

ON THE LEVEL

From the League of Human Dignity

October 2020

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; and our Medicaid Waiver offices in Scottsbluff, Kearney and North Platte, Nebraska.

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: leagueofhumandignity.com

Attention Lincoln Paratransit Users

What: Annual Paratransit Forum

When: Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020

Time: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Where: Online via Zoom

Contact Shawna Keller at the League of Human Dignity to be invited to participate in this Zoom meeting.

Email: skeller@leagueofhumandignity.com

Phone: 402-441-7871

We want to be ready to answer all of your questions, so please let us know your questions when you register so we can be ready to answer them at the start of the meeting.

MASK or MAIL

A woodblock print is reproduced, showing a young woman wearing a facemask. The works VOTE 11/3/2020 are part of the print, at the bottom.

This original block print is one of two prints donated to the League of Human Dignity by the artist, Ben Darling of Sydney, NE. Darling, as well as the League, encourages every eligible voter to vote in this year's general election on Nov. 3.

CEO's Note

October is an important month on many levels. One important element of October is that this is National Disability Awareness Month (NDEAM) and is a time to celebrate the many varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

This year marks the 75th anniversary since the first observance. The 2020 NDEAM theme is "Increasing Access and Opportunity." This year correlates to the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act as well. The ADA is landmark civil rights legislation that works to increase access and opportunity for people with disabilities across society, including in the workplace.

The League of Human Dignity, Inc. is proud to support National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Held each October, NDEAM aims to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945 when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Employers and employees in all industries can learn more about how to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month and ways they can promote its messages — during October and throughout the year — by visiting www.dol.gov/NDEAM.

October is also a month to remind everyone that the general election is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020. Every American who is registered to vote will be afforded the opportunity to help choose the individuals who will be representing and leading our cities, towns, states and country. Because this year is the 59th quadrennial presidential election, this election is of paramount importance.

We at the League of Human Dignity encourage all readers to vote if you are registered. And if you are not already registered, please get registered as soon as possible!

If you are not registered and do not know how, please call the League CIL or Office nearest to you for assistance. You can find the contact information elsewhere in this newsletter.

In spite of all our country's problems and issues, the United States of America is still one of the greatest countries on this earth! Each of us has the right and the responsibility to exercise our place in supporting our republic.

Vote like your life depends on it — it just may!

Kathy Kay, League Co-CEO

Inclusion Part of Economic Recovery

The theme for this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is "Increasing Access and Opportunity."

This year marks the 75th annual observance of NDEAM, a celebration administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. The observance culminates the Department's commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each October, NDEAM celebrates America's workers with disabilities and reminds employers of the importance of inclusive hiring practices.

"Ensuring that America's workplaces continue to include and accommodate people with disabilities will be an important part of our economic rebound," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia. "Looking ahead, the Department will remain focused on the policies that led to a strong economy and record-low unemployment rates for persons with disabilities prior to the pandemic. A vigorous economic rebound and job growth will, alongside the Americans with Disabilities Act, increase access and opportunity for Americans with disabilities."

To learn more about NDEAM, including ideas for how to participate, visit the NDEAM website, www.dol.gov/ndeam.

This story includes a reproduction of the official 2020 NDEAM poster. The background of the poster is royal blue. All lettering is gold. On the left is the theme "Increasing Access and Opportunity" and the words Celebrating 30 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act. At the bottom left are the 30th/ADA Anniversary and 75th/NDEAM Anniversary logos. Also in the lower left are the words National Disability Employment Awareness Month, #ADA30, #NDEAM75 and the website dol.gov/odep. At bottom left is the Department of Labor logo and the words Office of Disability Employment Policy, United States Department of Labor. Filling the right half of the poster, cascading downward, are diamond-shaped boxes with images of people with a range of disabilities working in various settings.

Have Your Say at the Polls

Take Part in General Election, Help Steer Future Policy Decisions

What does the future hold for U.S. policy that impacts people who have disabilities?

Nebraska and Iowa voters can have a say on the first Monday in November. That's the day – Nov. 3 – when voters head to the polls and cast their votes for President and Vice President of the United States, as well as members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

Presidential Race

Nationally, voters will decide whether Pres. Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence will remain in office, or Democratic challengers Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will lead for the next four years.

In Nebraska, Libertarian Party Presidential candidate Jo Jorgensen and her running mate Jeremy Cohen also are on the ballot.

Iowa voters have the choice of five additional party candidates and two non-partisan teams running for president and vice president. They are Alliance Party candidates Rocky De La Fuente and Darcy Richardson; Constitution Party candidates Don Blankenship and William Mohr; Genealogy Know Your Family History Party candidates Ricky Sue King and Dayna Chandler; Green Party candidates Howie Hawkins and Angela Walker; and Libertarian candidates Jorgensen and Cohen. Candidates with no party designation are Brock Pierce and Karla Ballard; and Kanye West and Michelle Tidball.

In addition to the presidential race, voters across the country will elect representatives from all House of Representative districts, including three from Nebraska and four from Iowa; and about one-third of the 100 senate seats, including one each from Nebraska and Iowa.

Nebraska Senate, House Races

Voters in Nebraska will elect one U.S. Senator and three Representatives.

Republican incumbent Ben Sasse of Fremont is running for his second six-year Senate term. He is facing challengers Chris Janicek, a Democrat from Omaha, and Gene Siadek, a Libertarian from Omaha.

In the House races, in District 1, Republican incumbent Jeff Fortenberry of Lincoln, a representative since 2005, faces challengers Kate Bolz, a Democrat from Lincoln, and Dennis B. Grace, a Libertarian from Fremont.

In District 2, Republican incumbent Donald Bacon, from Papillion, a representative since 2017, faces Democrat Kara Eastman of Omaha, and Libertarian Tyler Schaeffer of Omaha.

In District 3, Republican incumbent Adrian Smith of Gering, a representative since 2007, faces Mark Elworth Jr., a Democrat from Omaha, and Dustin C. Hobbs, a Libertarian from Grand Island.

For a complete list of all state-level candidates, visit the Nebraska Secretary of State website, sos.nebraska.gov. Polling places in Nebraska are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the Central Time Zone and 7a.m. to 7 p.m. in the Mountain Time Zone.

Iowa Senate, House Races

In Iowa, Republican Incumbent Joni Ernst is seeking her second term in the Senate, Challenging her are Democrat Theresa Greenfield of Des Moines, Libertarian Rick Stewart of Cedar Rapids, and Suzanne Herzog of West Des Moines, who is nonpartisan.

In Iowa's District 1, incumbent Abby Finkenauer, a Democrat, faces Ashley Hinson, a Republican.

In District 2, Democrat Rita R. Hart and Republican Mariannette Miller-Meeks face off in a race to replace retiring Democrat Dave Loebsack.

In District 3, the southwestern part of the state, incumbent Cindy Axne, a Democrat from West Des Moines, faces challengers David Young, a Republican from Van Meter, and Bryan Jack Holder, a Libertarian from Council Bluffs.

In District 4, Republican Randy Feenstra faces Democrat J.D. Scholten, in a race to replace Republican Steve King, who lost in the primary.

For a complete list of state-level candidates, visit the Iowa Secretary of State website, sos.iowa.gov. Polling places in Iowa are open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. statewide.

Are You Registered to Vote?

To register to vote in the general election in Nebraska, you must be 18 or turn 18 by Nov. 3, a resident of the county where you will vote, and a U.S. citizen. If you have been convicted of a felony you cannot register until two years after the completion of your sentence, including probation or parole. You cannot register if you have been found mentally incompetent by a court.

There are several ways Nebraska residents can register to vote, including online at NEReg2Vote. The online application is always available and is accessible by computer and mobile devices. Register in person through the state Department of Motor Vehicles when applying for or renewing your driver's license. Register through the state

Department of Health and Human Services and State Department of Education at the time of application, review or change of address for public programs.

An online voter registration application can be printed for you, to be completed, signed and mailed to your county election office. Addresses for the offices are listed on the form.

The deadline to register to vote in the general election is Oct. 16.

If it's your first time registering to vote in Nebraska by mail, you must also provide a copy of a current valid photo ID, or other proof you live at the address given on your application, including a copy of a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document, dated within 60 days of the date on your voter registration application.

In Iowa, you can register to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, an Iowa resident and will be at least age 18 on Election Day.

Iowans can pre-register online at the Iowa Secretary of State website or download, fill out and mail a voter registration form to their county elections official. The deadline to preregister is 10 days before the general election.

Iowans can register and vote on Election Day by going to their correct polling place with proof of identity and current address.

For more information, visit the Iowa Secretary of State's website, sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/voterregistration.html

Early (Absentee) Voting

In Nebraska, any registered voter can request an early voting (absentee) ballot.

Contact your county election office in person, by mail or by fax for an early-voting application or print an online early-voting application. Complete the application and mail, fax or email it to your county election office. The deadline to request that a ballot be mailed to you is 6 p.m. Oct. 23. Early ballots must arrive at your county elections official's office by the time the polls close on Election Day.

For more information on early voting in Nebraska, including a ballot application, visit the Secretary of State's website, sos.nebraska.gov/elections/early-voting-0

Any registered voter in Iowa can request an absentee ballot through their county auditor. Absentee voting begins Oct. 5 and ends Nov. 2.

A completed absentee ballot must be received by mail by Nov. 9, postmarked no later than Nov. 2. The deadline to return a completed ballot in person is Nov. 3.

For more information, visit the Iowa Secretary of State's website, sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/absenteeinfo.html

Community Healthy Living Class

Free Via Zoom – from the comfort of your home

The League of Human Dignity, Norfolk Office, is excited to announce a new course designed to provide tools to enhance skills to advocate for and be part of the community in which you live.

Classes will focus on:

Goal setting and Problem solving

Receiving and using information

Advocacy

Physical activity

Sustain a healthy diet

Maintain positive changes

Classes are held for 6 weeks for one hour, once a week by Zoom!

Please contact Jane Fink at 402-371-4475 for more information to participate in this wonderful opportunity.

Loan & Rental Program

Have you ever had a family member suffer a minor injury that required the use of crutches or a wheelchair for a short time? Has a recent illness or accident made it necessary to use a walker, transfer bench or a commode? Do you have equipment that you no longer need?

The League of Human Dignity's Equipment Loan Program allows you to rent or borrow many durable medical equipment items for a small fee. We also encourage donations of these items.

We do not loan or rent items that require special or custom fitting and/or supervision by a doctor, such as braces or corsets.

All donated items need to be in good shape. We do not accept donations that need repair.

Items we loan include Tub Seats & Benches, 2-Wheel Walkers, Canes, Crutches, Commodes, Reachers, and Grab Bars.

A one-time fee of \$5 is required — \$25 for Rollator Walkers — and the loan lasts as long as the items are needed. All loans are subject to availability.

Items we rent include Manual Wheelchairs, Transport Wheelchairs, Rolling Shower Chairs, Knee Walkers, and Hoyer Lifts.

Monthly rental and deposits vary by item and rent includes all maintenance and servicing during rental period. All rentals are subject to availability.

For details, to see if we have what you need, or to see if you have what we need and would like to make a donation, call or visit the League of Human Dignity office nearest you.

Amazon Smile

Support the League of Human Dignity When You Shop at Amazon By Buying Through AmazonSmile! Just go online to AmazonSmile, sign in and start shopping!

Join Us on Social Media

Find us on Facebook and Twitter — just click the logos in the electronic version of this newsletter, the links on our webpage, or search for us from your own Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Keep Reading with TBBS

People who have 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 (TBBS).

The program provides free audiobooks and audio magazines and braille through the mail and through digital download to individuals with a visual or physical condition, or a reading disability which limits use of regular print.

The collection consists of books and magazines similar to those found in a public library. The service is part of a nationwide network of cooperating libraries headed by the National Library Service, a division of the Library of Congress.

The program provides easy-to-use playback equipment on long-term-loan free of charge. Materials in the collection and the playback equipment are mailed to and from the library postage-free.

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

The program's in-house sound studios also record and produce audiobooks and audio magazines from Nebraska and regional authors as well as material about Nebraska and

the Great Plains. The recordings from the Nebraska Collection also are made available for loan to patrons.

For more information, e-mail nlc.talkingbooks@nebraska.gov or call 1-800-742-7691. For more information, the Nebraska Talking Book & Braille Service main page is at the Nebraska Library Commission website, nlc.nebraska.gov.

Where to Find Us

LINCOLN

Center for Independent Living
1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone 402-441-7871

OMAHA

Center for Independent Living
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

SOUTHWEST 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 29th Avenue, Suite 2
Kearney NE 68845
Phone 308-224-3665

NORTH PLATTE

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

Online at: leagueofhumandignity.com & Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter

League Employees . . .

Saying Hello:

Karri Roling-Wilson, Services Coordinator, Norfolk.

Saying Good-Bye:

Terri Groteluschen, Services Coordinator, Norfolk.

Patricia Pospisil, Services Coordinator, Norfolk.

SSA Continues Scam Warnings

The most effective way to defeat scammers is to know how to identify scams.

You should just hang up on any call you're uncertain of and ignore suspicious emails, said Jewell Colbert, Regional Communications Director for the Social Security Administration's Kansas City Region. Scammers are always finding new ways to steal your money and personal information by exploiting your fears.

One common tactic is posing as federal agents or other law enforcement. They may claim your Social Security number is linked to a crime. They may even threaten to arrest you if you do not comply. Just hang up.

As a reminder, continue to remain vigilant of phone calls when someone says there's a problem with your Social Security number or your benefits. If you owe money to Social Security, the agency will mail you a letter explaining your rights, options, and information about appealing.

Remember, Social Security officials will never:

Threaten you with benefit suspension, arrest, or other legal action unless you pay a fine or fee.

Promise a benefit increase or other assistance in exchange for payment.

Require payment by gift card, cash, wire transfer, internet currency, or prepaid debit card.

Demand secrecy from you in handling a Social Security-related problem.

Send official letters or reports containing personally identifiable information via email.

If you don't have ongoing business with Social Security, it is unlikely the agency will contact you. So if you get a suspicious call claiming to be from Social Security, hang up and report it to the agency's Office of the Inspector General at oig.ssa.gov.

League Services for Independence

People with disabilities have the same rights to live independently as anyone else. That's why the League of Human Dignity has been here for nearly 50 years — the services provided by the League's Centers for Independent Living help people to achieve and maintain their independence.

Services include, but are not limited to:

Individual and systems advocacy

Information and referral

Independent living skills training

Peer counseling and support

Transition from institutions to the community or from school to the next phase of life

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 come to our offices at 1701 P Street in Lincoln, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Or contact any of our other Centers for Independent Living.

Our CILs serve 43 Nebraska counties and eight counties in Southwest Iowa. We serve all 93 Nebraska counties with Medicaid Waiver services.

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: leagueofhumandignity.com/getinvolved/ and click on "Support Groups."

We aim to keep the list as up to date as possible, so additions and suggested changes are welcome. Call the League at 402-441-7871.

TAGG Purchases, Support the League

Here's what you do:

Download the free TAGG app to a smartphone and select the League of Human Dignity from the list of participating causes.

After purchasing goods or services from a participating business, take a photo of the receipt.

The business then will donate a percentage of the purchase to the League.

Barrier Removal Program

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
Center for Independent Living
1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone 402-441-7871

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

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

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.

RECYCLING: We are recycling electric wheelchairs and scooters. Will pick them up if needed. Call 402-890-8235 (Lincoln)

Get Your League Cotton Tote Bags

\$5.95 (includes sales tax) while supplies last! Only at the League of Human Dignity.

We're Looking for More Readers!

Get On The Level in your email box. Subscribe on our website or by sending your name and email address to janderson@leagueofhumandignity.com (A publication of the League of Human Dignity)

League of Human Dignity Building Corp.

The League of Human Dignity Building Corporation is taking applications for one and two 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 on 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 information, call Nada Resnik-McNenny at 402-441-7871 or 888-508-4758 (toll free) V/TDD or email: nmcnenny@leagueofhumandignity.com

Equal Housing Opportunity

Winter is coming: Snow Closing Info

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 for the latest word on cancellations.

To Our Consumers

The ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is still going strong, so the League of Human Dignity is continuing its procedures to protect our consumers, staff and the community.

With this in mind:

League offices will remain locked during business hours. League staff will continue to provide services to our consumers via phone, email, fax, mail or through other arrangements designed to emphasize minimal personal contact.

If you need to drop off timesheets, correspondence or other documents please use the mail slot or the receptacle provided.

If you need to rent or borrow durable medical equipment, please call the League and make arrangements by phone first, then you may sign the required documentation and pick up your equipment at the designated location.

If you have any questions or concerns, call your local League office. Out phone numbers are listed on page 8. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

And please protect yourselves — at the very least, practice social distancing, wash your hands and wear a mask.