

Lehigh Valley Center
for Independent Living, Inc.
435 Allentown Drive
Allentown, PA 18109-9121

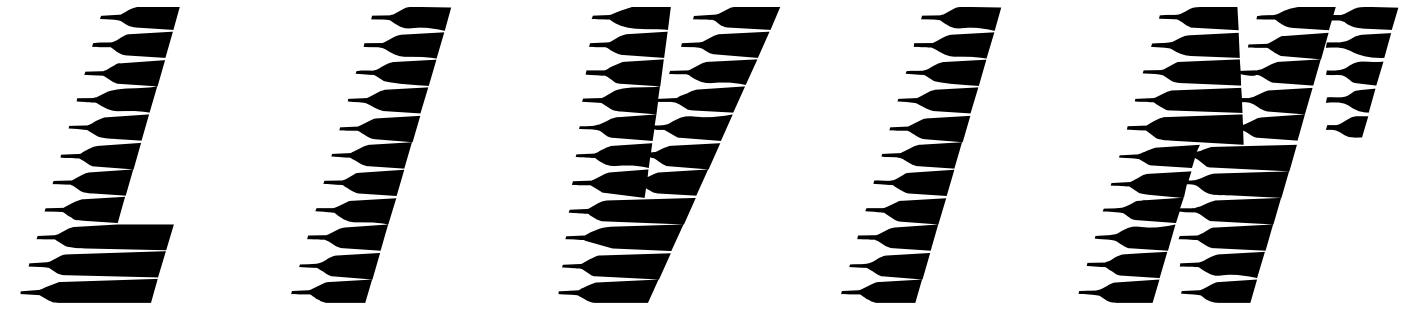
"Providing services to persons with all types of disabilities" A member of the **PA Council on Independent Living** (PCIL), a consumer controlled state association of Centers for Independent Living (CIL's)

LIVIN is a quarterly publication of the **Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, Inc.** LVCIL provides information and services to people with disabilities, and other service organizations in Lehigh and Northampton Counties. Businesses or Individuals may sponsor issues of **LIVIN**.

June–August 2006
Edition, Volume 40



Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lehigh Valley, PA 18002
Permit No. 233



LEHIGH VALLEY
Center FOR
Independent Living

The Official Newsletter of the
Lehigh Valley Center For
Independent Living, Inc.

435 Allentown Drive
Allentown, PA 18109-9121

June-August, 2006 Edition
Volume 40

Contact us:

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www.lvcil.org

See Inside For:

- Luncheon Registration
- Community Support Corner
- SWAT's New – RAT's Nest
- SLIRS Program Info
- And much, much more!

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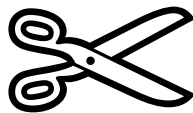
You are Cordially Invited
to the
16th Annual
Independent Living Month Luncheon
and
Awards Ceremony!

Please join us on **Thursday, July 27, 2006** as we celebrate the **16th Anniversary** of the signing of the American's with Disabilities Act and the successes of persons with disabilities in the Lehigh Valley! This year's event is entitled "**Advocacy, the Heartbeat of Independent Living**" and will feature keynote speaker: **Corey Rowley**, Executive Director of the *Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council*, with Master of Ceremonies, **Alan Jennings**, Executive Director of the *Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley*. Both are impassioned experts on advocacy. The luncheon will be held at *The Best Western Conference Center* in Bethlehem, located at **Routes 512 and 22**.

An additional and exciting feature of this year's luncheon will be the signing of an ADA Resolution by each person in attendance. The resolution recognizes each person's commitment to the ADA, the LVCIL and to people with disabilities everywhere.

Look inside this newsletter for additional details and a luncheon registration form. Also, please see details on how to nominate someone for one of our prestigious awards, which recognize the accomplishments of persons with disabilities and individuals who work on behalf of persons with disabilities.

Amy C. Beck
LVCIL Executive Director



Yes, I/We will attend the **ILM 2006 Luncheon** on Thursday, July 27, 2006 at the Best Western Conference Center, Routes 512 and 22 in Bethlehem, PA.

Yes, I am enclosing a donation to sponsor others to attend the Luncheon.

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Cost: \$20 per person

A check made payable to **LVCIL** for \$ _____ is enclosed

I am requesting a sponsorship for the luncheon.

(Awarded at the discretion of our Executive Director on a first-come, first-served basis).

Lunch Choices:

#__ Fettuccine Primavera with Chicken

#__ London Broil with Burgundy Mushroom Sauce

#__ Fettuccine Primavera (vegetarian selection)

Note any special dietary requirements: _____

Thank you!

Please send completed form to LVCIL by Friday, July 14, 2006, at
435 Allentown Drive, Allentown, PA 18109

Individuals are responsible for their own transportation arrangements.

LVCIL Board of Directors:

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For Your Information (FYI)

Sign Language Interpreter Referral Service News Our 2nd Annual

American Sign Language Club Picnic

On Saturday, August 12, 2006 the American Sign Language (ASL) Club will have their annual picnic at Canal Park Pavilion, which is located off of Dauphin Street, from 3:00 p.m. to dusk.

ASL Club Dates

SUMMER BREAK-The ASL Club will be on break all summer and will resume meetings in the fall on the following dates:

Wed. 9/13

Thurs. 9/28

ASL Classes

ASL Classes offered at the LVCIL will resume in the fall. For more information watch for our next newsletter and check our website: www.lvcil.org

Wellness for All Program:

In March of 2006, the *Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living* (LVCIL) launched its third year of the **Wellness for All Program**. Meetings take place on Mondays from 4-5 p.m. and will run from spring to early winter. Two main topics that will be discussed on an alternating basis are lifestyle and nutrition. Registering for the program is easy and can be done by contacting the LVCIL. Once complete, consumers may choose which of the meetings will best suit their needs.

The program is supported in part by a grant from the **Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (PA DCED)** through Representative Jennifer Mann's office.

To register and/or check the program schedule, please call LVCIL administrative associate, Brenda Palmer, at **(610) 770-9781 ext. 15**. Questions about this health program are welcomed and encouraged. To check what the current presentation topic is for each week, you may call **(610) 770-9781 ext. 23** and you will hear a pre-recorded message.

Thanks and Good Luck

A very special thank you and good luck to **Laurie Geist**, the former Development Coordinator and *LIVIN'* editor. May all your future endeavors be successes!

Volunteers Needed:

Are you someone who knows your way around a computer? LVCIL is looking for a few volunteers to help us offer basic computer skill training for our consumers. Volunteers must be well-versed in basic word processing, use of the Internet and e-mail; and willing to volunteer time on a regular basis. If interested, please contact **Corrina Passaro at 610-770-9781 ext.20** or corrinapassaro@lvcil.org. (If you are a consumer who would like to learn basic computer skills, watch for a future mailing announcing the training opportunity!)

FOR CIL

This column is provided as a service to the Lehigh Valley community. LVCIL takes no responsibility for the condition of items, negotiation of prices, storage, or pick-up and delivery of equipment. To have an item listed, please send a detailed description to:

LVCIL, 435 Allentown Drive, Allentown, PA 18109-9121
or e-mail, corrinapassaro@lvcil.org

For Sale: Motorized power chair Ranger X with a tilt back. 3 years old. In good condition. Asking \$1,500 OBO. Call **Evelyn at (610) 770-2059**. Leave a message on the answering machine.

For Sale: Iglide, 16 1/2 inches wide x 18 1/2 inches deep, never used. All operational manuals and charger available. Asking \$2,000. Call **(610) 258-8880**.

For Sale: Power wheelchair Action 2 Ranger by Invacare. Batteries are only 1 year old. Asking \$1,200 or best offer. Call **Gerald at (610) 261-0521**.

For Sale: Motorized twin bed. 3 years old. Make offer. Call **Caroline at (610) 437-6343**. Also a walker with wheels for \$10

For Free as is: Braun Car Chair Topper wheelchair lift for folding wheelchair. Must remove from home and install on car. Call **Bob at (610) 770-9781 ext. 11**

For Sale: 1986 Chevrolet Van w/working wheelchair lift for sale. 96,000 original miles. \$2,500.00 or best offer. Contact **Mrs. Pena at (610) 865-0172**.

For Sale: Black 1999 Ford Conversion Van for \$9,990.00. Includes-6" lowered floor, 5 yr old Ricon lift, rear tie downs, Remote Door lock system. Original mileage 65,856, 4.6L V8 (15 Hwy MPG.) AC-Front & Rear, AM/FM/CD, very good condition, Original seats included. Call **Sig Novak (610) 861-4638**

For Sale: Wheelchair Accessible Home. Three bedrooms, two baths located in Lower Macungie Township on the border of Trexlertown and Wescosville. Home includes covered porch, central air, kerosene heat, large outdoors shed with electric, landscaping, large yard, washer, dryer, refrigerator, oven and dish washer. Widened doors, grab bars in both bathrooms, and two outdoor ramps are also included. Great starter or downsizing home. Asking \$39,900; is part of a mobile home park, lot rent is \$305 per month with a two-person occupancy, \$15 extra per additional person. Taxes are approximately \$700 on the home itself which is located at 1190 Grange Road, Lot B-4, in Allentown Pennsylvania. Call **(610) 799-1190 (day) or (610) 336-0823 (evening)**.

For Sale: Lift/Lounge Chair (for persons who need help rising from a chair.) Mauve, 8 yrs. old. Used only for 5 yrs. New was \$800, asking \$200. Call **(610) 577-6779**

Community Support Corner

By Carol Olson

This month, I thought I would give you some informational websites that I think may provide you with important resources you may need or want to help you with your mental illness.

- www.webmd.com This is a good website with lots of information not only for mental illness, but physical illnesses also.
- www.medscape.com This is a website with a lot of clinical and educational medical information.
- www.bu.edu/cpr/jobschool Good website that addresses your psychiatric disability in the workplace and/or school.
- <http://moodgym.anu.edu.au> This is an interactive website that helps you to identify and work with your emotional problems.
- www.pmhca.org/ This website's purpose is to improve the quality of life through advocacy, education and elimination of the stigma and discrimination for people with mental illness.
- www.power2u.org/index.html The National Empowerment Center Website.
- www.bazelon.org/about/index.htm Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law Website
- <http://psychcentral.com/> One of the Top 5 Mental Health Websites on the Internet.
- www.nmha.org/index.cfm The National Mental Health Organization Website

These are just a few websites dealing with mental health and mental health issues. I hope at least one of these websites will be beneficial to you.

TRANSPORTATION

Continued from page 5

gram is very successful in counties where it has been implemented. Neither Lehigh nor Northampton County has the PwD Program but both have large areas where people with disabilities live and would benefit. Write your State Representatives and Senators and ask them to support legislation that would expand the *PwD Rural Transportation Program*. Specifically, ask your State Senator to support **Senate Bill 1175** which would appropriate 8.7 million dollars for statewide expansion of the program. If you can, be sure to tell them your personal story on how you would benefit from being able to get a ride to work, medical appointments and otherwise live the same kind of life that all Americans have the right to live. So many people take transportation for granted but for those who can't do what others' can simply because they can't get a ride is an unnecessary burden. Let your elected official know that this must stop. **You can do something about it!**

Ride and Rate Survey Form

Route _____

Time _____

Was the bus on time? Yes No

Did the driver kneel the bus when requested? Yes No

Were the automatic bus identification, destination and stop announcements turned on? Yes No

Did the driver indicate to a blind passenger where there was an empty seat? Yes No

Was the driver courteous with any passengers who requested additional information and/or assistance? Yes No

Was the driver focused on driving (not talking on cell phone or carrying on conversations with passengers?) Yes No

Did the driver safely secure your wheelchair, scooter (if applicable)?
 Yes No

Did the driver refuse to pick up any passenger?
 Yes No

Were all passengers treated with respect?
 Yes No

Did the driver enforce all the bus rules?
 Yes No

Comments:

Please send completed forms to Robbie Graves
435 Allentown Drive, Allentown PA 18109

Freewheelers Activities



Basketball:

Practices are Thursdays 7:45 to 9:30 pm
Bethlehem YMCA, Broad St. Bethlehem, PA
Games held at Eastside Youth Center, Allentown

Bowling:

Saturdays June 10th & 24th, July 1st, 15th & 29th at 7 pm

Golf at Putt U

June 6th & 20th, July 11th, 25th at 6 pm

Tennis Practice

Wednesdays from 12-2:00 pm indoors at Lehigh and outdoors at various courts. Call Bob for info.

Lehigh Valley Tennis Classic

A Nationally Sanctioned wheelchair tennis tournament will be held July 8-9, 2006 at Lehigh University.

Basket Bingo

Watch the LVCIL website for upcoming dates!

Monthly membership meetings:

First Thursday of the month at the **Mezza Luna Restaurant in Allentown, PA**

All are welcome to attend and play whether you have a disability or not. **Call Bob Amelio** for more info or directions to any of our events at **610-770-9781 ext. 11**



What Is A Rat?

By Robbie Graves (Advocate)



Yes, a rat is a furry little critter with a long tail, but for our purposes, **RAT** is short for Regional Action Team. **RATS are a group of people organized for a common purpose.** We meet at least once a month and discuss various issues pertaining to advocacy such as how to write effective letters and what to expect when meeting legislators, but the main reason to meet is to discuss the issues that matter to you and to organize campaigns to help bring about the positive changes we want. There are trips to Harrisburg to meet with our legislators and other advocacy actions. There are other activities as the group sees fit. These groups are *Your Groups*. If you are interested, please call me to get on the mailing list.

Thank You and Let's Advocate Together for Our Rights!

More RAT News:

The Regional Action Team continues to meet every second Wednesday of the month, except in July and August when we will be meeting on the second Friday. The meetings are at the CIL from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. All are invited!

We are continuing to recruit young people in their teens to twenties for our **Future Advocates Now (FAN)** group. We had our first meeting in early May when we met for lunch at the *Lehigh Valley Mall*. If you know any young person who is interested in having some fun and learning about how to make a difference in the world, please give me a call at the CIL.

I am working with the Independent Living Consultant Services on bringing some technical training workshops on advocacy, grant writing, and the ADA to the LVCIL. A workshop could be planned as early as July! **More news will be coming!**

**Independent Living Month
2006 Community Awards Nominations
Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, Inc.**

History: In 1991, the LVCIL Board of Directors established a program of awards to be made annually. These awards are given to Lehigh Valley citizens who exemplify the mission of LVCIL by facilitating the empowerment of people with disabilities to reach their fullest potential, enhancing the community's awareness of the assets of its citizens with disabilities, and advocating for cross-disability rights to access and full inclusion in our Lehigh Valley community.

A call for nominations is hereby publicly issued for the following awards:

The Mark J. Turbedsky "Torch of Independence"

This award is given in honor of the late **Mark J. Turbedsky**. He was the first Program Manager of LVCIL who exemplified the spirit of independent living for persons with disabilities.

Recipient: An individual with a significant disability who has demonstrated outstanding determination to live independently and contributes to the betterment of the community. Recipient must live in the Lehigh Valley (Lehigh or Northampton Counties). One award issued annually. Recipients selected by the nomination committee of the **LVCIL Board of Directors**.

The Chester R. Collyer "Key to Living"

This award is given in honor of the late **Chester "Bob" Collyer**. He was a charter LVCIL Board member and a lifetime advocate for people with disabilities.

Recipient: An individual or organization making an outstanding contribution to the ability of persons with disabilities to live independently in the community. Recipient must live in the Lehigh Valley (Lehigh or Northampton Counties). One award issued annually. Recipients selected by the nomination committee of the **LVCIL Board of Directors**.

Recipients will be honored at LVCIL's Annual Community Awards Luncheon to be held on **Thursday, July 27, 2006** at the Best Western Conference Center (Rts. 512 & 22).

Deadline for submitting nominations is **Monday, July 3, 2006**

Guidelines for submitting nominations:

- All information requested below is required for nominations to be considered.
- Supportive materials such as press clippings; letters of support, etc. may also be submitted (optional).
- Individuals may submit ONE nomination per award category.
- **ALL nominations MUST be received by July 3, 2006.**

ILM 2006 Community Awards Nomination Form

Send completed forms to:

LVCIL Awards Nomination Committee: 435 Allentown Drive, Allentown, PA 18109-9121

The Mark J. Turbedsky "Torch of Independence"

Nominee's Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: () _____ - _____

Explain why you are nominating this individual for The Mark J. Turbedsky "Torch of Independence"
(Please use additional paper as necessary): Supportive materials may be enclosed.

The Chester R. Collyer "Key to Living"

Nominee's Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: () _____ - _____

Explain why you are nominating this individual for The Chester R. Collyer "Key to Living"
(Please use additional paper as necessary): Supportive materials may be enclosed.

Nominator's Information: The following information is required so that you can be contacted if your nominee is selected:

Your name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: () _____ - _____

Your signature: _____ Date: ___/___/___

Nominations must be received by July 3rd.



The Rat's Nest

By Robbie Graves

TRANSPORTATION

In light of the recent developments in the *Lehigh Valley* regarding transportation, I have decided to devote an article to this topic. Transportation is a key issue for people with disabilities as it affects many aspects of our lives: the ability to get to work, to get to doctor appointments, to participate in recreational opportunities, and to visit friends and family. Often times, the one factor that decides whether or not a person with a disability is able to return to work and become a productive, tax-paying citizen is not dependent on the disability, but rather the availability of transportation!

Consumers who used Para Transit are most certainly aware of the changes that are about to take place. As of July 1st, *Easton Coach* will provide all the Para Transit services in the *Lehigh Valley*, since LANTA has decided to pursue a single carrier system. VAST will no longer be providing the transit services that they once had been. Understandingly, many people are very concerned about the state of their transportation come July 1st. My best advice to people is make your voice heard! On April 12th, several consumers and **RAT (Regional Action Team)** members participated in the LANTA Local Advisory Committee meeting and very thoughtfully and honestly expressed their concerns to LANTA about the change of service.

What Else Can You Do?

Aside from attending the next LANTA Local Advisory Committee meeting (October of 2006), You can come to our RAT meetings the second Wednesday of every month here at LVCIL from **1:00 pm to 2:30 pm**. We discuss a

variety of topics important to people with disabilities, learn from and support each other, and work on advocacy campaigns to help improve the lives of people with disabilities in the Lehigh Valley. One of the activities we recently undertook was a "Ride and Rate" Day when several RAT members including myself rode different fixed route bus routes and rated the service. Happily, there were no major problems or issues noted and in fact, a couple drivers were noted for being particularly helpful and courteous. One of the things consumers can do is to continue to use the "**Ride and Rate**" form periodically to rate the bus they happen to be using. If you are using Para Transit, you can still use the form, just ignore some of the questions which will obviously not apply. There is a form included in this newsletter (*see page 6*) and please feel free to make copies. You can also call or e-mail me at the CIL if you would like more forms and I can either send them to you or e-mail a copy to you.

If you encounter a transportation problem, you must let people know. Your problem may or may not get resolved right away, but the important thing is that your complaint is being heard. Whenever you contact anyone about a problem, take notes of who you talked to, the day and time you called, what was discussed and any follow up that is to occur. If you still are not satisfied with the resolution of your problem, the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights has a complaint form that you can fill out. It can be found at their website, www.fta.dot.gov or you

can call me and I'll be glad to send you one. The Federal Transit Administration can also be reached by phone at **1-888-446-4511** or through the Federal Information Relay Service at **1-800-877-8339**.

What If You Can't Get A Ride?

This is one of the most common complaints I hear from consumers. There are outlying areas of Lehigh and Northampton Counties that are not served by any transportation system. If you happen to have a disability and live in one of these more rural areas, there probably is no way for you to get to work unless you drive yourself or a family member or friend drives you. As we all know, these situations are often not possible but yet you still can and want to work, or need to get to medical appointments, etc. There is a program in many other counties of Pennsylvania called the Persons with Disabilities Rural Transportation Program, also known as The Shared Ride Program. This program is designed to meet the needs of those Pennsylvanians with disabilities who live in areas not served by other means of transportation and yet, "need a ride". The program is partially financed by the Commonwealth and the consumers who are utilizing the service "share the cost of the ride". Fares will vary from county to county depending on local service costs, but in all counties, consumers pay only a portion of the full fare, about 15 percent. The pro-



Continued on page 7