



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

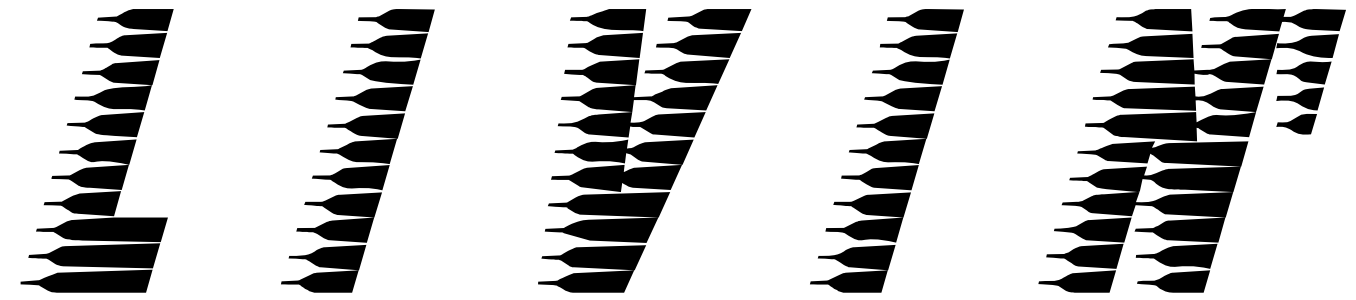
"Providing services to persons with all types of disabilities" A member of the **PA Council on Independent Living** (PCIL), a consumer controlled state association of Centers for Independent Living (CIL's)

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**.

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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

March 2007- May 2007 Edition
Volume 43

Contact us:

Phone: (610) 770-9781
Fax: (610) 770-9801
TTY: (610) 770-9789
Email: info@lvcil.org
Web Site: www.lvcil.org

See Inside For:

- Sign Language Information
- The Right Stuff About Renting
- Independent Living Month
- Transportation Information

Editor: Corrina Passaro
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bamelio@lvcil.org

**Collective Paratransit Complaint
Underway at LVCIL**

Every day we are receiving calls from persons with disabilities in the Lehigh Valley who have been experiencing serious problems with LANTA Metro Plus paratransit services provided by Easton Coach. Some individuals report being left for four hours after a doctor's appointment. Some cannot get to work on time and some are spending hours riding on an Easton Coach van. Others are routinely denied trips, which fall within normal daytime hours, and still others are told they will never again have a ride to be able to participate in their favorite weekly recreational opportunity.

We are very concerned with the quality of the Lehigh Valley's paratransit services since the change to a one-provider system nearly nine months ago. The ADA paratransit guidelines mandate a much better service than what many of you are receiving. While we encourage each of you to report any concerns or complaints to LANTA, Easton Coach, your state legislator or an involved government agency, we recognize many individuals are reluctant to file a complaint. Many individuals fear their service will be even worse if they complain. LVCIL is organizing a collective John/Jane Doe complaint in which your identity will be sealed and held by LVCIL.

Please take time to consider this opportunity to help improve transportation services which persons with disabilities desperately need. **Please contact us at 610-770-9781 or via email at robgraves@lvcil.org to receive a copy of the complaint form and instructions.**

Amy C. Beck

LVCIL Executive Director

LVCIL Annual Fund
Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living
435 Allentown Drive, Allentown, PA 18109
610-770-9781
www.lvcil.org

- Yes, enclosed is my tax-deductible donation to **LVCIL's Annual Fund** in the amount of \$ _____
- Yes, enclosed is my tax-deductible donation to **LVCIL's Annual Fund** in the amount of \$ _____
- Yes, enclosed is my tax-deductible gift to **LVCIL** in honor/memory of _____ in the amount of \$ _____
- Yes, I am enclosing a tax-deductible donation to **LVCIL**, in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

- I would like to be contacted for more information about LVCIL.

Thank you!

Please send completed form to LVCIL, 435 Allentown Drive, Allentown, PA 18109

LVCIL Board of Directors:

- Tom Burns (T)**
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For Your Information (FYI)

LVCIL RAMP Grants Available

LVCIL has grants available for low-income homeowners living in Easton, Allentown or Bethlehem through the R.A.M.P. (Real Access Made Possible) Program. Qualified individuals would receive funds to build new or replace deteriorating wheelchair access ramps on their homes. For more information or to see if you qualify for a grant, contact Mark Piedmonte at (610) 770-9781 ext. 29.

Independent Living Month

Independent Living Month (ILM) will take place on July 26, 2007 at the Best Western. This year's event will be combined with LVCIL's Silent Auction. Additional information will be available shortly, including a new time for the event!

If you would like to nominate someone for *The Mark J. Turbedsky "Torch of Independence"* or *The Chester R. Collyer "Key to Living" Award* please contact Amy Beck at (610) 770-9781 ext. 13 or by e-mail at amybeck@lvcil.org. Nominations must be received by July 2, 2007.

Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council Public Hearings

PA SILC is conducting hearings to seek your suggestions to help create the three-year State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The hearings help determine how Independent Living funds should be used to improve the lives of Pennsylvanians with disabilities. **A public hearing will be held at LVCIL on Tuesday, May 24, 2007 from 1:00-2:30 p.m.**

If you cannot attend the hearing, comments about SPIL can be submitted through April 30th to:

PA Statewide Independent Living Council
2 North Second Street, Suite 100
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Or by e-mail to bjmountz@pasilc.org.

Interpreted Performances at the Civic Theater in Allentown



Steel Magnolias

Saturday, April 28, 2007

Sunday, June 17

The Right Stuff About Renting

By Debbie Rozear

Spring is right around the corner. Now is the time when many people are searching for rooms, apartments, and houses for rent. There are many items to think about before looking for your new residence. Here at LVCIL, we would like to help take some of the guesswork out of your search.

On Tuesday, May 8, 2007 at 10:00 AM, Todd Hacker from CACLV will be coming in to present a program called The Right Stuff About Renting. When you come to this program, come with your questions and a lot will be learned by all.

What are some of the questions that may be answered? What are the things to look for when you go through a house or apartment? What are some of the dos and don'ts when renting an affordable, accessible apartment or house? Come and get these and many other questions answered.

A landlord must allow modifications for people with disabilities. These modifications are called reasonable accommodations. Special



accommodations for services must also be allowed. Landlords, housing managers, sellers, and lenders are not allowed to ask you about your disability. You are also not required to provide your medical records or sign a document allowing others to see them! The only time there is an exception is when a property is for a person with a particular disability, or if there is a unit that is designated for people with disability. Questions may then be asked just to prove eligibility.

I would highly recommend this course to anyone who is preparing to rent their new dwelling. If you are interested in coming to this program, please call me to sign up, 610-770-9781 ext. 24. If there are any accommodations that you may need (such as an interpreter) while here, please let me know when you sign up for the seminar.

Wellness For All Program 2007

The Wellness for All Program kicked off on March 5, 2007 at LVCIL. This year there is a new time for the program **1:00-2:00 p.m.** Topics remain the same and deal with nutrition, health and wellness. For a complete list of topics visit www.lvcil.org.

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|----------|----------------------------------|
| April 23 | Sexuality and Disability: Part 2 |
| April 30 | Rehabilitation Resources |
| May 7 | Health/Book/Video/CD Club |
| May 14 | Chiropractics and Chronic Pain |
| May 21 | Sexuality and Disability: Part 3 |
| May 28 | Trager Therapy and You |
| June 4 | Health/Book/Video/CD Club |

Stick Up for Your Right to Communication Access

Many companies, medical offices, and agencies are not aware of the rights of Deaf and hard of hearing people. They do not know that it is their responsibility to provide interpreters or captioning services for their Deaf patients/clients/students. Often they believe it's the Deaf/HH person's responsibility to "BYOI" (Bring Your Own Interpreter), which may be a friend or family member.

It is important for you as a Deaf or hard of hearing person to request a professional interpreter, or other accommodation, if you need it. The better you can inform hearing people about why an interpreter (or other

accommodation) is necessary, the more empowered you will become. You can become familiar with your rights through such resources as www.ada.gov and www.eeoc.gov. You may even wish to share these resources with hearing persons.

If you believe you are a victim of discrimination (by a business/company/person) because of your disability, you have the right to file a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (<http://www.phrc.state.pa.us/>). They will then file your complaint with the appropriate federal agency. Your complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination.

All of this can seem overwhelming, so if you have any questions or would like assistance in registering a complaint, you may contact either of the following people:

Robbie Graves:
610-770-9781, Ext. 26
(voice/relay)
Email: robgraves@lvcil.org

Michele Marks:
610-770-9781, Ext. 21
(voice/relay) or 610-770-9789 (TTY).
Email: michelemarks@lvcil.org

We are here to help!

Pennsylvania Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (PARID) Training

On Saturday, April 28, 2007, LVCIL will host a PARID training "NIC Test Preparation" at its offices in Allentown. The training will last for one day and Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) will be awarded. For more information or to register, please contact Michele Marks at (610) 770-9781 ext. 21 or by e-mail at michelemarks@lvcil.org.

Sorenson Videophone Coming Soon to LVCIL!

LVCIL will have a Sorenson videophone installed at the offices. Continue to look for information about installation and how you can schedule an appointment to use the videophone!

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. Call for other dates or watch website for more info.

Tennis Practice

Wednesdays from 12-2:00 pm at Lehigh University's Lewis Tennis Center. Call Bob for info.

Lehigh Valley Tennis Classic

A Nationally Sanctioned wheelchair tennis tournament will be held July 13-15, 2007 at Lehigh University.

Basket Bingo

Watch the LVCIL website for upcoming dates in September!

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**.

For Free

FOR FREE, AS IS: 1997 Car Chair topper. Opens to drivers side and is for a manual wheelchair. In good condition mechanically. Brackets and wiring is included but assistance needed to remove chair topper from vehicle. If interested please call Corrina Passaro at (610) 770-9781 ext. 20.

For CIL

Wheelchairs/Stair Glides

FOR SALE: Jazzy 1103 Power Chair with EZ Lock Attachment and Jay contoured back. Very good condition. Asking price is \$1,200.00. Also selling a Roho Quad Select seat cushion 18.5 x 18.5 inches. Either included with the Jazzy 1103 or if bought separately, \$150.00. For more information, please call (610) 258-8880.

FOR SALE: 7 1/2 foot stair glide by Excel. Originally used in a bi-level home. Has foldable vinyl swivel seat, foldable arm rests and foot rests. Includes two remotes. No special wiring necessary, plugs into home electrical outlet. Very easy to install. Hardly used. Asking for \$1,500 or best offer. Contact Andy at (484) 274-6337.

FOR SALE: William Comdo is selling a stair glide. For more information, please contact him at (610) 262-6980.

FOR SALE: 2004 Access Industry XL Stair Lift. In excellent condition, only used for approximately six months. Great run for a 12-step stairway. Right side insulation. Includes 2 remotes. Cost \$2500 new and is asking for \$1500 or best offer. Contact Marlene E. Whiting at (610) 865-8063.

Wheelchair Lifts/Vehicles

FOR SALE: 1993 VW Eurovan and Braun Handicap Lift. Lift suitable for short adult or child. 44,000 miles inspected with new tires. \$5,000 or best offer. Contact John Ulicny at (610) 797-7149.

Bed/Bath Items

FOR SALE: Two sets of safety grab bars for \$30 (for the pair) and an adjustable tub transfer bench for \$35. Contact Marlene E. Whiting at (610) 865-8063.



Lehigh Valley Action Team News

By Robbie Graves

Urgent News About the Lehigh Valley Action Team!

News Flash! At the April meeting of the Lehigh Valley Action Team, the members agreed to change the meeting time. LVAT will still meet on the second Wednesday of each month, but we are moving the time up. **The meetings will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please feel free to bring your own lunch to what will be called "Brown Bag Lunch and Learn."** The format is casual, meaning get here when you can, eat your lunch and participate as you like. Along with discussing current advocacy issues, each session we will discuss something about the ADA or another disability-related law. If there is a particular part of the ADA or disability-related law topic you want to learn about, let me know and I will put it on the schedule.

Also, for those who are interested, **you can arrive early, at 10:30 a.m.**, for crafts or some other consumer-directed activity. If you have a craft that you would like to share with others, let me know and I will put it on the schedule. Please bring your own supplies, as we are not able at this time to purchase anything. If there are items people can bring from home, let me know in advance so I can let people know. We want this hour to be a time of fellowship, sharing and fun.

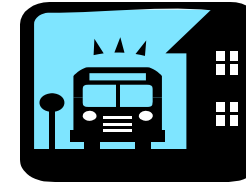
Now on to our regularly scheduled update!

Regularly Scheduled Updates

For starters, you may have noticed, the name of our Regional Action Team was officially changed to the **Lehigh Valley Action Team**, as discussed and voted on by the members present at the January 10th meeting. Our mission and focus remains the same, just the name has been changed to make our group a little more unique to our geographic area.

Also as discussed at the January meeting, we will be spending more time focusing on barriers this year. We were given an assignment at the January meeting; to make a list of the barriers we have encountered while shopping. We were going to review this list at the February meeting, but that meeting was rudely cancelled by Mother Nature. We will review our lists and then come up with specific ideas on how to deal with each barrier. Our work on barrier awareness, education and removal will progress from there, including discussion on a Barrier Awareness Day, which we have talked about in the past.

Continued on Page 5



Regularly Scheduled Updates

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Transportation

We have word from PennDot and LANTA that LANTA has received the grant to expand the PwD Shared Ride Program, which means that those consumers who currently live outside the ADA boundaries for complementary paratransit service will now be able to qualify for paratransit service via the contracted paratransit provider, Easton Coach. As of this writing, the program has not officially been "un-rolled," but consumers can still apply and LANTA will notify them when they have been approved and when they can start scheduling trips under the new PwD Shared Ride Program. I have copies of the application and would be more than happy to assist anyone who would like to fill one out and send it to LANTA.

LANTA has announced that fares for the fixed route service will be increasing on April 1st. **The Free Fare Transit ID Card for people with disabilities will be discontinued and be replaced by an all day pass for \$1.00. This change will be effective on April 1st, 2007.**

"Promoting Wellness for Persons With Disabilities Act"

Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa will be introducing this year in Congress the "Promoting Wellness for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2007." This legislation will establish accessibility standards for medical diagnostic equipment and create wellness grants to fund health programs that focus on people with disabilities. It will also require medical and dental schools and residency programs to increase training to improve competency and clinical skills in providing care to people with a variety of disabilities.

In order to help Senator Harkin with this very important and overdue piece of legislation, we are collecting stories from consumers about problems they have had while accessing medical care, so please send in those stories to me here at the CIL. You can also call me if you need assistance with this, as every voice needs to be heard. If you participated in our survey in the fall of 2005, which focused on this topic, please give me a call or send me a note to let me know that I can use your comments, as I still have all those surveys that were completed and returned to me then. Barriers in accessing medical care is a very serious and real problem that many people in the Lehigh Valley have encountered, so this legislation, if passed and made into Federal law, will have far reaching effects and should provide some real equality for people with disabilities when it comes to health care.

Future Advocates Now (FAN)

The Future Advocates Now (FAN) continues to grow. In February we had twelve young people who met for lunch at the Lehigh Valley Mall. **Our April meeting is scheduled for April 28th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Lehigh Carbon Community College. The meeting will take place on campus in room 119A of Science Hall. Our May meeting is scheduled for May 19th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the same location.** If you are planning to attend either meeting, please give me a call.

Also...

It is very important to let your elected officials know who you are and what matters to you. Don't hesitate to call your State Representative and Senator and ask to meet with them in their local office to introduce yourself and discuss an issue that is important to you. **They want to hear from you.** If you want some tips on this or are not sure how to contact your elected officials, let me know and I will be glad to help.