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OIL Newsletter



A monthly publication of THE OKLAHOMANS for INDEPENDENT LIVING
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If you are trying to go green and would like to help save trees, check out our newsletter at oilnewsletter@oilok.org or call us and we will send it via e-mail.

If you are receiving this newsletter in error or no longer wish to receive it, call and we will remove you from our mailing list.

Steps to Making a More Positive You...

Appreciate the wonders of life. Each new day has possibilities!

“WIN PRIZES” FUNDRAISER BINGO

As a fundraiser for our children with disabilities Christmas party, OIL is having a Bingo that will be held on Thursday, **November 8th**, 6:30 p.m., at the American Legion Post 79, 400 South Second Street, in McAlester.

The cost to play all regular games is \$10 for two cards. The bonus game will cost an additional \$7 for two cards for a chance to win a \$200 Wal-Mart card.

Please help us spread the word by inviting your friends, family, and everyone you see!

THANKSGIVING DINNER

The Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on Thursday, November 15th, 6:00 p.m., at the First Baptist Church, 100 East Washington, in McAlester. A traditional meal consisting of ham, turkey, and all the trimmings will be served. Those attending are asked to bring a store-bought dessert. Free lift-equipped transportation is available to McAlester and Krebs residents.



CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Party will be held on Saturday, December 1st, 1:00 p.m., at the McAlester High School Cafeteria, One Buffalo Drive. The county schools will send home flyers with their students who have disabilities and IEP's (Individual Education

Plans). Children 15 & under as well as their siblings will receive a gift from Santa. **Registration Deadline is Wednesday, November 28th.** If a sign language interpreter is needed, please call ASAP. Families are encouraged to attend with their children. A traditional Christmas Dinner will be served and you are asked to bring a store-bought cake or pie. Free lift-equipped transportation is available to McAlester and Krebs residents.

TRANSFERRING HOME MOVIES TO DVD

Also as a fundraiser for our children with disabilities Christmas party, OIL is transferring your old home movies/recordings to DVD. This will allow you to watch your movies on a DVD player and to save storage space.

For each transfer you will receive...

- *DVD Transferred Movie
- *Choice of a Laser Scribed Label
- *Clear Slim Jewel Case and...

you can have done as many as you like for \$10 each.

You may bring your movies to OIL, 601 E. Carl Albert Parkway, in McAlester. Call Deanna, Terry, or Pam for more information.



Home Movies to....

MIKE WARD INDUCTED INTO THE WHEELCHAIR & AMBULATORY SPORTS USA HALL OF FAME

Mike Ward lives by a simple philosophy.

If you're standing still, you're in the way.

Living out that mantra became a little trickier the day a doctor told him he'd never walk again. Trickier, mind you but not impossible.

Ward has had paraplegia for almost four decades, the result of a broken back when he was still a teenager. But ever since that accident changed his life, the Oklahoma native has been helping to change other people's lives.

His conduit? Sports. Paralysis could not douse his competitive fire.

"Wheelchair sports have really opened a lot of doors for me personally," Ward said, "and it helped me reach out to a lot of folks."

Ward was recently inducted into the Wheelchair & Ambulatory Sports USA Hall of Fame. He was recognized for accomplishments that might not be widely known but that should be wildly celebrated.

He has made life better for thousands.

Sports have always been part of Ward's life. A lineman, he played high school football in Moore, spent a year at Wabash College in Indiana, then had a short stint on the Oklahoma State football team before deciding to focus on his academics. He transferred to Oklahoma, where his younger brother, Jeff, had signed to play football.

To make some money, Ward took a job unloading cargo trucks in Oklahoma City. He was on the loading dock one day when some cargo broke free and fell on him. He never lost consciousness and realized what had happened. He had broken his back. He had no feeling in his legs. He was paralyzed.

When the doctor confirmed it later at the hospital, he had one more bit of information for Ward. "You aren't ever going to walk again," the doctor said.

"You don't know me," he thought.

He had been taught by his parents to believe that he could do anything, that there are no barriers. His injury, as bad as it was, didn't change those beliefs. And yet, in the first few months after the accident, he found that he was imposing limits on himself. He was back at OU, working toward a speech and hearing degree and living in an off-campus apartment. While he went to class, he didn't do much else.

"I was content to stay in my little apartment where I could control everything," he said.

Then, he met Rich Harrell, another young wheelchair user in Norman who had been injured a few years earlier. Like Ward, Harrell had played sports throughout his life. As they talked and got to know each other, they realized they still had a desire to compete. They formed a wheelchair basketball team.

That was in 1974, a time when attitudes about the disabled were still raw in this country. Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act was still more than a decade away, and it was common for people to think nothing of using hurtful terms such as cripple.

So, the idea of a wheelchair basketball team was lost on some people. Even the fiancé of the guy who agreed to coach the team struggled to wrap her mind around it. "Why would anyone want to play wheelchair basketball?" she asked. "Why do these guys want to play? Why?" She failed to understand that their accidents hadn't extinguished their competitive fire.

"It had nothing to do with showing the world anything," Ward said. "It's internal — 'I want to compete.' Of course, once you're able to prove to yourself that you can do these things, and then you can do anything."

Ward decided to try other sports. Power lifting. Javelin. Discus. Shot put. He ultimately made two Paralympic teams, in 1988 and 1992, and competed

in events across the country and around the world.

Along the way, he met people who were once like him. They suddenly found themselves having a disability, and they needed help. They needed motivation.

That prompted Ward to help found Oklahomans for Independent Living in 1985. The nonprofit organization works to assist and empower the people with disabilities in and around McAlester. It has a staff of 10, a reach of eight counties, and an impact on hundreds.

Of course, the truth of the matter is that Ward had to first help himself. He had to break free of the comfort of his apartment. He had to shake off society's belief that his wheelchair limited his life. He had to start the grueling process that one day allowed him to walk again with the help of leg braces. He needed a strong will and an internal drive, needed them every day since his accident. Those fires were stoked by wheelchair sports.

"Once you prove to yourself that you can do stuff athletically," Ward said, "there's nothing that can hold you back."

Nowadays, Ward splits time between Oklahomans for Independent Living and his audiology practice in McAlester. He's been married for 32 years, has two grown children and is also a grandfather.

He's definitely not standing still.

Read more:

<http://newsok.com/paralysis->

[could-not-douse-mike-wards-competitive-fire/article/3717762#ixzz2AKqdX8gg](http://newsok.com/could-not-douse-mike-wards-competitive-fire/article/3717762#ixzz2AKqdX8gg) by Jenni Carlson, from the Daily Oklahoman.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE APARTMENTS

Finally, the Rock Ridge Apartments are under construction. The complex located at 8th and Jefferson in McAlester will consist of 15 affordable, accessible units. Accessible Spaces Inc. is the organization building the HUD funded complex. The apartments should be open by late August or early September of 2013. It has been a long four year project to just get started. It took a concerted effort by OIL and our community to bring the project to McAlester.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT INCREASE

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for nearly 62 million Americans will increase 1.7 percent in 2013.

The cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits that more than 56 million Social Security beneficiaries receive in January 2013. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 31, 2012.

SATURDAY TRANSPORTATION

OIL will take individuals anywhere in the McAlester area whether it is to visit friends/family or just to see an afternoon movie matinee. The cost is \$1 per stop. The dates are November 10th and 17th.

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 \$1 per pick up in McAlester and \$2 for Krebs and Frink Chambers. Outside this area, fees are based on actual costs of gasoline needed to provide the service.



You can have the freedom that comes with living at home even though you have a long-term illness or disability. The Oklahoma Living Choice Project can help you move out of a nursing home and back into the community.

This project gives Oklahomans like you or your loved one more options to manage health care needs and adds more balance to the state's long-term care system.

If you live in a nursing home and qualify for SoonerCare, then Living Choice may be able to help.

Contact any O.I.L. Case Manager for a referral to the Living Choice Project at (918) 426.6220v/tdd.

*Events are held at OIL unless otherwise noted						
NOVEMBER EVENTS						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Shopping 7:00-10:45am	2	3
4 Daylight Saving	5	6 Men's Gp. Western Sizzlin' 5 pm	7	8 "Win Prizes" BINGO! American Legion, 6 pm	9	10 Saturday Transportation 8 am
11	12 OIL CLOSED Veterans Day	13 Women's Gp. Location - TBA 11am	14	15 Shopping 7:00-10:45am Thanksgiving Dinner First Baptist 6 pm	16	17 Saturday Transportation 8 am
18	19	20	21	22 OIL CLOSED Thanksgiving	23 OIL CLOSED Thanksgiving	24
25	26 Brain Injury Gp. 1 pm	27 Movie Night 5:30 pm	28	29	30	
<p>*Low Impact Exercise Class meets Mon., Wed., & Fri., 10:00 a.m., Stipe Center *Alzheimer's Support Group, 3rd Wed., 12:00 p.m., Main & OK Church of Christ, 423-4743 *Cancer Support Group, 3rd Thur., 1:00 p.m., The Van Buren House, 426-5600 *Diabetes Support Group, 1st Tue., 6:00 p.m., MRHC Wellness Ctr. Conf. Room, 421-8656 *For information on Men's & Women's Grief Support Groups – call Hospice of McAlester at 423-3911 *Bariatric Support Group, 2nd Tue., MRHC Wellness Ctr. Conf. Room, 5:30 p.m., 421-6600</p>						

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