



Note from the Director:

Welcome to the mid-winter edition of The WILL Center's newsletter.

It is also mid-session for the Indiana General Assembly, and while it is not a budget year, there are several bills that are of great interest to us as a community.

- SB 312 would provide a stronger framework for supporting parents with disabilities in their efforts to raise their own children.
- SB 255 would remove the requirement of a prescription for the purchase of insulin. Many people struggle to afford this life-saving medication without the addition of additional expenses such as transportation to and from doctor's office visits and their associated costs.
- HB1250 would require medical education boards to develop curriculum to address implicit bias in the provision of health and medical care.

This is the proverbial tip of the iceberg. There are dozens of bills that will impact our community in a number of ways. It may seem more than anybody can find the time and energy to address, but it's our lives that are being legislated, and we have a right and a responsibility to weigh in on those things that will affect us.

For information on these and other pieces of legislation, contact us. If you would like to weigh in, contact us for the different ways you can do so.

It's your government. Take ownership.

An Introduction to Indiana Long Term Care Ombudsman

The Indiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program advocates for residents of long-term care facilities. These include nursing facilities and licensed assisted living facilities. The Ombudsman's primary purpose is to promote and protect the Resident Rights guaranteed to residents under federal and state law. We are resident-directed.

John Turner has worked as the regional Ombudsman since June 2010. His service area includes the state-licensed nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Vigo, Sullivan, Parke, Vermillion, Clay and Putnam counties. He moved his office to The WILL Center in 2018

John worked at General Housewares Corp. for 28 years in management and marketing. He became a small church lay pastor 40 years ago, starting at Farmersburg Presbyterian Church and serving at Howesville Presbyterian Church before returning to Farmersburg Presbyterian Church.

Other community volunteering includes: coaching of youth basketball, baseball, and softball; helping with school activities and assisting with activities and events at hospitals and nursing homes.

John has been married to Cheryl for 48 years. They have four children and six grandchildren.

Through the years he has traveled throughout the country for business and on vacation. However, John says, "There is no place like home and some of the best people that I have met and worked with are right here in the Wabash Valley."

"I truly love talking to the residents at the nursing homes in my area and working with the staff and families as an Ombudsman. It is the most rewarding experience I have ever had," shared John.

Most of his work is solving problems for the residents. Some problems are easier than others, but giving the resident a calming peace and making sure their rights are being addressed is the focus of his job. The other benefits to being an Ombudsman are educating the staff members, families and communities about the rights each resident has.

"The extra special benefit is listening to the wonderful life stories of the residents," he said.

Energy Assistance

As everyone knows, it's winter – time to make sure you are getting the most for your energy dollars. If you hold a candle near the doors and windows the flame will flicker if air is going out. If air is going out so is your heat. If the heat is going out then the cold air is coming in your home.

There are some simple ways to help with these problems. An old bath towel which rolled up, held with rubber bands on the ends and placed at the bottom of the door will help. This is especially helpful with older homes. There are inexpensive kits you can buy to place over your windows. You might look in to the Weatherization Program.

The WILL Center will be glad to help you with an Energy Assistance Application. The applications are still being accepted thru the WICCA office.

If you have questions call 812-298-9455 x207. Stay Warm!

Disability Awareness Month

March holds a special place among our staff and the people we serve. The entire month of March is dedicated to spreading disability awareness. Each year the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, (GCPD), selects a central theme upon which to build their campaign.

This year's campaign is entitled, "See People, Not Punchlines."

Our Youth Services Coordinator Jared Price participated in this year's upcoming Disability Awareness Campaign. The campaign illustrates that comedy can be funny without using disability as a source of comedic material.

To learn more, please visit <https://www.indianadisabilityawareness.org/> or follow them on Facebook.

Peer Support

This March we will be participating with the Vigo County Public Library in the BIG READ. This year, for the first time, the featured read will be a play: "Our Town" by Thornton Wilder.

Wilder is a three-time Pulitzer Prize-winner. He began his storied career as a novelist before branching out to short stories, screenplays, and dramatic works. At first glance, his play "Our Town" appears to be a simple, innocuous portrait of life in the small New Hampshire town of Grover's Corners. But as time passes in the three acts - an ordinary day, a wedding, and a death - the play builds to a soaring exploration of human existence; its boundless trails, joys questions and certainties.

Copies of "Our Town" are available at the Vigo County Public Library.

This year's events include the library sponsoring performances of selected scenes from the play as well as a short one-act play called "The Happy Journey," which Wilder wrote as he was developing the characters for "Our Town."

One of the performances of "The Happy Journey" will take place at 7 p.m. April 3, 2020 at The WILL Center.

The BIG READ is program of the National Endowment for the Arts, BIG READ broadens our understanding of our work, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book.

Upcoming Events

- March 4 – PeopleNotPunchlines: Disability Etiquette**
- March 10 – #RepresentationMatters: Authentic Disability Cultural Representation**
- March 11 – Peer Support, 1:30 p.m. at the WILL Center
- March 11 – Using Free and Low Cost Assistive Technology to Further Independence**
- March 12 – Sign Language 101**
- March 17 – Intersectionality & Disability**
- March 19 – Panel Discussion: Challenges of Caregiving**
- March 21 – WILL Center 2020: Fundraiser with the Price Vision Group. 7 – 10 p.m. at The Landing 3354 N. Fourth St, Terre Haute.
- March 26 – Annual Disability Awareness Awards, 10 a.m. First Financial Bank Conference Center, 4353 S Seventh St. Terre Haute
- March 31 – Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council (INSILC) Disability Listening Session, 5 p.m. Dede II, Hulman Memorial Student Union, Indiana State University

** This event at 5 p.m. Whitaker Room, University Hall, Indiana State University.

For more information or for most recent calendar, check our Website (www.thewillcenter.org) or find us on Facebook.