

Celebrating our 60th year of Empowering People. Creating Communities.

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Spring 2011

Organizational Growth Leads to Expansion



Dignitaries at the groundbreaking ceremony at 1400 South Braddock Avenue

On Friday, February 11, 2011, UCP/CLASS held a groundbreaking ceremony at 1400 South Braddock Avenue. The groundbreaking ceremony marks the official launch of a capital project. UCP/CLASS hopes to occupy their new location by late summer. The building formerly the Center for Creative Play and currently being referred to as Centre II or Centre East was purchased in June of 2010. UCP/CLASS will renovate the 30,000 square foot office building to accommodate staff.

The day was successful on all accounts in terms of the cooperating weather, staff, participants, and board members who were able to attend, and the dignitaries involved in the ceremony. State Sen. Jay Costa, D-Forest Hills, President of County Council Rich Fitzgerald, Mayor of Swissvale Deneen Swartzwelder, District Attorney Stephen Zappala, County Council Member Doug Shields, along with Mark Howell from Congressman Mike Doyle's office, Christopher Rosselot Assistant to Senator Casey, Mary Ester Van Shura on behalf of County

Thank you for reading this issue of The Voice. If you are receiving this newsletter by mistake or would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact Lorraine Brewer at 412.683.7100 or lbrewer@ucpclass.org.

Community is a network of people who come together for some common cause or celebrations. A community is not necessarily geographic, although geography can define certain communities. More to an understanding of community is to appreciate that community is really based on the relationships that form, not on the space. Indeed, space can be an abstract notion when it comes to understanding community. Think about the global community created by the Internet. These communities are not bound by geography, but are relationships forged in cyberspace.

The term culture is analogous to community, but culture relates more to the behaviors manifested by the community. People bound together around a common cause create a community, but the minute they begin to establish behaviors around their common cause they become a culture. Now my anthropological friends will take issue with this simplistic definition, but the purpose of this article is not to add to the anthropological literature but to offer cultural information to help promote change.

To the heart of the matter, this basic definition of community and culture blend two key features. One is the fact that community is a network of people. Often these people may have great differences or even distances between them. They can be very disparate in other ways, but the second feature, that of a common cause, is what pulls them

together. The similarity of the common cause or celebration is the glue that creates the network. Regardless of who the members of the network are as people, their common cause overrides whatever difference they may have and creates a powerful connection. Then, as the collection of people begins to frame behaviors and patterns, they become a culture.

Think about the many communities you may be involved with. From your family, to your work team, to your church, to your clubs or associations, you find yourself around people who might be different from you in many ways, but the commonality of the community tends to override the differences you have and create a strong norm for connections.

This blending of similarity of interest with natural diversity of the members creates unique phenomena for growth and development in both people and organizations. The drive to find, create or be more than we had before is magically transformed when it is blended with community.

Current business leaders understand this. Most successful companies and organizations understand the potency of community and work to create a community sense among their employees. In fact, thinking about any organization or workforce, including families, from the framework of community can lead to a greater sense of bonding,

focus and success. Quite simply, community is a universal concept that not only creates advancement in products and ideas, but for people as well.

Cultures and communities have many features, but one key ingredient for a community is regularity. That is, for a community to be viable it must have some regular points of contact and connection. For a family community, this might be annual reunions, or the celebrations of holidays together. For a religious community, this would be weekly services and holy days for celebration. For clubs, groups or associations, the regular meetings or gatherings formalize the group as a community.

Other features of community include the notions of consent, creativity and cooperation. Robert Nisbit, (1972) suggested that community thrives on self-help and equal consent.



Continued on Page 5

Organizational Growth Continued...

Executive Dan Onorato's office and Legislative Assistant Jan McMahon from the Honorable Paul Costa's office took part in the ceremony.

Other people in attendance included Mike Magulick from PNC Bank, Paul Rosenblatt, Springboard Architects Principal, Joe Massaro, III and Stephen Massaro from Massaro Corporation. Board Presidents Maggie Guzzo, David Zak, and Rob Oliver also took part in the ceremony. Noticed were foundation leaders who have taken an interest in the project and community leaders who are excited to have UCP/CLASS expanding to the East Side of Pittsburgh, specifically in Swissvale and the general Regent Square Area.

It has been over ten years since UCP/CLASS' last capital campaign when the community was asked to help raise funds for the current building at 4638 Centre Avenue. The success of UCP/CLASS has continued since then and the organization finds itself relying on friends, family, staff, corporations, and foundations to once again play an important role in the completion of this project. UCP/CLASS' Board of Directors and employees have already committed to \$100,000 over a five year period.

The need for more space has been increasingly evident with the growth of the organization. Celebrating our 60th anniversary of providing supports to the disability community from 1951 – 2011, UCP/CLASS has grown from a grass roots organization founded by parents to the 14th largest Pittsburgh area social service nonprofit. Al Condeluci, Chief Executive Officer explains, "As UCP/CLASS has grown, our headquarters in Oakland located at 4638 Centre Avenue has been augmented with several satellite offices. The Centre Avenue building was acquired in 1980 when our budget was \$740,000 and has 18,000 square feet. At that time, UCP/CLASS served 400 people. Currently UCP/CLASS has an operating budget of \$26 million and serves nearly 3,000 individuals and families. While we have enjoyed the strength and vibrancy that growth can promote, the net result of our growth has caused us to explore ways we can create a more central approach to our future."



Architects from Springboard at the groundbreaking.

UCP/CLASS offers fourteen different programs, most of which will be housed at the 1400 South Braddock Avenue location. The 1400 South Braddock Avenue location will be home to Residential Services Administrative Staff, Attendant Care, Community Service Program for People with Physical Disabilities (CSPPD), UCP Kids, Fiscal and Administration.

UCP/CLASS will continue to utilize the space at the 4638 Centre Avenue location. The Centre Services division providing community skill building and vocational services to adults will maintain current operations at that locality. UCP/CLASS' Community Relations and Public Policy Department, and the Multiple Sclerosis Service Society who recently merged with UCP/CLASS in July of 2010 will make use of the Centre Avenue space as well.

If you or someone you know are interested in this project and would like to make a donation, please contact Courtney Walker, Development Director at 412.683.7100 extension 2153 or via email at cwalker@ucpclass.org. All donations should be made payable to UCP Foundation and mailed to 4638 Centre Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

PATF: A Valuable Resource

The Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) is a nonprofit organization that provides low-interest loans to people with disabilities and older adults so that they can buy the assistive technology devices and services they need.

Assistive technology, or "AT", is any device that helps a person with a disability achieve a more independent and productive life. AT devices may include such items as:

- adapted vehicles
- home modifications (including ramps, roll-in showers, lowered counter tops)
- computers with special software and/or hardware
- hearing aids
- flashing doorbells
- scooters and wheelchairs
- seat lift chairs
- closed circuit televisions (CCTVs)
- fences for safety and to prevent wandering

Assistive technology services are those services that help with the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device. Services may include evaluating the needs of a person with a disability, training to use a particular device, maintaining and repairing a device, designing and building a device, or providing technical assistance for family members, personal care attendants or employers.

As of January 1, 2011 the interest rate for the low-interest loan program (Loans over \$1,001.00) will be 4%. The interest rate for the mini-loan program (Loans under \$1,000.00) will remain the same at 0%.

If you have any questions about assistive technology, home modifications and durable medical equipment, or need more information on a loan from PATF, contact Katherine Reim in the northwestern territory at 1.888.2424 extension 2117 and Kevin Huwe for the southwestern counties at extension 2175.

Since PATF began, more than \$23 million in loans have been extended for the purchase of adapted vehicles, ramps, roll-in showers, hearing aids, seat lift chairs, computers with specialized hardware and/or software, wheelchairs, scooters, CCTVs and other devices.

You can find information about PATF on their website at www.patf.us.



A Great Partnership is a Work of Art

To people familiar with the Pittsburgh area, the Mattress Factory is not a place to pick out the latest mattress and box spring; it is a place where visitors can join in contemporary art exhibits. To UCP/CLASS, the Mattress Factory is a place welcoming to visitors as well as volunteers. Located in the Mexican War Streets in the North Side of Pittsburgh, the Mattress Factory is a contemporary art museum specializing in large room-sized works of art, called installations, which are created by artists living in residence at the museum.

Every Thursday over the past two years, Sherry Johnson, Bernard “Bucky” Stewart, and Roy Noble volunteer at the Mattress Factory. As part of their volunteer duties, Sherry, Bucky, and Roy often help the museum prepare installations to be displayed. In February, one of their tasks was to unwrap individual bricks of brown sugar encased in plastic. These bricks would be used by artist María Magdalena Campos-Pons to create a giant brick wall in her installation “Guardarray.” The installation by Campos-Pons is part of the current exhibit *Queloides: Race and Racism in Cuban Contemporary Art*.

The Mattress Factory placed cards next to

the exhibit recognizing the hard work of the UCP/CLASS volunteers involved in the installation. This is just the beginning of a great partnership with the Mattress Factory.



Roy Noble, Bucky Stewart, and Sherry Johnson beside the brick wall installation.

Look for another article about UCP/CLASS' partnership with the Mattress Factory in the Summer Edition of *The Voice*.

Culture and Community Continued...

He felt that people do not come together merely to be together, but to do something together that cannot be done in isolation. Others (Sussmen, 1959) identified community for its sense of interdependence. McKnight (1988) described community as a collective association driven toward a common goal.

Indeed, if we think about communities that we know, they all work toward some identified goal. From teaching people new skills, to saving souls, to addressing a common problem, to launching a government, all of these ventures capture the power of community, and then through their behavior, culture.

UCP/CLASS is aware of these important ingredients and explore the notion of community daily. We hope that you might find the similarity of our mission - “working toward a community where each belongs” and join us in this quest.

Dedication, Determination, and Daddy's Little Girl: A Successful Combination

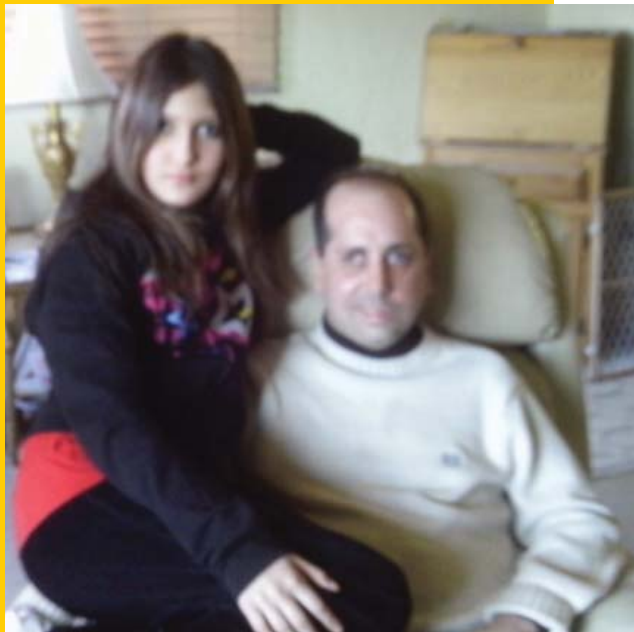
It's impossible to know when we first meet someone what stories they have to tell. The familiar adage "don't judge a book by its cover," is especially relevant for people recovering from a traumatic brain injury. For these individuals, their stories are so unique and are the foundation of who they are versus who they were. Keith's story is one that deserves to be told as his dedication to rebuilding his life is nothing short of impressive.

interested in taking part in community activities or leaving his apartment. He was often fatigued and complained of chronic pain in his neck. As a result Keith highly depended on staff or family support to complete routine tasks. To Keith, after acquiring a disability, life was bleak. He was not interested in socializing with others, at times demonstrated a negative attitude and had difficulty handling challenging situations without getting frustrated or angry. The goal for Keith and UCP/CLASS staff was to develop strategies that enabled Keith to complete tasks independently and express himself in a more assertive manner. With staff from his residential program and the community skill building team working in conjunction with Keith, he steadily gained confidence and began to look at life a little more optimistically. The most important person in Keith's life, who he consistently credits as his motivation is his daughter Kendra. While Kendra is Keith's motivation, it is important to note his mother Sandra is his biggest advocate and his stepfather George has always been an important person in his support system. Of her dad, Kendra shares the following, "On weekends my dad and I like to play the Wii. Some of the games he can't play because he can't use his left hand so we have specific games that we both can play. Sometimes my grandmother takes us out to places like Fun Fest to go bowling or we just go to his house and play darts and other games that we have. Considering my dad doesn't

Every story has a beginning and for Keith the realization of having a disability was difficult to accept. Keith spent two months in a coma after suffering a hematoma deep in the brain. A hematoma, which is a collection of blood outside the blood vessels, generally the result of hemorrhage, or more specifically, internal bleeding is virtually impossible to predict. For a long time Keith felt that something he may

have done contributed to his brain injury. Keeping that in mind, when Keith first began participating in the services offered by UCP/CLASS he had many disability adjustment issues to confront and was, to put it mildly, less than excited to be taking part in any type of program that focused on recovery and his role in becoming more independent.

Relying on a wheelchair for mobility combined with the fear of how others would perceive him, Keith was not



Kendra and Keith

have very good eyesight in one of his eyes he's pretty much mastered darts and that is something that he has improved. These are some of the things I like to do with my dad over the weekends that I see him." [Kendra is 11 years old and in the 5th grade. She was recently selected to test for c-mites (a program at Carnegie Mellon for talented children.) Keith likes to brag that she got her brains from him.]

Today, Keith no longer uses a wheelchair. He committed himself to walking again and after using a quad cane for several years he walks freely without the use of mobility aids. While in his apartment, Keith has increased his interest in cooking and giving input into what meals he would like to prepare. Keith shows particular interests in certain television shows, puts in CDs that he enjoys (one of his favorites is Fleetwood Mac), and enjoys going out to dinner. He is now able to take walks around his apartment with very little to no complaints about fatigue or pain. Kevin Courtoy, Keith's residential supervisor, states, "Keith has really increased his independence in the area of daily living skills to the point where if he can't do it himself he will at least give it a try. This is a huge improvement for Keith. He even does some of his own cooking and cleaning up several times per week. Staff that have been here since Keith first came into our residential program and worked with him throughout this journey are amazed at what he can do for himself and has accomplished in the time that he has been living at Shaler."

In addition to success at home, Keith has also made great strides in his classes at the Centre where he is enrolled in classes relating to his goals. In the skill building program Keith is a very active participant in the Community Resources Class. The class travels once a week to various locations. While out in the Community Keith is determined to be as independent as he possibly can where he serves as a role model for his peers. He loves to go bowling and to lunch at the Spaghetti Warehouse. Keith also takes a number

of classes to improve his independent living skills such as housekeeping skills where he learns skills that he can generalize to his apartment with support from the residential staff. Keith has shown an increase in interest in his meal preparation class and is able to independently prepare one of his favorite recipes, kielbasa boiled in sprite. With the assistance of his therapist, Brandy, Keith has learned to make apple pies with wheat crust and Splenda. To many this task might seem ordinary, to Keith this represents his ability to utilize fine motor skills, follow directions, incorporate information from Health and Wellness, Nutrition and Meal Preparation Classes, and most importantly; complete a task.



Keith in his meal preparation class.

Brian Furman, Keith's Case Manager, talks about Keith's successes. "I have now served over two years as his case manager on the skill building team. During that time I have seen Keith continue to make improvements to his own overall quality of life. I don't think it is an easy task for Keith to

accept his accident or that he attends a program that serves people with different disabilities. Clearly, Keith does not want to have to be in a program forever as he expresses his desire to move on daily. However he has accepted and embraced the fact that the staff at UCP/CLASS and the programs he is involved in, helps him in becoming the best person he can be and gives him the opportunity to live life to the fullest."

Keith continues to succeed daily through being completely determined. While his daughter will always serve as an inspiration to him, Keith realizes that only he can build his independence. By participating in both the Community Skill Building and Residential Programs, Keith personifies the perfect example of how UCP/CLASS offers a unique blend of services to support people in living the most independent life as possible. As far as what Keith would like to ultimately accomplish, he says, "I would love to get a job, maybe working with machines, where I can earn a salary. I would love to have the opportunity to spend more time with my daughter."

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*Joyce Redmerski and Mike Magulick at the
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Stephen Massaro, Ken Service, Maggie Guzzo, Joe Massaro III, and Paul Rosenblatt discuss the new building.

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Char Raynovich, Lee Snook, Melva Gooden Ledbetter, Matt Perkins, and Linda McLellan wait for the groundbreaking ceremony to begin.



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Now Accepting Nominations

UCP/CLASS is accepting nominations for the 19th Annual Community Heroes Awards Dinner held Wednesday, October 19, 2011 at The Westin Convention Center Pittsburgh.

Each year UCP/CLASS honors Community Heroes, individuals or associations, who have enhanced the quality of life for people in our community. They have increased awareness of issues confronting people with disabilities, or brought about meaningful change in the community.

Since 1951, UCP/CLASS has provided tailored services to people with disabilities and worked to promote their inclusion in the community. Do you know someone whose work has benefited others? A person or an organization who symbolizes UCP/CLASS' mission of "working toward a community where each belongs?" Please take the time to nominate them today. Nominations forms are below. Nominations must be received by **Monday, April 18, 2011**.

AWARD CATEGORIES

(Please check the appropriate box)

Advocacy and Awareness Award

This award is given to an individual or group who has raised awareness of disability issues to a level that has resulted in meaningful change for individuals with disabilities.

Community Hero Award

This award recognizes the work of individuals who are helping UCP/CLASS achieve their mission of "working toward a community where each belongs". This award is given each year to an individual, corporation, or organization, which through their actions has been able to enhance and improve the quality of life for all individuals in the community.

Gertrude Labowitz Lifetime Achievement Award

This award is given each year to an individual or organization in recognition of their outstanding record of enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities. The award was founded in 1987 in honor of UCP Board Charter Member Gertrude Labowitz and her lifelong commitment to human services.

Humanitarian Award

This award is given to an individual or corporation that has shown special commitment and generosity of spirit in benefiting people with disabilities.

The information included on this nomination form will be considered confidential and is intended only for the use of the independent panel of judges.

Nominations Form

Please complete and return by Monday April 18, 2011

Nominee _____

Title _____

Company/Affiliation _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail Address _____

Nominator _____

Title _____ Date Submitted _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail Address _____

Signature of Nominator _____

DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE

Please attach a narrative description comprising 250 words or less describing your reasons for this nomination. Be sure to include back-up material addressing any of the criteria, under the appropriate category. No materials will be returned. Please do not send originals.

Send nominations to Courtney Walker, Development Director, UCP Foundation, 4638 Centre Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213 or fax to (412) 683-4160. Nominations can also be sent via email to: cwalker@ucpclass.org or completed online at

www.ucpclass.org

Please call (412) 683-7100 ext. 2153 with any questions.

United Way Supports Direct Care Giver Training Program

In collaboration with PHI and the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, UCP/CLASS has received a grant from the United Way for the Direct Care Giver Training Program. The project provides learner-centered education involving 900 new participants each year. Comprised of 100 agency workers, 300 consumers, and 500 family and informal caregivers, that yield increases in knowledge, skills



The first group of employees at the pilot training.

and attitudes of workers, and improved care and support reported by 300 consumers. The project increases consumers able to remain in the community; family caregivers able to keep their loved ones in the community; and systems change through creating new benchmarks for effective community care.

PHI, a nationally leading nonprofit dedicated to quality care through quality jobs, receives support from national and regional foundations. PHI's staff has worked for over 15 years to strengthen America's long-term care direct-care workforce of over three million home health aides, certified nurse aides and personal care attendants. PHI works to improve the lives of people who need home/residential care by improving the lives of

the workers who provide care. Its mission is to ensure caring, stable relationships between consumers and workers so that both may live with dignity, respect and independence.

The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University is Pennsylvania's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service and is qualified to participate in this project. It is one of 67 University Centers in the U.S. authorized under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1970 and reauthorized in 2000. The Institute on Disabilities has a history of collaboration with local, state, and federal organizations on projects related to education, assistive technology, research and evaluation, criminal justice, independent monitoring for quality, and institutional longitudinal surveys. Its mission is to create/promote connections within communities so that people with disabilities are recognized as an integral part of community life.

UCP/CLASS is one of the largest providers of in-home services. Serving Allegheny County, 100 attendants will receive the 77 hour training yearly. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that there are 35,000 people in Southwestern Pennsylvania employed as direct-care workers. In Allegheny County, the number of elders age 85 and over increased from 28,251 in 2000 to an estimated 35,428 in 2009. The character of

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UCP/CLASS Creates New Department

In the past year, UCP/CLASS has created a new department to better serve individuals currently enrolled in the Attendant Care Program. The Consumer Employer Resource Department (CERD), serves as the Fiscal Agent for individuals interested in employing their own direct care workers. The department consisting of eight Resource Coordinators under the direction of Felicia Kmetz, assists consumers in managing the employment process for the consumer.

Serving as a fiscal agent, Resource Coordinators are responsible for attaining and submitting all Federal, State, and Local paperwork necessary for a consumer to hire their own Direct Care Workers. This includes IRS forms, Criminal Background Checks, and Worker's Compensation accounts. Additionally, Resource Coordinators complete unemployment compensation taxes for all consumers each quarter. Resource Coordinators are on hand to answer any questions a consumer may have on hiring/firing their employees as well as assisting consumers in placing ads for new attendants.

The new department has established a Consumer Model Orientation Packet that provides consumers who are new to the program with the tools to successfully learn how to manage their attendants. With this information, consumers understand their responsibilities as an employer and learn to process timesheets. When a consumer is first signed up for the program, their Resource Coordinator goes to their home and reviews the orientation packet with them. Consumers have the ability to ask questions and begin a working relationship with their Fiscal Agent.



Employees from the CERD, Linda Flores, Felicia Kmetz, Charley Bickett, and David Craven.

From the first time a consumer meets a Resource Coordinator, they are shown the support necessary to hire who they wish to be their direct care worker allowing them to develop an independent lifestyle. The system is arranged to ensure that consumers receive the necessary resources to be an effective employer.

The Consumer Employer Resource Department takes pride in its role of assisting consumers to have the independence to manage their own personal care. By establishing and growing this new department, UCP/CLASS is able to serve consumers who elect the consumer model option for services. If you or someone you know is interested in employing their own direct care workers, contact Felicia Kmetz at 1.888.954.2424.

Training Program Continued...

traditional caregiver has shifted. An experience based education approach is required as the pool of available caregivers is diversifying and the care needs of consumers are more complex. The curriculum features role plays, case scenarios and other interactive exercises designed to build the communication and problem solving skills of workers, consumers and family members.

With this funding, UCP/CLASS and PHI will establish the foundation for a permanent community-based training infrastructure that is adult learner-focused and relationship-centered. The project will directly enhance and help to rapidly replicate the pilot training effort launched by UCP/CLASS and PHI last year, generating replicable dashboard indicators against which other agencies can evaluate new training initiatives.

The project is a continuation of a training project initiated by UCP/CLASS and PHI in April of 2010 to support caregivers to keep elders and

persons living with disabilities safe in their homes. The training will equip entry-level staff with the clinical, relational, and communication skills they need to be effective caregivers.

Caregiver stress and burden creates strains on families and businesses as employees struggle to balance work-life commitments. Better prepared caregivers are more able to respond in the moment to the complex needs of consumers and their families, thereby reducing levels of informal caregiver stress and burden, improving satisfaction with services and creating a broader community level impact on quality of life services.

UCP/CLASS, PHI and The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University are appreciative to receive funds from the United Way to begin implementation of a project that will benefit so many and have far reaching implications for caregivers, consumers, and their families.

Put On Your Walking Shoes

Yes, it is that time of year once again. It is time to start thinking about the Walk for a Healthy Community presented by Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. This year the Walk for a Healthy Community returns to Heinz Field on Saturday, May 21, 2011.

The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community is a fundraiser that benefits 67 local nonprofit health and human service agencies in the Pittsburgh area, including UCP/CLASS. Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield underwrites the cost of the walk so that 100 percent of the money raised by walkers goes directly to support our goal of Empowering People. Creating Communities. This year all proceeds UCP/CLASS receives from the walk will go toward our new building.

Register now at www.walkforahealthycommunity.org to join the 5K or One-Mile Fun Walk, and then raise funds to support UCP/CLASS. To access the UCP/CLASS team page directly, visit <http://ucpclass.dojiggy.com>. A donation of \$25 will not only show your support, but will allow you to receive a t-shirt if you attend the event. Bring your families, friends, and even your dog!



Dr. Grady Roberts and Dennis Barbour at the 2010 Walk for a Healthy Community

For more information, call 412.683.7100 or 866.620.WALK or email highmarkwfahc@ucpclass.org.

Save the Date!

For additional information regarding these or any of our events, contact Courtney Walker, Development Director, at 1.888.945.2424 or visit our website at www.ucpclass.org.

Painting Without Limitations Art Show

Friday, May 6, 2011
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm
at 4638 Centre Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Join us for an evening of friendship and art created in our art classes.

Walk for a Healthy Community

Saturday, May 21, 2011
Registration begins at 7:45 am
5K Walk begins at 9:00 am
Heinz Field

Sponsored by Highmark
Blue Cross Blue Shield

South Side Summer Open Sponsored by WDVE and BudLight

Saturday, June 18, 2011
10:00 am - 6:00 pm

This annual event transforms Pittsburgh's South Side into a one day miniature golf course.

Alby Oxenreiter Golf Classic for Multiple Sclerosis Service Society

Monday, August 8, 2011
Chartiers Country Club
Registration begins at 10:00 am

Organize your foursome today.

19th Annual Community Heroes Awards Dinner

Wednesday, October 19, 2011
Westin Convention Center

Join UCP/CLASS to recognize the heroes in our community.

4th Annual Motorcycle Poker Run

Saturday, September 17, 2011
Brentwood VFW Post 1810
3801 Clairton Blvd. (Rt 51)
Pittsburgh, PA 15227

Rain or Shine! Benefits Multiple Sclerosis Service Society of UCP/CLASS

Hope to see you there.



Alle-Kiski Support Group

3rd Friday of Each Month
7:00 p.m.
Puckety Presbyterian Church
Lower Burrell PA 15068
Mary Venter 724.337.7133

Beaver Hopefuls Social Club

1st Tuesday most months
Noon
Fire Mountain Restaurant
Chippewa PA
Mary Laughlin 724.847.0501

East Suburban Social Club

3rd Thursday each month
6:00 p.m.
St Martin's Episcopal Church
Monroeville PA
Judy Ero 412.371.1247

Fayette County Social Club

Last Monday each month
6:00 p.m.
Mt Macrina Nursing Home
Downstairs Conference Rm
Uniontown PA
Beverly Hurley 724.439.4848

Laurel Highlands MS Group

March, June, September &
December
Noon
Call for further information
Website: lhmsg.org
Rita Shapiola 724.537.3851

Mon Valley Social Club

3rd Thursday each month
6:00 p.m.
Riverview Baptist Church
McKeesport PA
Kathy Craddock 412.673.4967

MS CAN Social/Support Group

3rd Friday each month
Noon 2:00 p.m.
MSSS, 875 Greentree Rd
2 Parkway Ctr. #125
Greentree PA
Dan Loebig 412.882.5659

MS Highrollers Social/Support Group

Every Wednesday
Noon and 2:00 p.m.
VFW – Post 810
3801 Clairton Boulevard
Brentwood PA
Ed Johnston 412.321.6158

Multiple Sclerosis Club of Butler

4th Monday most months
7:00 p.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church
Jacque Cinski 724.898.2116

North Hills Area Support Group

2nd Tuesday every month
6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Lutheran Senior Life Bldg.
Rt 228 & Pittsburgh Street
Mars PA
Judy Pottgen 412.487.6368
or 412.979.2333

West Hills Support Group

3rd Tuesday every month
6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Eat 'n Park
off Steubenville Pike
100 Manor Care Drive
Robinson PA
Linda Davis 412.251.8836

Together We Can Support Each Other

The Multiple Sclerosis Service Society serves as the host of many support groups and social clubs throughout the Pittsburgh area. Contact a group near you for more information or to get involved.

Sometimes the weather or other factor prevents you from taking part in outdoor activities, so here are a few ideas for “getting out” while staying in:

Attend an inexpensive or free class at stores like Whole Foods and Williams-Sonoma. Sometimes restaurants, gourmet food stores, and hospital/clinic wellness centers also offer classes for “cooking light” or the “how to’s” of ethnic cuisine.

Take a class based on a special interest – Scrapbooking, knitting, or sewing. Learn a craft; start a hobby; or master some computer software. Make an appointment or just drop in to a specialty store to ask for instruction or to work on a project. Sales people are glad to help you with your project when time permits.

Attend a travelogue, a poetry reading, or a guest-author event at a bookstore.

The Federal government offers an America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Lands Pass which gives the bearer FREE entrance to all national parks, forests, historical places, and other federal lands and properties operated by the National Park Service, United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Reclamation. Normally an \$80 annual fee, this pass is FREE for a lifetime for a person with a disability. To obtain a free pass, just visit any national park or federal land office and provide proof of disability (your disabled parking pass, your SSDI award letter, or letter from your doctor). The pass provides free entry to you and the occupants in your vehicle to federal lands, or at places

such as the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (“Gateway Arch”) in St. Louis. When visiting sights such as this memorial, where an individual entrance fee is normally charged, the pass allows the bearer and three adult companions to be admitted at no charge (children 16 and under are free). It may also entitle the holder to a 50-percent off fees (such as those for camping, docking, parking, tours, etc.). Senior citizens, who are age 62 and older but are without a disability, may obtain the same lifetime pass for \$10.

People who enjoy outdoor adventure may look for a local Wilderness Inquiry program. Wilderness Inquiry’s mission is to make adventure travel accessible to everyone, regardless of your age, background, or ability. They conduct community events where people of all abilities can learn about water safety and try canoeing, kayaking, or paddling one of their Voyageur canoes. (Voyageur canoes are specially crafted for comfort and ease of use.)

More and more communities are making outdoor activities accessible. There are accessible trails and fishing piers in many county and local parks. To find out what is available in your area, contact your city, county, and state parks and recreation departments.

Wilderness Inquiry adventures, scheduled for all areas of the country and the world, include hiking, canoeing, rafting, rock climbing, horseback riding, and more. Experienced with people of all abilities, they will customize your trip with your specific needs in mind. Visit www.wildernessinquiry.org to learn more.

Health and Wellness: Affordable and Fun Things to Do

The article to the left is reprinted with permission from The Motivator, which is the publication of the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America, summer 2009 edition. The author, Shelley Peterman Schwarz has been living with MS for many years and offers tips and information about ideas for “getting out” while staying in, traveling to exciting sites, and participating in outdoor activities.

You can learn more about Shelley Peterman Schwarz at her website www.MeetingLifesChallenges.com or contact her via email at Shelley@MeetingLifesChallenges.com.

The UCP Voice is a publication of the UCP Foundation, A non-profit, 501 (c) (3), non-sectarian, equal opportunity employer that has advocated for the rights of people with disabilities to live, work and participate in the community for 60 years.

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Special thanks to the contributing writers of this issue: Kevin Huwe, Teresa Martuccio, Charley Bickett, and Diane Cagey.

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