

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

- **Transportation**
- **Disability Mentoring Day 2008**
- **Get out and VOTE**
- **Director's notes**
- **Spotlight on a Personal Attendant**
- **Peer Training**
- **Disability Summit**

You will find an application for an advanced voting ballot in this newsletter.

You will also find the addresses for each county that they need to be mailed to.

Please ask your Three Rivers Counselor if you have any questions.



# Three Rivers

## Access to Independent Living

SEPTEMBER 2008

## Disability Mentoring Day-October 15

Disability Mentoring Day began in 1999 with fewer than three-dozen student participants as part of a White House effort to increase the profile of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), celebrated every October. This year Disability Mentoring Day will take place on Wednesday October 15. Three Rivers will be arranging for close to 100 high school students from our service area to participate in "A Day in the Life of a College Student." They are put in groups and paired with volunteer mentors from Kansas State University. They will attend class, tour the campus, enjoy lunch and a fun activity.

## VOTE 2008

### Important Dates

Deadline to register to vote  
**Monday October 20**

General Election Day  
**Tuesday November 4<sup>th</sup>**

# Director's Note

Information  
and  
Referral



**Three Rivers  
helps people  
with all  
disabilities of  
all ages.**

Medical  
Equipment  
Loan  
Program

Welcome to our first newsletter for fiscal year 2009. For Three Rivers Inc., as well as other Centers for Independent Living, our Federal and state grant reporting year begins October 1. For us, fall is the time we are wrapping up our annual reports and starting on the New Year's goals. One of Three Rivers Inc.'s goals is to help everyone exercise their right to vote. Read Anne-Marie Hughey's article for information and inspiration. Three Rivers' is also focusing on emergency preparedness, look in this issue and future issues for valuable information to help keep you ready for all types of natural disasters.

We'll also be updating everyone on Three Rivers Disability Summit Committees. I encourage everyone to get involved in one of these committees. It's another way in which you can have positive impact on your lives and your communities. The word "empower" gets thrown around a lot these days. It simply means *giving power*. What better person to *empower* than yourself? Get involved, at the end of the day you'll feel the positive impact of the word *empower*.

## Erica Christie, Community Services Manager

Erica Christie, Community Services Manager, is currently deployed to Iraq. MAJ Erica M Christie is part of the 287th Sustainment Brigade. She has been employed with Three Rivers since December 2002. Three Rivers also has other staff with spouses that are currently deployed. We keep them close to our hearts and hope for their safe return.

## H.O.M.E. Program Growing

Our H.O.M.E. Program is private, professional and affordable assistance in your home. This is to help people remain in their own homes. It is not financially based, so we keep the rates low. It goes with our service of deinstitutionalizing, to keep people out of nursing homes. It can be individually tailored for anyone. It is a great way to help recuperate after a hip replacement surgery. You can designate how many hours you want someone to come to your house to help. Services vary, but can include housework, meal preparation, yard work, bathing etc.

# Peer Training Program Starts

We want to welcome Joniece Pitts to Three Rivers Inc.'s Peer Trainer Program for individuals who self-direct their attendant care. Joniece is a wife, mother of three, and grandmother of two. She enjoys taking care of her grandkids, coordinating the Juneteenth Celebration, baking, sewing and singing. The thing she enjoys the most is being a light that shines as an encouragement to fellow citizens. With her loving and caring attitude we knew Joniece would be perfect candidate for the Peer Trainer Program.

As a Peer Trainer, Joniece provides education, encouragement and guidance to consumers who are new to self-directing their personal care. The Home and Community Based Attendant Care programs can sometimes be confusing and complicated and Peer Trainers such as Joniece really make a difference. The success and independence of people with disabilities is our goal at Three Rivers. If you are interested in becoming a Peer Trainer or would like to request assistance from a Peer Trainer, please contact Molly at Three Rivers' Wamego office.

*Spread the word... Three Rivers has a lot to offer.*

## Medical Equipment Loan Program

Our Medical Equipment Loan Program collects donated medical equipment and provides it free of charge when someone needs it. It is not financially based, anyone may borrow medical equipment. If you have medical equipment that is not being used and would like to donate it, please let us know. After someone no longer needs the medical equipment, it is returned for someone else to borrow. Our inventory varies and depends on donations, but can include hospital beds, walkers, wheelchair, canes, shower chairs and more. Let us know if you are in need of borrowing medical equipment.

## Meet our Staff ~ Just a few of our friendly faces.

Angie is our Personal Attendant Liaison. She works directly with personal attendants at Three Rivers. If you need to reach Angie, her direct line is 785 456-8573.

Laura is our office coordinator. Her office is by the front desk and oversees receptionists at all of our locations.

Jeanie is an Independent Living Specialist on the PBPN Reservation. She has an office at the Social Service Building. Her number is

Molly is our Independent Living Assistant. She takes all referrals when new people want services from Three Rivers. She answers lots of questions. She also works with H.O.M.E. consumers in Wamego.

You will find an application for an advanced voting ballot in the newsletter. You will also find on the backside a list of addresses for the county offices. Please mail your application for your advanced voting ballot to your county office before Monday October 20. If you have questions please ask your Three Rivers Counselor.

### Important Dates for the 2008 Election

**October 20**  
Deadline to register to vote

**November 4**  
Your advanced ballot must be received by your county clerk's office.

**November 4**  
General Election Day

# ELECTION 2008

Election 2008

By: Anne-Marie Hughey, Legislative & Policy Advocate  
SKIL Resource Center

**“Get Involved in Politics as if Your Life Depended Upon It, Because it Does!”** These words were spoken by Justin Dart, father of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and disability rights leader at every speech he gave. Why were these words so important that Justin repeated time and time again? Justin believed that every individual not only had the right and responsibility to vote, he or she also had the right and responsibility to get to know candidates, educate them on issues important to us, and help those candidates, who we believe would fight for our issues on the local, state and/or national level, get elected.

This is a very important election year in Kansas and the Nation. Elections will be held for every seat in state Senate and House, every U.S. Kansas Congressional seat, US Senator Pat Roberts' seat and the position that will determine the course of our nation over the next four years, the President of the United States. On November 4, 2008, every Kansans 18 years of age and older will have the **responsibility and opportunity** to vote for **their** candidate.

However, before we choose for whom we want to vote, we all must become **informed** voters. We need to look at who is running for those offices, and get to know what each candidate stand for.

How do you get involved in politics? There are a number of things you can do to help you become a more informed voter:

Get to know the candidates. Contact him or her and talk with them about issues important to you. The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILCK) website has posted some sample questions you can use when you go to public/candidate's forums or speak with them individually on disability and human rights issues. The sample questions can be found at [http://www.silck.org/candidate\\_questions\\_2008.htm](http://www.silck.org/candidate_questions_2008.htm)

Volunteer to help him or her get elected. Many candidates have limited funds, and are always looking for volunteers to help with mailings, phone calling, putting up election signs, etc. Volunteering will not only help the candidate, it will also help those candidates who have limited knowledge of disability issues get a first hand education. **Note: if you work for a non-profit, you are not allowed to do any type of work for the candidate while you are on the clock.**

Go to your local candidate's forums, and other events where you can hear in a public meeting what she or he stands for.

Help others become informed voters. Talk with your family, friends and neighbors about what the candidate stands for and why you believe he or she is the best person for the job.

Donate money. If you have the resources, send your candidate money to help with his or her campaign. Even a small donation can help a candidate, maybe by buying a few more election signs, or do one more mailing.

The disability community has a great deal at stake in this election. We need to have elected officials who know and believe in our issues. Sometimes it only takes one or two votes on the house floor that could win or lose a vote that could affect our rights and freedoms. **Get involved in Politics! Your Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Independent Living does depend on it!**

# QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CANDIDATES



One of the popular themes in some political circles is The Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, also known as, TABOR. If such legislation were passed, it would place a very tight lid on state spending and would lead to no growth in services provided and likely, a cut back in services to the citizens of Kansas. **Would you vote against any move to restrict the state government's ability to operate and deliver social services to those in need?**

**In KS we have an option for persons with disabilities and seniors to stay in their own home and receive necessary long-term care services. The program is Home and Community Based Services; would you give moral and financial support to such a program?**

**Home and Community Based Services programs provide care in the home which is 1/2 to 1/3 less expensive than care in a nursing home; would you support a state budget which would insure that persons needing that kind-of service would not have to wait to get the service?**

**There are times when seniors or persons with a disability need inexpensive items such as bathroom modifications or ramps; would you support a state budget item to centers for independent living to insure that this modifications were made in a timely way?**

Minimum Wage - Minimum wage is to be able to afford shelter, food, health insurance, and retirement without working ten to twelve hours a day, six or seven days a week. **What does the term "living wage" mean to you? If elected, what would you do to help solve the problem of workers being paid sub-standard wages?**

A recurring problem for persons with mental illness is that their mental health insurance coverage is not comparable to the physical health insurance coverage they are able to secure. The mental health insurance coverage is often built with limitations and caps, which are unheard of in writing physical health insurance coverage. **Would you support mental health insurance coverage that was on par with and equal to the physical health coverage?**

**What are your thoughts about the role of state government in the lives of persons with disabilities?**

**Often times transportation is a need of persons with a disability or frail elderly persons; would you support some type of comprehensive region-by-region transportation plan which would fill this need?**

# Helpful Web Sites

[www.rockthevote.org](http://www.rockthevote.org)

[www.kacil.org](http://www.kacil.org)-Kansas Association of Centers for Independent Living

[www.silck.org](http://www.silck.org)-Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas

[www.agingkansas.org](http://www.agingkansas.org)-Kansas Department of Aging

[www.srskansas.org](http://www.srskansas.org)-Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services

[www.threeriversinc.org](http://www.threeriversinc.org)

## CONTACT US

**Wamego Office 785-456-9915**

**Toll free 800-555-3994**

**Audrey Schremmer-Philip**, Executive Director

**Cindy Diederich**, Business Manager

Finance Dept:

**Jean, Chris, Karen and Monika**

**Becky** Independent Living Specialist

**Shauna** Independent Living Specialist

**Molly** Independent Living Assistant

**Wendy** Independent Living Counselor

**Angie** Personal Attendant Liaison

**Miyuki** File Review Clerk

**Laura** Office Coordinator

**Stacie** Community Outreach Specialist

**Seneca Office 785-336-0222**

**Lynn** Independent Living Coordinator

**Deb** Independent Living Counselor

**Mike** Receptionist

**Manhattan Office**

**785-537-8985**

**Toll free 877-714-7272**

**Lori** Independent Living Counselor

**Rhonda** Independent Living Counselor

**Theresa** Independent Living Specialist

**Clay Center Office**

**785-632-6117**

**Toll free 877-714-7273**

**Rose** Physical Disability Waiver Coordinator

**Keyna** Independent Living Specialist

**Becky** Receptionist

**Topeka Office 785-273-0249**

**Janet** Independent Living Counselor

**PBPN Office 785-966-8344**

**Jeanie** Independent Living Specialist

**Visit our website**

[www.threeriversinc.org](http://www.threeriversinc.org)

[reception@threeriversinc.org](mailto:reception@threeriversinc.org)

## General Information for the Kansas 2008 Election

It is important that all Kansans eligible to vote in the 2008 election do so. Following dates and websites regarding the 2008 election.

**October 20, 2008** is the last day to Register to Vote in the general election. You can get the voter registration application at <http://www.kssos.org/forms/elections/voterregistration.pdf> or contact SKIL for a registration application.

### **YOUR ADVANCED BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE BY NOVEMBER 4, 2008**

**November 4, 2008** General Election Day

If you are new to Kansas or have not voted before and you are not sure which district you live in, or who the candidates are running in your district, you can find it by going to [www.ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/vote](http://www.ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/vote) or you can contact your local county election office. All county election office contact information can be found at <http://www.voteks.org/voteks/electionofficer.html>

A full list of Candidates and their contact information is available at [http://www.kssos.org/elections/elections\\_upcoming\\_candidate.asp](http://www.kssos.org/elections/elections_upcoming_candidate.asp)



## Disability Summit

Three Rivers held a Disability Summit on June 10 at Black Jack Hills, St. George Kansas. We had over 130 in attendance. Anne Marie Hughey, Policy Advocate, was the facilitator. Those in attendance included consumers, educators, other social service providers and Three Rivers staff. Throughout the morning everyone had a chance to voice their idea of what barriers people with disabilities run into in our communities. Three Rivers services the following nine counties: Brown, Clay, Geary, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie, Riley, Wabaunsee, and Washington. There was representation from all counties. During lunch everyone had a chance to wander throughout the building looking at all of the barriers that had been written on papers which were displayed on the walls. Every participant was given 3 stickers and asked to place their stickers on the 3 barriers that they thought needed the most attention. The stickers were then counted and the top 3 barriers were named: Transportation, Advocacy, and Public Knowledge about Disabilities. Three committees were formed and everyone chose which "Barrier Committee" they want to participate with.

Since the Disability Summit those committees are trying to stay attached. The Transportation Committee has had the most activity. It is starting in Pottawatomie County and will hopefully branch out to others after one success. County Commissioners are meeting once a month to discuss County Transportation. Currently the system is not serving enough people, or is it easy to access. One thing that will help is to increase public knowledge about the transportation system in the county. Many people don't even know when and how it works. Watch for updates in the newspapers and our newsletter. Other committees will also be increasing their involvement with their barrier.

**THREE RIVERS  
PO BOX 408  
WAMEGO KS 66547**

## Access to Independent Living

*The staff at Three Rivers wants you to be safe!*

**Keep a first aid kit in a waterproof box, like a tackle box.**

**Plan ahead for an emergency.**

**Keep important papers in a waterproof box.**

**Most importantly if you can't take care of yourself in an emergency, ask for help. Your local police don't know you need help, unless you ask.**

Make sure you are prepared for all emergencies!

Your lifeline has battery back-up-don't assume it won't work in a power outage.

Make sure your portable oxygen is full.

Have a landline phone, cordless phones don't work when the power is out.

Keep an emergency number of someone with a generator for use in an emergency.

Keep a list of back-up Personal Attendants.

Make sure you have enough food, water, medicine and other necessities to last 2 weeks.