

# ON THE LEVEL

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## From the League of Human Dignity

*April, 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 [League website]

## Support Local Nonprofits Spring during Giving Days

*Please Give During Online Events in Omaha, Lincoln Next Month*

This year's OmahaGives! and Give To Lincoln Day online fundraising events are coming up in May and the League of Human Dignity is asking all its friends and supporters to keep the League in mind and please give as much money as you can.

The events are sponsored by the Omaha Community Foundation on May 25 and the Lincoln Community Foundation on May 216.

Both involve 24 hours of public online giving, meant to raise awareness of the missions and needs of local nonprofit organizations. The focus is on encouraging everyone in both communities to show their support and appreciation for the work nonprofits do.

Omaha Gives! will raise donations for nonprofits in Douglas and Sarpy counties in Nebraska and Pottawattamie County in Iowa, on Wednesday, May 25. Donations made to the league during the event will specifically benefit both the Omaha Center for Independent Living and services offered in Pottawattamie County by the Southwest Iowa Centers for Independent Living in Council Bluffs.

Pottawattamie County nonprofits that are participating in this year's OmahaGives! also will be featured on a PottawattamieGives! web page sponsored by the Iowa West Foundation. PottawattamieGives! is a way to highlight Iowa nonprofits and is not a separate giving event

Give to Lincoln Day will raise funds for Lincoln and Lancaster County nonprofits on Thursday, May 26. Donations to the League will benefit the Lincoln Center for Independent Living.

For details on when and how to give, as well as links to the respective websites where donations can be made, keep an eye on the League's website, [www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com), and Facebook page. We will make information available as soon as we get it.

Donations primarily will be made online and can be tracked throughout the day.

In the past, the Lincoln giving event also has sponsored in-person giving downtown at the Lincoln Community Foundation office, 215 Centennial Mall South. In Lincoln and Lancaster County, each online donation also will be matched proportionally from a challenge match pool created by major sponsors of the event.

This is the fourth year for the event in the Omaha metro area. The League of Human Dignity has taken part in it each year. This is the fifth annual Lincoln giving event. League has taken part in each Lincoln events as well.

The need for funding has never been greater for the League, as with other nonprofits. We ask all residents of the Omaha-Council Bluffs and Lincoln areas who support independence and equal access for people with disabilities to give what they can to the League's mission during these two fundraising events.

## **CEO'S NOTE**

In July of 2013 Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the most recent re-authorization of the Rehabilitation Act.

One of the provisions of the new law is that a new core service of transition has been added as a required service that must be provided by Centers for Independent Living.

Though regulations are still being finalized, transition services are being defined as transition and diversion of people from nursing homes, and other institutions to community living. Also included in this service is transition of youth who experience disability from secondary education to post-secondary education, work, and adult living.

The League has long assisted people who experience disability with transition and diversion from institutional to community-based living. Though the League has provided services to youth over the years, we have not focused on assisting youth who experience disability and families with the often difficult transition from secondary education to adult living.

In response to this new required core service, the League is reallocating resources, and is in the process of developing a Transition Coordinator position. The Transition Coordinator will work with League Staff in each of our Iowa and Nebraska CILs to collaborate with students who experience disability and their families, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Nebraska Department of Education, and local school districts to help youth who experience disability to transition to their next stage in life.

We at the League are very excited about becoming more involved with serving youth who experience disability, and we look forward to this opportunity to better assist Iowans and Nebraskans with disability to actively participate in their communities.

Mike Schafer, League CEO

## **Nebraska, Iowa Legislation to Keep an Eye On**

The 2016 legislative sessions are well under way in Nebraska and Iowa and disability advocates are keeping an eye on several pieces of legislation.

### *Bills of interest in the Nebraska Unicameral include:*

LR 418, introduced by Omaha Sen. Sara Howard, creates a special committee of the Legislature, the ACCESSNebraska Oversight Committee. The committee will provide oversight and an ongoing dialogue between the lawmakers and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to ensure continued improvement of ACCESSNebraska. The legislation was adopted on Feb. 29, on a 26-7 vote and signed by the President of the Senate on March 1.

LB670, introduced by Omaha Sen. Bob Krist, would require a hearing prior to release for persons taken into custody for mental health reasons. The bill has been assigned to the Judiciary Committee and was scheduled for a hearing on Feb. 17.

LB674, introduced by Sen. Krist, provide financial compensation for people who care for family members who have disabilities in their homes. It also would allow the caregiver and his or her family to receive health insurance in the same manner as fulltime state employees. The bill has been assigned to the Health and Human Services Committee and was scheduled for a March 3 hearing.

LB697, introduced by Sen. Howard, would, with federal approval, allow for the use of Medicaid funds to pay for functional family therapy for eligible youth. The bill was referred to the Health and Human Services Committee and scheduled for a March 3 hearing.

LB701, introduced by Sen. Mello, would eliminate the sunset provision relating to self-sufficiency contracts. People receiving assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program would be allowed to count hours spent on vocational training toward meeting the work activity requirement for purposes of the self-sufficiency contract. The bill was placed on the general file for debate Feb. 11.

LB708, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Kate Bolz, would add a memory care endorsement under the Health Care Facility Licensure Act. The endorsement would apply to assisted living facilities that provide care for people with cognitive impairment, dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Qualifications for the endorsement would include staffing enhancements, training and security requirements; and may include an additional supplemental reimbursement rate. The bill was sent by the Health and Human Services Committee to the General File for debate Feb. 11.

### *Parking Permit Bill Changes Definitions*

LB865, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Sue Crawford, would change the definition of "handicapped" or disabled people who are unable to travel more than 200 feet without stopping would be eligible for a "handicapped" or disabled parking permit. The bill also would remove obsolete language from the state's "handicapped" parking statutes. It was referred to the Urban Affairs Committee. On March 23 the bill was placed on final reading.

LB1007, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Colby Coash, relates to the state's Adult Protective Services. It would change provisions and definitions regarding vulnerable and senior adults. It also would eliminate the three-year statute of limitations on prosecuting knowing and intentional abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults. The bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee and on Feb. 19 was placed on the General File.

LB1032, introduced by Omaha Sen. John McCollister, would create the Transitional Health Insurance Program (T-HIP). The program would provide for health coverage to eligible adults age 19 to 65 with incomes below 133 percent of the Federal Poverty

Level. It would use the private health insurance market, emphasize personal responsibility, leverage employer-sponsored insurance, strengthen Nebraska's health care system, emphasize job training and employment, and would support transitioning people off public programs and into private coverage as they become financially able.

The bill was referred to the Health and Human Services Committee and on March 10 was placed on the General File.

LB1033, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Kathy Campbell, would develop a state plan to meet the integration mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court's *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision. The bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to assess components of a plan which may be in development, consult with other agencies that administer programs serving people with disabilities, and create a stakeholder advisory committee to assist in the creation of a strategic comprehensive plan to address community-based service needs of Nebraskans with disabilities

The bill, a Speaker Priority bill, advanced from the Health and Human Services Committee to the General File Feb. 17. On March 18 the bill was placed on final reading.

LB1088, introduced by Hyannis Sen. Al Davis, would provide an exemption from the payment of sales and use taxes on goods and services by centers for independent living. The bill is in the Revenue Committee, where it was the subject of a hearing Feb. 19.

### *Consumer Bill of Rights Sent to Governor*

LB698, introduced by Omaha Sen. Heath Mello, would adopt the Home Care Consumer Bill of Rights. The bill of rights is meant to protect the rights of people who receive in home personal care services.

The bill of rights is a recommendation from the Legislature's Aging Nebraskans Task Force, ensuring consumers' right to:

- participate in the approval of services and any changes in services
- refuse service
- receive information on rights and responsibilities in the agreement between the consumer and service provider
- freedom of choice of service providers
- freedom from exploitation.

Companies or individuals found not providing the information required by LB 698 to consumers receiving in-home services would be in violation of the Home Care

Consumer Bill of Rights, and would be subject to a civil penalty of \$100 up to \$1000 for each violation.

The Health and Human Services Committee sent LB698 to the General File for debate on Feb. 11. It passed on final reading and was sent to the governor March 24.

### *Legislation of interest in Iowa's 2015-2016, 86th General Assembly:*

#### *In the Senate*

SF201, relating to finding an examining physician for a person believed to be seriously mentally impaired in an emergency situation. The bill passed the Iowa Senate 49-0 and the House 97-0. It was signed into law on April 17, 2015.

SF 475 would create a refundable \$2,500 home modification income tax credit for homeowners with disabilities, homeowners with family members that have disabilities living in the home, or people with progressive chronic diseases that will require home modification within three years if they are to remain in their homes. The credit would apply to unreimbursed home modifications. Only people earning 250 percent of the federal poverty level or less are eligible. The bill remains in the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

SF 2125 would require the Department of Human Services to terminate contracts with Managed Care Organizations and direct the Iowa Department of Human Services to pursue other initiatives to realign the state's health care delivery system. The bill passes the Senate 29-19 and currently is in the House Human Resources Committee.

SF 2213 would strengthen government oversight of the Medicaid managed care system, including enhancing the role of various advisory boards, appointment of an interagency program integrity work group, expansion of the role of the state's long-term care ombudsman, establishing a Medicaid Reinvestment Fund to pay to expand access and improve outcomes, and amending the Managed Care Organization (MCO) contracts to address concerns.

The bill passed the Senate 32-18 on March 2, and has been assigned to the House Human Resources Committee.

SF 509 would require gas stations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act by offering fueling assistance to people with disabilities, including the posting of signs and the use of a refueling assistance notification device. Small businesses would receive a \$500 income tax credit to help pay for the changes. The bill passed the Senate 30-20 and currently is in the House Ways and Means Committee.

## *In the House*

HF 543 would limit licensed intermediate care facility beds for persons with intellectual disabilities at the state resource centers. The bill remains in the House Human Resources Committee.

HF 588 would change rules relating to removable disability parking placards. Current Iowa law allows people with disabilities to get a removable windshield parking placard that does not expire. There have been numerous reports of misuse, as they are not always returned upon the person's death. This bill would eliminate non-expiring placards, and replace them with renewable five-year placards, beginning January 1, 2017. The bill passed the House 96-0 and passed the senate 47-2 on March 23.

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

18-hole 4-player scramble and more!

June 10, 2016, at Bent Tree Golf Club, Council Bluffs, IA

12 p.m. registration; 1 p.m. start

To register or for more information about the 2015 Omaha/SW Iowa Benefit Golf Event, contact the League of Human Dignity:

- Omaha at 5513 Center Street, phone 402-595-1256, email [oinfo@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:oinfo@leagueofhumandignity.com)
- Council Bluffs at 1520 Avenue M, phone 712-323-6863, email [fgreise@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:fgreise@leagueofhumandignity.com)

## **2016 Norfolk Benefit Bike Run Ad**

10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 16, 2016

Registration at Chesterfield West in O'Neill; Music by the band LOCO

Dinner at 5:30 p.m.; Live Auction

This is a 174-mile "poker run." Ride for \$20 (includes one poker hand) Extra hands \$5

For more information, contact the League of Human Dignity, 400 Elm Ave., Norfolk, NE 68701; Phone 402-371-4475; Email [jfink@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:jfink@leagueofhumandignity.com)

## **Lincoln Benefit Golf Event Ad**

Thursday, Sept. 22, 2016, at the Highlands Golf Course, Lincoln.

To register or for more information, contact The League of Human Dignity, 1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, Call 402-441-7871 (V/TDD); Fax 402-441-7650, or email [crigoni@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:crigoni@leagueofhumandignity.com)

## **April 11 Marks 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Signing of Fair Housing Act**

This April marks the 48th anniversary of the signing of the federal Fair Housing Act.

As originally passed, the Act, prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. In 1988, disability and familial status were added and were further codified in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Act passed Congress after a long and difficult journey. President Lyndon Johnson signed it into law on April 11, 1968. During the month, the disability community and the nation come together to celebrate the Act and to recommit to that goal which inspired us in the aftermath of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's assassination in 1968: to eliminate housing discrimination and create equal opportunity in every community.

At its heart, fair housing means that every person can live free. This means that our communities are open and welcoming, free from housing discrimination and hostility. It also means that each one of us, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, and disability, has access to neighborhoods of opportunity, where our children can attend quality schools, our environment allows us to be healthy, and economic opportunities and self-sufficiency can grow.

For more information about Fair Housing, including how to file a Fair Housing complaint, go online to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at [hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp](http://hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp)

## Midwest Rugby Rebels Seeking Coach, Game Officials, Players

The Midwest Rugby Rebels, a wheelchair rugby team based in Omaha, is looking for a new coach and game officials, said team member Robert Rieck.

The team is looking for someone with positive leadership who employs an affirmative approach to coaching. The coach will need to foster trust and mutual respect among the players and him- or herself; help develop a vision of success and steps needed to attain it; a willingness to learn about wheelchair rugby and its intense competition. Past coaching experience is preferred

The team also is seeking up to two referees to officiate at team scrimmages. Past sport refereeing would make the transition to wheelchair rugby particularly seamless, although those with no experience will be provided with hands-on training. The positions are internships with the potential for income-generating work with referee certification through the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF).

Additionally, the team continues to actively seek players. Anyone with a physical impairment in three of their four limbs should call Robert to find out more about signing up.

The sport helps players improve their life skills in areas of problem solving, mental and physical enrichment, communications, teamwork, creating options, conquering self-doubt, and improving self-esteem.

Email Robert at [robertarieck@outlook.com](mailto:robertarieck@outlook.com) or give him a call at 402-802-1806. He recommends looking into any of the team's openings and finding out more before telling yourself you can't do it or aren't interested — Give it a try!

## 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.

## 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

## **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 offers 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

## League Employees

### *Saying Hello:*

Jolene Zochol, Medicaid Waiver Supervisor, Lincoln

Jennifer Fischer, Independent Living Advisor, Southwest Iowa (formerly secretary)

### *Saying Good-Bye:*

Robert Syvertson, Independent Living Advisor, Southwest Iowa

Buddy Hogan, Services Coordinator, Omaha

Olin Miller, Service Technician, Lincoln

Cathy McCauley, Services Coordinator, Lincoln

## League Donors

February 1, 2016 through March 23, 2016

Builder (\$500 and above): David McChesney, Peed Foundation; CareTech Inc.

Century (\$100-\$249): Eleanor Sack, Monica Balters

Believer (\$50-\$99): Judith Pittack

Other: Reba Schafer, Rosalind Morris, Shantell Hall

### *Thank You for Your Generosity!*

## AmazonSmile Ad

Support the League of Human Dignity When You Shop at Amazon by Buying Through AmazonSmile!

Just go online to AmazonSmile, sign in and shop away!

## 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 FUNdraising!

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!

## 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: 1994 Ford full-sized wheelchair-accessible van. High-topper, rear entry, in good shape, runs good, 302 motor, 160,000 miles. Call Jim 402-261-3980 (Lincoln).

FOR SALE: Wheelchair with electric van hoist; 5' x 8' deck with railings and 3' x 12' aluminum ramp with legs (dismantled). Call Duane 402-304-0332 (Lincoln).

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: Wheelchair accessible E250 Ford van. Power doors, wheelchair lift, hand controls, EZ lock system, \$22,750. Call 402-890-8235 (Lincoln).

## 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.

## 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.

## OmahaGives! Ad

WHAT:

24 hours of online giving to benefit nonprofits in Douglas, Sarpy & Pottawattamie counties

WHEN:

12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, May 25

WHERE:

Give online at [OmahaGives website]

## Give to Lincoln Day Ad

WHAT:

24 hours of online & in-person giving to nonprofits in Lincoln & Lancaster County

WHEN:

12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. Thursday, May 26

WHERE:

Give online at [Give to Lincoln Day website] or in person from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Lincoln Community Foundation 215 Centennial Mall South in Lincoln