

# ON THE LEVEL

---

## From the League of Human Dignity

*February, 2016*

ON THE LEVEL is the bi-monthly newsletter of the League of Human Dignity, Inc.

The League of Human Dignity is a consumer-based, nonprofit organization, dedicated to promoting independent living for people with disabilities, in their own homes instead of nursing homes. To this end, we will advocate for the rights and needs of people with disabilities, while providing quality services to assist them in becoming and remaining independent citizens.

Established in 1971, the League now offers services in all 93 Nebraska counties and eight Southwest Iowa counties, through our Centers for Independent Living in Lincoln, Norfolk and Omaha, Nebraska, and Council Bluffs, Iowa; our Medicaid Waiver offices in Scottsbluff, Kearney and North Platte, Nebraska; and our Mobility Options shops in Lincoln and Omaha.

ON THE LEVEL is available online, by email subscription, Braille and on audio CD. To subscribe in any of these formats, contact the Public Information Office in Lincoln or your nearest League of Human Dignity office. The newsletter also is archived on our website [www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com)

## Democratic, Republican Parties' Caucuses, Primaries Under Way

The process for selection of the major party nominees for U.S. President is under way.

The Democratic and Republican Iowa precinct caucuses are Feb. 1 throughout Iowa. Voters select delegates to their respective county party conventions, which in turn will select delegates for the state conventions. State delegates then will attend their parties' national conventions where nominees for the Nov. 8 general election are selected.

In Nebraska, the Democratic Party also will hold precinct caucuses throughout the state on Saturday, March 5. Anyone eligible to vote in Nebraska or who will be 18 on Nov. 8 can participate. Each participant must be a registered Democrat or must register as a Democrat at a caucus. For more information, including caucus locations, go online to the caucus website at <http://nebraskacaucus2016.org/> The site includes a number of videos about the caucuses.

Nebraska Republicans will hold their primary election on Tuesday, May 10. For more information, the Nebraska Republican Party website is at <http://negop.org/>

Be sure to take part in the process and make sure your voice is heard.

## **New Art Installed at League**

Photo shows a wall hanging featuring three tribal masks. Mixed media “Islanders” by artist Bob Donlan is part of a new selection of art for sale at the League of Human Dignity offices in Lincoln. The works, many by artists with disabilities, are from the collection of Dean Settle at the Metro Gallery in Lincoln. Come in and check them out — art always makes a great gift.

## **CEO's NOTE**

I don't know about you, but even though we have had a mild winter, I am ready for and looking forward to Spring!

I want to make readers aware of an upcoming opportunity to become involved in shaping the future of independent living services in Nebraska over the next three years.

Nebraska Centers for Independent Living, and the Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council have been collaborating over the past months to develop a draft of a Statewide Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) during the life of the 2016-2019 plan years. Location, dates, and times of public forums in the League's Nebraska CILs are as follows:

Omaha CIL (5513 Center Street) February 16 at 1:00 P.M.

Lincoln CIL (1701 P Street) February 24 at 1:00 P.M.

Norfolk CIL (400 Elm Avenue) February 29 at 1:00 P.M.

The public forums are being held to provide Nebraskan's with the opportunity to provide input on the draft statewide independent living plan. Other public forums also are being scheduled throughout the state during February and March, but the final schedule and location of these is not yet firm. You can check the League's website [www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com), under Recent News, or our Facebook page for the schedule and location of other forums.

We urge you to become involved in the SPIL development process, because your input is a valuable resource in the development of independent living services.

## **New National Center Will Promote Accessible Transportation Options**

Two national agencies have started a new transportation center to promote available and accessible transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, and communities throughout the United States.

Easter Seals and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging have launched the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center. The national technical assistance center is funded by the Federal Transit Administration, with guidance from the Administration for Community Living (ACL).

The center will support the delivery of more effective, efficient, high-quality, and coordinated specialized transportation services that maximize federal investments.

“People with disabilities and older adults often rely on public transportation systems to engage in the community and live their lives to the fullest” said Kathy Greenlee, Administrator of the ACL. “The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center will connect transportation leaders and the aging and disability networks to ensure that the perspectives of people with disabilities and older adults are incorporated into every aspect of transportation planning. We look forward to continuing our work with the FTA to support transportation systems that work for people of all ages and abilities.”

To find out more about the center, request technical assistance, or to sign up for the Center’s e-News, email to [contact@nadtc.org](mailto:contact@nadtc.org) or call toll-free 866-528-6278.

## **Lincoln Holiday Luncheon**

Photo shows several people lined up in front of a table filled with food dishes, filling their plates. The staff of the League’s Lincoln CIL and offices enjoyed their annual covered-dish holiday luncheon on Wednesday, Dec. 23. League offices closed at noon on Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, and were closed on Christmas Day.

## **Southwest Iowa CIL Thanks Year’s Volunteers**

Roger Gorn of Council Bluffs is the League of Human Dignity’s 2015 Ken Lindhorst Volunteer of the Year Award winner for the Southwest Iowa Center for Independent Living.

CIL Director Frank Greise presented Roger’s award Friday, Dec.4, during the center’s annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in Council Bluffs.

About 15 League staff, volunteers and guests attended the annual event, which was held in conjunction with the CIL's holiday decorating party. Volunteers each were presented with a flashlight bearing the League logo as thank-you gifts.

Roger has been a League volunteer for 16 years. He helps out at the CIL office. This is his fourth Volunteer of the Year Award. He also won it in 2001, 2005 and 2011.

This story includes three photos. In the first, two men, one holding a plaque, stand smiling. Roger Gorn, right, 2015 Ken Lindhorst Volunteer of the Year Award winner, holds his award, presented by Southwest Iowa CIL Director Frank Greise, left. In the second photo, a large poinsettia sits on a table, along with a white cake bearing the words, "Thank You for all you do." The third photo shows several people seated around a large table. League SW Iowa CIL staff, volunteers and guests enjoyed a meal and fellowship at their annual luncheon Dec. 4 in Council Bluffs.

## **Registration Now Open for 2016 ADA Symposium in Denver**

This year's National ADA Symposium is June 19 through 22, at the Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center.

The annual conference is the source for latest information on the Americans with Disabilities Act. Presenters include nationally recognized representatives of agencies and organizations involved with the ADA.

The four-day symposium consists of features, 72 breakout sessions, pre-conference, keynote, welcome reception and exhibits. It is designed to provide current, practical, useful information to a diverse audience.

The event is coordinated and hosted by the Great Plains ADA Center, based in Columbia, Mo. and the Rocky Mountain ADA Center.

Registration is \$650 per person prior to March 20 and \$800 per person thereafter.

For more information about the symposium, or to register, go online to [www.adasympoium.org](http://www.adasympoium.org) or call 1-800-949-4232.

## **Vehicle Lift Service Special ad**

\$29.95 Inspect, Clean and Lubricate (Parts not included)

Goof February 10 through 28

Winter can take its toll on your lift. Bring it in and we'll help you keep it in good working order.

Mocility Options: Knowledge, Independence, Innovation.

402-441-7871 (V/TDD) 1720 O Street, Lincoln, NE

## **As Tax Time Nears, Don't Forget About Social Security Benefits**

By Lisa Kohout

Social Security Assistant District Manager, Lincoln NE

It's that time of year again: time to start preparing to file your taxes. If you receive Social Security benefits, one of the documents you will need when filing your federal income tax return is your Social Security Benefit Statement (form SSA-1099).

Social Security benefits may be taxable, including monthly retirement, survivor, and disability benefits. About one-third of people receiving Social Security benefits must pay taxes on some of these benefits, depending on the amount of their taxable income. This usually happens only if you have other substantial income — such as wages, self-employment, interest, dividends, and other taxable income that must be reported on your tax return — in addition to your Social Security benefits. You'll never pay taxes on more than 85 percent of your Social Security benefits, based on Internal Revenue Service rules.

To find out if you must pay taxes on your benefits, you will need your Social Security Benefit Statement. You should automatically receive this statement each January. It shows the total amount of benefits you received from Social Security in the previous year so you know how much Social Security income to report to the IRS on your tax return. The 1099 form is not available for people who receive Supplemental Security Income, which is not taxable.

Whether you file your taxes early or wait until the deadline, it's easy to obtain a replacement 1099 form if you didn't receive one or misplaced yours. You can get an instant replacement by using your secure online "my Social Security" account. If you don't already have an account, you can create one in minutes. Follow the link to the my Social Security page, and go to "Sign In" or "Create an Account." Once you are logged in, select the "Replacement Documents" tab to obtain your replacement 1099 form. A "my Social Security" account also allows you to keep track of your earnings each year, manage your benefits, and more.

You can also get a replacement 1099 form by calling 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778), Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., or by contacting your local Social Security office.

## **2016 Omaha/SW Iowa Benefit Golf Event ad**

The Omaha and Southwest Iowa Centers for Independent Living 2016 Benefit Golf Event is Friday, June 10, 2016 at Bent Tree Golf Club in Council Bluffs, Iowa

Four-Player Golf Scramble, Hole-In-One Contest, Silent Auction, Buffet Dinner, And More!

Proceeds from this annual fund-raising event will go to the Omaha and Southwest Iowa Centers for Independent Living, to help them fulfill their mission, promoting and supporting independent living and the full participation by people with disabilities in their community. If you would like to help out as an event planner, player, underwriter, sponsor or all of the above, contact the League of Human Dignity at 402-595-1256 in Omaha or 712-323-6863 in Council Bluffs.

## **Coming this July: The 2016 Norfolk Benefit Bike Run**

Last year's ride was so much fun we're doing it again!

All proceeds will benefit the League's Norfolk Center for Independent Living. Planning is just getting started for this year's event. To be a part, contact the CIL at 400 Elm Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701; phone 402-371-4475; or email [jkloppenborg@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:jkloppenborg@leagueofhumandignity.com)

## **Housing Clinic in the Works**

A housing clinic is in the planning stages in Council Bluffs.

The clinic, sponsored by the Housing Committee of the Human Services Advisory Council, is tentatively set for April at a time and place yet to be announced. It will provide resources and information to help attendees find and keep affordable housing.

Topics to be covered include finding a good, affordable apartment, what to do when you will be late paying your rent, how to get your deposit back, what to do if your home needs repairs, what to do if you're being discriminated against, your rights and responsibilities as a renter, and more.

Daycare services will be available during the clinic for children age 1-5 and transportation assistance also may be available. A certificate of completion will be provided to those who participate in the clinic.

The Human Services Advisory Council is made up of Omaha- and Council Bluffs-area agencies, including the League of Human Dignity.

More details about the housing clinic will be announced on the League's Facebook page and Twitter as they become available.

## Iowa SPIL Planners Seek Input

The Iowa State Independent Living Council is asking all Iowans who experience disability to help develop the new Iowa State Plan for Independent Living by filling out the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XVXWPND>

The link is available on the League's website as well, where you can also access it in a form you can print out, fill out and mail in, or you can have the survey mailed to you or take it over the phone. just go to [www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com) and navigate to the "Recent News" page.

Make sure your voice is heard!

## League Donors

Nov. 23, 2015 through Jan. 21, 2016

Builder (\$500 and above): League of Human Dignity Inc. Membership; Bud Wiederspan; Caretech Inc.; Joyce Holtmeier; Dillon Chevrolet-Buick-Pontiac Inc.; Diane Klima; Sid Dillon

Supporter (\$250-\$499): Edward Roche

Century (\$100-\$249): Wauneta Peterson, BPO DOES Drove 4; J. Paul McIntosh, Nebraska United Methodist Foundation; George Underwood; Mike Schafer and Marlene Brondel; Gates Minnick; Frank Velinsky; Debbie Kee; Vivian Cordell; Kent Mattson; James and Julie Nygren; Conner Roofing Company; Jeff Patterson; Denise Wiener; Tom Lovgren; Becky Hanna; Jim Carrier; Gene Zoetis

Believer (\$50 to \$99): Vernon Williams; Elaine Bills; Jason Velinsky; Mary Steiner; Tim Keelan; Dan Zach; Knorr & Dinkelman Families; P. Doyle Enterprises LLC

Other: Mary Lee Kenworthy; Grant Hrabovsky; R. Vandeventer; David Jensen; Anonymous; Katherine Hancock; Burdie Thrapp; C.G. Pritchard; Paula Luther; Velma Bower; Lonnie Mueller

In Memory of Robert Allington: Dale Young

In Memory of Maggie Albertson: Rosanne Staniford

In Memory of Margaret and Thomas Thorson: Sharon M. Thorson

Thank You All for Your Generosity!

## League Employees

### *Saying Hello:*

Melissa Stodola, Services Coordinator, Norfolk.

Linda Higgins, Acting Office Director, Scottsbluff.

Anissa Wilson, Services Coordinator, Omaha

### *Saying Good-Bye:*

Anthony Broderick, Services Coordinator, Omaha

Jeananne Gross, Office Director, Scottsbluff

## Winter is coming: Snow closing information

We have designated KFOR radio as our weather station.

In times of severe weather, please turn to KFOR 1240 AM, or go online to [www.kfor1240.com](http://www.kfor1240.com) for the latest word on cancellations.

## Barrier Removal Grants Available from League

Barrier Removal Grants are available to qualified renters or homeowners who have mobility limitation or who have someone in their family who does.

The League offers grants in Omaha, Council Bluffs, and Lincoln and Lancaster County. The program is for people with low to moderate income, based on U.S. Housing and Urban Development guidelines, who need funds to remove barriers in their homes.

Examples of eligible modifications include outside ramps and lifts, grab bars, handrails, widened doorways, accessible tubs and showers, and reachable sinks and counters.

League staff offer a variety of services to assist in making homes more accessible to people with disabilities. For more information or for an application for a Barrier Removal Grant, contact:

### *Omaha Center for Independent Living*

5513 Center St., Omaha, NE 68106

Phone 402-595-1256

### *Lincoln Center for Independent Living*

1701 P St., Lincoln, NE 68508  
Phone 402-441-7871

### *SW Iowa Center for Independent Living*

1520 Avenue M, Council Bluffs, IA 51501  
Phone 712-323-6863

## **No Need to Give Up Reading**

People with limited ability to read, hold a book or turn pages still can enjoy their favorite books and magazines, through to the Nebraska Library Commission's free Talking Book and Braille Service.

The program provides easy-to-use playback equipment free on long-term loan. Free books and magazines are available on digital cartridge by mail, through digital download, and in Braille. The service's available digital books and players continue to increase weekly.

All materials received by mail can be returned postage free.

The service is available to individuals, as well as schools and other facilities, such as nursing homes, hospitals and senior citizen centers.

Online application forms can be printed, completed, and then mailed to the Talking Book and Braille Service. The Web site is [www.nlc.state.ne.us/TBBS/applyforservice.aspx](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/TBBS/applyforservice.aspx)

For more information, e-mail [nlc.talkingbooks@nebraska.gov](mailto:nlc.talkingbooks@nebraska.gov) or call 1-800-742-7691.

## **Join Us on Social Media**

For the most up-to-the-minute news, find us on Facebook — just click the logo in the email edition of this newsletter or on our webpage or search for us from your own Facebook page.

Follow us on Twitter too. Just click the logo in the email edition of this newsletter or on our webpage, or find us @LHD68508.

## **Where to Find Us**

LINCOLN Center for Independent Living & Mobility Options  
1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone 402-441-7871

OMAHA Center for Independent Living & Mobility Options  
5513 Center Street, Omaha, NE 68106  
Phone 402-595-1256

NORFOLK Center for Independent Living  
400 Elm Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701  
Phone 402-371-4475

SW IOWA Center for Independent Living  
1520 Avenue M, Council Bluffs, IA 51501  
Phone 712-323-6863

PANHANDLE Medicaid Waiver Office  
17 E 21 St., Scottsbluff, NE 69361  
Phone 308-632-0470

KEARNEY Medicaid Waiver Office  
3811 W. 29th Avenue, Ste 2, Kearney NE 68845  
Phone 308-224-3665

NORTH PLATTE Medicaid Waiver Office  
2509 Halligan Dr., North Platte, NE 69101  
Phone 308-532-4911

[www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com)  
& Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

## **League's CILs Offer Services People Need for Independence**

The League of Human Dignity's four Centers for Independent Living provide services that people with disabilities need to achieve and maintain their independence.

Services provided at League CILs in Nebraska and Southwest Iowa include, but are not limited to:

- \* Individual and systems advocacy
- \* Information and referral
- \* Independent living skills training
- \* Peer counseling and support
- \* Transition from institutions into the community

- \* Training in personal assistant hiring and management
- \* Barrier removal grants
- \* Equipment loan and rental

Call the League at 402-441-7871 to find out more. Or drop by our offices at 1701 P Street in Lincoln, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Feel free to contact any of our other Centers for Independent Living for information about independent living for people with disabilities.

Through our CILs and Medicaid Waiver offices, the League serves all 93 Nebraska counties and eight counties in Southwest Iowa.

## **Associations & Support Groups**

The League maintains a list of associations and support groups in Nebraska, Southwest Iowa, the region and the nation for people with disabilities and their loved ones.

To see the complete list, in pdf format, please visit our website: [www.leagueofhumandignity.com/get-involved](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com/get-involved) and navigate to "Support Groups" at the bottom of the page.

## **Classifieds**

Classified ads cost \$5 for the first 25 words and 25 cents for each additional word. To place an ad, write to: On The Level, League of Human Dignity, 1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508; call Jim at 402-441-7871 v/tdd; call toll free at 888-508-4758; or fax: 402-441-7650. Equipment, supplies and other items for sale must be accessible to, or for the use of, people with disabilities.

FOR SALE: Six adjacent cemetery plots in Westlawn-Hillcrest Cemetery in Omaha. Section 8, Lot 24R spaces 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. \$1,000 each or \$5,000 for all six. Call the League of Human Dignity, 402-441-7871.

FOR SALE: Ford E350 van 7.3 turbo diesel. Full 8-inch floor drop, power doors, power lift, new carpet, \$10,000. Call 402-890-8235 (Lincoln).

## **The League of Human Dignity Building Corporation**

Is taking applications for 1 and 2 bedroom apartments with roll-in showers in Lincoln, Omaha, York, Columbus, Norfolk and Hastings.

These units come with Section 8 certificates and rent is based upon income. Eligible applicants must qualify under income guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Applicants must experience disability to qualify.

To apply or for more info, call Paula Shufeldt at 1-888-508-4758 V/TDD or email [pshufeldt@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:pshufeldt@leagueofhumandignity.com)

## **Dairy Queen Fundraiser ad**

We put the FUN in FUNDrasing!

Support the League of Human Dignity

On the third Wednesday of each month, Dairy Queen at 540 S. 32nd Ave. in Council Bluffs gives part of its proceeds from 5 to 8 p.m. to benefit the SW Iowa Center for Independent Living, to help the center fulfill its mission to promote independent living and the full integration of people with disabilities into their community.

Enjoy a treat & support the League of Human Dignity!

## **Bruno Vertical Platform Lifts ad**

\* In Stock, visit us at 1720 O Street in Lincoln

\* Helps you maintain your independence

\* Safe, economical, efficient way to overcome architectural barriers

Call us at 402-441-7871 for more information about this great product!

Mobility Options

Knowledge. Independence. Innovation.