year comes to an end, DOC's board of directors is beginning to decide where the community service projects need to be focused in 2008. We will keep everyone posted on our exciting new ventures.



If you wish to help DOC achieving goals you can give a tax deductible donation at any Wells Fargo Bank. Just make your check out to, "The Disability Outreach Committee." For more details on our organization visit the home page of our website.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Mark Miller  
Chairman of the Board



## *DOC launches The Edge News Journal*

The Disability Outreach Committee board members, a non profit organization that works to improve the lives of the disabled by helping them to find solutions to everyday problems, has officially launched their newest addition—The Edge News Journal.

DOC Chairman Mark Miller said the monthly online news journal will operate independently of DOC and highlight news of the disabled from legislation and government to local features on those men and women making a difference in their communities despite their disabilities.

"It's all about giving the disabled population a forum where they can read about the things that are impacting their lives," Miller said. "DOC is all about solutions and one of the best ways for us to keep up with what's happening in communities is to know what's happening in them -- The Edge gives us that insight so we know what to focus on next."

DOC hired Deborah De Vos as The Edge's managing editor, which also includes reporting, editing and laying out the new journal. She brings with her three years of experience as a government and features writer for the Valley Journals.

"We feel fortunate to have been able to secure someone with her kind of knowledge and expertise," Miller said. "She is a great asset to our organization and with her proven accolades in journalism we are confident that she will deliver honest, objective, fair and balanced news."

The Edge News Journal will publish monthly on the first of every month. Anyone with comments, announcements or story ideas is encouraged to contact the editor at [docpress@gmail.com](mailto:docpress@gmail.com).



**It's not just a man or woman thing—  
Get empowered, Get motivated and  
Get on the move!**