

# ON THE LEVEL

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## From the League of Human Dignity

April, 2017

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] [leagueofhumandignity.com](http://leagueofhumandignity.com).

## Support the League During Spring Giving Days

Charitable giving has never been more important to organizations like the League of Human Dignity than it is this year. That's why it is crucial that everybody gives what they can during the three area giving days this spring, benefiting nonprofits in Lincoln, Omaha and Norfolk.

The League's Lincoln Center for Independent Living is again asking all its friends and supporters to please give during this year's Give To Lincoln Day.

Give To Lincoln Day starts at midnight on Thursday, May 18 and runs throughout the day. Sponsored by the Lincoln Community Foundation, the annual giving day asks residents to go online and give during the 24 hour period and donate to the nonprofits serving Lincoln and Lancaster County.

The purpose of the event is “to raise awareness of philanthropic needs and opportunities in the community, increase public awareness of local nonprofit organizations, build the capacity of local nonprofits and inspire donors to support the causes that mean the most to them,” Lincoln Community Foundation officials said,

Donations primarily will be made online at [www.givetolincoln.com](http://www.givetolincoln.com) from 12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. May 18. But the foundation also accepts gifts from those who prefer to donate in person, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the foundation office, 215 Centennial Mall South.

The minimum donation is \$10 and each donation will be matched proportionally from a challenge match pool.

Give to Lincoln Day is in its sixth year and the League has taken part each year. Last year, the event raised more than \$3 million for 350 local nonprofits.

The Omaha and Southwest Iowa Centers for Independent Living are asking their friends and supporters to give during this year’s Omaha Gives! and Pottawattamie Gives! on Wednesday, May 24. The event will raise money for nonprofit organizations in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area.

All funds donated to the League during the event will specifically benefit the Omaha CIL, which serves consumers in Douglas and Sarpy counties, and the Southwest Iowa CIL in Council Bluffs, to support services in Council Bluffs and Pottawattamie County.

The minimum online donation is \$10, and hourly drawings, prizes and bonus dollars will boost gifts. The official website, [www.omahagives.org](http://www.omahagives.org), features a list of all nonprofits and their updated donations totals throughout the day.

This will be the fifth year for the event, sponsored by the Omaha Community Foundation and American National Bank. It’s the second year for Pottawattamie Gives! sponsored by the Iowa West Foundation and Pottawattamie County Foundation. The League has taken part in each giving day and asks that all residents keep nonprofits in mind, especially the League, and give what they can.

Last year, Omaha Gives! raised nearly \$9 million for local nonprofit organizations.

Links to the two giving day websites soon will be available on the League’s website, [leagueofhumandignity.com](http://leagueofhumandignity.com) and Facebook page. And follow the League on Twitter (@league68508) for the most up-to-date information.

The 2017 Norfolk Area Big Give, sponsored by the Philanthropy Council of Northeast Nebraska, is Tuesday, May 23. Last year’s Big Give raised more than \$86,000 for 31 Norfolk area nonprofits over the event’s 24-hour giving period. This will be the League’s

first year participating in the event. More information will be made available following a series of orientation meetings for participating organizations, held throughout March.

## CEO's Note

Locating affordable housing can be a challenge for any of us, but imagine trying to find decent affordable and accessible housing. This is a struggle for many who live with disability. The problem can be made worse by architectural barriers and discrimination.

Every April, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses Fair Housing Month to commemorate passage of the landmark 1968 Fair Housing Act. The act became law shortly after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Originally banning racial discrimination in housing sales and rental, the law was amended in 1988 to ban discrimination based on disability. Today it prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and family status.

The law, as amended in 1988, states that people with disabilities, who are otherwise qualified to rent or buy, cannot be denied the opportunity based on disability. Landlords also must allow renters with disability to make reasonable accessibility accommodations, such as installing a ramp. New units of four or more must have at least one wheelchair accessible entrance and wheelchair accessible common areas. In buildings with elevators, all units must have certain accessible features, such as doorways and hallways wide enough for wheelchairs. In buildings without elevators, all ground floor units must have these features.

Anyone with a disability who feels they have been discriminated against can file a complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Landlords and/or developers found to be in violation can be forced to comply and possibly fined.

As a result of the Fair Housing Amendments Act, there are fewer obstacles in securing accessible housing. And when a person does face discrimination, there is legal recourse.

Fair Housing Month is a time for us to reflect on how far we've come in making housing more equitable and ending discrimination. Yet, we still have long way to go in making sure all people can live in their community of choosing and pursue their dreams.

# Pending Legislation to Watch in Nebraska, Iowa

The 2017 legislative sessions are well under way in Nebraska and Iowa, and several bills under consideration would affect people with disabilities.

Bills especially of interest to the League include:

In the Nebraska Unicameral, LB 645 would add dyslexia to the list of learning disabilities in the state's schools for purposes of special education. The bill was introduced Jan. 18 by Sen. Patty Pansing Brooks of Lincoln, and was considered by the Education Committee. It advanced to the Legislatures General File Feb. 27.

LB 595 would allow teachers and school administrators to use physical force, physical restraints and seclusion to subdue students deemed violent or unruly. Under the bill, such actions would not be classified as corporal punishment. The bill is opposed by disability rights advocates because of the harm it no doubt would cause to students with disabilities.

The bill was introduced Jan. 18 by Sen. Mike Groene of North Platte, and was placed on the General File March 16. It is Sen. Groene's priority bill this session.

LB 456 aims to protect the best interests of children who have parents with disabilities, while protecting the rights people with disabilities to be parents. It would provide supportive services for disabled parents in family and dependency matters.

Adhering to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the bill would provide for due process and equal protection for the rights of parents and prospective parents with disabilities. It would impact adoption, custody, visitation, foster care, child welfare, and family law.

The bill was introduced Jan. 17 by Sen. Tom Briese of Albion, and currently is in the Health and Human Services Committee.

LB 649 would prohibit additional services or populations under the state's new Medicaid privatization plan, known as managed care. The bill would put the managed care plan on hold for about a year or until a critical evaluation of the program can be completed, and the success of the plan is proven.

The bill was introduced Jan. 18 by Sen. Pansing Brooks and currently is in the Health and Human Services Committee, with a hearing scheduled for March 17.

In the Iowa House of Representatives, HF 417, a refueling assistance bill, was introduced Feb. 23 and currently is in the Commerce Committee. The Senate version, SF 353, also was introduced Feb. 23 and is in the Senate's Agriculture Committee.

HF 417 and SF 353 would require new and renovated gas stations to install a signaling device at the pump to notify station employees that a customer needs assistance with refueling. Smaller stations may be eligible for a tax credit to help pay for the device. Stations with fewer than two employees would not be required to assist with refueling.

The devices would make the lives of people with disabilities, including veterans, easier and help them participate fully in life. Many need assistance because of difficulty operating the pump or gas inlet. Adaptive equipment for driving has been available for more than 60 years, yet we are still struggling to make adaptive refueling available.

HF 172, introduced Feb. 1, would appropriate an additional \$7.1 million to the Iowa Department of Human Services to reduce waiting lists for all Medicaid home and community-based services waivers. The bill currently is in the House Human Resources Committee.

The funds would be in addition to any other funds allocated for DHS medical assistance program for fiscal year 2017-2018.

## **After Hours Transportation for Lincolmites with Disabilities**

The League of Human Dignity Extended Hours Service (EHS) Transportation Program offers 70 rides each week, for people with disabilities in Lincoln, who need accessible, affordable transportation when other options are not available.

So, if you have a disability and don't drive — and it's late or it's the weekend or a holiday, and the city buses and HandiVans aren't running, EHS is there for you.

EHS is for people who are eligible for Lincoln's StarTran HandiVan service and who use Lincoln's fixed-route buses or other assisted transportation, or who experience permanent disability and do not have a vehicle of their own and valid driver's license.

A HandiVan or EHS identification is required — eligible residents can get both at the League of Human Dignity, 1701, P Street, in Lincoln. Stop in or call 402-441-7871 for details about eligibility and registration.

EHS offers rides weekdays from 5 to 11 p.m.; Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sundays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day,

Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Each one-way ride is \$4.

Reservations for rides are accepted Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Reservations may be made from one to seven day prior to a requested ride. Same-day requests are subject to space availability.

Contact the League's Transportation Coordinator for more information about this great program!

## April Is Fair Housing Month

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 was the culmination of years of efforts to eliminate discrimination in housing and ensure equal opportunity throughout this country.

Also known as the Fair Housing Act, Title VIII, prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, sex, and (as amended in 1988) disability and family status.

Enactment followed a long and difficult journey. From 1966-1967, Congress regularly considered the fair housing bill, but it failed to get a strong enough majority to pass.

The name of Civil rights leader Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had become closely associated with the legislation from the time of the 1966 open housing marches in Chicago, and when King was killed on April 4, 1968, Pres. Lyndon Johnson urged Congress to pass it. Johnson saw the act as a fitting memorial to King's work.

Johnson and Congressional leaders provided a voice of reason amid the civil upheaval that followed King's assassination. With rioting and destruction mounting in every part of the country, Johnson asked that the act be passed prior to King's funeral. The House of Representatives complied, followed without debate by the Senate.

Johnson signed the act into law on April 11, 1968, and it was such a monumental achievement that its first anniversary — and every anniversary since — has been a time for celebration.

While even now, 49 years later, much remains to be done, the law makes possible communities that 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 where we all can grow opportunities and self-sufficiency.

Based on information from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

## What Is ‘Youth Transition’

Youth Transition . . .

It is about putting the pieces in place that a young adult may need to accomplish their dreams and lifelong happiness.

The Purpose of Youth Transition — to ensure that young adults will gain the skills, knowledge and interagency relationships to establish long-range goals for independence after high school.

The League of Human Dignity’s transition component serves students age 14 to 26.

The League assists youth and young adults with disabilities to transition from high school and life with parents to post-secondary education, employment and, for some, independent living.

## Living Well with a Disability in Norfolk

If you experience disability, this free 8-week class sponsored by the League of Human Dignity can help you steer yourself onto the road to healthy living in every aspect of your life.

The workshop consists of eight sessions at Northstar Services, Small Conference Room, 312 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street in Norfolk. Sessions are 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Thursdays, starting April 6. Contact the League to see if there may still be space available in this great workshop.

Email [bjohnson@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:bjohnson@leagueofhumandignity.com) or call 402-371-4475 and ask for Brenda.

## 2017 Omaha/SW Iowa Golf Event

18-hole, 4-player scramble & more! June 16, 2017, at Bent Tree Golf Club, Council Bluffs, Iowa. 12 p.m. registration, 1 p.m. start.

Register a 4-player team for \$300, or support the event through one of our event sponsorship levels: \$1,000, \$750 or \$250.

Proceeds will go to League of Human Dignity's Omaha and Southwest Iowa Centers for Independent Living, to help them fulfill their mission: Promoting independent living and the full integration of people with disabilities in their communities.

To register or for more information about the 2017 Omaha/SW Iowa Benefit Golf Event, contact the League of Human Dignity:

In Omaha at 5513 Center Street, phone 402-595-125, email [oinfo@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:oinfo@leagueofhumandignity.com)

In Council Bluffs at 1520 Avenue M, phone 712-323-6863, email [fgreise@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:fgreise@leagueofhumandignity.com)

Visit us online at [www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com) and please "like" us on Facebook

## **ADA Symposium Filling Up Fast**

Registration for this year's National ADA Symposium is more than 60 percent sold, according to the Great Plains ADA Center, which hosts the event.

This year's symposium is May 14 through 17 at the Chicago Hyatt Regency O'Hare, 9300 Bryn Mawr Ave., in Rosemont, Ill. The four-day event is the largest conference on the Americans with Disabilities Act and the source for latest information on the ADA. Presenters include nationally recognized representatives of agencies and organizations that are involved with the ADA.

The symposium consists of a pre-conference session Sunday afternoon, May 14, break-out sessions, advanced discussion groups, exhibits and hands-on learning activities. The event is coordinated and hosted by the Great Plains ADA Center, based in Columbia, Mo.

Beginning April 1, registration is \$900 beginning April 1.

For more information about the symposium, or to register, call Lisa Tucker at 352-669-0076, email [Tuckerli@missouri.edu](mailto:Tuckerli@missouri.edu) or register online at [www.adasymposium.org](http://www.adasymposium.org).

## **2017 Norfolk Benefit Bike Run**

11:30 a.m. Saturday, July 15, 2017. Proceeds go to the League of Human Dignity to support independent living for people with disabilities in Northeast Nebraska.

For more information, contact the League at 400 Elm Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701, phone 402-371-4475, or email [jfink@leagueofhumandignity.com](mailto:jfink@leagueofhumandignity.com).

## League Donors

Feb. 7, 2017 through March 21, 2017

SUPPORTER (\$250 to \$499): Amy Menge

CENTURY (\$100 to \$249): Monica and Michael Balters; Honda Cars of Bellevue; John and Sharon Jacobson

BELIEVER (\$50 to \$99): David Gonzales

FRIEND (\$25 to \$49): Ms. Karla Britian

OTHER: Donna Geschwender; Amazon Smile Foundation; Jane Green

## League Employees

Saying Hello:

Jimmy Yeck, Independent Living Advisor, Council Bluffs.

Saying Good-Bye:

Racheall Petite, Services Coordinator, Omaha

## 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/getinvolved.html](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com/getinvolved.html) and click on "Support Groups."

## Talking Book & Braille Service

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. Patrons can have audio books and magazines mailed directly to them and all materials can be returned postage free.

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.

## **Adaptive Sports & Recreation**

Madonna's Adaptive Sports and Recreation program offers a wide range of adaptive sports opportunities for children and adults with acquired physical disabilities, people of all abilities, to enjoy a new sport or get back into a sport they once enjoyed.

The program provides three basic areas of focus: open recreation, periodic workshops and competition opportunities. Instruction and adaptive equipment are available.

For more information, go to [www.Madonna.org](http://www.Madonna.org), click "news" and then "events. Or contact Rick Haith at 402-413-3722 or send e-mails to [rhaith@madonna.org](mailto:rhaith@madonna.org).

## **2017 Lincoln Benefit Golf Event**

Time to start making plans for the 2017 League of Human Dignity Lincoln Benefit Golf Event, coming Thursday, Sept. 21 (It'll be here sooner than you think!)

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

Proceeds for our 9th annual Lincoln Benefit Golf Event will help the League fulfill its mission in the 19-county area served by the Lincoln Center for Independent Living.

## **Council Bluffs DQ Fundraiser**

We put the FUN in fundraising!

Support the League of Human Dignity. On the third Wednesday of each month, Dairy Queen at 540 S. 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue 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: promoting independent living and the full integration of people with disabilities into their communities.

Come on out and enjoy a delicious treat – and support the League of Human Dignity!

## Barrier Removal Grants

Barrier Removal Grants are available to qualifying renters or homeowners and their family members who have mobility limitations.

Grants are available to:

- People in Omaha, Council Bluffs, and Lincoln & Lancaster County.
- People with low to moderate income, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- People who need help removing 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:

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

Omaha CIL, 5513 Center St., Omaha, NE 68106, Ph. 402-595-1256

SW Iowa CIL, 1520 Avenue M, Council Bluffs, IA 51501, Ph. 712-323-6863

A service of the League of Human Dignity

## 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

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

## The League of Human Dignity Housing 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)

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY.

## 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 56508; 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.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL NONPROFITS! Please give generously during Give To Lincoln Day May 18; The Norfolk Area Big Give May 23; and Omaha Gives! & Pottawattamie Gives! May 24.

## Amazon Smile 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!

## League Apparel Ads

### HOODED SWEATSHIRTS

from the League of Human Dignity  
Sizes Small through 3XL  
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST  
\$13.95 (price includes sales tax)  
Available at League offices

### League of Human Dignity

### LONG-SLEEVED T-SHIRTS

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST  
small/medium/large/extra large - \$24.95  
2XL - \$25.75; 3XL - \$27  
(prices include sales tax)

### ON SALE NOW!

### FLEECE VESTS

Blue or Gray / Sizes medium through 4XL  
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST  
All sizes \$29.95  
(price includes sales tax)

# League Centers Offer Services

The League of Human Dignity's 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. Or contact any of our other Centers for Independent Living.

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

## Bruno 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 MOBILITY OPTIONS at 402-441-7871 about this great product!