

THE PIPELINE

The newsletter from OIL

Volume 24,
Issue 1

First Quarter
2019



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OFFICE HOURS:

Mondays-Fridays
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MISSION:

To empower people with
disabilities to live as full
and productive members
of society.

FIVE CORE SERVICES:

- Information/Referral
- Life Skills/Training
- Advocacy
- Peer Support
- Transitioning

Michael McIntire, Musician and More Consumer Directed Services Spotlight

Michael McIntire is an accomplished musician who has entertained across the country, including by invitation at the Smithsonian. He plays guitar, banjo, harmonica, violin, and more.

His music is eclectic, including rock, country, blues, and bluegrass. He has recorded seven music CDs and is on the Missouri Arts Council Touring Program. After a career spanning more than four decades, in recent years he has slowed down to stay closer to home, but music is still part of his daily routine, including that he enjoys using new technology which employs artificial intelligence in music composition.

He is also a motivational speaker and has written an autobiographical book which was published in 2006. The book gives a glimpse into Michael's life and a clue about his personality, including that he has a really good, sometimes dark (in more ways than one) sense of humor.

You see, Michael is blind. In fact, his stage name is "Blindcat," and his book is titled *Blind Man Running*. In it he tells his story, including how he became a runner at the age of 19 when he decided he needed to be healthier. In days past, he did a lot of jogging in public spaces when he lived in bigger cities, and he also ran for many years on the backroads of Shannon County, where he grew up from the age of 12 and where he currently resides.

He has never allowed himself to be

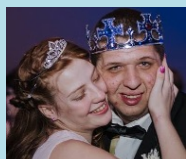


MICHAEL "BLINDCAT" McINTIRE
and SANDIE "MAMACAT" ZEMBLIDGE.

defined by his eyesight, or lack thereof, and he has always been intent on not being held back by the negative ideas of others regarding his vision. This includes that he also did some driving, long past the time he should have been behind the wheel. But by avoiding night-driving he's lived to tell about it (and so have the rest of us). Throughout his book he credits his "Blind Fairy," for keeping him safe or at least helping him avoid serious damage.

Michael was not born blind, but his vision started to fail when he was a child. He says, "I was in third grade when the school sent a note home to my mother. Apparently my visual deterioration had begun. They recommended a specialist, and after an examination I was diagnosed with 'retinitis pigmentosa,' a hereditary eye disease of the retina."

(continued on next page)



INSIDE HIGHLIGHTS:

Legislature Contacts: Contact your elected officials (page 4)

Night to Shine: Prom hosted by Endurance Church (pages 5 & 7)

Consumer Directed Services: Informational insert to share

"I may be blind, but I have vision."

- Michael McIntire (continued from page 1)

Blind Man Running



*A Product of
the Ozark Mountains
- The Story of
a Blind Man's Quest
for the Joy of Life*

Michael McIntire

Retinitis pigmentosa (RP) typically starts with night blindness and/or a loss of ability to see to the side. This leads to an ever-decreasing field of vision, commonly called 'tunnel vision,' described by some who have it as looking through a straw. The condition is progressive and has no cure. Eventually individuals with RP will have their vision reduced to being able to see only shapes and differences in bright light and darkness.

CDS and ILS Department Notes

By Newsletter Editor Terry Hampton

Ozark Independent Living is tasked with five mandated core services: Information and Referral, Life Skills Training, Advocacy, Peer Support and Transitioning. We all work together to provide these services. Individuals in our **Consumer Directed Services (CDS)** program have dual enrollment in our **Independent Living Services (ILS)**, giving them access to additional resources.

In this newsletter is an insert about OIL's CDS Program which is a way for qualified individuals with disabilities to have control over their own care, and for family members (other than a spouse) to be able to receive payment for providing care. This is important, because often caregivers need to give up full-time employment to provide care for a loved one. If you know someone with a disability who is Medicaid active and might benefit from being on the CDS program, please pass along the information to them.

ART SHOW

On the ILS side of OIL, something we do for fun is our Annual Art Show Featuring Seniors and Artists with Disabilities. A separate Senior Division is new this year and open to those in our service area who are age 65 and over, with or without a disability. There are many artists out there who are doing neat things, especially at area senior centers, and OIL would like to showcase their work. (See *additional information on next page.*)

Remember, OIL is the only Center for Independent Living in south-central Missouri, and we've been here since 1996!

In the final chapter of Michael's book, "Last Vestige of Sight," he has this to say with his typical humor and upbeat style:

As the lights dim and I pass into a world of darkness, being only able to see the flicker of a candle, or the sun on a bright day, I do so without fear, for I am surrounded by love. Ray Charles is quoted as saying, "Eyesight is only one percent of life." Each day I strive to love and learn.

We are dealt a hand of cards, and how those cards are played is our choice to make. When God dealt my hand the cards consisted of health, stunning looks, talent, intelligence, creativity, wisdom, and oh yeah, did I forget to include modesty?

I strongly believe in the power of positive thinking, while entering into a new and exciting world. Of course I miss gazing into the faces of my friends and loved ones, especially my daughters and Sandie, but there is a positive side to this coin.

When I hear the voices of my parents or old friends, I see their faces as they were thirty years ago. They are ageless. I like the idea of never looking into a mirror and seeing an old man staring back at me. As I live the remainder of my days in the Ozark Mountains, I miss being able to gaze across the majestic hills or experience the scenery of the river from a canoe, but I just can't bring myself to whine about it, for I was once able to see the wonders of the world. In my view the glass is always half full.

I have seen the best of what life has to offer, and these memories are forever programmed deep within my soul. These eyes have gazed upon colorful sunsets, '57 Chevys, Harley Davidsons, the perfection of the female form and most precious of all, the faces of my beautiful twin daughters, Dillan Margot and Dane Michael. What could I possibly have to cry about? It has been, and continues to be, a wonderful and exciting life.

Michael's book, *Blind Man Running*, and his music CDs are available at the Book Nook, 203 Washington Avenue, West Plains. See videos of Michael and Sandie on his Youtube channel "Blindcat50," including his 2011 performance of "My Coat and My Hat" at the Smithsonian. All are invited to like and follow his Facebook page "Michael Blindcat McIntire."

Staffer Spotlight

ASHLEY ROBERTS

Consumer Director Services Department

Ashley has been employed at OIL since July of 2015. She works in the Consumer Directed Services (CDS) Department as a Coordinator and Reassessment Specialist.

Originally from the Shannon County area, Ashley now lives in West Plains with her husband, Matt. They are still newlyweds, having married in April of 2018. Ashley says, "We enjoy traveling, and the married life is great!"

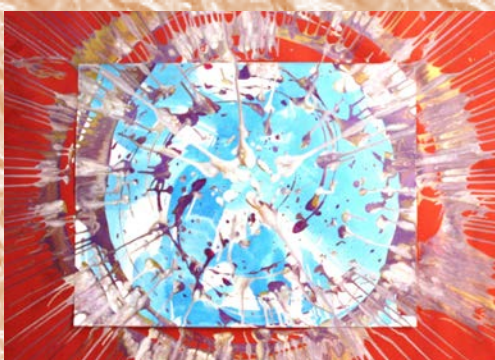
Ashley holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Southwest Baptist University and says she enjoys working as a CDS coordinator. "It gives me the opportunity to help those in our community stay in their own home and get the care they need. It is a privilege to work with our consumers and the employees at OIL."

A NOTE ABOUT CDS and COORDINATORS

Consumer Directed Services is a Mo. Medicaid program which enables qualified individuals with disabilities to have personal care and homemaker chores in their home, through the assistance of an attendant of their choosing (other than a spouse). 'Consumers' (the individuals receiving care) are the employers of their 'attendants' (caregivers) and are in charge of supervising the attendant. The consumer is 'the boss.' CDS attendants do not work for OIL. They work for individual consumers.

CDS coordinators, including Ashley and seven others in the CDS department, work for OIL to help facilitate the CDS program throughout the seven-county region of Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Shannon, Texas and Wright. Each CDS consumer has an assigned coordinator who monitors, coordinates and provides support services to the consumers and their attendants. This includes monitoring consumer's time sheets and care plans and scheduling of home visits according to state regulations. The coordinators make monthly contacts and also act as advocates for the consumers on the CDS program.

To learn more about CDS, contact CDS Manager Glenn Cargile, 417-256-8714 or gcargile@ozarkcil.com.



7th ANNUAL ART SHOW

Featuring Seniors & Artists with Disabilities

West Plains Civic Center – May 18-27

Get your entries ready and help spread the word!

At left is the 2018 winner in the Youth Division

Ozark Independent Living is pleased to once again offer the opportunity for artists to display their talents and for the community to view and appreciate their work. Artists with disabilities of all skill levels and of any age, and seniors, age 65 and over regardless of ability, are encouraged to enter.

First, second and third place medals are awarded for winners in the Youth (17 and under) and Adult (18 and over) Divisions and also in the Senior Division which is a new category this year. All entrants receive a ribbon of participation.

Disciplines included in the show are painting; photography; drawing (pencil, charcoal, crayon), graphic design and illustration (including coloring/activity books); three-dimensional (such as sculpture, jewelry, ceramics); fabric (sewing, quilting, knitting, etc.) and mixed media/other. Artists may enter multiple pieces, with a limit of one entry per

category. There is no fee to enter, but an entry form is required. Drop-off locations for artwork will be available throughout OIL's service region.

For more information, including about how to obtain an entry form, contact Kathy Bauer, 256-8714. All are also invited to like and follow Ozark Independent Living's Facebook event page "[Art Show Featuring Seniors & Artists with Disabilities.](#)"

Artists may offer their work for sale, but they are in no way obligated to do so and OIL does not guarantee that work will sell if offered. If artists would like to price their pieces, OIL will pass along to them the contact information for potential buyers.

The show is open to artists in Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Shannon, Texas and Wright Counties. The public is invited to view the entries during normal civic center hours of operation.

LEGISLATOR CONTACTS

The Missouri Legislature is in session. Here is contact information for elected officials in OIL's service area.

NOTE: City and ZIP for each address is...

Jefferson City, MO 65101

(except governor's office, as noted)

Senate District 33 (Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Ripley, Texas, Webster and Wright)

SENATOR MIKE CUNNINGHAM

Phone: 573-751-1882 -

Email: Mike.Cunningham@senate.mo.gov

Missouri Senate, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Room 320

Senate Dist. 25 (Shannon & others further east)

SENATOR DOUG LIBLA

Phone: 573-751-4843

Email: Doug.Libla@senate.mo.gov

Missouri Senate, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Room 422

House Dist. 141 (Wright)

REP. HANNAH KELLY - Phone: 573-751-2205

Email: Hannah.Kelly@house.mo.gov

Missouri House, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Rm. 235-BB

House Dist. 142 (Texas and northeast Howell)

REP. ROBERT ROSS - Phone: 573-751-1490

Email: Robert.Ross@house.mo.gov

Missouri House, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Room 302-I

House Dist. 143 (Shannon, Oregon, et al)

REP. JEFF POGUE - Phone: 573-751-2264

Email: Jeff.Pogue@house.mo.gov

Missouri House, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Rm 411-A

House Dist. 154 (Howell, except NE corner)

REP. DAVID EVANS - Phone: 573-751-1455

Email: David.Evans@house.mo.gov

Missouri House, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Room 114-C

House Dist. 155 (Douglas and Ozark)

REP. KARLA ESLINGER - Phone: 573-751-2042

Email: Karla.Eslinger@house.mo.gov

Missouri House, 201 W. Capitol Ave., Room 400 CB

GOVERNOR MIKE PARSONS - 573-751-3222

P.O. Box 720, Jefferson City, MO 65102

Email: governor.mo.gov/get-involved/contact-the-governors-office

Let elected officials know how you feel about legislative issues which affect you. We're all advocates!

It bears repeating – Always be on the alert!

Federal Trade Commission SCAM WARNING

The Federal Trade Commission is getting reports about **people pretending to be from the Social Security Administration (SSA)** who are trying to get your Social Security number and even your money.

In one version of the scam, the caller says your Social Security number has been linked to a crime involving drugs or sending money out of the country illegally. They then say your number is blocked and might ask you for a fee to reactivate it/get a new number. They will ask you to confirm your Social Security number.

In other variations, they say somebody used your Social Security number to apply for credit cards, and you could lose your benefits. They also might warn you that your bank account is about to be seized, that you need to withdraw your money, and that they'll tell you how to keep it safe.

IT'S ALL A SCAM. Here's what you need to know:

- The **SSA will NEVER CALL and ask for your Social Security number.** It will not ask you to pay anything or threaten ending benefits on the phone.
- **Your caller ID might show the SSA's real phone number**, but it's NOT the real SSA calling.

Computers make it easy to show any number on caller ID. You cannot trust what you see there.

- **NEVER give your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you in this way. Do NOT confirm the last 4 digits. Do NOT give a bank account or credit card number – EVER – to anybody who contacts you by phone asking for it.**
- **Anyone who tells you to wire money, pay with a gift card, or send cash is ALWAYS a SCAMMER.**

If you're worried about a call from someone who claims to be from Social Security, get off the phone, and then call the real SSA at 1-800-772-1213.

Learn more at www.consumer.ftc.gov

Newton's Agency

**Call us today
417-257-0954**

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www.newtonsagency.com

e-mail us at
newtonsagency@gmail.com

Partnering
with families
to help people
with special needs
live as productively
and independently
as possible to
reach their full
potential.

Community News

JOYCE CHRISTOPHER Retires from Voc-Rehab



In 2018, Joyce Christopher celebrated 25 years of employment with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). After marking that milestone, and after 1,045 successful employment placements for individuals with disabilities, Joyce moved on to retirement, effective Jan. 31, 2019.

Her West Plains VR colleagues gave her a send-off retirement party attended by many area friends and VR officials from around the region, including from Jefferson City.

As a VR counselor, Joyce has worked for the past several years with young people, ages 16-23, in several school districts from throughout the West Plains VR office's multi-county service area. At the party, she recounted success stories that stood out in her memory (including at least two students who went on to complete law school), and said, "I'm going to miss my kids."

We send our best wishes to Joyce on whatever is the next step in her journey and thank her for her years of service. (Her husband David says that before she settles on anything else, that the two of them will be doing some traveling.) **You'll be missed, Joyce!**

VR helps people with disabilities obtain and maintain employment. Counselors help determine eligibility for the program and work with clients to develop a vocational goal to assist in reaching an employment outcome. Call VR, 417-256-8294, to learn more about various programs for hiring workers with a disability or for working with a disability.

All 22 Centers for Independent Living in Missouri receive funding through a grant from VR.

Second Annual Night to Shine Prom

Endurance Church of West Plains hosted its second annual "Night to Shine" Prom on Valentine's Day weekend. Part of a larger movement, hundreds of such proms are held around the world each year. The events are described by sponsoring agency the Tim Tebow Foundation as "an unforgettable prom night experience, centered on God's love, for people with special needs ages 14 and older."

Ozark Independent Living is proud to support this wonderful event for the community! (Photos on page 7)

PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT



OIL staffers Glenn Cargile, at left, and Terry Hampton attended Project Homeless Connect (PHC) along with Kathy Bauer. Glenn and Kathy were available to give information about services available through OIL. Terry represents OIL on the PHC planning committee.

Project Homeless Connect (PHC) was held on Jan. 31 at Ozark Action, Inc. (OAI) in West Plains. Ozark Action is the organizer of the event, and OIL was one of more than 20 organizations, agencies and churches which took part. PHC is designed to assist individuals who are homeless, under-housed or at risk of becoming homeless. The resources available were intended to help individuals obtain housing or at least get back on their feet and headed in the right direction to obtain housing.

Birth certificates, medical screenings, coats, blankets, haircuts, hygiene items, reading glasses and more were offered. Information about social service programs, including to address issues with employment, substance abuse, mental health, disabilities and housing was also available during the event. Nearly 100 individuals in need attended.

Resources

OIL does not endorse websites or attest to the accuracy of information from other sources, but sometimes we find resources on topics of interest which we pass along for our readers' own investigation.

CARE (Caregiver Advice, Record, Enable) Act now in Missouri



Missouri has become the 40th state to pass the CARE Act.

Signed by Gov. Mike Parson in 2018, the CARE Act supports unpaid family caregivers by requiring hospitals to record their names when their loved ones are admitted; notify caregivers when their loved ones are moved or discharged; and instruct caregivers on the medical tasks they will need to perform at home.

According to AARP, Missourians spend more than 700 million

hours each year providing care for family members — a contribution totaling nearly \$8.5 billion in unpaid service. The CARE Act's passage will help caregivers perform their role more effectively.

The state AARP office will be hosting tele-town halls and caregiving conferences for education and support. For details, visit aarp.org/mo.

The **MO-HOPE Project's** goal is to reduce opioid overdose deaths in Missouri. Practical steps are being taken toward progress, including expanded access to overdose education and naloxone (opioid overdose antidote), public awareness, assessment, and treatment referral.



MOHope Project

One element of the project is promotion of the "Good Samaritan" law which protects people who call 911 from arrest and prosecution for possession of drugs or paraphernalia. If you witness an overdose, (alcohol or other drug) MO-HOPE asks that you, "Don't Run, Call 911."

Another part of the project is encouraging safe disposal of prescription medications. According to

project partner GenerationRx.org, nearly 70 percent of those who misuse prescription drugs get them from family members or friends, often from the medicine cabinet. One of the simplest and most effective ways to fight misuse is to encourage the proper disposal of unused or expired medication.

To assist with that goal, 'drug deactivation bags' are being made available by GenerationRx. The special bags allow for safe disposal of unused prescriptions by neutralizing the medications. OIL will be getting a supply of the bags and will offer them to anyone needing to dispose of medications. Call 256-8714 for more information.

For more information about opioids and resources for working together to save lives, visit **MOHopeProject.org**.

IS IT A COLD OR FLU?		
Signs and Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Headache	Rare	Common

Feeling under the weather?

If you're feeling really sick, seeking medical attention might be in order, but this information from the Centers for Disease Control could prove useful if you think you only have a cold and you might instead have the flu.

One way or the other, if you're feeling ill, **don't spread it to others by going to work or getting out and about, especially if you have a fever!**

And remember to **wash your hands and keep them away from your mouth and eyes.**

Events & items to note...

New to Missouri:

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program is a USDA grant-funded program which is new in Missouri for 2019. It provides funds to low-income seniors (individuals who are at least 60 years old and have a household income of less than 185% federal poverty income level) to purchase eligible foods from approved vendors at a farmers market. Participating seniors will receive 10 vouchers each worth \$5 to exchange for produce with authorized farmers.

While some details are still being worked out, and training is required for vendors to be able to sell items to seniors, this will be a good resource to get fresh produce to seniors and to support area farmers markets. Area senior centers should be able to answer questions about the program as the spring selling season begins.

There are several farmers markets throughout OIL's service area, including one in Alton which will be starting its second season April 13.



A Night to Shine party pictures

These photos from **Night to Shine** are provided by Endurance Church. (See more information on page 5.)



Salvation Army Bell-Ringing

OIL staffer Ashley Roberts and her husband Matt helped ring the Salvation Army bell during Ozark Independent Living's shift of volunteering for the Red Kettle Campaign this past holiday season. Also participating from OIL were Pam Johnson, Glenn Cargile and Terry Hampton.

Ozark Action – a community partner with OIL – administers the Salvation Army funds in our community, and they do a great job!





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If you or someone you know would like to know more about Consumer Directed Services or any of the other services offered by OIL, please give us a call or clip this form and drop in the mail to: OIL, 109 Aid Avenue, West Plains, MO 65775.

Check and or all that apply:

- ☐ Add to the Pipeline newsletter mailing list OR ☐ Remove from list
☐ Contact for more information about Consumer Directed Services
☐ Contact for more information about Independent Living Services

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays

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**Supplies needed for
Senior Centers**

All of the senior centers in OIL's service area are collecting "spring cleaning" items all during the month of March. With budget cuts faced by all the centers, this is one way community members can help out. Items needed, include:

Sponges
Air freshener
Hand sanitizer
Bathroom cleaner
Paper towels

Bleach
Windex
409 spray
Bug spray
Dish soap