



# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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A monthly publication of THE OKLAHOMANS for INDEPENDENT LIVING

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(918) 426-6263 V/TDD, OIL Web Page URL ([www.oilok.org](http://www.oilok.org)), ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), ([www.myspace.com/oilmcalester.com](http://www.myspace.com/oilmcalester.com))



To conclude our garden we  
must have Thyme;

Thyme for each other  
Thyme for family  
Thyme for friends



## FREE DENTAL CARE

On February 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, The Oklahoma Mission of Mercy (OkMOM) is having a free two-day dental clinic open to people that are uninsured, underinsured, or would otherwise not be able to seek dental care. The team of volunteer dentist will determine your treatment plan which may include; Restorations (Fillings), Extractions, Cleanings, Root Canals. The clinic will be held at the Tulsa Convention Center and will take approximately the first 1,000 people per day. There is no Pre-registration, No Pre-qualification, No Payments, or Insurance Required.

For those who live in southeastern Oklahoma, please remember about the Caring Hands dental clinic here in McAlester. You can contact them at 918 426-0900.

## FREE TAX SERVICES

The VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Program

provides assistance to anyone under \$50,000 annually with income tax preparation. The program helps determine if you are eligible to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit and any other credits that are available. They will prepare a simple tax form and then E-File it for you. The Ki-Bois Community Action Program offers service in the following areas;

Haskell County 918 967-2123  
LeFlore County 918 647-3267  
Latimer County 918 465-3381  
Pittsburg County 918 423-3525

The Southeastern public library in McAlester also offers free tax assistance and volunteers will be available beginning in February. Call 918 426-0930 for details or for information on the program at libraries in other areas.

## OIL AND INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS (ILC's)

Independent Living Centers such as OIL are typically non-residential, private, non-profit, consumer-controlled, community-based organizations providing services and advocacy by and for persons with all types of disabilities. The goal is to provide individuals with disabilities the assistance needed to achieve their maximum potential within their families and communities.

Independent Living Centers also serve as a strong advocacy voice on a wide range of national, state, and local issues. ILC's work to assure physical and programmatic access to housing, employment, transportation, communities, recreational facilities, and health and social services. Do you like what OIL does? Do you have a friend or relative that could benefit from ILC services? There are nearly 500 ILC'S in the U.S. so give us a call and we can find the closest ILC for you or your loved one.

## NEW INITIATIVE EXAMINES THE ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

In response to complaints about inaccessible medical services and equipment, the Equal Rights Center (ERC) has launched a new initiative aimed at eliminating this form of discrimination. The initiative began after three ERC members who use wheelchairs called the ERC to report denial of services, inaccessible tables, and inadequate lifting practices at medical clinics in Washington, D.C. Not providing equal preventative and urgent care services to a large segment of our population is not only illegal but also a disservice to our entire country.

The ERC began the initiative to educate people with disabilities

about their rights and health care providers about their responsibilities and, when necessary, advocacy and enforcement directed at those who violate the laws protecting people with disabilities. If you or anyone you know have encountered accessibility issues at a health facility, take action by reporting problems accessing medical services or equipment. Contact Jennifer Wolfsheimer at the ERC at 202 370-3210.

### **MAN CONSCIOUS DURING 23 YEAR COMA**

A man who emerged from what doctors thought was a vegetative state says he was fully conscious for 23 years but could not respond because he was paralyzed. Rom Houben, 46, had a car crash in 1983 and doctors thought he had sunk into a coma. His family continued to believe their son was conscious and sought further medical advice.

Professor Steven Laureys of Belgium's Coma Science Group realized that the diagnosis was wrong and taught Houben how to communicate through a special keyboard. Rom used the device to tell a reporter for the German magazine *Der Spiegel* that: "I screamed but there was nothing to hear." Belgian doctors who treated him early on said that Rom had gone from a coma into a vegetative condition.

Coma is a state of unconsciousness in which the eyes are closed and the patient can't be roused, as if simply asleep. A vegetative state is a condition in which the eyes are open and can move, and the patient has periods of sleep and periods of wakefulness, but remains unconscious and

unaware of him or herself or others. The patient can't think, reason, respond, do anything on purpose, chew or swallow.

But Rom's parents would not accept that he was comatose or vegetative and they even took him five times to the United States for tests. More searching finally got her in touch with Laureys, who put Houben through a PET scan that indicated he was conscious. The family and doctors then began trying to establish communication.

A breakthrough came when he was able to indicate yes or no by slightly moving his foot to push a computer device placed there by Laureys' team. Then came the spelling of words by using his finger and a touch-screen attached to his wheelchair.

Imagine yourself lying in bed wanting to speak and move but unable to do so while in your head you are OK. The case came to light after Laureys published a study in the journal *BMC Neurology* showing that about four out of ten patients with consciousness disorders are wrongly diagnosed as being a vegetative state.

Houben has started writing a book on his experiences.

### **HELPFUL HOW TO'S**

Life rolls along a bit more smoothly when you know how to do stuff. So to start the new year off with positive strategies and knowledge, here are some crash courses across a range of topics.

#### **Disability-related How To's**

*How to's.....autism.* This video, How to Help a Child with Autism  
[www.wonderhowto.com/how-](http://www.wonderhowto.com/how-to/video/how-to-help-a-child-with-autism-281661/)

[to/video/how-to-help-a-child-with-autism-281661/](http://www.wonderhowto.com/how-to/video/how-to-help-a-child-with-autism-281661/)

*How to's.....dyslexia.*

[www.ehow.com/topic\\_1352\\_coping-with-dyslexia.html](http://www.ehow.com/topic_1352_coping-with-dyslexia.html)

*How to use close captioning in your podcasts.* Is a big help for those with hearing impairments.  
[www.wonderhowto.com/how-to/video/how-to-use-captioning-in-your-podcast-245025/](http://www.wonderhowto.com/how-to/video/how-to-use-captioning-in-your-podcast-245025/)

*House cleaning basics,* not really about disability, but

helpful for those learning daily living skills and who are starting to live on their own.

[www.ehow.com/topic\\_7798\\_housecleaning-basics.html](http://www.ehow.com/topic_7798_housecleaning-basics.html)

#### **How to toilet train...**

\*a child with a disability?

[www.pediatrics.about.com/cs/p\\_arentingadvice/a/sp\\_needs\\_potty.html](http://www.pediatrics.about.com/cs/p_arentingadvice/a/sp_needs_potty.html) and here's another

[www.dummies.com/how-to/content/potty-training-children-with-disabilities.html](http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/potty-training-children-with-disabilities.html)

\*a child with autism?

[www.teach.com/toilet.html](http://www.teach.com/toilet.html)

\*a child with cerebral palsy?

[www.originsofcerebralpalsy.com/04-care/01-bathing-toilet.html](http://www.originsofcerebralpalsy.com/04-care/01-bathing-toilet.html)

\*a child with developmental disabilities?

[www.dcs-cde.ca.gov/rsc/toilettraining.pdf](http://www.dcs-cde.ca.gov/rsc/toilettraining.pdf)  
[www.consultantlive.com/display/article/10162/1425974?verify=0](http://www.consultantlive.com/display/article/10162/1425974?verify=0)

\* a child with OCD?

[www.ehow.com/how\\_5750595\\_potty-train-toddler-ocd.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_5750595_potty-train-toddler-ocd.html)

#### **Here are several sites that might be useful for school:**

*Are you using Windows Vista? Tweak it for students with disabilities.* The Ease of Access Center in Vista gives powerful tools to people with visual or

auditory disabilities so they can use a computer more effectively. This 3 minute video will show you how.

[www.5min.com/Video/Tweak-Windows-Vista-for-People-with-Disabilities-210066013](http://www.5min.com/Video/Tweak-Windows-Vista-for-People-with-Disabilities-210066013)

*How to find technology communication tools for the classroom.*

[www.howtothings.com/education/how-to-find-technology-communication-tools-for-the-classroom](http://www.howtothings.com/education/how-to-find-technology-communication-tools-for-the-classroom)

*How to improve study skills in middle school.*

[www.howtothings.com/education/a2964-how-to-improve-study-skills-in-middle-school](http://www.howtothings.com/education/a2964-how-to-improve-study-skills-in-middle-school)

*How about study skills for those in high school?*

[www.howtothings.com/education/a2470-how-to-improve-study-skills-for-high-school-students.html](http://www.howtothings.com/education/a2470-how-to-improve-study-skills-for-high-school-students.html)

*How to teach life skills in special education?*

[www.howtothings.com/education/a4393-how-to-teach-life-skills-in-special-education.html](http://www.howtothings.com/education/a4393-how-to-teach-life-skills-in-special-education.html)

*Fight the winter blues:*

If you've noticed feelings of depression, lethargy, or moodiness around the winter season, you may be suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder. Don't let the winter blues get you down. This guide will teach you about treatment plans and coping strategies. [www.ehow.com/topic\\_405\\_seasonal-effective-disorder.html](http://www.ehow.com/topic_405_seasonal-effective-disorder.html)

## **NUTRITION AND COOKING**

The Oklahoma State University Extension Center nutrition and cooking class is full but another one may be scheduled in mid-summer. Watch for details then.

## **OIL SOCIAL**

The Social will be held on Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30

p.m. We will gather at Carla's Café, 606 East Wyandotte. Call for free local transportation.



## **VALENTINE'S DANCE**

The dance will be on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. It will be held at the J.I. Stipe Center, 801 N. 9<sup>th</sup> Street in McAlester. Bring your sweetheart or maybe come and meet one! Please bring a 2 liter of soda pop or a package of cookies. Call for free local transportation.



## **GAME DAY**

We will meet for some fun with board games. We will start at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Bring a sack lunch if you wish.

## **SATURDAY TRANSPORTATION**

OIL will take individuals anywhere in the McAlester area whether to visit friends/family or just to go shopping. The cost is \$1 per stop. The dates are set for February 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **MONEY MANAGEMENT CLASS**

The OIL money management class will not be held this month but watch next month's newsletter for the March date.

## **OIL CLOSED**

The office will be closed on Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> for President's Day.

## **Transportation**

OIL provides lift-equipped transportation in McAlester and the surrounding area, Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30. A twenty-four hour minimum notice is required. The cost is \$2 round trip in McAlester and \$4 for Krebs and Frink Chambers. Outside this area, fees are based on actual costs of gasoline needed to provide the service.

**\*Prices are subject to change.**



## **Are you eligible for the ADVantage Program?**

Are you a person with a disability who is at least 21 years of age?

If you said "Yes" then answer the following:

Do you require assistance?

1. On a daily basis in order to live, such as eating, toileting, grooming, bathing, dressing, and moving about to accomplish the task
2. In order to maintain or support daily functioning such as taking medication, preparing meals, paying bills, shopping, laundry, transportation, etc.
3. Are you at risk for nursing home placement?

**The ADVantage Program may be able to help. Contact any OIL ADVantage case manager at 426-6220 V/TDD.**

