



P. O. Box 625 • Institute, West Virginia 25112-0625

New SILC Members and Officers

Governor Manchin made three new appointments to the SILC on July 9, 2009 and one new appointment on November 12, 2009. The new SILC members are:

- Darla Ervin – Morgantown
- Kevin Maynus – Beckley
- Joyce Floyd – Elkins
- Ginny Gattlieb – Charleston – State Rehabilitation Council Chairperson

The SILC elected new officers on October 6, 2009. The new SILC Executive Committee members are:

- Jack Mitchell – Chairperson – Harpers Ferry
- Bill Davis – Vice-Chairperson – Morgantown
- Brenda Goodfellow – Secretary – Sistersville
- Anne Weeks – Treasurer – Huntington
- Nathan Parker – Member-At-Large – Huntington
- Dave Sanders – Member-At-Large – Belle
- Cindy Spinks – Immediate Past Chair – Summersville

Congratulations to all on their new positions!

Check Out the VITA Program!

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) can help you prepare and file your state and federal income tax returns. If you have income from work and are not claimed as a dependent by another taxpayer (your parents for instance) you may be eligible for this assistance. More importantly, you may be eligible for an “earned income tax credit” or EITC which could give you a check from the IRS even if you don’t owe any taxes! There are about 150 sites and 500 volunteers around the state in the VITA program.

To find the VITA site closest to you dial 211, call 800-829-1040, or go to www.wveitc.com. For more information on the program go to www.wveitc.com or www.irs.gov.

If you are interested in becoming a VITA volunteer call or e-mail Kelli Hinkle-Burgess, statewide coordinator for the program, at 304-342-6972 or khburgess@te-associates.com.

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WVCILs

Appalachian CIL:
Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Dr.
Charleston, WV 25302
1-800-642-3003

Mountain State CIL:
821 Fourth Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
1-866-687-8245
329 Prince St.
Beckley, WV 25801
304-255-0122

Northern WV CIL:
601-603 East Brockway Ave.
Suite A & B
Morgantown, WV 26505
1-800-834-6408

Upcoming Events

FSN Training Day

The Fair Shake Network's Legislative Training Day will be Tuesday, January 19th at the Charleston Civic Center. Featured speaker will be Tim Sheehan, Executive Director of the CIL for Western Wisconsin.

Disability Advocacy Day

Wednesday, January 20th will be Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol featuring displays from various disability groups and other activities.

2010 Disability Caucus

July 26-28th are the dates for the "2010 Disability Caucus: Celebrating 20 Years of the ADA."

The event, at the Charleston Marriott, will feature training, the development of strategies, Caucus Awards, and a big celebration. **Hold These Dates!**

Walk and Roll

The Huntington Mayor's Committee held its annual "Walk and Roll" parade, Job Fair, and the Mayor's Awards program at the Big Sandy Superstore Arena on October 1, 2009 to celebrate "Disability Employment Awareness Month." The Kick-Off Celebration began with the parade down 4th Avenue at 9:30 a.m., with Mayor Kim Wolfe and Police Chief Skip Holbrook in the lead. The Huntington High School Band added color, music, and excitement for parade watchers. Fourteen agencies and representatives from state, county, and city governments joined the "Walk and Rollers" to the arena where Mayor Kim Wolfe presented business awards to Dirtbusters, Dress for Success, and Developmental Therapy. Individual awards were presented to Ben Branson (Mountain State CIL), Jamie Baumgardener, Jack B. Williams, and Barbie Black. Bill Bartram received the Most Improved Award. Stephanie Decker and Lisa Wayman were thanked for Outstanding Community Service and Assistance. This year's prized Ron Yost Award was presented to Alissa Stewart, from Southwestern Community Action. One hundred thirty vendors and over one hundred Job seekers participated in this year's Job Fair. The celebration was considered a huge success!

A Personal Story

This article begins a new feature in the WVSILC newsletter to give people with disabilities the opportunity to share their stories. Our first is the story of a gentleman from Huntington.

"Two Important Incidents in My Life" By Leo Mulvey
(As told to Berlin Meredith, Senior Services Coordinator)



I was born on August 18, 1936 at Wheeling, West Virginia. I have three brothers and one sister (who died of cancer). My mother gave me over to a Catholic home as a small child (six or seven).

I remained at the Catholic home until I was approximately 15 years old. At that time I went to Saint Mary's Trading School. Mom and dad were divorced so I went to live with dad. He was an alcoholic and mean. He beat me a lot.

Once while living with my dad I was in a small bedroom and he came in and started choking me. I guess I must have died, as he choked me, because I saw the Lord coming down to get me. He let me see my mansion. It was so pretty. All light gold, bright lights, and I saw lots of people waiting on me. They were just standing there looking toward me. I was "going home." I even saw

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Mountain State CIL Disability Awareness Day 2009



On October 6, 2009, Mountain State Centers for Independent Living (MTSTCIL) held their annual Disability Awareness Day. Dee Delancey from WOWK, Channel 13 in Huntington; WCHS, Channel 8; Best Buy; several other

businesses; civic leaders; and Marshall University students participated in the event.

The event kicked off at 9:30 am at Marshall University's Student Center by the Memorial Fountain. Participants were given wheelchairs or blindfolds and off they went to spend the day "walking a mile" in someone else's "shoes."

Huntington Mayor, Kim Wolfe, rolled from the student center to his office on 8th Street and 4th Avenue. With Anne Weeks accompanying him on his journey, Mayor Wolfe did it on his own, but not without encountering a couple difficult curb cuts.

Dee Delancey, who was scheduled to have rotator cuff surgery in two days, used a power wheelchair to visit with the Mayor, the Sheriff's secretary, a manager at Best Buy and the students at Marshall.

In an early morning interview with Anne Weeks on WKEE radio, Jim Davis used a wheelchair to do his radio show. Even though he had been told his studio was accessible, his knees were hitting the counter and Anne verified for him the counter was not regulation height at below 36".

One of the students at Marshall was blindfolded and spent the day navigating the campus with the help of former WVSILC member Kelly Simpson, and her son, Erick Dowdy, a current WVSILC member and MU student. Erick, who is blind wasn't sure

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Chairperson's



Corner

SILC members have been busy and a lot has happened recently. We have been participating in conference calls with Senator Rockefeller's staff for regular updates on Health Care Reform. This has been a very interactive and informative group and kept all of us in the loop. A small group of people developed and submitted a grant proposal to the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services to hold a 2010 Disability Caucus. I am happy to say our grant was approved and the planning committee is well underway with plans for the Caucus July 26-28, 2010. As the Caucus dates will coincide with the 20th anniversary of the ADA. the theme is "2010 WV Disability Caucus: Celebrating 20 Years of the ADA". Hold the dates, July 26-28, 2010, for this special event and watch for more information to come. Scott Cooper has been traveling across the country creating a video called "It's Our Story". This is an oral history work about the disability rights and independent living movements made by the people, for the people and of the people. Scott was recently here in West Virginia conducting interviews. For more (Cindy continued on page 5)

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someone could pick up on how he spends his day in just 3 or 4 hours. But he was pleasantly surprised when Marcelle commented on how much he realized during his time as a “blind person” and how “lonely” he felt that day because no one would stop and speak to him.

Cathy Hutchinson accompanied Delegate Dale Stephens from the campus to downtown Huntington. With Cathy in a power chair and Delegate Stephens using a manual chair, they navigated several difficult areas of downtown sidewalks and Pullman Square so he could get a feel for what was accessible and what still needed to be done. Delegate Stephens was so impressed that he is hoping to spend some time at the Capitol in the future using a wheelchair so he can identify problems there.

MTSTCIL has officially established the first Tuesday in October to be Disability Awareness Day and next year’s event will be held October 5, 2010. If you would like to have an event in your own community on that day, the centers can help and want to start coordinating the awareness program with other communities, to eventually make it a statewide event.

Six West Virginians Honored for Vocational Excellence

Six West Virginians were recognized Oct. 22, by the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) for exemplary vocational rehabilitation.

The honorees, received their Ability Works recognition awards during a ceremony in Institute. The annual awards, held during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, honor one exemplary candidate from each of the agency’s six districts.

Keynote speaker Natalie Tennant, West Virginia Secretary of State, was joined by Education and the Arts Cabinet Secretary, Kay Goodwin, and DRS Director, Deborah Lovely, commending the six honorees during the ceremony.

“Working with their own strength and determination, using this bridge of support and assistance from the Division of Rehabilitation Services, today’s winners have earned their employment success,” said Tennant.

Gary Hefner, a licensed practical nurse at Greenbrier Valley Medical Center, is the 2009 Ability Works State award winner for West Virginia. He is from Marlinton and represents the Beckley District.

Dan Clarkson, protective services worker in the Kanawha County Sheriff’s Office, is the award recipient from the Charleston District.

Kalin Hanlan, a hostess at Applebee’s in Bridgeport, received the award for the Clarksburg District.

Carolyn Hancock is the Wheeling District winner. She is a revenue auditor at Wheeling Island Hotel, Casino and Racetrack.

The Huntington District winner is Justin Booth, a retail pharmacist at Kroger in Logan.

Donna Southerly, award winner from the Martinsburg District, was recognized for her employment as an administrative secretary at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College.

For detailed information about Ability Works 2009 and DRS services, visit the agency’s Web site at www.wvdrs.org/.



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my blind grandfather waiting on me. At least he was blind on earth but there he could see me. He said “welcome home,” “you’re home now.”

But the Lord then told me to go back—it wasn’t my time. He told me to go back and two doves would watch over me. Sort of like angels I suppose. I still feel them to this day in my everyday life. Sometimes I even see them. It’s almost as if they can let me know little things like whether it’s going to be a pretty day or not. It’s a comfort knowing they are there. I came back to Wheeling, West Virginia but decided to leave that area and I came to Huntington, West Virginia.

Seeing my Lord and heaven changed my life.

The second important incident happened while I was living on Madison Avenue in Huntington, West Virginia and often visited the local Fire Station #4.

One day as I was walking to the fire station I saw something fall from an upstairs window. I looked up and saw a small baby taking its clothes off and throwing them out the window. As I was looking up, the small baby toppled out the window and I caught it in my arms and took it to the fire station. I later learned that the mother was laying upstairs drunk.

The fire station reported the incident and it got on TV and I was reported as a hero. I guess it sort of gave me a swollen head.

I made lots of friends while living in Madison Manor on Madison Avenue in the West End of Huntington. One of those friends was Annabelle, who lived in the same senior high-rise as me. One day she told me she would watch over me after her death, like an angel. She passed away shortly after that and I know she is watching for me. Also, the sisters at the Catholic home still pray every day for me. I talk to them sometimes on the phone, especially around the holidays.

Both of these incidents have had an affect on me spiritually. I now regularly attend Highlawn Baptist Church.

I guess you could say I died once but was sent back to save the little baby.

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information about this project, go to <http://www.pinedafoundation.org/programs>. A slate of SILC members and staff were chosen to attend the APRIL Conference in Puerto Rico. This year’s theme was “Together We Can! Juntos Podemos!”. Participants were able to attend workshops on topics such as the future of IL, learning how people with disabilities use photography, making presentations fun, catching up on legislative updates as well as receiving a presentation on independent living in Peru. In between working hard we did find time to explore the island and enjoy tropical festivities. A new Executive Committee was elected at the October SILC meeting:

- Chairperson - Jack Mitchell
- Vice-Chairperson - Bill Davis
- Secretary - Brenda Goodfellow
- Treasurer - Anne Weeks
- Members-At-Large - David Sanders and Nathan Parker

Congratulations to each of you and with that I will sign off. My successor, Jack Mitchell, brings many years of experience in independent living with him. I believe he will be a wonderful chairperson!

Best,
Cindy Spinks



Disability Policy Priorities & Strategies

At the December 2, 2009 SILC meeting, representatives from West Virginia Centers for Independent Living (WVCIL); West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC); West Virginia Olmstead Council; West Virginia Mental Health Consumers Association (WVMHCA); and the Fair Shake Network (FSN) presented their disability policy priorities and worked with SILC members in small groups to develop strategies for common priorities. Common priorities include:

- Cuts to state Independent Living funding
- Implementation of the West Virginia Olmstead Plan
- Limitations on administration of medications by AMAPs to residential settings
- Elimination of the Institutional Bias for services
- Waiting lists for Medicaid Waiver services
- Out of State Placement of children and adults
- Services for individuals with traumatic brain injuries

For a full list of the priorities, the strategies developed, and updates – please visit www.mtstcil.org or www.wvsilc.org