



Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living
The Patriot's Vision

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Washington, PA 15301

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Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living August 2012 Volume 1, Issue 4

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Visit us at
www.tripil.com

The Power to Change

By Daniel Kleinmann

There is a comment that is sometimes heard in the TRIPIL community: "TRIPIL is not the same", or "before TRIPIL would have done this differently." TRIPIL is not the same as it was and thank goodness it is not. TRIPIL's greatest strength was never it's consistency but rather power to change and grow. Each challenge to TRIPIL, big and small, is resolved by its ability to adapt and lead the way. The volunteers, members and staff are creative and determined to survive in order to meet our common goal, liberty and justice for all people with disabilities. As a team we grow to serve our community, not the way we always have, but rather the best way. So some of the names and plans may be different. It will still be TRIPIL that stands strong to face the future.



If you are interested in becoming a TRIPIL member for 2012, please send the completed form along with the \$2 membership fee to us at:
TRIPIL 69 E. Beau St Washington PA 15301

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ COUNTY: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

_____ I am a new Member _____ Contact me about becoming a Volunteer

2012 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



The faces that make up our past at TRIPIL can remind us of the triumphs we shared. TRIPIL is made from new individuals and new ideas that will continue to carry us forward. **Advocacy leads to change!**

Board Member Elections Take Center Stage

The TRIPIL boards of directors are running for office and it is up to members like you to help decide the direction this Center for Independence will take. This is your opportunity to take an active role in the upcoming year's policies. Please take the time to vote using the ballot forms that have been sent out. The deadline for returns is 4:30 p.m. on August 22. If you need assistance, please call Maxine at (724) 223-5115. The election results will be announced at the Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, August 23.



Key Dates for the 2012 Presidential Elections

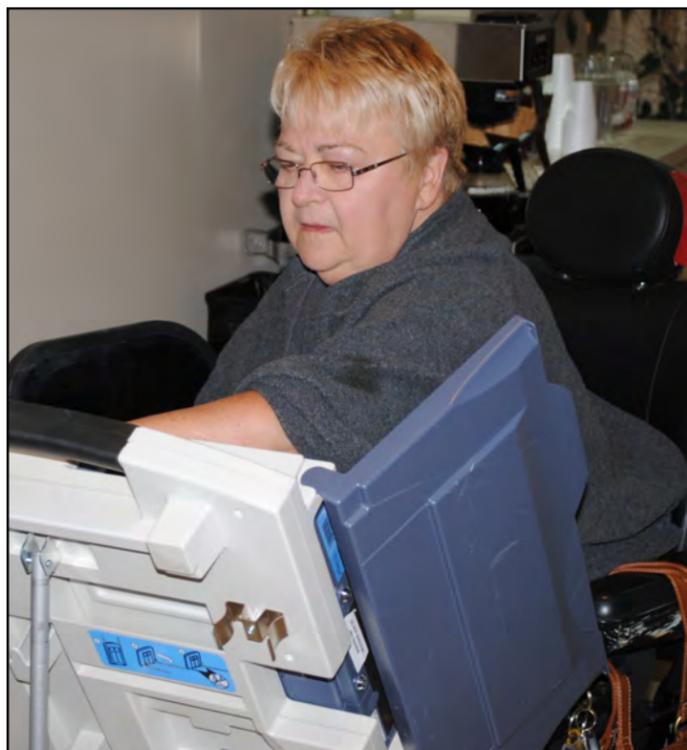
10/9/12 - General Election Registration Deadline

10/30/12 - Last day to apply for Civilian Absentee Ballot

11/2/12 - Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots

11/6/12 - General Election

Make sure you are ready for this very important election. If you have questions or need help getting registered to vote, call us at (724) 223-5115.



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each year at Edinboro University. Three Rivers Adapted Sports (TRAS) holds a water skiing clinic at Conneaut Lake each year in mid-July. They bowl every Wednesday evening, as well, as golf at various times. HOPE Network and TRAS collaborate to provide one of the only all-disabled golf outings. The Chuck Scally Memorial Golf Outing is scheduled for Monday, August 13th. Participants must have a disability. Both programs promote independence and healthy living through physical activity. Who knows? You might have an inner-Paralympian just waiting to be discovered.



Matt Berwick says that he is looking forward to bringing new energy in developing the Youth Program.

TRIPIL Youth Find a New Leader

On Monday July 30th Matt Berwick began his first day as TRIPIL's new Youth Specialist. He hit the ground rolling, by taking on the Youth Leadership camp and learning the ropes of a new job with style.

Matt studied at Point Park University in Pittsburgh and has earned a degree in Elementary Education. While there he worked to bring awareness about accessibility to the campus. He said by the time he was done there they were much better

about having accessible classrooms than when he started. Matt found that he really enjoyed teaching in high school, when he volunteered with the Future Educators. He also has a passion for team sports, and enjoys softball, curling and quad rugby. In fact, Matt is a member of the famous Steel Wheelers of Pittsburgh and has been involved with them for 7 years.

Matt is excited to be part of TRIPIL and very proud to join the Patriots team too.

The World is Our Stage Athletes with Disabilities Compete

As the world readies for the 2012 Olympic Games, those of us in the disability community should be preparing to support the athletes with disabilities that will compete in the 2012 Paralympic Games. This year's games are the 14th edition of the Paralympics with 165



countries participating, that is 19 more than participated in Beijing, and 16 of them will be competing for the first time in Paralympic history. For the first time in 12 years, athletes with intellectual disabilities will compete in swimming, table tennis, and track and field. On August 29th everyone can enjoy the splendor of the Opening Ceremonies with competition beginning on the 30th. Athletes will compete in 20 different sports over the course of 11 days and then say good-bye to London at Closing Ceremonies on September 9th. The International Paralympic Committee will stream 580 hours of live competition from London on www.Paralympic.org including daily coverage of swimming, track and

field, and wheelchair basketball. If you feel inspired by watching these amazing athletes, you can get involved with your local adapted sports organizations and give your favorite sport a try. A couple of the organizations in our area offer activities all year round and focus on many sports, at various levels, recreational to competitive. HOPE Network conducts water skiing and kayaking every Thursday from 5pm-830pm, starting on July 5th. They conduct a monthly sports clinic for youth at the Children's Institute, and various other sport activities throughout the summer. Golf and cycling are just a couple of **HOPE Network's program offerings.** HOPE also promotes the Junior Wheelchair Basketball Camp held
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YWCA Project Status

TRIPIL purchased the former Washington YWCA building on 47 West Maiden St. for its new headquarters in January, 2012. We are pleased to announce that the project is advancing. Exterior work on the roof, parking lot and grounds has started and interior work will begin shortly. We anticipate that the "Y" will be ready for occupancy in mid-2014. More key details will be shared at **TRIPIL's Membership Meeting on August 23** – including information on how members can contribute

to this exciting project. Please feel free to contact Development Director David Misra at 724-223-5115 or davidm@tripil.com if you need more information or to find out how you can help.



Accessible Dreams Moving Ahead

On June 18, Accessible Dreams held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of a fully accessible home on Grace Avenue in Canonsburg. The

home buyers, Thomas, Catherine and Valerie Liadis, each have a disability and require different levels of accessibility throughout their new house.

Mr. Liadis says, "Without help from Accessible Dreams, I wouldn't be able to move into the three-bedroom house with two handicapped-equipped bathrooms and an open floor plan. The doors are extra wide, everything is on one floor, even the door seals are low for easy wheelchair access."

NHT Keeps Finding Success

The Nursing Home Transition Team is consistently growing as a strength of the TRIPIL organization. There are many heroes working to do everything they can to help so the individuals can live freely in their own homes. But the stories we feel are most worth sharing are those who made it out.

Steve Chmiel's story:

A couple of years ago, Steve fractured his ankle and went into the hospital. It was discovered that he was going to need some skilled care and additional supports that would not allow him to return home immediately. Health issues became a prominent issue for Steve while living in the nursing facility. After a year in Kade's Nursing facility, his name came to TRIPIL's NHT team's attention when the social worker at Kade's Nursing facility referred him to the program.

The nursing home finder went to meet with him and explain the transition process. It took the transition team 5 months to put a plan together for Steve that would provide him with the necessary

support that he needed, emotionally, physically, and financially, in order to return to the community.

Steve is still adjusting to life in the community and his independent living specialist has become an important part of his support system that allows him to continue to grow and thrive in the Washington County community.



Rich DeLuca is a board member and a volunteer at TRIPIL. Rich was in Kade's Nursing Home for along time before the NHT program found him. He now is training to be a finder so that he can look for people that want out like him.



Art Fuller, another NHT success story opens his front door to his apartment for the first time after living in a nursing home.

Terri Winiacki's story:

Terri went into the hospital for a minor health issue and ended up spending the next 15 years of her life in various nursing homes. One day her name appeared on a list that is generated by the State that notifies nursing home transition teams of individuals who have been institutionalized for at least 120 days. Once her name was on that list, the social worker from the nursing facility

also called to inform the NHT team that she was interested in transitioning back into the community. The first step of the transition process is to sign an ODF (Outreach Data Form). This form lets the transition team know that the individual is interested in leaving the nursing facility, and enters them into the system.

For more than 15 years, Terri called the Washington County Health Center her home. It took 8 months for TRIPIL's NHT team to assist her with finding housing, apply for in-home services, have a budget approved to provide her personal care services, and to get her funding to purchase furniture and household items, as well as, the durable medical equipment that would be necessary for her to live comfortably in her apartment in Waynesburg, PA.

Terri says, "It's great to be free and on my own. I am able to make my own choices about my life." Terri left the nursing facility on April 27th and is enjoying life as a productive member of her community.

TRIPIL is always looking for volunteers to help find others who are still trapped in nursing homes and looking for help to get out.

Call us at (724)223-5115 for more information about volunteering!