



# FLIC NEWS

The Newsletter of the  
Finger Lakes Independence Center  
Ithaca, New York



Volume 14 Issue 4 WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE Winter 2009

### Vision Support Group

1-2:30 pm the 1st Tuesday of each month  
at Finger Lakes Independence Center  
215 5th Street  
Contact: Sherry Thurston 272-2433

### Low Hearing Group

1:00-2:30 pm at Longview  
Every 3rd Wednesday  
1 Bella Vista Drive  
Contact: Sherry Thurston 272-2433

### Acquired Brain Injury

7-9:00 pm  
2nd Tuesday of every month  
Finger Lakes Independence Center  
215 5th Street  
Contact: Dr. Richard Maxwell  
256-5076

### Support Group for All Disabilities.

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm  
2nd Wednesday of every month  
Titus Towers Community Room  
Contact: Sherry Thurston  
272-2433

### Depression Support Group

5:30 pm to 7 pm  
Every Thursday  
215 5th Street  
Contact: Larry Roberts  
272-2433

### THANK YOU

Thanks to all of those who attended our Holiday Luncheon and an special thanks to the staff who work hard every year to put the luncheon together. By request below is the recipe for the Pumpkin Crumb Cake that was a hit at the luncheon.

### PUMPKIN CRUMB CAKE

1 box yellow cake mix (save 1 c. for topping)

1 egg

1/2 c. melted butter

#### FILLING

1 can (16 oz.) solid pack pumpkin

1/2 c. sugar

1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon

3 eggs

1/4 c. brown sugar

#### TOPPING

1/2 c. sugar

1/2 c. chopped nuts (optional)

3 tbsp. butter

1 c. cake mix (reserved)

Blend cake mix (minus 1 cup) with eggs and melted butter; spread into greased 9 X 13 inch pan. Beat filling ingredients together with mixer.

Pour filling over crust. Combine topping ingredients and crumble over filling. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 45 minutes. Serve warm or cold.

Whipped cream or ice cream topping is a nice touch.



*Winter*

## ***2009 Nearing An End***

by Lenore Schwager

2009 was a successful year for the Finger Lakes Independence Center. We served 2226 people with 2637 different services in 2009 ranging from having their questions answered, providing information, to borrowing equipment from our loan closet or Try it Room. We also presented 202 programs to 3396 individuals on disability issues, the Americans with Disability Act and/or FLIC's services.

FLIC collaborated with the United Way of Tompkins County, Lifelong, Alternatives Federal Credit Union, Challenge, and Cornell Cooperative Extension to present a program on Asset Accumulation for individuals. This is a very important issue for people with disabilities who receive certain benefits as they have a limit on the resources that they can accumulate. FLIC will continue to work on this issue.

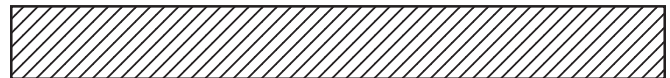
The computer room is furnished with up to date equipment and accessible software thanks to a grant from the Tompkins Charitable Gift Fund and is open for your use. When you try it out please be sure to give us feedback as to what is missing or needs to be looked at.

FLIC worked on providing educational outreach on breast cancer to women with disabilities in Tompkins and Schuyler Counties through a grant from the Twin Tiers Regional Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

FLIC will continue with the Living Healthy Workshop, a free 6 week program for people with an ongoing health condition. For more information contact Sue Olmstead at Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County. 273-8686. Email: [sjolmstead@ofpcinc.com](mailto:sjolmstead@ofpcinc.com) or FLIC at 272-2433. [flic@clarityconnect.com](mailto:flic@clarityconnect.com)

The Depression Support group meets every Thursday at 5:30 p.m., the Acquired Brain Injury group meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. and the Visual Support Group meets on the first Tuesday of the month beginning February 2 at 1:00 p.m.. All of those groups meet at FLIC.

I wish all of you a very Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you in 2010.



### ***FLIC NEWS***

*Winter Volume 14 Issue 4*

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Lenore Schwager, Emily Papperman

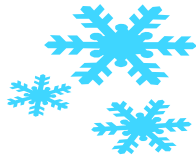
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Patricia Liddick

The FLIC News is a quarterly newsletter published by the Finger Lakes Independence Center, 215 5th Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Your questions, comments, or suggestions concerning the contents of this publication are always welcome. *Any opinions or ads printed in this newsletter are not to be perceived as endorsement by FLIC. Medical and legal issues should be discussed with professionals in these fields.*

You may contact the Center at: 607-272-2433 Voice/TTY; Email: [FLIC@clarityconnect.com](mailto:FLIC@clarityconnect.com); or FAX 607-272-0902.

Visit our website: [www.fliconline.org](http://www.fliconline.org)



## ***Peer Counseling and Peer Support***

by Sherry Thurston

Do you wish you could talk to someone who has “been there, done that”?

Peer Counseling gives you the chance to talk with people who have been in your shoes, sort of speak, and have shared some of the same experiences. By talking with a peer counselor or by participating in an individual and group sessions, you can:

- Discuss issues and learn from others with disabilities who are living independently in the community
- Explore your options and solve problems
- Maximize your ability to live independently
- Learn about other services that are available to you
- Or just to organize you thoughts by talking to someone

Peer Counseling is sharing information and creating a network of support that helps in all aspects of your life. We at Finger Lakes Independence Center can offer you information on other support group that are being held in the area and support services that are relevant to your individual needs and circumstances.

If you need help with filling out paperwork, or understanding why you were denied benefits, looking for a piece of equipment or just need someone to talk with give one of our Peer Counselors a call at the Finger Lakes Independence Center and we will help you in any way that we can, 607-272-2433.

## *Unfair Treatment at Work?*

Feel you’ve been treated unfairly at work? Or faced with critical poverty, racial, housing, health care or other social and economic issue?

Tompkins County **Workers’ Center** can help.

They provide free and confidential information, referral and advocacy assistance to workers who feel they have been treated unfairly on the job or in other areas of their lives.

### **Tompkins County Workers’ Center**

115 E. State Street/Martin Luther King, Jr. Street

607-269-0409

Email: TCWRC@yahoo.com

WWW.TCWorkersCenter.org

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## ***VESID Schedule for 2010***

**VESID Orientations REQUIRE registration through VESID. Please call VESID in Elmira to sign up for Ithaca Orientation. 607-734-5294.**

The following is a schedule for upcoming orientations to be held in Ithaca. in 2010. Again you must register for these through the Elmira VESID office. The orientations are held 8:30am-11:00am at Tompkins Workforce NY located at Center Ithaca.

- **January 22, 2010**
- **February 19, 2010**
- **March 19, 2010**
- **April 23, 2010**
- **May 21, 2010**
- **June 18, 2010**
- **July 23, 2010**
- **August 20, 2010**
- **September 17, 2010**
- **October 22, 2010**
- **November 19, 2010**
- **December 17, 2010**

## **Ask A Peer**

by Sherry Thurston

**Q:** How can find a therapist or psychologist who accepts Medicaid?

**A:** I would go to [www.mhaedu.org](http://www.mhaedu.org) and click on Guide to Mental Health Professionals.

**Q:** I am on SSDI and I want to go back to work. Will working effect my SSDI?

**A:** No, not at first. You will be able to work for 9 months, Trial Work Period, (TWP) then SSA will look at your substantial gainful activity to see how much you have worked. Then they will extend the TWP for an additional 36 months without it affecting your SSDI benefits. For more information it would be better to come in and talk with one of the peer counselors about your benefits.

**Q:** Is it typical to be denied the first time when you apply for Social Security Disability Benefits?

**A:** Yes, I have worked at FLIC for 12 years and I think only two people out of all the people I've helped have gotten their benefit check the first time around. But remember if you are denied, you have 60 days to appeal the decision. One of the peer counselors at FLIC can go through the paperwork and tell you the reason why you were denied and then help you with the process. Also, once you have been accepted your benefits are retro active from the first day you started your case with SSA.

**Q:** I have been looking for a pillbox with a timer on it. Do you know where I can find such an item?

**A:** Yes, FLIC has a Try-It-Room filled with daily adaptive devices. We have a pill dispenser that has an alarm on it that will let you know that it's time to take your pills. FLIC's Try-It-Room is open to the public, you can borrow an item for up to two weeks without a deposit and if the item you borrow works for you then we can tell you were we purchased the item and you can buy the item yourself.

For those who don't know about the Try-It-Room, we have items for hearing, visual, physical disabilities and kitchen aids, sewing aids, games, bathroom aids

and much more. Come, browse and see what is available.

**Q:** I would like someone to come into my business and talk to the employees about disability awareness and how to interact with specific types of disabilities. Is this something FLIC does?

**A:** Yes we do. We can talk about language, etiquette and how to interact with people with disabilities. If you're looking at specific disabilities such as learning, visual or what to do with service animals we can address those issues. Give us a call and talk with our Educational Outreach person and she will schedule one of our staff to come and do one or several presentations depending on the subject matter.

## ***Personal Assistance Program***

FLIC in conjunction with Tompkins Care Connection offers a Consumer Directed Program for eligible people who need help in their homes. What we call CDPAP. Who is eligible? People who are interested in CDPAP must have a medical need for assistance with activities of daily living (i.e., bathing, dressing, transferring, grooming) and also be able to direct their own personal assistance services. Individuals who are not currently self-directing, may also qualify if they have a family member, who is willing to have the same responsibilities as the self-directing participant. A spouse CANNOT be a personal assistant BUT can be the designated representative. A spouse, parent, son, son-in-law, daughter or daughter-in-law may not be the personal assistant. People directing their own service, or their designated representative must meet the following criteria:

All participants must:

1. Live in Tompkins County
2. Be currently receiving or be approved for personal assistance by the Tompkins Care Connection.
3. Be eligible for Medicaid.
4. Be in a safe environment.
5. Be "medically stable".
6. Be under the care of a physician willing to order personal care services.

## *Garage Band or World Tour?*

by Monica Vionmaa

Are you in a “garage band”, or on a “world tour”?

When thinking about people with disabilities, one of the tendencies can be to romanticize the experience—the person who overcomes great odds, perseveres in the face of setbacks or misunderstanding, or achieves out of the ordinary goals. However, not everyone with a disability wishes to be the poster child for overcoming, or to be expected to compensate for his or her circumstances by extra effort.

Sometimes, as one of my colleagues expressed it, they just want to be allowed to be ordinary.

The word disability is only one word, yet a huge range of conditions and their effects are lumped together in this category.

Add to that the additional diversity of people’s personalities, experiences, family, friends, geographic location, and opportunities, and there is no one definition of disability, or what a person with a disability is like.

Just as people without disabilities have a range of personalities and experiences, and choose to live the way they identify with, so it is with people with disabilities.

Some people may be comfortable living what might be considered ordinary lives - the “garage band”, and some might be motivated to accomplish things that might be considered out of the ordinary - the “world tour.”

They should be free to choose whichever path, with no pressure to live up to additional expectations because of their disability.

On the other hand, this also means we should not downplay the accomplishments of people with disabilities who choose out of the ordinary pursuits, for that is part of who they are. Just as some people

without disabilities pursue professions or activities requiring a great deal of training and preparation, people with disabilities might pursue similar vocations at which they wish to excel.

It is a tension another of my colleagues mentioned he thinks about lately.

People also change over the course of their lifetime. The person in the “garage band” may decide they want to take things to the level of the “world tour”. The person on the “world tour” may decide to take a hiatus, or retire. And some people may go through periods where they do one or the other.

The Finger Lakes Independence Center’s mission is “To empower all people with disabilities while creating an inclusive society through the elimination of social and architectural barriers.”

Part of empowering and inclusion is accepting people for who they are, the person in the “garage band,” as well as the one on the “world tour.”

## *Read a good book lately?*

by Patricia Liddick

With it being so cold and not wanting to go out I have read several good books lately. I specifically like a good mystery so my list of books will fall into this category. These are books that have stayed with me long after I’ve read them. Happy Winter and Happy Reading!

### **The Likeness-Tana French.**

This had a fabulous premise in that the female detective in the story looks exactly like the person for whom she is going undercover. Can she pull it off? What a read!

**Heartsick-Chelsea Cain.** Very violent but one terrific read. A female serial killer and the victim- in this case the lead detective on the case-she allowed to go free.

**The Brass Verdict-Michael Connelly.** LA lawyer Mickey Haller butts heads with Harry Bosch.

## ***Money, Money, Money***

by Larry Roberts

Money is a puzzle to me. I know I need it to pay for things like rent, food, clothes, my television, phone, and Internet access. I pay for my transportation. I pay taxes, buy books, keep my church pledge and make charitable donations. I buy gifts for others, make co-pays for medications I take and pay the co-pay I owe my psychotherapist and my doctors, and my dentist. It's a puzzle made up of many different pieces but even when I list all the things I spend money on the picture is still unfocused. I don't really have a sense of how much money I make and how much I spend. I am probably not all that different from lots of other people.

I have done a few things to be more responsible. I have begun to save money for retirement. I have saved nickels, dimes, and pennies in one place instead of letting them disappear into the clutter in my house. I bring lunch to work because a few years ago it occurred to me that ordering lunch for delivery was really expensive.

I am beginning to worry about my economic stability and have become keenly aware that I am not doing a good job managing my money. I don't know how much I make a month, how much I spend on extras like tea at my favorite bookstore. I don't know how much my partner makes. I was stunned last year when the co-pay for my anti-depressant medication went up dramatically. I don't know what we pay for phone, or TV or Web access because my partner takes care of that and has established automatic bill pay for those things.

The one thing I keep in the back of my head is the suggestion that as a first step in getting a handle on economic reality I should keep track of how much I spend in one week. I think I am going to do that. It's scary because I don't really want to know how badly I am doing. But part of independent living is being responsible for all the details in my life. I have gotten away with letting this slide but don't think I can do that any longer. If I need help I can always ask my credit union for suggestions or take a class at the Cornell Cooperative Extension.

I make a good living but I am not taking very good care of it. I work hard. I deserve better from myself. I hope I will take the steps I need to take. I have done many other hard things in my life. Unfortunately, I still have a few more hard things left to do. It's all part of being an independent person, and getting out of my life what I'd like to get out of it.



## ***Christmas Classic***

by Emily Papperman

I recently saw "White Christmas" (the classic Bing Crosby movie), for the first time. I'd wanted to see it for years, but I just never got around to it. It's a great movie for a lot of reasons, but the greatest thing about it for me is the simplicity of its message. It's about making memories and spending time with the people you love. It may seem like an easy thing to do in theory, but in these stressful times a lot of people seem to get lost in the perpetual race that is daily life. For so many of us life seems defined by a never-ending stream of questions. Will I lose my job? Will I be able to pay all my bills this month? What will we have for dinner tonight? The list goes on.

Soon, we lose sight of what is good in our lives and what makes us truly happy. There is a song in "White Christmas" that really stuck with me, and it seems especially appropriate for the world right now. It's called "Count your Blessings." In the midst of stress and worries, I know that may be hard to do. But, try to spend time with the people and things that you love. Remember what makes you happy. If you do remember the good things, the bad will be more bearable. So, take it easy, count your blessings, and be with who and what you love.

If quitters never win, and winners never quit, how can it be wise to: "Quit while you're ahead"?

Funny Sayings to Make You Laugh  
[www.funnysayings.web.com](http://www.funnysayings.web.com)



# Housing First

## Of Tompkins County

### Fact Sheet

Whether a household is on the brink of losing its home, or a family or individual is living in a shelter, or in unstable housing, this new program provides resources for communities to help resettle people into housing.

#### Who is eligible?

Tompkins County residents with total income at or below 50% of median income for Tompkins County and are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

#### How can the Housing First help?

Housing First offers a unique prospect for effectively and efficiently preventing households in crisis from losing their housing. Services offered through the program include:

#### **Supportive Services**

Creation of a housing plan  
Landlord/tenant conflict assistance  
Referrals to mainstream resources  
Relocation assistance

#### **Housing Assistance**

Security deposits and moving costs  
Rental and utility arrears  
Short-term rental assistance  
Medium-term rental assistance

Participants will also be linked to services that provide support to regain or obtain employment and self-sufficiency.

#### **Falling behind on your rent? Can't pay your utilities? Lost your home?**

Housing First of Tompkins County can help.

#### **Housing Assistance**

- Security deposits and moving costs
- Back rent and utility payments
- Short-term rental assistance

#### **Supportive Services**

- Make a plan to keep safe and affordable housing
- Help with Landlord/Tenant problems
- Help finding and applying for other benefits
- Help finding a new unit (if needed)

#### **For more information, call**

2-1-1 or 1-877-211-8667(TOMP)

*This program is funded by the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act*