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INDEPENDENT  
L I V I N G

THE  
GUSHER  
PIPELINE

January - February 2014

The Newsletter from O.I.L.

Volume 18 Issue 1



DAVID KONTRA – ADVOCATE AND ARTIST



Born in Cleveland, it slowly but surely occurred to my parents that as a young boy, my vision was failing. Many trips to various doctors were unsuccessful in the detection and cure of my deteriorating eyesight.

As I grew up, I discovered the many prejudices people have toward one another and the discrimination that is aimed at not only minorities but the disabled. My blindness revealed to me the hurtful ways people could unjustly punish and victimize those who are different. In my case, this includes peers, students, and even some

teachers. Harsh experiences and episodes in my life are just some reasons why I create mirror images of society and the promotion of civil liberties.

At around the age of nine, I was diagnosed with a degenerative eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa. From this stage in my life I've had less than 5% vision in my left eye and only light perception in my right eye. Consequently, I am near total blindness. As a boy I began to draw in order to escape depression, and I learned to rely on my memory to create my work. I must fight through the obstacles of blind spots, nystagmus (involuntary eye movements) and blurred vision within an area less than a ¼ of an inch. In essence, it is like looking at the world through a straw.

Throughout my life, I created drawings only to throw them away. I never thought for one moment that anyone would ever truly be interested in purchasing them. After all, who would want to buy art created by a blind person. Being a visual artist was unrealistic, and according to many people, a waste of time.

It wasn't until the love of my life saw my ability as an artist by studying some scrap paper sketches that I created. She convinced me to continue to draw, which I did. But I didn't offer my art for sale until years later, when I finally decided

*... continued on center spread*

**If you are interested in receiving important information regarding disability issues from Jefferson City, MO, or Washington, D.C., please provide O.I.L. with your email address. Our office will place your email address on a list to receive immediate news regarding legislative disability issues. Please contact Kathy Harrington: 256-8714 or 1-888-440-7500 or email: [info@ozarkcil.com](mailto:info@ozarkcil.com)**



# More From Moore

In this issue, I would like to pass on to everyone some very interesting information about long term care and people with disabilities that I read in the November copy of the AARP Bulletin. "The number of family care givers available for older Americans will drop dramatically in coming years. Today there are more than seven potential care givers, ages 45 to 64, for every person age 80-plus. In 20 years there will be four. Looking even further out, between 2030 and 2050, the number drops to just under three." And, "by 2050, there will be three times as many people age 80 and older as in 2010 [when there were 9 million]." Looks like we will have a lot of job security, as the article also goes on to say, "18 million people over age 65 will be dealing with a disability by 2030, up from 11 million in 2010." Our office is all about people with disabilities – that's who we serve! Between our Independent Living Dept., Consumer Directed Services Dept., and our In-Home Services business, this office has an answer for anyone dealing with these issues – all under the umbrella of the only Center for Independent Living in this area. Call or come by any time!

Regards,  
Cindy

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## SOCIAL CALENDAR

**Jan. 3-4:** MSU-WP Grizzly BB **New Year's Classic Tournament** in the WP Civic Center Arena.

**Jan. 24** (7 p.m.): MSU-WP presents the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' Imaginary Theatre's "**The Tortoise in the Hare**" at the West Plains Civic Center Theater. Admission is \$5 in advance or \$8 at the door; 13 years and under are free. For more information, contact U/CP at 417-255-7966.

**Jan. 25:** MSU-WP **Trivia Night** in the WP Civic Center Arena. Details TBA.

**Feb. 1:** Save the Date for the next **Women with Heart Annual Luncheon**. Silent Auction at 11, and meal at noon. Speaker & Details TBA. Contact Jim Streff at : [jim.streff@ozarksmedicalcentr.com](mailto:jim.streff@ozarksmedicalcentr.com).

**Feb. 1:** The 11th Annual **Chocolate Festival** to benefit Christos House will be held at the National Guard Armory from noon-4 p.m. Admission is free and tasting tickets are 10 for \$5.

**Feb. 1** (7 p.m.): **Acrobats of China** featuring the "New Shanghai Circus" will perform in the WP Civic Center Arena. Tickets \$15 each.

**Feb. 8** (9 a.m.-5 p.m.) & **9** (9 a.m.-3 p.m.): **TRL Gun Show** at the WP Civic Center Arena and Exhibit Hall. Cost \$7 for both days. Children ages 12 and under free with paid adult.

**Feb. 8** (7 p.m.): The **Buck Trent Music Show** will be at the WP Civic Center Theater.

**Feb. 15** (7 p.m.): **Pastor Pudges Redneck Revival Comedy and Music Show** will be held at the WP Civic Center. Doors open at 6 p.m. Cost TBA.

**Feb. 20** (3-7 p.m.): **Heart of the Ozarks Health Fair** will be held in the Joe Paul Evans Arena in the WP Civic Center. Free.

**Feb. 21** (7 p.m.): MSU-WP presents the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' Imaginary Theatre's "**The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe**" at the West Plains Civic Center Theater. Admission is \$5 in advance or \$8 at the door; 13 years and under are free. For more information, contact U/CP at 417-255-7966.

**Feb. 22** (noon): WP Public Library Foundation "**Chili Cook-off**" will be held in the WP Civic Center.

The calendar is posted by **Downtown Antiques at:**  
[www.westplainscalendar.com](http://www.westplainscalendar.com)

You can find a complete list of local events at this address.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"How far you go in life depends on you being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in life, you will have been all of these."*

George Washington Carver

... continued from cover **David Kontra**

to pick up my first paint brush in 2001. Since then, I have sold over 500 paintings and drawings. It's gratifying when patrons surround me at a solo art exhibition wanting to know how I create my paintings. One client coined my architectural works, "Recognizable Abstract." It is pleasing to know, that with time, sometimes people do look beyond discrimination, differences, and realize that obstacles can be overcome with determination.

Even though total blindness is near, I intend to continue to rely on my memory in order to paint and draw. Perhaps in the future, I will attempt to create or design another art form. But for now, I wish to continue to entertain and astonish those who view my visual artwork.

The OIL program has been very beneficial to me and I support their efforts in their noble cause. Many disabled people rely on OIL for numerous reasons, but perhaps the most significant one is that this program brings ability and



dignity to those who truly deserve independence.

***"Insolence and ignorance shown by others can be the best fuel for fierce determination."***

D. Kontra

## SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)

Seasonal affective disorder (also called SAD) is a type of depression that occurs at the same time every year. If you're like most people with seasonal affective disorder, your symptoms start in the fall and may continue into the winter months, sapping your energy and making you feel moody.

In most cases, SAD symptoms appear during late fall or early winter and go away during the sunnier days of spring or summer. Winter-onset seasonal affective disorder symptoms include: depression, hopelessness, anxiety, loss of energy, heavy feeling in the arms or legs, social withdrawal, oversleeping, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, appetite changes (especially a craving for foods high in carbohydrates), weight gain, and difficulty concentrating.

The specific cause of seasonal affective disorder remains unknown. It's likely that genetics, age and your body's natural chemical makeup all play a role in developing the condition. A few specific factors that may come into play include:

**Your biological clock (circadian rhythm).** The reduced level of sunlight in fall and winter may disrupt your body's internal clock, which lets you know when you should sleep or be awake. This disruption of your circadian rhythm may lead to feelings of depression.

**Serotonin levels.** A drop in serotonin, a brain chemical that affects mood, might play a role in seasonal affective disorder. Reduced sunlight can cause a drop in serotonin that may trigger depression.

**Melatonin levels.** The change in season can disrupt the balance of the natural hormone melatonin, which plays a role in sleep patterns and mood.

If your seasonal depression symptoms are severe, you may need medications, light therapy or other treatments to manage SAD. However, there are some measures you can take on your own that may help. Try the following:

**Make your environment sunnier and brighter.** Open blinds, trim tree branches that block sunlight or add skylights to your home. Sit closer to bright windows while at home or in the office.

**Get outside.** Take a long walk, eat lunch at a nearby park, or simply sit on a bench and soak up the sun. Even on cold or cloudy days, outdoor light can help—especially if you spend some time outside within two hours of getting up in the morning.

**Exercise regularly.** Physical exercise helps relieve stress and anxiety, both of which can increase seasonal affective disorder symptoms. Being more fit can make you feel better about yourself, too, which can lift your mood.

**Take care of yourself.** Get enough rest and take time to relax. Eat regular, healthy meals.

**Practice stress management.** Learn techniques to manage your stress better. Unmanaged stress can lead to depression, overeating, or other unhealthy thoughts and behaviors.

**Socialize.** When you're feeling down, it can be hard to be social. Make an effort to connect with people you enjoy being around. They can offer support, a shoulder to cry on or a joke to give you a little boost.

**Take a trip.** If possible, take a winter vacation to a warm, sunny location.

**Resource: Mayo Clinic**

## KEEPING UP WITH YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

It is so hard to believe that another year has come and gone. The staff at OIL and IIHS would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year!

One of the things that many people do at the beginning of a new year is make a new year's resolution. I know I do every year! But, seriously, how many of us really stick to our new year's resolution? According to [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov) the top 9 most popular resolutions are as follows:

1. Drink less alcohol
2. Eat healthy food
3. Get a better education
4. Get fit and lose weight
5. Take a trip
6. Manage debt and save money
7. Manage stress
8. Quit smoking
9. Volunteer to help others

A good way to stick with your new year's resolution is to first decide what it's going to be. The second step is to make a plan on how you will stick with your resolution. If your new year's resolution is to get fit and lose weight then one of the things that must happen is you need to change your lifestyle. The third step is to implement that plan. You can join a gym, change your eating habits, exercise daily, and drink plenty of water. The last step of the process is to have fun at completing your resolution and stay determined. Good luck to everyone who has made a new year's resolution. I wish everyone a very safe, happy, and healthy 2014!

Jill Donica  
IIHS RN Supervisor

## HELLO FROM THE CDS DEPARTMENT

I hope you are all feeling well, have enjoyed the holidays with family, and are staying warm! I want to share with you some important information that you might not know about.

If you have to pay a spend-down (or premium) for your Medicaid and have questions or concerns, did you know there is a special number to call based on the county you live in?

For **Douglas** or **Ozark** Counties contact:

MO Healthnet Spend-down Unit-Southwest Region at 417-895-6070

For **Carter, Howell, Oregon, Shannon, Texas, or Wright** Counties contact:

MO Healthnet Spend-down Unit- Southeast Region at 417-967-4551 Ext. 250

For questions about Family Support Services such as Medicaid Eligibility and Food Stamps there are two central toll free lines that cover all counties in Missouri to assist you.

**To speak with a customer service representative:**

Family Support Division Information Center 855-373-4636 Monday – Friday 7 am- 6pm

**To reach the automated line for information about your account(s):**

Family Support Division Automated Line 800-392-1260  
24 hours per day 7 days per week

As a reminder for Consumer Directed Services, you must be Medicaid Active and have your spend-down met (if you have one) at the beginning of each month to remain eligible for services. If you have any questions regarding the services that Ozark Independent Living provides, please call us Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. We are here for you!

Jaime Grider - CDS Manager

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Pictured are OIL Independent Living Specialist Rosemary Hendon and OIL Data Specialist Pam Johnson with some of the pantry items.

## BASIC NEEDS PANTRY

Ozark Independent Living (OIL) manages a basic needs pantry. The pantry contains household items and personal care products. These commodities are for individuals who need assistance with basic necessities during a crisis situation or transitioning. Recently OIL was invited to be a non-profit organization recipient of in-kind donations at the Missouri State University-West Plains (MSU-WP) Grizzly Basketball tournament. This event was organized by Grizzly Basketball Head Coach Yancey Walker in conjunction with MSU-WP's 50th anniversary celebration. As fans from the West Plains community entered the basketball game, they gave a generous supply of personal care products to OIL. These items will be stored in the pantry

and then given to individuals with disabilities needing assistance in OIL's seven county service area. OIL is always willing to help individuals with disabilities because Ozark Independent Living is YOUR center for independent living.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WORD SEARCH

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| DISCRIMINATE | LEADER     | REVEREND    |
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|              | MINISTER   |             |



## NOTES FROM DATAVILLE

Happy New Year!! I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas. Just a reminder, W-2s will be mailed the end of January. Please do not call us until the first week of February to check on your W-2. Make sure your attendant/attendants addresses are up-to-date, so as not to delay their W-2 being delivered. A holiday letter was sent to you last week, be sure to read it!!! It has important information on payroll cycles and paydays for 2014. Also, your new pay cycle calendars are included in the envelope. If you have any questions please call me at 1-417-257-0038 ext. 208.

Wishing you and yours a prosperous and happy 2014!  
 Lori Blaker  
 Data Manager

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**KATHY HARRINGTON - EDITOR**

If you would like to add additional names or remove your name from this mailing list please call: 256-8714 or 1-888-440-7500.

**YES !! Please contact me at the following address and phone:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please contact the following friend(s) with O.I.L. information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(Information can be sent anywhere, but OIL's service area includes the seven counties of Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Shannon, Texas, and Wright - there are other Independent Living Centers throughout the state.)

The GUSHER can be formatted to fit your need. It is available in three formats: standard print, large print, and cassette tape. You may pick it up at our office location or have us mail it to you. If there is a specific format you want please feel free to contact us at 1-888-440-7500; or just e-mail us a message at: [info@ozarkcil.com](mailto:info@ozarkcil.com).

**CLIP & SAVE**

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

American Macular Degeneration Foundation  
**888-622-8527**

Anxiety & Depression Association of America  
**240-485-1001**

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease  
(COPD) Foundation  
**866-316-2673 or 866-731-2673**

National Fibromyalgia &  
Chronic Pain Association  
**801-200-3627**

National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
**800-344-4867**

National Organization on Disability  
**646-505-1184**

National Spinal Cord Injury Association  
**718-803-3782**

Missouri Arthritis & Osteoporosis Program  
**888-702-8818**

Service Center for Medicaid  
**800-465-3203**

Service Center for Medicare  
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United Cerebral Palsy  
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