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INCITEMENT INCITEMENT

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Spring 1990

VICTORY VICTORY VICTORY WE WILL RIDE!

by Bob Kafka

It happened without fanfare and without the clamor that made it possible. ADAPT members are still in somewhat of a joyous trance. Thousands of disabled people are still unaware that it has occurred. To some it is still hard to believe. Others just smile.

Under orders from the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals to revise their rules, the Department of Transportation issued regulations that will require that all new buses be accessible and require supplemental paratransit service for those who can not use the fixed route system. In addition the rules require that when purchasing used buses, a good faith effort must be made to find used buses with lifts. When buses are refurbished, lifts must be installed.

These new rules, which become final mid-September, are the culmination of a 15 year struggle led by ADAPT. The language in the new rules is similar to the language incorporated in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The publishing of the DOT rules is a major vindication for the strategy and tactics of ADAPT.

The American Public Transit Assn., APTA, obviously gun-shy after their confrontations with the "wheelchair warriors" of ADAPT, have stated they will not challenge the new regulations.

The new rules allow a waiver of the lift requirement for new vehicles only if four conditions are met. All these conditions pertain to situations where there are no lift equipped buses available to be bought, and delay in purchasing buses would significantly impair transportation in the community.

continues p.2



OVER
700
MARCHED
IN THE
WHEELS
OF
JUSTICE
ACTION.
(See
Article
p.3)

Photo: Tom Olin

A requirement to purchase or lease new accessible vehicles would also apply to demand-responsive systems for the general public.

DOT is asking for public comment on alternative lifts and securement devices and the types of wheelchairs they can accommodate. They also want comments on who should be eligible for supplemental paratransit. Under the current rule a person who has no physical problem entering on a bus is not eligible for paratransit.

Though there has been no parades, and no "NIGHTLINE" interviews, the history of the disability rights movement will register ADAPT as changing the way disabled people advocated, and how victory was achieved.



Jennifer Keelan is hugged by her mother Cindy as she reaches the top of the Capitol steps. Photo: Tom Olin

The following are excerpts from Nelson Mandela's speech at Cape Town City Hall (South Africa), following his release after 27 years of imprisonment for fighting against apartheid, and for social justice.

Amandla! (Power!)
Ngawethu! (It Is Ours!)
Amandla! (Power)
Ngawethu! (It Is Ours!)
i-Afrika! (Africa!)
Mayibuye! (Let it come back!)

---Xhosa anti-apartheid chant led by Nelson Mandela at his Cape Town speech 2/11/90 after 27 years in prison for justice.

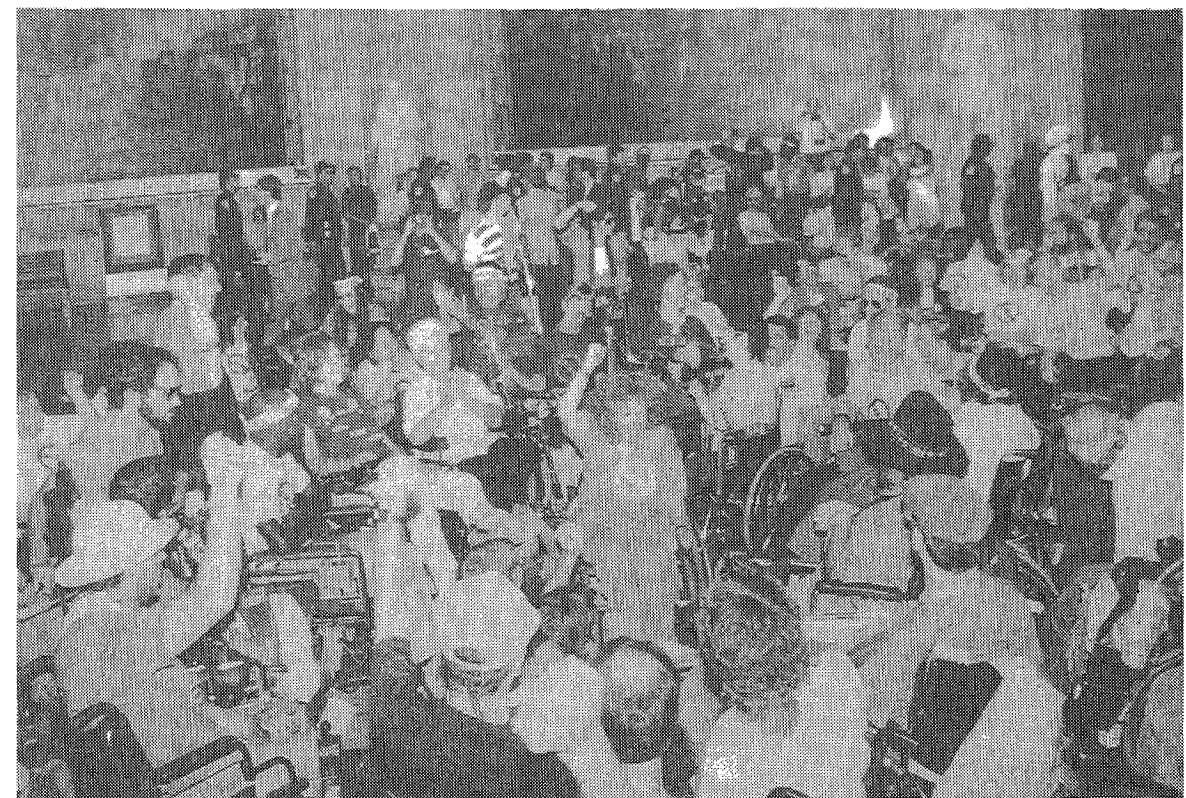
Our struggle has reached a decisive moment. We call on our people to seize this moment so that the process toward democracy is rapid and uninterrupted. We have waited too long for our freedom. We can no longer wait. Now is the time to intensify the struggle on all fronts.

To relax our efforts now would be a mistake which generations to come will not be able to forgive. The sight of freedom looming on the horizon should encourage us to redouble our efforts. It is only through disciplined mass action that our victory can be assured.....

...Our march to freedom is irreversible. We must not allow fear to stand in our way....

In conclusion, I wish to go to my own words during my trial in 1964. They are as true today as they were then. I wrote: I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the idea of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."



The Capitol Rotunda echoed with ADAPT's chant "ADA NOW" as 104 arrested. Photo: Tom Olin

DC ACTION A HUGE SUCCESS

ADAPT's Wheels of Justice action in Washington, DC in March was a great success. Over 700 people participated in the march from the White House to the Capitol, Monday March 12th. Speakers at the Rally after the march included: Justin Dart, Chairperson of the President's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities; Pat Schroeder, Representative from CO and strong supporter of ADA; I. King Jordan, President of Gallaudet University; Major Owens, Representative from NY and one of the strongest supporters of the ADA; Bobby Silverstein, Staff Director to the Senate Disability Policy Sub Committee of the Labor and Human Resources Committee; Evan Kemp, Chairperson of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; James Brady, former Press Secretary to President Reagan; and Mike Auberger, Co-founder of ADAPT. Monday's activities culminated with 60 people climbing the steps to the Capitol in a symbolic demonstration of our determination to not allow any barrier to stop us from gaining our civil rights. When all had reached the top of the 78 steps, we divided into two groups to deliver a message to Speaker Tom Foley and House Minority Leader Bob Michels to quickly pass the bill with no weakening amendments.

Tuesday over 200 folks gathered in the Capitol Rotunda and met with Speaker Foley, Minority Leader Michels and the primary House Sponser of the ADA, Steny Hoyer of MD. ADAPT tried to impress on the Congressmen the importance to us, and millions of other disabled Americans, of quick passage of the ADA with no weakening amendments. Though Foley and Michels both talked of the ADA passing in May, they would not make any commitments. So the group began chanting and Capitol Police arrested 104 demonstrators.

ADAPT took over the office of the leading House opponent of the transportation sections of the ADA, Bud Shuster (PA), on Wednesday. The *Washington Times* (3/15/90) quoted Shuster saying "This [the ADA] is a feel good bill. There is no money accompanying the bill to pay for the costs it is proposing." ADAPT's demand was to meet with Shuster and that he end his opposition to the ADA. But Shuster would not meet with us, and at the close of that business day, he had the 64 ADAPT members who would not leave the building arrested.

Court took up all of Thursday and Friday morning for most of the group; however, some folks were able to go down to HUD for a short housing action (see article this issue). The trials were done on a one at a time basis, for the greater part of the first day, after which cases were taken in groups. Sentencing was quite uneven, depending to some extent on the Judge who heard the case. Some people were given simply the \$10 court cost fee to pay, while others were given suspended sentences, a years probation and fines of up to \$500 (for a person with an income of about \$400 a month.)

The weeks worth of actions ended with a contingent of ADAPT folks joining the local Greyhound drivers union picket line for several hours Friday afternoon.

DO
NOT
ENTER

THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW! ...WAIT A MINUTE...?

One of the biggest ironies of the Wheels of Justice action was revealed by the DC justice system itself. When the five folks who received a year supervised probation went to file their paperwork, they were told to go to another building, Building B, to complete the process. But when they arrived there the supposedly accessible entrance had no ramp, nor was there a ramp on any of the other entrances!

17 years after the passage of Section 504 of the Rehab Act, this federally funded court system, could not see fit to have a ramp available.

A man standing nearby Building B said that a stone ramp was under construction, and that they used to have a wooden ramp -- but it rotted away! There were marble steps for the able bodied folk entering the building but apparently no one felt it necessary to provide even a temporary ramp while the new ramp was being installed.

A 504 lawsuit has been filed by the National Disability Action Center on behalf of the five. Obviously it takes more than passage of laws to ensure our civil right to access.

HUD GETS HIT

In response to proposed weakening of the regulations for the Fair Housing Amendments, 40 people protested at HUD, Housing and Urban Development, offices in Washington DC on March 16th. The protest was organized by Concrete Change to send a message to HUD that disabled people are not happy with attempts to weaken and delay the accessibility goals outlined in the Amendments.

When it passed, the Fair Housing Amendments required that new public and privately owned family housing be accessible to people with disabilities. The National Association of Home Builders, NAHB, have fought access requirements, and according to Concrete Change Organizer Eleanor Smith, the National Spinal Cord Injury Association and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (claiming to represent the disability community) have been compromising access goals.

Some protesters were able to enter the building from two entrances, and were able to negotiate a meeting with Under-Secretary Alfred DelliBovi. DelliBovi listened to the protesters demands that: access features should comply with HUD guidelines, not weaker ones proposed by other groups; that buildings only be exempted from compliance on a building by building measurement basis... rather than a site average; and that HUD guidelines be published now, with no more delays. DelliBovi seemed open to protesters input, but the NAHB continues to lobby for weaker guidelines and a two year delay before anything is adopted!

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AIR ACCESS REGS OUT

Air Transport Assn. Files Suit

On March 2, 1990, the Department of Transportation issued final rules implementing the Air Access Act of 1986. These rules have most of the requirements for which disability advocates have been battling for 3 years. The rules went into effect April 5, 1990.

Highlights of the rules:

- * Wheelchairs and other assistive devices have priority.
- * Battery-powered wheelchairs must be accepted, both wet and dry cell. Airlines must provide the packaging at no cost to the traveler.
- * Airlines must provide boarding assistance.
- * Aircraft of 100 seats or more must have space for storing a wheelchair in the cabin.
- * Cannot refuse transportation to people on the basis of their disability.
- * No limit on the number of disabled people on a flight.
- * May not require advance notice except in specific circumstances that take extra preparation time. (respirator hook-up, etc.)

- * May not require a disabled person to travel with an attendant, except in specific circumstances. If airlines do require an attendant, they may not charge for his/her travel.
- * May not keep anyone out of a seat on the basis of their disability except as an FAA safety rule requires.
- * There must be movable aisle armrests on half the aisles in aircrafts with 30 or more seats.
- * New widebody aircraft must have accessible bathrooms.

The Air Transport Association, which represents major airlines, filed a lawsuit on April 5th requesting a motion to 'stay the regulations'. As of this writing no action has been taken by the court. The above regulations are now in effect, but keep watch to see what the court does. For information on court action, contact Tim Cook, National Disability Action Center, 202-467-5730

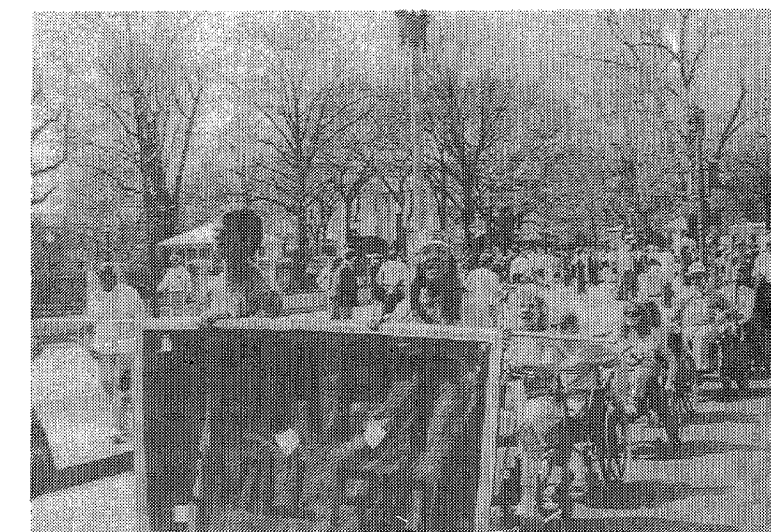
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ADAPT



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Denver Co. 80219



Marchers leave the White House for the Capitol. Photo: Carolyn Long



A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

American Disabled for Attendant
Programs Today?

by Bob Kafka

The battle for accessible public transportation has been the major focus of the disability rights community for almost two decades. TRANSBUS was the first salvo, back in the 1970's, to get the transit industry's attention to our need for an accessible mode of public transportation. We called for retrofitting all buses in the days when the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, ACCD, was in its prime. We thought we had victory in 1979 when the Department of Transportation issued regulations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that required the purchase of accessible buses. The American Public Transit Assn., APTA, filed suit and all we got was an interim final rule that gave us "special efforts", not accessibility.

When ADAPT entered the public transportation arena in 1980, the battle took on a new tenor. We began demanding our rights. The cry "ACCESS IS A CIVIL RIGHT" resounded throughout the country. Though most disabled people shied away from these 'militant' disabled people, more and more saw ADAPT as the organization that personified the term 'Disability Rights'. ADAPT folks felt the issue. The people in ADAPT are mostly low income, people who use public transportation, people who use attendant services, people who felt abandoned by the Independent Living Movement.

Please send us your comments, articles, photos, cartoons, etc. We want your input! Also your contributions are always WELCOME!



Stephanie
Send to: ADAPT/ Incitement
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The strategy of ADAPT is to use the tactics of other civil right organizations. ADAPT believes in grassroots organizing. It believes that 'People Power' is the way towards an accessible community. Disabled people, in the streets, doing aggressive non-violent civil disobedience changed the way people looked at the "Jerry's Kids" of the world.

The proof of ADAPT'S effectiveness is in the statistics. Over 50% of all the buses on the road today are lift equipped. This 25% increase has occurred at the same time that the budgets for the transit industry have been cut in half. This has not come about because of law suits, though they have helped. This has not come about because of legislation, though the potential of the passage of the American with Disabilities Act has helped. This has not come about because of bureaucratic sensitivity, though the sensitivity has improved.

It has come about because of the work of people committed to an issue. It has come about by using old fashioned community organizing.

Now that victory is so close, where do we go from here? The energy and network of ADAPT is still out there. There is no shortage of issues. What shall it be? For this writer the next issue is clear: ATTENDANT SERVICES.

This is a subject people who are involved in ADAPT know in a very personal way. The lack of a clear attendant services policy in this country is hindering the independence of millions of disabled people. Medicaid, one of the largest stream of dollars flowing from Washington, funds a hodgepodge of medically-oriented attendant services serving some disability groups better than others. Insurance companies have not done an adequate job of paying for attendant services. Vocational Rehabilitation's role is unclear. State funded services are limited and vary greatly from state to state.

The issue is ready for ADAPT to tackle. Our name could be:

AMERICAN DISABLED FOR ATTENDANT
PROGRAMS TODAY! (ADAPT)

What do you think?



ADA NOW

(Mike Auberger's address to the Wheels of Justice marchers at the nation's Capitol Monday 3/12/90)

Twenty years ago I walked up these steps a wholly equal American citizen. Today I sit here with you as less than second class citizens, who are still daily, legally discriminated against -- even at the end of the 20th Century.

The history of disabled Americans lists back before our country was a country. Women gained the right to vote in 1920. African Americans and other minorities gained civil rights in 1964. But today disabled Americans still are legally denied the right to employment, public transportation, telephones and public accommodations.

We are here today to demand that the Americans with Disabilities Act be passed immediately, without further weakening amendments, without delay, without compromise!

Today we represent those who have come before us, and those who will become disabled in the future. We represent those who could not be here with us in body -- But who are here in spirit, and those who are prevented from speaking for themselves. We are here for the future of disability in America and in the world.

The fight for disability rights has seen many warriors. Our struggle has even seen many of our brothers and sisters die without the simple rights that most Americans take for granted. We've all known friends, loved ones and compatriots who have struggled to gain our equality but have not lived to see our dream fulfilled.

The steps we sit before represent a long history of discrimination and indignities heaped upon disabled Americans. We have faced what these steps have represented. Among us are those who have been institutionalized against our will. There are those among us who have had our

children taken away solely because we are disabled. We have been denied housing, jobs, etc. These indignities and injustices must not go on.

We will not permit these steps to continue to be a barrier to our rights and equality.

We will not let any barrier prevent us from the equality that is rightfully ours.

The preamble to the constitution does not say: "We the ABLE BODIED people". It says: "We the people". WE ARE THE PEOPLE.

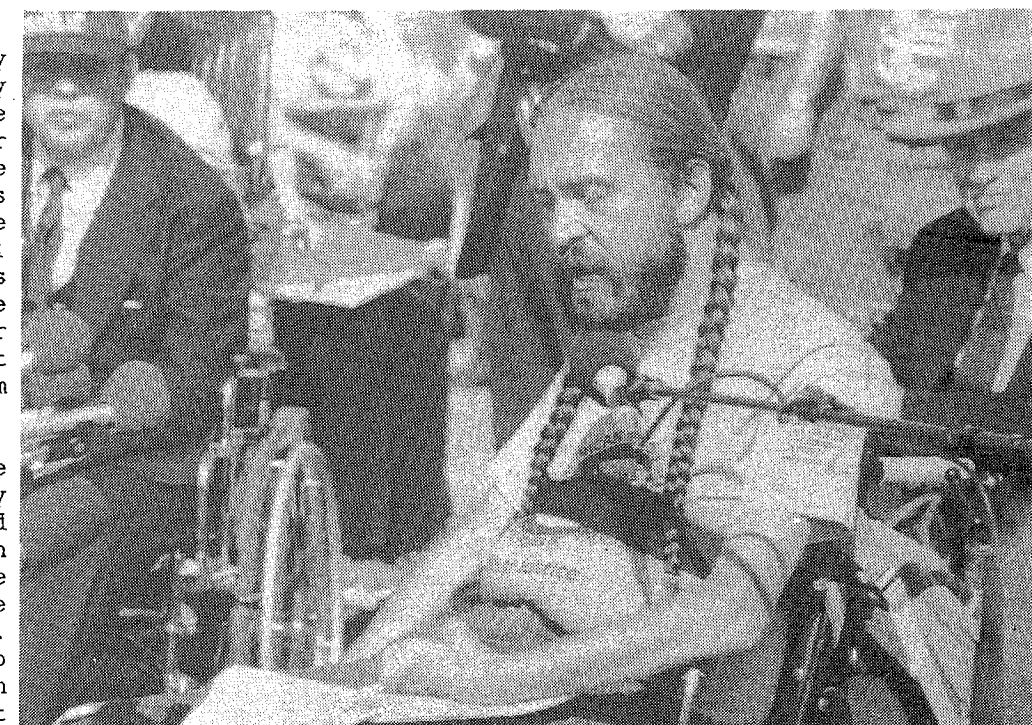
The pledge of allegiance does not say: "Liberty and justice for all -- BUT DISABLED PEOPLE". It says: "Liberty and justice for all."

WE ARE HERE TO DELIVER A MESSAGE.

WE ARE HERE TO DEMAND OUR CIVIL RIGHTS NOW!

WE ARE HERE TO DEMAND THE PASSAGE OF THE ADA NOW!

WE ARE HERE TO DEMAND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VOTE NOW!!!



Mike Auberger calls for quick passage of ADA.

Photo: Tom Olin

(Mr Roberts first asked Wade Blank to summarize his personal background, which Wade did as follows: "George was born, he was left on the doorstep of an orphanage; he was put in the state home and training school. He never knew who his family was. His entire life has been one of incarceration in the state home and training school in Colorado until 1971, when they released him from the state home and training school and put him in a nursing home where he spent the next eight years of his life. He sued the nursing home and won enough money to buy himself a home. He's now a home-owner and because of all those experiences, he has now committed his life to social change for other disabled people.")

"They will not listen and respond to disabled people, they will not talk to us, they will not descend to talk to us. We're frustrated and we don't like to go to jail all the time... The Denver government listens to us, but the United States Congress doesn't listen to us at all."

-- George Roberts
Denver, CO

"Your honor, I prepared something high falutin', but I think what makes a lot more sense is, this one's for Kenny."

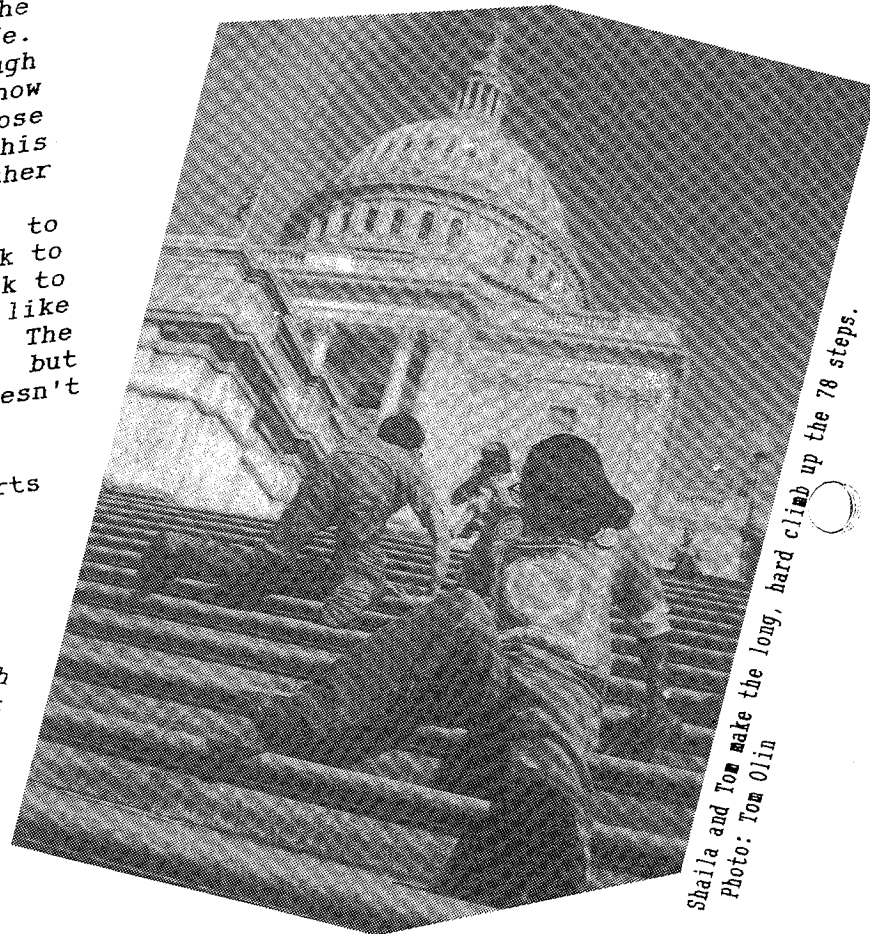
-- Tom Hogan
Fairbanks, AK

"I'm here today for the people who have died... and who have not seen what law become a reality. I'm here for Kenny, a little five year old who just died recently. He used to come on all the demonstrations... I've learned from these people what commitment is and what caring is. Lots of people back in my home state don't understand why we're here. I'm here for the children of the future who shouldn't have to be told they cause a fire hazard. And because they can't sit in a restaurant for the children who shouldn't have to be told they can't ride a bus or get into a bathroom..."

-- Christine Coughlin
Phoenix, AZ

"Obviously I'm going through this procedure for the second time in my lifetime [referring to the civil rights movement of the 60's]. And with the courage and determination of the people before you right now, I feel I could do no less. And I'm honored to be here going through this procedure and would be willing to go through it again until the Americans with Disabilities Act is passed and implemented. So you may see me again for the same thing."

-- Charles Sims
Philadelphia, PA



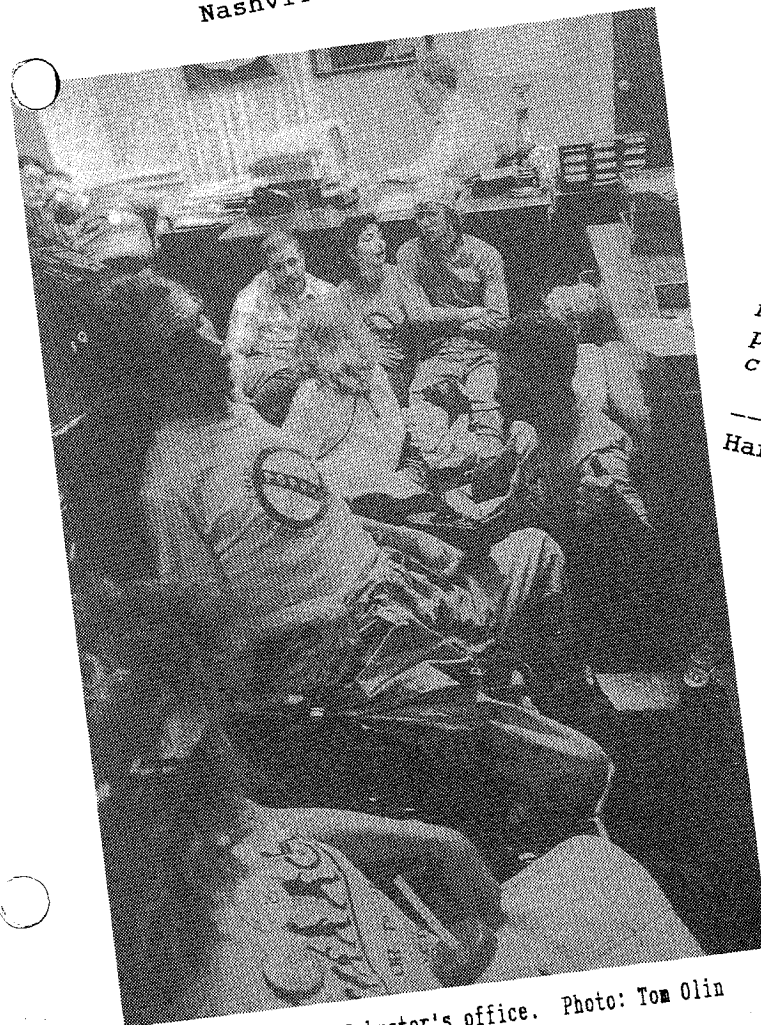
Shaila and Tom make the long, hard climb up the 78 steps.
Photo: Tom Olin

"You are the pioneer patriots of the 20th Century. We are here today representing 43 million Americans with disabilities forced by massive discrimination to be this nation's most isolated, unemployed, impoverished and welfare dependent minority. President Bush has estimated the economic cost to America of this discrimination to be \$300 billion per year. The devastating human cost would be impossible to communicate in numbers or words. We are here today to tell the Congress that two centuries is long enough for people with disabilities to wait for the Constitutional promise of Justice."

-- Justin Dart, Jr.
Wheels of Justice Rally

"I'm sitting here today for a person from my state of Tennessee... Up until last Thursday, this person was going to be here today. He lives in nursing home and together in our community we raised the money so that we could come here to express our feelings to Congress. And the day before we were to leave, he was informed by the administrator of the nursing home and his physician that if he left he would not be permitted to return to the nursing home. They would throw him out on the street and he would have no place to live... We all know that is a violation of his Constitutional rights. ...He could probably find a lawyer who would do the case for free... and he certainly has the time... but he knows that if he did choose to fight that case, that the nurses would not help him go to the bathroom when he is hungry, to, and not feed him when he is hungry, they would wait the long waiting that people can go through inside of an institution. So he really doesn't have the choice to enforce his rights..."

-- Diane Coleman
Nashville, TN



Sit-in a Schuster's office. Photo: Tom Olin

"When I was a baby, they wanted to put me away, but my mother and father fought and I stayed home with them, and I had a good life. I went to high school, and now I work in the community to fight for other people who can't fight for themselves. All we want is education and jobs. All we want is and get out in the good jobs, to try like everybody else..."

-- Wayne Spahn
Austin, TX

"What this whole group, what this outpouring shows today is that we're solid, that we have solidarity. And if solidarity can make Poland free it can make us free too!"

-- Evan Kemp, Chairperson of the
US Equal Employment Opportunity
Commission

"I was in a nursing home for thirteen years. I had to fight to get out. It was the beginning of my life at 22. I will not stop fighting and going to court until we all have the same rights as non-disabled people. For instance, sitting in a movie house. People have gone to jail, demanding their right to sit in movie theaters. The is the USA. That is crazy. Look in back of me, there's a man in this courtroom who can't hear. That is not freedom. They call this a country for all people. If the ADA passes in the form that it is now, it will bring civil rights for people in wheelchairs, deaf people, civil rights for all people."

-- Claude Holcomb
Hartford, CT

"...I think we need to announce today that if we need to come back perhaps we'll simply stay, until... (cheers.) We should not be expected to come back again and again and to be made to look like we're begging, or asking for favors. We're not. We're not asking any favors. We're simply demanding the same rights, the same equality that every other American citizen has."

-- I. King Jordan, President
Gallaudet University

"I was in Sonoma State Hospital with two of my friends for about 18 years. It was hard to get out. We got out fight to get out... When we got out of the state hospital, we got put in a convalescent home. So I was there for about four years. The nursing home was no good. What I mean by that is bad care, bad food, and when somebody pushed the button to go to the bathroom or be helped, they had to wait for two or three hours. So I fight for myself and no more. So I fight for myself and two of my friends... We've been out for five years and have been working with this group for five or six years. And if I had to go to jail, I would fight for the ADA to be passed. That's all I have to say."

-- Chris Hronis
Haywood, CA

"Let me say obviously God wants this to happen or you wouldn't have the most glorious day Washington has seen all year. There is no higher authority than that and you have really gotten that vote, and big time."

-- Representative Pat Schroeder



ET and Lillibeth listen to speeches at Monday's rally.

Photo: Tom Olin

"From the beginning of human history, society has hidden away its disabled population in its insane asylums where society performed experiments on them, or their families kept its disabled members in dark basements, attics, or if the disabled person was lucky, the family kept them locked in the back bedroom. So this segment of our society has been in prison against their will throughout history. They have been forcefully raped and sterilized against their will by tens of millions. They have been sexually, physically and mentally abused by both their families and their caretakers without any recourse whatsoever... The last five years I have seen many people take charge of their life and become leaders in their communities all across the nation. Now there is a baby disability revolution beginning in this country... I have been arrested 12 times in seven states along with my brothers and sisters for fighting for my people's human rights... By law we are here today are guilty, but by every moral, we are not guilty."

-- Arthur Campbell
Louisville, KY

People tried to have me put away, tried to have my parents put away. My parents were even treated bad because they had me. Nobody ever thought that I deserved an education. I had a fourth year education at 24 years old. I had to prove to OVR (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) that I had a brain. Because I didn't have a foundation educationally, they didn't want to send me to college. I'm an honor student; I have an Associates Degree in Mental Health.... Despite all the odds, despite no family support, despite no government support, despite no respect, I see my people as the most powerful people in this country. And I know we'll get our civil rights because we're going to take them, if we got come back every day."

-- Cassie James
Philadelphia PA

The quotes used in this issue, unless otherwise noted, were collected by Diane Coleman at the *Wheels for Justice* action in Washington, DC March 11th -15th, 1990. Many thanks to her for her careful, thoughtful work!

"My heart goes out to them... I'm in a unique position. My mother was a double amputee in a wheelchair. I have more intimate experiences with the plight and problems of the disabled than perhaps any other member of Congress."

-- Bud Shuster, (R, PA)
As quoted in the *Washington Times*

"We are not beggars. We are here to demand rights that are ours to complete a process that has been going on for some time. We shall overcome and we want to overcome. This month or next month. Not forever. We want to overcome now!"

-- Representative Major Owens

Compare and Contrast

Cent Waldrep, member of the National Council on Disability, and ex-chairperson of the Texas Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons, sent a letter out on Governor's Committee stationary (though it is not a Committee position) supporting this position. Calling the new policy a "bold move" he writes:

Cramming the ADA down the throats of American business will not create the ultimate environment we envision. We must recognize the realities of a free enterprise system and work together with the private sector in creating solutions. ADA will not be undermined with the approval of new language reflecting Greyhounds new policy. On the contrary, it could serve as a model for future such negotiations.

The Greyhound driver's union, the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions, passed the following resolution at their meeting January 9, 1990:

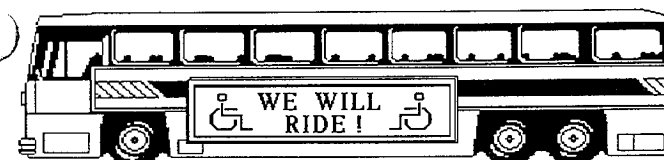
Whereas the US Senate has passed the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and said act is pending in the House of Representatives; and

Whereas the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions endorses federal action to ensure that those with disabilities will have access to all forms of public transportation; and

Whereas the Travel Assistance Program adopted unilaterally by Greyhound Lines would have only limited effect in meeting the legitimate needs and rights of the disabled and should not be considered as an adequate substitution for effective legislation:

Now therefore be it resolved:

1. That the Amalgamated Council support the passage of the ADA by the US House of Representatives; and
2. That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and each member of any committee with jurisdiction of the ADA.



ABA/UBOA MEETS ADAPT

Sixty disability rights activists gathered in Dallas last January for a direct action advocacy training and protest against two of the largest bus associations in the nation. Folks came from as far as Arizona, Denver and New Mexico, to Georgia and Tennessee to take part in the week long event.



Protesters in front of the Loews. Photo: Carolyn Long

The American Bus Association, ABA, and the United Bus Owners of America were holding their first joint convention at the Loews Anatole Hotel in Dallas, and this convention became the focus of several ADAPT actions.

On Monday January 22nd 100 training participants and local supporters marched to the Loews Anatole Hotel. Despite the security pick-up truck which was parked to block the marchers' path, protesters were able to climb around and reach the front door to call for an end to the transit groups lobbying against access and the ADA. Although several of the participating bus companies professed support for accessibility, they did not hesitate to shut the doors of their inaccessible buses in the faces of disabled folks trying to get a look inside. Wayne Smith, Executive Director of UBOA demonstrated his continuing lack of understanding of the issue when he, and several other UBOA members, suggested that if we were so into touring, ADAPT should start a wheelchair bus tour association.

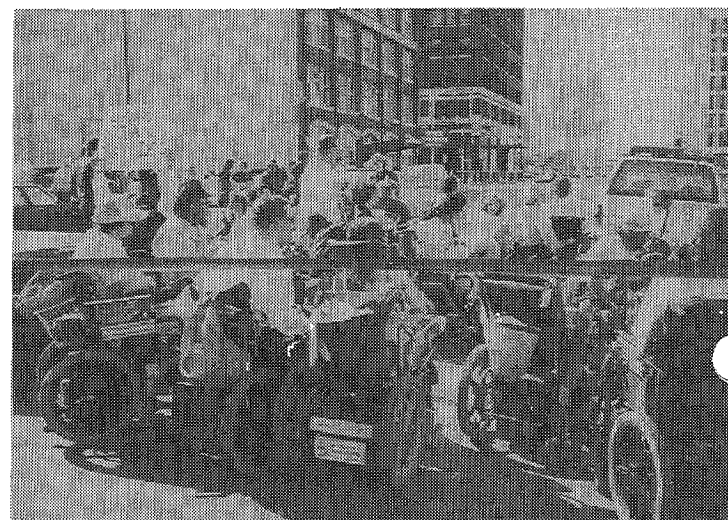
Tuesday the focus turned to Greyhound, and their downtown bus terminal. At high noon ADAPT struck, and within minutes all bus bays were blocked, and nine buses were captured, some out in the street where they blocked traffic

at the downtown lunch rush hour. In the end twenty eight protesters were arrested, a DART bus was commandeered by the police to take everyone to jail, and Frank Lozano was booked in the jail house garage because officials refused to let his dog guide Frazier in the jail.

Wednesday held a demonstration of an unusual (for ADAPT) nature. ADAPT walked in on the ABA/UBOA bus expo, started mingling with ABA/UBOA folks and pointing out the need for access. Several ADAPT folks transferred to the bottom step of several of the buses on display, to try and get a glimpse of the glamorous interiors. These were pretty fancy buses, and not a one --not even the self proclaimed "Seniors Unlimited" bus -- had a lift, though many people admitted lifts could be installed. There were no arrests, and after about an hour of educating ADAPT left peacefully, warning this might not be our last visit.



Even road blocks didn't stop ADAPT (above). Corralled in the street outside Greyhound (below). Photos: Carolyn Long



GREYHOUND CHANGES POLICY

In an apparent move to get around the ADA, Greyhound finally came out with a revised set of regulations for disabled travellers, once known as their helping hands policy.

The new regulations, called the Travel Assistance Program, get rid of the requirement for a doctor's letter or other proof of disability, nor do you need to have someone travel with you. If you do bring someone to help you, that person can still travel for free on your ticket. If you travel alone you must call 1-800-752-4841 48 hours in advance to notify them of your plans. "Advance notice is required" according to Greyhound's statement. The company still reserves the right to decide if it is SAFE for you to travel alone, and to refuse to take you alone if they decide you can't travel safely alone. (Sorry all you folks with cooties, this may put a cramp in your travel plans.)

Greyhound has agreed to take some types of battery operated wheelchairs. According to their memo they take most types (but there are no specifics,) and taking a chair depends on whether or not it fits in the baggage compartment. They will provide battery boxes, through their "full service agency locations" so folks needing them at any other locations will have to make arrangements in advance. Their is no charge for the boxes, but they must be returned at the end of the trip.

Currently Greyhound's tariff only covers baggage for value up to \$250, but you can pay an additional fee and declare a higher value up to \$1,000.



Photo: Carolyn Long



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"Seeing eye" and "hearing ear" dogs can still travel "as a companion to the blind or deaf individuals at no extra charge" according to the new regs. They must be harnessed, (no need to muzzle them, according to big hearted Greyhound), should ride at your feet on the floor.

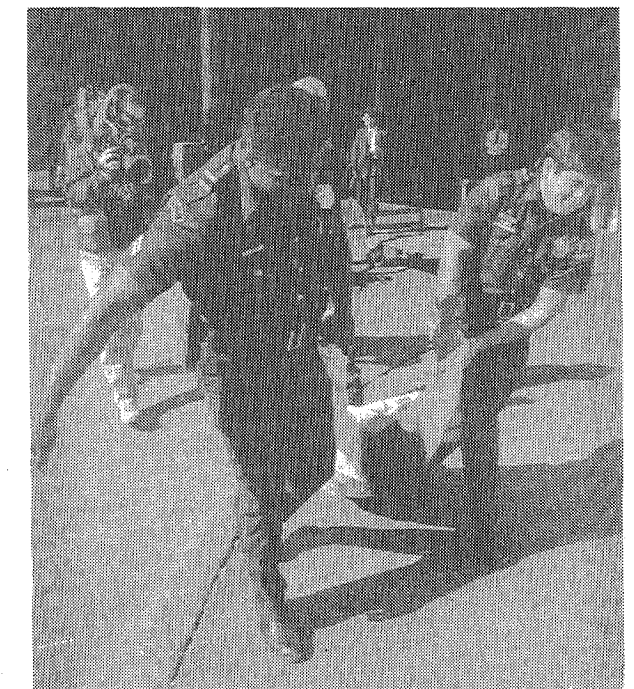


Photo: Tom Olin

Some people, like Greyhound's CEO and principal owner Fred Currey, think this policy plus the use of a ramp and aisle chair specially designed for buses should be the only requirements in the ADA, ie no lift requirement.

AROUND THE NATION

Nashville, TN -- Tennessee ADAPT (American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today) and five disabled individuals filed an Amicus Curiae brief in a local "right to die" case of a woman who was diagnosed with ALS 14 months ago. The woman, who had received no independent living services, no peer counseling, no training to adjust to her respirator, no suicide prevention counseling, also had no access to home-based attendant services. ALS (a type of muscular dystrophy) was presented as a terminal illness; yet as the ADAPT folks pointed out, the noted scientist Stephen Hawking also has ALS, and has had it for about 25 years. Calling for equal access to suicide counseling, ADAPT asked that the request to die be treated the same as a non-disabled person's request of the same nature. "However, people with severe health conditions are often deprived of these basic protections because a society concerned about limited resources increasingly devalues the lives of such individuals" stated Carol Gill in her affidavit. Sadly the Judge, within an hour decided this was not an area for the courts to intervene in, and the woman ended her life the next morning.

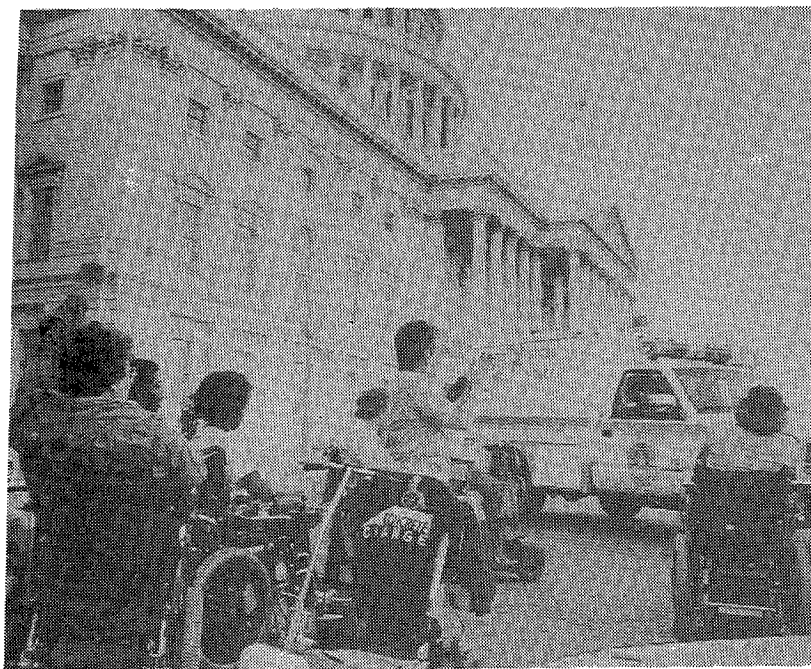


Photo: Tom Olin

Los Angeles, CA -- "Pardon me, Ms. Collins, but Christy Brown is Not 'Ugly'. He's a person with Cerebral Palsy." Southern CA ADAPT held a press conference right after the Oscars to respond with outrage to Joan Collins' off-the-wall comment during Oscar night on how amazed she was at Daniel Day Lewis' (*My Left Foot*) talent at making someone as handsome as himself look as ugly as Christy Brown. Ah Hollywood and the body beautiful. Southern CA ADAPT summed it up: "we cannot let you trivialize the noble life of Christy Brown to superficial standards of cosmetic proportions. 'Ugly' is not how a person deviates from the physical norm, ugly instead is prejudice in all its forms."

Denver, CO -- When six ADAPT members went to lunch at a local restaurant TACO HOUSE, they weren't expecting a free lunch, but they also weren't expecting a free trip across town... to jail. But, that's exactly what they got. Several of them had gone through the Taco House drive through before and been served, but this time they decided to go inside. Passers-by helped them into the inaccessible restaurant, but the manager refused to serve them. Accusing the six of blocking aisles, though waitresses and customers alike were getting by, he had the six arrested for trespassing and disturbing the peace. At least one of the customers (in fact someone who had helped them inside) agreed with the ADAPT customers and refused to be served before the ADAPT folks, who had gotten there first. Charges carry a possible \$990 fine and 180 days in jail. ADAPT is filing for a motion to dismiss, since they say they were neither blocking aisles nor disturbing the peace. In addition they say the restaurant manager was violating another state law prohibiting restaurants from refusing to provide food, even if the facility is not accessible.

Protesters shout support for arrestees as they are driven off in police vans.

AROUND THE NATION

Long Island, NY -- The Long Island Railroad has recently been ordered by the courts to improve the access provided, according to Bob Schoenfeld. Long Island Railroad was ordered to redo their high level stations originally built wrong, and to put lifts on their low level stations. The suit, brought by National Disability Action Center and Long Island ADAPT, has resulted in 75 to 80% of the 120 rail stations becoming accessible.

Fort Worth, TX -- They're here!! After eight years of having their lifts bolted down, Cowtown once again has made a reluctant step ahead when 24 of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority's lifts were rebuilt and service again implemented. "Despite some foot dragging by the T's General Manager John Bartoscewisc and Board Chair Hershell Payne, once again wheelchair users can get to the store for a half a gallon of milk, or go to a movie -- if you don't insist on a nighttime one" smiled Walter Hart of Fort Worth ADAPT. He went on to explain "two reasons for the recalcitrance at the T are the prominence of the two aforementioned individuals. Both are very prominent in APTA and its little sister Southwest Public Transit Authority. In fact, the T will be co-hosting the APTA convention in Houston Sept. 30 - Oct. 4th."

Desert Hot Springs, CA -- A new ADAPT group formed here in February. 35 folks in chairs turned out for the initial parade. One of the first issues the group will tackle is curb cuts.

Colorado Springs, CO --

December 1st 18 ADAPT folks paid a call on a local Taco John's restaurant. Their visit, came after a series of unanswered letters to the corporate offices in the Springs and Cheyenne, WY.

"We put up two tables on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant and bought tacos and sodas from Taco Bell and left all the bags and cups on the tables so the logo could be seen" explained Barbara Guthrie, community organizer with ADAPT. "We had people passing out leaflets to the cars coming into the drive-through, some of whom left after reading what we were there for.... We waited a few weeks and then I wrote another letter to the Vice President in Cheyenne letting him know that to avoid another, more upgraded embarrassing situation I would advise him to write me back." Gary Wofford, VP for Operations not only wrote back, he outlined access plans for all the Colorado Springs sites, two to be done in January 1990, and the third by July.

Las Cruces, NM -- Activists in Las Cruces have been stirring again lately. The protests at the New Mexico State University last year finally bore fruit in March when the first accessible university shuttle bus came on service. "We (handicapped students) were paying right along with other students a \$5 activity fee that covered shuttle service around campus but we weren't getting it," explained NMSU student/New Vistas ILC worker Cesar Rodriguez. Local activists, unable to travel to Washington DC for the Wheels of Justice action held a press conference at their local federal building to show their support of the national action and the ADA bill.

IF YOU WERE IN SAN FRANCISCO SEPT. 27, 1987 FOR THE DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST APTA YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO MONEY! A SETTLEMENT WAS REACHED BETWEEN A CLASS OF DISABLED PERSONS AND APTA AND THE HILTON HOTEL, IN A LAWSUIT FILED IN 1987. IF YOU WERE DENIED ACCESS TO THE HOTEL, AND DID NOT GO INSIDE OR WENT IN THROUGH THE GARAGE, OR KNEW THAT PEOPLE WERE BEING KEPT OUT AND WOULD, BUT FOR THE CLOSURE, HAVE GONE IN - YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE.

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DEADLINE TO HAVE YOUR CLAIM IN: MAY 15, 1990