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# OIL Newsletter



**A monthly publication of THE OKLAHOMANS for INDEPENDENT LIVING**

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## **HISTORY OF O.I.L.**

Oklahomans for Independent Living, Inc. envisions an American society where people with disabilities experience full inclusion and opportunities in all aspects of society.

As a Center for Independent Living, Oklahomans for Independent Living, Inc., is a consumer-controlled, community based, cross-disability, non-residential, private, non-profit agency designed and operated by individuals with disabilities to provide an array of independent living services.

Our facility is located in downtown McAlester, OK. Our primary service area is southeastern Oklahoma, comprised of the following counties: Atoka, Coal, Haskell, Hughes, Latimer, McIntosh, Pittsburg and Pushmataha. Though our direct services are limited to this service area, our indirect services are available to consumers from a much broader area.

We endeavor to support consumer choice in all aspects of independent living, including local, state and national levels.

Oklahomans for Independent Living, Inc. is the corporate entity chartered by the State of Oklahoma that is responsible for and operates the programs and services. Oklahomans for Independent Living is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Tax Code and is designated a charitable organization by the authority of the Secretary of State in the State of Oklahoma.

A volunteer Board of Directors, in compliance with its by-laws, governs Oklahomans for Independent Living, Inc. The Board of Directors is legally and fiscally responsible for all funds allocated to and expended by Oklahomans for Independent Living.

## **THE OKLAHOMANS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING MISSION**

The Mission of the Oklahomans for Independent Living is to encourage individuals of all ages, with all types of disabilities, to increase:

- (1) Personal independence,
- (2) Empowerment and self determination,
- (3) Full integration and participation in their work,

community, school, and home activities.

## **OIL SERVICES**

To be eligible for Oklahomans for Independent Living services, a person must experience a significant disability which limits their ability to function independently. A disability(ies) that substantially limits someone from functioning independently in the following area(s):

- self-care
- mobility
- education
- employment
- housing
- Other (specify):

If you or your family member, neighbor or friend, checked any of the above items, you/they are eligible for OIL services. Also, if assistance is needed in improving or maintaining the ability to function in the family or community; or assistance is needed in obtaining or maintaining employment, OIL services may be able to help.

In order to document that eligibility for OIL services, OIL must prepare an Independent Living Plan, a formal plan which states personal goals and services that an individual will receive. Individuals may choose not to have such a plan, which is a Waiver.

*OIL is updating our data base!*  
If you are receiving OIL services and you have not been contacted

by OIL, you will be contacted soon. OIL is updating our data base and services provided to all. Don't be alarmed when we call, we just need some basic information.

OIL must have accurate information for our annual reporting to Rehabilitation Service Administration. Accurate information helps OIL keep continued funding, so it is very important when we call.

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR**

In an effort to promote recreation and leisure outlets for persons with disabilities, O.I.L. has provided on an annual basis the following activities or events:

Valentine's Dance, Game Day, Men's Group, Women's Group, St. Patrick's Day Breakfast, Movie Night, Area and State Special Olympics, Summer Picnic's at Chadick Park, Muskogee Azalea Festival, Children's Camp Plea, Adult Camp Plea, Water Park Trip in Muskogee, Women's Art and Craft Day, Fishing Trips, Shrine Circus, Pittsburg County Free Fair, Halloween Dance, Thanksgiving Dinner, Bingo Fundraiser, Christmas Parade, Children with Disabilities Christmas Party, McAlester Tour of Lights, Honor Heights Tour of Lights, other Monthly Socials, Social Outings such as Shopping Trips, Local Parades, and many other activities.

All of the above activities require fundraising, in order for the event to be held. Currently, OIL does not have a funding stream for recreational activities or events.

This last month, the Valentines Dance was cancelled. The Dance was cancelled for two reasons. One, there was no funding to put on the Dance. Secondly, the Dance requires staff participation and volunteers. OIL did not have the staff or volunteers available to hold the Dance.

**This DOES NOT mean that all activities or events are cancelled.** It simply means, OIL is re-evaluating activities and events, and researching funding opportunities.

OIL realizes that the above mentioned activities are important. Social and recreational activities create peer to peer relationships, they provide inclusion within the community and they give consumers the ability to socialize and interact with others.

***Again, recreational activities and events will continue as they have in the past, some events may change and new ones may be added, but they are not going away!!***

## **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AWARENESS DAY 2014**

Join OIL for the 20th Anniversary of People with Disabilities Awareness Day on Wednesday, April 2. We have a chance to make our voices heard at the state Capitol during the annual People with Disabilities Awareness Day. But, just attending this event is not enough. We have to multiply our voices. We need to fill our vehicles with friends, co-workers and clients. We need to see that each seat is filled so that we are not just a crowd but a wave that carries a message through the state Capitol. We need participants to tell legislators or their staff what it's like to **"Spend a Day in My Shoes."** Waves start with just drops of water, but when they multiply, there is nothing that can stand in the way. So, challenge yourself to fill your vehicles and attend People with Disabilities Awareness Day on April 2. If you need transportation, call OIL soon to reserve your space on the Bus.



## **SOCIAL SECURITY**

Beginning **August 2014**, Social Security will no longer issue Social Security number printouts in the field office. Individuals, who need proof of their Social Security number and cannot find their card, will need to apply for a replacement card.

In addition, beginning **October 2014**, the field office will stop providing benefit verification letters, except in emergency situations. Benefit verifications are available online, and can be obtained by registering for a "my Social Security account" located at: [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount) or through the national toll-free number: 1(800)772-1213.

## **FREE TAX ASSISTANCE**

The VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Program provides free assistance to anyone, making under \$50,000 annually with basic income tax preparation. The program helps determine if you are eligible to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit and any other credits available. They prepare a simple tax form and then e-file it for you. The service is free to those who meet the income guidelines. There are two places where you can be helped.

Ki-Bois Community Action will start assisting individuals on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and will continue through April but you must have an appointment. You can reach their offices by calling;  
Pittsburg County 918 423-3525  
Haskell County 918 967-3325  
LeFlore County 918 647-3267  
Latimer County 918 465-3381

The Southeastern Public Library in McAlester also offers free tax assistance on Mondays only, from 9:30 – 4:00 p.m. The AARP volunteers will also be

available starting February 3<sup>rd</sup>, but see individuals on a first come first served basis only.

The Ms. Wheelchair Oklahoma Leadership Pageant is currently taking applications for the 2014 pageant for age divisions 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, and 16-19. The official Ms. Wheelchair Oklahoma must be between the ages of 21-60, use a wheelchair for 100% mobility in the community, reside in Oklahoma, must be able to make appearances and do public speaking, and attend the Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant in August, in Long Beach, California. A title with sash and crown will be given to the winners of each age division. The pageant is a non-profit organization and is seeking sponsors and donations for the winner prize packages, participation gifts and items for a silent auction. Please e-mail State Coordinator, Jesa Lopez, for an application or more details at [jesalolo@ymail.com](mailto:jesalolo@ymail.com).

### **ROCK RIDGE APARTMENTS**

Rock Ridge Apartments, a complex owned and operated by Accessible Spaces Incorporated, is a 15 unit, accessible, affordable apartment building for adults with disabilities in McAlester. Rock Ridge Apartments was developed in cooperation with OIL.

If you are interested in housing at Rock Ridge, any OIL staff can assist you with the application process. Just give us a call and we will help.

### **CARING BRIDGE**

Caring Bridge is an important tool that patients and their families can use to stay

connected during times of critical illness, treatment, and recovery.

The free service offers the patients the ability to create a personalized website that features a patient journal, guestbook, photo gallery and more that helps you to;

- \*Connect with family and friends.
- \*Keep people informed and receive messages of hope.
- \*Share in a protected, respectful space.

You can also;

- \*Invite people to lend a hand.
- \*Receive help with chores and errands from family, friends and neighbors.
- \*Coordinate care and organize tasks.

To build your page, go to [caringbridge.org](http://caringbridge.org).

### **MOVIE NIGHT AT OIL**

We will meet on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. Bring your favorite movie and we will take a vote as to which one to watch. OIL will provide the Popcorn!



### **SATURDAY TRANSPORTATION**

OIL will take individuals anywhere needed in the McAlester area whether it is to visit friends/family or just to see an afternoon movie matinee. The cost is \$1 per stop. The dates are set for March 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> starting at 8:00 a.m.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

OIL provides lift-equipped transportation in McAlester and the surrounding area, Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30. A twenty-four hour minimum notice is required. The cost is \$1 per pick up in McAlester and \$2 for Krebs and Frink Chambers. Outside this area, fees are based on actual costs of gasoline needed to provide the service.

**\*Prices are subject to change.**




You can have the freedom that comes with living at home even though you have a long-term illness or disability. The Oklahoma Living Choice Project can help you move out of a nursing home and back into the community. This project gives Oklahomans like you or your loved one more options to manage health care needs and adds more balance to the state's long-term care system. If you live in a nursing home and qualify for SoonerCare, then Living Choice may be able to help.

**Contact Leah Medina,  
Case Manager, for a referral  
to the Living Choice Project at  
(918) 426.6220v/tdd.**

\*Events are held at OIL unless otherwise noted

## MARCH EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b> <u>Saturday</u> <u>Transportation</u> 8 am
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <u>Men's Gp.</u> Western Sizzlin' 5 pm	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <u>Shopping</u> 7:00-10:45am	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <u>Brain Injury Gp.</u> 1 pm	<b>11</b> <u>OIL Social</u> Pizza Inn 5:30 pm	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <u>St. Patrick's Day Breakfast</u> <u>Boomarang</u> 8:30 am	<b>15</b> <u>Saturday</u> <u>Transportation</u> 8 am
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <u>Women's Gp.</u> Wall's Bargain Ctr. 11am	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <u>Shopping</u> 7:00-10:45am	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <u>Brain Injury Gp.</u> 1 pm	<b>25</b> <u>Movie Night</u> 5:30 pm	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					
<p>*<u>Low Impact Exercise Class</u> meets Mon., Wed., &amp; Fri., 10:00 a.m., Stipe Center *<u>Alzheimer's Support Group</u>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed., 12:30 p.m., Main &amp; OK Church of Christ, 916-1210 *<u>Cancer Support Group</u>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thur., 1:00 p.m., The Van Buren House, 426-5600 *<u>Diabetes Support Group</u>, 1<sup>st</sup> Tue., 6:00 p.m., MRHC Wellness Ctr. Conf. Room, 421-8656 *For information on <u>Men's &amp; Women's Grief Support Groups</u> – call Hospice of McAlester at 423-3911 *<u>Bariatric Support Group</u>, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue., MRHC Wellness Ctr. Conf. Room, 5:30 p.m., 421-6600</p>						

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