



The Patriot's Vision

TRIPIL

69 East Beau Street
Washington, PA 15301

The Patriot's Vision

Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living

April 2012 Volume 1, Issue 3

Responding to PA's Cuts

TRIPIL is literally at risk. TRIPIL Services has been struggling with changes for over a year. Under the new administration, policies from the Department of Public Welfare have been introduced with little or no warning. All of these changes have come about without any input from current providers or consumers of the services. These changes directly affect our consumers and TRIPIL.

The big attack is on Consumer Directed Attendant Care. Consumers are also losing medical services and now must

(Continued on page 2)



Stefan Manz and Flo Moffit advocate at an Our Medicaid Matters rally in Washington DC

The Spring Ahead

The Patriot's Vision is looking toward the future, and being mindful of the past. In this spring issue we will talk about the challenges that we face right now, and how we look to overcome them. We encourage you to join us as we build a better tomorrow. We cannot do it alone; so please, take some time to read these stories and learn with us. We can do it if we work together!

Visit us at www.tripil.com

Table of Contents

Responding to PA's Cuts	1,2
Your Life Depends On It	2
TRIPIL Purchases YWCA	3
Volunteer Program	4
NHT Program Makes Strides	5
Youth to Challenge Society	6
ACCESSIBLE HOME NEWS	7
PA Voter ID Law	8



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

(Independence Shouldn't Have to Wait, Continued from page 1)

help pay for any medically related transportation. The cuts in Medicaid really will hurt consumers.

No more money for consumers to travel in the community with their **own or friend's vehicles;**

Medical transportation for doctor visits now cost consumers \$2 each way.

The proposals and some of the policies already in place take Pennsylvania back 10 years in its history of making the shift from expensive, restrictive institutional care like nursing homes, to less expensive home based services.

Simply put, the State is cutting the budget without regard for our rights

to have control over the decisions in our lives. The clamor of our voices is our only weapon. Locally and across the State we must start a revolution to save our rights to stay in the community and get the medical care we need.

YOU can make the difference! Visit our website <http://www.tripil.com> for much more information and action steps or call us @ 724-223-5115 and ask for **Michelle Loar**.



services, transportation programs, and assistive technology programs. Additionally, law makers are trying to take away consumer control of attendant services.

If you do not vote, you are telling our Representatives and Senators that you do NOT care about yourself or your brothers and sisters with disabilities. Let them know your vote counts! Get out and vote in the primaries on April 24th!!

"Vote As If Your Life Depends On It; Because It Does."

This quote is one of our favorites from Justin Dart, who is the Father of the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). The upcoming elections are critical, and your vote counts. There are a lot of changes developing within the government that will directly affect the lives of people with disabilities. Some of the changes include cuts to: your medical insurance, county human

Something is Always Happening at TRIPIL



Every Day at TRIPIL

- Tuesday** 1:00 to 2:00 Cardio boxing, 4:00 to 4:30 Reach for Sky
- Wednesday** 8:30 to 12:00 Zumba, 1:00 to 3:00 Wii Games
- Thursday** 11:30 to 12:00 Nutritional Support group, 4:00 to 4:30 Reach for sky
- Friday** 9:30 to 10:00 Sit & be fit, 4:00 to 4:30 relaxation

American Sign Language Class

Every Thursday at 11am Elisha teaches ASL for beginners. If you ever had an interest to learn Sign Language, or you want to pick up a few essential words, this is the place to do it. Join in any time, and as always it is free for all our TRIPIL members.



Ed's Computer Workshop

Each Wednesday at 10 am the café is the place to be. If you ever had a computer question that you were afraid to ask, or maybe you missed out when they told every one else how to do it. Be sure to be at TRIPIL when Ed covers everything from plugging in to logging on the Internet.

Will the PA Voter ID Law Keep You From Voting?

This fall for the first time ever there is a requirement for you to show a current photo identification card. For the 2012 Presidential elections every voter must have a photo ID with an expiration date. Otherwise your vote will not count and your voice in this important election will be silent. We urge you to help make sure that everyone is ready to vote this fall. For too long people with disabilities were kept from voting because of inaccessible voting locations. Stairs and narrow doors stood in our way. This year it might be the Voter ID bill that keep us from our constitutional right to vote.

Many people with disabilities do not have a drivers license, nor any other form of Photo ID because they never needed one before. If you or someone you know is not ready for

the changes this election; please contact TRIPIL. We are ready to support your advocacy so you can have your opportunity to vote. Do not let yourself be silenced. Raise your voice and vote.



Help Us Speak Out against the budget cuts in Harrisburg

If you haven't yet signed our petition about the cuts in CILs, Aging, Attendant Care, Mental Health and more. Just type the following into the web address in your web browser to access it easily:

<http://www.change.org/petitions/the-governor-of-pa-roll-back-the-cuts-ensure-independent-living-for-all>

Please pass this request to your family, friends and colleagues. We are hoping for 20,000 signatures. **Can we count on you?**

TRIPIL Purchases YWCA

TRIPIL is pleased to announce the purchase of the historic YWCA building located at 47 West Maiden St. in Washington, PA for its new headquarters. Situated just three blocks from TRIPIL's current home on 69 E. Beau St. and across the street from the City of Washington municipal building, the "Y" is a nearly 30,000 sq. ft. three-level stone masonry structure in the classic Elizabethan Revival style – the only building of its type in the City of Washington.

"We are simply bursting at the seams at our present location as ever more consumers choose to leave nursing homes to live without barriers in the community," said TRIPIL Founder and CEO Kathleen Kleinmann. "It's wonderful that we will shortly have a fully accessible facility that will accommodate our expanded programs and the needs of our thriving base of consumers in the region for years to come."



Construction, directed by local architect Ken Kulak, will begin in early 2013 and take about 18 months to complete. Once renovations are finished, TRIPIL will be proud to offer:

- A "right-sized" state-of-the-art operations center with three times the space for new & in-demand programs for seniors, veterans, youth and others.
- An expanded Internet Café and exercise center.
- Sparkling new member facilities including an auditorium, stage area, gymnasium, meeting/community rooms, rest rooms, day care and MORE!

We invite all members of the TRIPIL community to participate in this exciting and worthwhile campaign. Please contact **Membership Director Daniel Kleinmann** at 724-223-5115 extension 161 to learn how you can help.



The New and Improved Volunteer Program

In order to create a better volunteer program for TRIPIL, we are bringing some important changes to the volunteer program. The staff and **volunteer's input and skills must be** used to ensure we have the right individuals in the right job. We are also looking at personal and professional experience and skill building, and an overall understanding of each volunteer. Not forgetting to mention a new volunteer rewards system is being created for staff appreciation of **TRIPIL's valued volunteers!**

The new ideas within the Volunteer Program at TRIPIL are not limited to either a committed or single-event volunteer. Most people volunteer for events held by TRIPIL under many circumstances and have distinct differences for involvement with TRIPIL. The Volunteer Association will give volunteers a new network and the ability to link with professional contacts and peers. It will also increase professional confidence, gain valuable job skills, and help direct all individuals toward personal goals and interests. This Volunteer Program aims to be different by building leadership and increasing variety and fulfillment,

and an increased sense of self-worth. All volunteer positions are open to applicants and are in great need of recruitment, such as Clerical, Mailing, the Youth Program, Skills Training, Accessibility Survey Assistant, Voter Education, Maintenance Assistant, Outreach Assistant Peer Support, and Technology Assistant. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer contact TRIPIL today!



My name is Chris, I am a graduating senior at California University of Pennsylvania studying Applied Sociology. I recently became involved with TRIPIL as an intern focusing on a more effective volunteer process.

ACCESSIBLE HOMETOWN NEWS

Accessible Dreams is working hard to get funding for your accessible home needs. Below are several different programs funded to help make your home more accessible. Now we are looking for people who need work done on their house, so that they show there is a need for even more dollars. Take a look at the following programs. Call Accessible Dreams and let them know what you need.

THE ROOF IS UP and the house is looking mighty nice! Drive by and take a look! It is located in the 300 block of Grace Avenue in Canonsburg, PA. Accessible Dreams is looking for qualified buyers who will call it home in June. It is completely wheelchair accessible...1,400 square feet, three bedrooms, two full baths, kitchen, dining and family room for as low as \$97,500. Accessible Dreams is



taking applications. **MORE HOME MODIFICATIONS!** Ramps, lifts, bathrooms, and kitchens. Accessible Dreams is working with seniors, veterans, and families who have children with disabilities. A family in Washington is getting a new ramp and lift solution designed, funded and installed so that their son can get **transportation for doctor's visits.** Accessible Dreams was recently awarded a grant of \$40,000 from the Edith L. Trees Foundation to provide home modifications for families whose children have developmental and physical disabilities. These funds are available for modifications such as ramps or wheelchair access within the home.

GET YOUR HOUSE IN SHAPE! Applications are being taken for Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's (PHFA.org) **RENOVATE AND REPAIR** program dollars. Home repairs such as roofs, windows, furnace, ramps are just a few of the eligible home repairs under this program. The purpose of the program is to keep homes in good repair. It is not just for accessibility projects. **Call Accessible Dreams** at 412-276-1734 to discuss your home repair and accessibility needs.

Youth to Challenge Society

TRIPIL Youth Leadership continues to challenge the normal ideas of what a youth program in a CIL setting should look like. TRIPIL Youth Leadership is a cross-disability, cross-ability program for young people with and without disabilities.

This February, we had our kick-off event and it was awesome. We had nearly forty students attend. In March, we launched two drama teams to spread the message of independent living through skits and plays. "Faces in the Crowd" is for students who are 14 to 24 and "The Unhindered Performers" is our junior drama team for ages 9 to 13. Students will write and act in original skits about youth and disability issues. Our student actors will challenge themselves and society with the realities of living life with a disability. Drama has been a used as a tool in the disability rights movement for al long time, and we are proud to continue this tradition. In April, Momentum Over Barriers launches on April 17. Momentum Over Barriers (M.O.B.) is a social justice youth group. M.O.B. will

teach students of diverse backgrounds and abilities that they can come together to effect change in their schools and community. M.O.B. is currently in search of adult advisors to assist the youth specialist in providing support to the **students at M.O.B.'s monthly meetings. TRIPIL's membership can be proud of it's youth leadership program, for, we are challenging social norms with Independent Living in wild and beautiful new ways. This generation will know that Advocacy Leads To Change!**



Mike Matthews works with the next generation to build a better future.

Nursing Home Transition Program Strides Ahead

Program changes at TRIPIL will give more information and control to people seeking to move out of nursing homes.

A new consumer packet has been implemented to give the consumer all of the information about the program and allow them to track the progress of their transition. The packet also has the contact information name and picture of

each person involved in the process and explains each step and the consumer's responsibility throughout. An IL Specialist will be with the consumer from the beginning to the end of the transition, and then after for continued support in the community. TRIPIL prides itself on the ability to transition individuals from a life of confinement to a life of freedom and independence.

It's Our Time

TRIPIL was proud to support our attendants as they gathered at Market Square in Pittsburgh on April 3rd. They, along with 5,000 other home care workers, agreed to a contract with the Pennsylvania Workforce Council and the United Home Care Works of Pennsylvania.

The contract protects consumer control, increases wages for home care workers, and provides opportunities for skilled training. It is also the first step in negotiating with the state government for affordable health insurance, retirement pensions,



and paid time off for sick days or vacations. The goal for consumers is to keep the hard working attendants happy and healthy so they can get the best care. The attendants are looking to get the benefits their hard work deserves. Together we can make a difference!