Welcome to the summer issue of Independent Living!

This edition is all about celebrating independence—of our nation and of individuals who utilize our services. You will find inspiring stories of independence and learn about ways to increase your own independence, so you can lead a happy and healthy life. In celebrating independence, we extend our deepest gratitude to veterans and their families. Please share this newsletter with your friends and family and anyone you think may benefit from Services for Independent Living’s (SIL) services. To learn more about SIL, please visit our website at www.silcolumbia.org or call 573-874-1646.

Definitions of Independence: Which one do you relate to?

Independent:
- not influenced or controlled by others in matters of opinion, conduct, etc.; thinking or acting for oneself
- not subject to another’s authority or jurisdiction; autonomous; free
- not dependent; not depending or contingent upon something else for existence, operation, etc.
- possessing a competency

Log Boat Brewing Co.
SIL Charity Bingo
Each Wednesday in August at 7 p.m.
504 Fay St
Columbia, MO

For more info, call Rose at SIL 573-874-1646 ext. 224

Mature Living Festival
Friday, October 14
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Parkade Plaza: Bus Loop I-70 W
Columbia, MO
Michelle Adams’ Story of Independence

Living in an apartment by herself, Michelle Adams’ independence is important to her. After graduating from MU and returning home for six months, Michelle moved to her first apartment in Columbia in a central location so she could access shopping and activities within strolling distance of her powered wheelchair. Michelle had used a Direct Support Professional (DSP) for several years to help clean and cook, but with three DSPs in a year, she made a decision to learn daily living skills to complete the tasks on her own.

She was further encouraged by other users of wheelchairs who lived independently without DSPs and said, “I looked at other people’s disabilities and gauged myself off of them. If they can do a task by themselves, then I can do it.”

Michelle uses her manual wheelchair in her home, and she was eager to begin completing tasks on her own with the support of an independent living specialist who also uses a manual chair and lives independently in her own home.

After identifying what she wished to work on, she promptly replied, “the oven” as priority! She jumped into her first task immediately. With an independent living specialist modeling her own wheelchair’s placement, that very first afternoon Michelle safely positioned her wheelchair, put a baking dish in the 350-degree oven, and took it out after 10 minutes with the use of her silicon baking mittens. When her next scheduled visit occurred, she said she had baked cookies on her own. What an independent celebration!

Michelle continued to tackle her remaining tasks because she wished for her next DSP timesheet to be her last. She succeeded! She learned a technique to keep the vacuum cord out of her front wheels; long handled items already in her home to show she did not need to buy new cleaning supplies for her shower; how to attach regular cleaning cloths to her Swiffer sweeper for the reach she needed to scrub from top to bottom; as well as using a simple, 12-inch ruler to pull the oven rack out and push it in to reduce the possibility of burns.

During a follow-up call, she acknowledged a build in confidence and said the tasks are becoming easier. She now makes her meals and cleans her apartment without assistance.

Michelle’s drive, her parents’ support, and an SIL independent living specialist helped her reach her goal of complete independence. Michelle needed encouragement to tackle her daily living tasks and wished someone had presented a fully independent option earlier in her life. If you feel you can live truly independently without reliance of a DSP, call SIL. Maximizing independence is what we do!

Meet Christine (Chrissie) Fouts, SIL’s new Volunteer Coordinator!

Chrissie moved to Columbia from Chicago two years ago, where she was managing volunteers at the nation’s largest free health clinic. Chrissie is enthusiastic about moving the SIL volunteer programming forward by adding to the wonderful work her predecessor, Katie Derrick, did with volunteer services. Chrissie also looks forward to building new volunteer programs at SIL.

As a certified yoga instructor, Chrissie works to bring a sense of calm and compassion to her work. Originally from Fort Wayne, Indiana, Chrissie holds Bachelors’ degrees in Psychology and Gender Studies and a Master in Public Affairs with a concentration in nonprofit management. She has multiple years of experience working in volunteer management as well as domestic violence and rape crisis intervention. In her free time, Chrissie enjoys being outside, hiking, gardening, reading, and cooking. You can reach Chrissie at cfouts@silcolumbia.org or by calling our office.
New Intergenerational Group is Growing this Summer!

Services for Independent Living is excited to announce a monthly Intergenerational Group Program. Age is just a number, and this fun, interactive, and inclusive group will provide an opportunity for youth and older adults to share their unique knowledge, skills, and experiences with each other through various activities. The group is open to all interested individuals!

The group’s main focus during the warm months is working on the accessible raised garden bed at the Boone County Health Department’s community garden. The group members planted swiss chard, lettuce, peas, tomatoes and other vegetables in early spring. On June 21, the group played the reminiscing game—a tool to get to know one another better—after tending the garden. Each month we encourage a group member to provide a snack to share.

Meet Charlotte Hughes. She has been an SIL consumer for over six years. She joined SIL’s newly formed Intergenerational Group a few months ago. Charlotte’s goal for becoming part of the group was to help her get out of the house. She said, “It’s an emotional thing.” The group now gives her something to look forward to and keep her busy during the hot weather. When we asked for volunteers to water between monthly meetings Charlotte was the first to say yes! Not only is she watering and weeding the garden, she also delivers vegetables to other group members. Charlotte said, “I used to garden when I was young, but it has been so long that now I am re-learning. I feel like I am learning from the young people and hopefully, they will learn something from me.”

Partnering up for Accessibility Awareness and Fun

On Friday, May 20, 2016, PedNet Coalition and Services for Independent Living organized the first-ever All Access Scavenger Hunt as part of Bike, Walk & Wheel Week. The scavenger hunt was designed to be fun and challenging for everyone and featured simulations of living with disabilities. For example, participants hunted for accessible parking spots on several downtown streets and searched for the newly installed audible street crossing signals (they’re at College and Broadway!). Teams of four had 90 minutes to complete the scavenger hunt in downtown Columbia. They also shared their progress on social media. This family-friendly event drew about 45 people and was a great success.

SIL had a wonderful partner in PedNet Coalition (Pedestrian and Pedaling Network) for this event. PedNet Coalition is a non-profit organization that promotes active transportation through advocacy and educational programming. They work to make it easier for people to walk, bike, use wheelchairs and public transit for transportation.

For more information on PedNet Coalition, please visit their website at www.pednet.org, or call 573-999-9894.
SIL wins City of Columbia Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement (MCPA) Award for Resource Conservation

The city of Columbia recently presented the Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement (MCPA) awards. The MCPA program was created to recognize the efforts of local businesses and organizations who take action in their own operations to reduce global warming pollution in the community. This year, Services for Independent Living won the MCPA award for resource conservation for reducing, reusing, and recycling durable medical equipment. A big thanks to our staff and volunteers in the durable medical equipment department for doing such outstanding, impactful work! For more information about SIL’s Durable Medical Equipment (DME) program or to donate/recycle items, please contact us at the number below.

Volunteer Opportunities Available

Interested in spending time outdoors and giving back to your community? Services for Independent Living is seeking volunteers to assist in yard work for low-income seniors in Boone County. We have individual and group projects available throughout the season to help seniors stay comfortably in their own home.

Interested individuals must complete a SIL Volunteer application, pass a background check and be available at least twice a month.

For more information please contact:
Christine Fouts, Volunteer Coordinator
573-874-1646 ext 223  |  cfouts@silcolumbia.org

SIL is working with individuals in our Consumer Directed Services program who are looking for people to work for them. If you’re interested in a flexible, part-time position, please call 573-874-1646 or visit silcolumbia.org/cds-attendants