



MDI News Update



Two monthly newsletter - Issue Two, November 2001

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Editorial

Hello and welcome to the second issue of the newly structured *MDI News Update*. As mentioned in the first issue, this newsletter will have less pages than the old magazines, however you will receive it on a more regular basis. It is already two months since the last issue and it feels like only yesterday since I wrote the last editorial !!!!

There was a great response to the new layout and format. Thanks for all your comments, keep them coming.

Included in this issue, among other items are: a copy of the Chairperson's report, which was presented at our Annual Conference and AGM last September; a piece on the presentation of our new minibus by Control Aer, which was officially presented to us at our AGM and presided by Minister Tom Kitt, TD; Branch news from Cork and pointers regarding the euro.

If you have any articles, branch news, photographs, details on up-coming fundraising / social events etc. to be included in future issues, please send them to us. Remember, this is your newsletter, which provides a good opportunity for members and branches to share information and publicise events. So, why not make the most of it. The next issue will be due out in late January 2002, so get them articles, photo's etc. in as soon as possible.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and every good wish for the New Year.

Until next year, take care.

Slán,

Hubert McCormack



Pictured hanging around Dublin Zoo are Mary Rose Howell, (Cork) Serena Brennan (Mullingar) and Siobhán Windle (Dublin) on the day of the AGM.

Director's Note

Hello Everyone,
Welcome to the second edition of our Newsletter. The last few months have been very busy for MDI, with our AGM in September and the re-launch of our Youth Group in the Dublin region. A newly established Youth Group in the Southern region was also launched in Cork, with the appointment of a new Youth Officer, Mary Rose Howell.

Since the last issue, I have had the opportunity of visiting four of the Branches, which I was delighted to have done. I hope to meet with the other branches before Christmas, or early in the New Year. If there is any support I, or any of the MDI staff can give, do not hesitate to contact me.

Lastly, I would like to wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Joe Mooney



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The Annual General Meeting of Muscular Dystrophy Ireland took place on Saturday 22nd September 2001 in Dublin. A copy of MDI's Chairperson's Report, by former Chairperson Judy Windle, follows.....

Chairperson's Report MDI AGM 2001

As most of you will know by now, we have lost a Director for the second year running. Happily we have been able to fill the post again, without much delay, and with a very high calibre candidate who has been a member of MDI for many years, Joe T. Mooney. Joe



took up the post of Director in July having resigned as Manager of ILCS (Rehab) and I'm sure you will all join me in wishing him every success with the tasks ahead.

We had intended to have our AGM this year in May but, due to the unexpected departure of Frances Bird in April, it was not possible to arrange a full days Conference in time. Instead we held a National Council meeting on the 19th May when we informed all members of the Council who attended of the situation in the office. Taking this disruption into account, we have managed to continue to provide services to members, as far as possible.

The two holiday camps for young members went ahead in Lucan and Kilcuan during the months of July and August. Almost forty families benefited in this way. There was also a long weekend break for adults in Galway earlier in the summer which was attended by 11 members. Other holiday arrangements made both by Branches and by individuals and families were supported financially by MDI.

The Health Boards are at last acknowledging the work we are doing, particularly in the respite area, and are becoming more generous with funding. Some Health Boards are more generous than others. The Eastern Regional Health Authority has been providing finance towards the cost of family support and respite for several years but it has been a hard struggle to get some others to come across. I must mention the Southern Health Board which last year and this year has provided substantial funding towards the cost of services in their area.

It is precisely because there is a lack of statutory services available to the community that voluntary bodies, such as ourselves, are obliged to help our members in this way. The Health Boards recognise this and that is why they are willing to fund us – to do their work. Small, or indeed, any voluntary organisations should not be engaged in service provision. They should act as advocates and where necessary, pressure groups, for their members ensuring that the services are available when required and helping members to tap into them.

Apart from this source of funding, MDI depends on donations, memberships subscriptions and fundraising to keep the show on the road.

The main national fundraisers each year are the Ladies Mini Marathon and the sale of Christmas cards. Last year we also had the benefit of a major golf classic which yielded £24,000 for respite. We have to thank the Dublin Branch for putting this our way. Next year we hope to hold a national flag day and applications have been made to the appropriate authorities for permits to cover the whole country.

As you all probably know by now, in Dublin we have two Caravelle vans and a smaller van for use by members, not just members in Dublin but anywhere around the country



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where they are needed. Cork also has a van which was purchased recently with funding from the Southern Health Board. This is also available to members living in the Southern Health Board area.

One of the Caravelle vans was donated to MDI by Control Aer, a company based in Ballyfermot, which decided that instead of entertaining their clients at Christmas, would do something philanthropic instead. Through contact with a member of MDI, we were chosen as the beneficiaries. Mr. Tom Kitt T.D. Minister of State of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is cutting the ribbon on it for us to-day.

One of the items which gave rise to a lot of debate at the Council meetings during the year was the question of the annual contributions from the Branches to the Research and Trust Funds but this was finally resolved at the meeting last May.

Another matter which has given rise to some problems has been the payment of membership subscriptions. As has been repeatedly pointed out, our Constitution requires members of MDI to pay whatever annual subscription is fixed by the National Council. At present, the annual subscription is £10 for an individual and £15 for a family.

It was in accordance with these provisions which, admittedly, have not been very strictly adhered to in previous years, that only paid up members were issued with a full set of papers for the AGM. As we have lots of other people on our database who are interested in MDI for one reason or another, and who are on our mailing list for newsletters etc, we issued a separate letter to over 350 people inviting them here to-day where they could, if they wished, become members of MDI by paying their subscriptions.

This is European year of the Volunteer and within Carmichael Centre, there is a Volunteer Resource Centre which has a

database on people willing to do voluntary work. An awareness Day to attract volunteers was held here and across Dublin on the 8th September. Several people who come along showed an interest in doing some voluntary work for us. This would be very helpful as we usually have to employ a lot of help through an Agency for our various activities, with the younger members particularly, which is very expensive. We were only able to attract two volunteers for the youth camps this year.

We remain affiliated to EAMDA, Mobility International, of which we have been members for several years, is in the process of winding up, due to lack of funding. EAMDA too, is in difficulties, for the same reason. This is due to the fact that it is almost impossible anymore for the smaller European organisations to obtain funding from Brussels. EAMDA's AGM, which we hosted here last September, is taking place in Cyprus next weekend. It will be decided there what the fate of EAMDA is to be.

Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) now has over seventy member organisations for physical and sensory disabilities and also for intellectual disabilities. Joe Mooney is and has been a Board member of DFI since last year and I am a Council member. We attended their AGM last month.

I hope I have covered the main activities of the past year, briefly of necessity. All of these would have been dealt with in greater detail at the four Council Meetings we have had since the last AGM and relayed to the members through their Branches.

I have not dealt in this Report with plans for the coming year as that will be a matter for the incoming officers and National Council. I am stepping down as Chairperson at last, having probably been 13 years in the position. I did try to persuade others to take over in previous years, without success.



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It has been an honour and a pleasure to have served MDI in this way and I hope my contribution has been useful. There are so many people I should thank for their help and support over the years that I would not attempt to name them as I would surely leave out someone. The Executive Committee, the National Council and the staff have all helped me enormously and I thank them all.

May I wish the new Director, and staff and all the members well in their future endeavours.

Judy Windle

Control Aer present new bus to MDI



Pictured with Minister Tom Kitt, T.D., who cut the ribbon at the presentation of a new Volkswagen Caravelle by Control Aer to MDI are: John Grainger - Director, Control Aer; David Kelly - Director, Control Aer; Rose O'Keffee, Friend of MDI; Judy Windle, former Chairperson - MDI and Joe Mooney, Director - MDI

The presentation took place at our AGM and Annual Conference which was held in the Ashling Hotel, Dublin on Saturday 22nd September 2001.

Once again, many thanks to Control Aer for their extremely generous donation.

News from the Cork Branch

On Monday 10th September last, we held our Annual General Meeting, which was held in the Blarney Park Hotel. We were delighted that Joe Mooney, Director of MDI could attend. The meeting was well attended and the same officers remain in place, with the exception of a new branch secretary Jean Lane who was elected. I am delighted to welcome Jean aboard. It is great to have new people on the committee; new people have new ideas.

A new Youth Worker has been appointed by MDI for the southern area. Her name is Mary-Rose Howell and she will cover the Cork/Kerry Region. Mary, who is based at our Cork office will principally cater for our younger members (7 to 17 year's old). Mary is in the process of setting up a Youth Club.

Their first meeting in relation to this took place also in the Blarney Park Hotel on 3rd November last. There was a good attendance and afterwards everyone went bowling and then on to McDonalds for Tea!!!! We wish Mary-Rose well in this new venture, and would encourage all the children and young people to fully participate in their new Youth Club and future events.

The Cork Branches Annual Christmas Dinner/Party will take place in Jury's Hotel, Cork on Sunday 9th December. This was a great success last year. Please ring our office in Cork at (021) 430 9407 to book your seat! Everyone is welcome.

On 14th November, we had a Ladies Lunch at Jury's Hotel. A full restaurant menu was served in a private room. These are great occasions for meeting old friends and making new. A great day was had by everyone.

Finally, I would like to pass on our best wishes on behalf of the Cork Branch to Mary



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O'Sullivan, Family Support Worker for the Southern Region, who gave birth to a bouncing baby girl in October.. As Family Support Worker, Mary is very dedicated to her job and we are looking forward to her return in the New Year. Congratulations and thank you Mary.

Margaret Butler
Chairperson - Cork Branch

Youth Worker Required

to work with young people with muscular dystrophy in Dublin, Kildare & Wicklow. Candidates must be reliable and trustworthy, be able to organise and participate in youth activities and can work on their own initiative. Experience an advantage.

For Job Description and further details contact Joe Mooney at:

(01) 8721501 or 8723826

C.V.'s to: **Muscular Dystrophy Ireland**

Closing date for applications 23 November 01

MDI is an equal opportunities employer.

FOR SALE

Wheelchair Accessible Vans



Details:

96 Nissan Cargo - 2.3 Diesel
30,000 miles. Contact Joe the MDI Office on
(01) 8721501

97 Fiat Scudo, 51,000 miles
£6,000 ono.

Contact Peadar or Mary
on 087 2932954

Electric Wheelchair

Powertec - Adult size, good condition
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(021) 4894849



Government is currently committed to the Introduction of Disability Rights Legislation. This commitment as advocated by Government is necessary for the implementation of Strategy for Equality - The Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities.

Legislation has been demanded for over a decade by disabled people and their families.

The need for such legislation was again evident in recent years when disabled people and their parents had to resort to the courts in an effort to access the most basic of education provision.

The absence of such legislation has done much to exclude disabled people from participation in too many areas of Irish life. So, will a Disability Act provide Adequate protection for disabled peoples rights?

Will transport provision, education, personal support or income support be addressed in this law? Who will enforce this legislation?

If you have ideas to contribute on how this law should be drafted and enforced then you may be interested in a conference entitled "Get Our Act Together" which takes place in Dublin on 3rd December.

For more information, contact Anne Waldek at: (01) 6766035



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MDI and the Euro

It's only a few weeks to go now before we will all be spending euro's. It will take some time for us all to get used to the system as everything will appear to have got more expensive (because there is over one euro in a punt - 1.27 to be exact). To help you understand the change over and the new rates etc., we have put together a euro change over timetable and a transaction chart. We hope you find it useful.

Euro Change over Timetable

Date	Action
December 01	Retailers will be "front loaded" with euro notes and coin. Packs of euro coins (£5) will be on sale from Post Offices and Banks.
1 st January 02 € Day	Euro notes and coins come into circulation. All Irish notes and coins should be lodged or changed into euro. Banks, Building Societies and Post Offices will issue euro notes and coins only. All Irish pound bank notes will be converted into euro free of charge. ATM's will commence dispensing euro notes. Non-cash transactions (e.g. credit/laser cards etc. will be demonstrated in euro. Retailers will continue to accept payment in Irish pound notes and coins but issue change in euro only. It is expected that within two weeks of € Day the bulk of cash transactions will be carried out in euro. There will be a dual circulation period until 9 th February 2002. During this period you will be able to spend both Irish notes and coins as well as euro. No matter how you pay, the shops will give you back your change in euro.
9 th February 02	After midnight the punt is no longer legal tender. Retailers and others will no longer be obliged to accept Irish notes and coins. Irish banks will accept Irish note and coins for a limited period. The Irish Central Bank will accept Irish notes and coins for a longer period.

Euro Translation Chart

Euro = Punt		Euro = Punt	
1c	1p	€5	£3.94
2c	2p	€10	£7.88
5c	4p	€20	£15.75
10c	8p	€50	£39.38
20c	17p	€100	£78.76
50c	39p	€200	£157.51
€1	79p	€500	£393.78
€2	£1.58		

How the changeover can help MDI

It is estimated that there are thousands of pounds worth of Irish coins throughout the country left lying in drawers, jars etc. Why not put them to use rather than leaving them aside by donating them to MDI. We would appreciate any support you can give.



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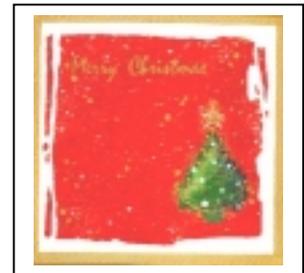
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MDI Christmas Cards 2001

This page features Christmas cards available from the MDI office this year.

The cards featured below are sold in packs of 8 (one of each card with envelopes) for IR£3.20 (or €4.00) a pack (plus .50p postage per pack). Verse inside card reads: "Happy Christmas - Nollaig Shona"

Actual card size



There are also plenty of last years small cards available. These cards are also sold in packs of 8 (one of each card) for IR£3.00 (or €3.80) a pack (plus 50p postage per pack). Verse inside card reads: "Wishing you peace and happiness this Christmas - Guimid siocháin agus sonas oraibh um Nollaig"

Card size: 15cm x 10.5cm - To order any of these cards, contact the MDI Office

Christmas Party

The North Eastern Branch of MDI are holding their annual Children's Christmas Party on **Sunday 9th December 2001** at **3.00pm**. Venue: **United Beverages Premises, Dundalk** (usual place!). Santa will be there. There will also be a balloon artist and face painting. **All are welcome.**



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