



# e - LIFElines

Spring, 2018

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Phone: 309-663-5433



## **GAIL KEAR ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT AFTER 21 YEARS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Gail Kear has announced that she will retire from LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) on April 27, 2018, after over 21 years as its Executive Director. Since 1996, Gail has expanded LIFE CIL's programs, opened our Pontiac branch office, and led our Center to be recognized as one of the leading Centers for Independent Living in the state.

Gail's leadership has been instrumental at the local, state, and national levels. She served on the statewide boards of the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, the Governor-appointed Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois. The Statewide Independent Living Council has honored Kear for her leadership in improving the lives of Illinoisans with disabilities. Gail also chaired the Illinois Disability Vote Project in its initial years and served on a national Disability Vote council. In 2016, the League of Women Voters McLean County recognized Gail for her leadership and service to McLean County with the *Florence Fifer-Bohrer Award*.

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*"Gail's decades of service supporting dignity, fairness and progress for all people inspires my own work and is sure to continue motivating her colleagues at LIFE CIL in Bloomington."*

*-Ryan Croke, Director of the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living*

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Gail will continue to support LIFE CIL in our transition to the next Executive Director, who the Board of Directors will announce soon. See page 5 for details on Gail's upcoming reception.

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

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- Independent Living Skills:  
Healthy Relationships Class
- Community Advocacy Training
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**"I'm so proud of the team we have built here at LIFE CIL and that so many of our team members have become statewide leaders in the Independent Living movement."**

**- Gail Kear**



## LIFE CIL CELEBRATES THE **10<sup>TH</sup>** ANNIVERSARY OF THE WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL EVENT WITH THE GAME WITH THE 2018 **DREAMTEAM!**

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 7, 2018

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m. Doors open and activities begin  
11:00 a.m. Game begins

**COST:**  
Tickets are \$5; Children ages 5 & under are **free**.

Tickets can be purchased at the door or at LIFE CIL in advance.

**WHERE:**  
Kingsley Junior High School  
303 Kingsley Street, Normal  
Parking is available at the North & South ends of the school.

Members of the University of Illinois Wheelchair Basketball Teams return to Normal to play against LIFE CIL's 10th Anniversary Dream Team. Players from previous Home Teams & Home Team organizations will come together to represent LIFE CIL in this milestone game.

This year's team could include players from any of these groups or organizations to create **LIFE CIL's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dream Team:**

- ◆ 2017 – Be Strong
- ◆ 2016 – Area Athletic Coaches
- ◆ 2015 – Bloomington-Normal Deaf Club

- ◆ 2014 – Local Religious Organizations
- ◆ 2013 – District 87 Teachers and Staff
- ◆ 2012 – Multicultural Leadership Program
- ◆ 2011 – Bloomington Police Association and Bloomington Firefighters Local #49
- ◆ 2010 – State Farm Activities Association
- ◆ 2009 – Illinois Wesleyan University men's basketball team

**Proceeds benefit the programs and services of LIFE Center for Independent Living, and provide two scholarships to the University of Illinois Youth Wheelchair Sports Camps this summer.**

**LIFE CIL assists persons with disabilities to achieve and maintain independent lifestyles in DeWitt, Ford, Livingston and McLean Counties.**

## WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL, 2018 (CONTINUED)

In addition to the game, we will hold our **50/50 raffle** and **DOOR PRIZE**.

**Concessions** will be for sale with the help of the **Bloomington-Normal Jaycees**. Don't forget to stay to the end for the concessions **LIVE auction!**

You can also bid on items in our **silent auction** with the help of **Epsilon Sigma Alpha (ESA)** Tau Tau Chapter.

Visit **The Zoo Lady and her Zoo Crew** for **FREE** face painting and balloons, and enjoy visiting with some **special guests** for fun photos.

**Adams Photography** will be there to capture those fun photos and memories of this milestone event. We will share those photos on our Facebook page shortly after the event ([www.facebook.com/lifecil](http://www.facebook.com/lifecil)).

**Wayne's Music World** will also be providing the DJ services for this event.

**This event is made possible with the help of our proud 2018 DREAM TEAM sponsors:**



### **Want to get Involved?**

Here are a few ways you can be a part of this great day:

- ⇒ You could sponsor the event – there are several sponsorship levels with various benefits for each level.
- ⇒ You could provide a monetary donation to support the event and LIFE CIL.
- ⇒ You could provide an in-kind donation for our concessions or silent auction.
- ⇒ We hope you will come to the event! Invite your family and friends! We are sure some of you will buy concessions and bid on silent auction baskets.

If you have any questions about the upcoming event, please contact Brianne at 309-663-5433, toll-free 888-543-3245 or via email: [brianne@lifecil.org](mailto:brianne@lifecil.org).

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Most Fridays from January through March, the LIFE CIL conference room was full of laughter and learning. Ten participants gathered at LIFE CIL to take part in a class on Healthy Relationships.

The participants felt that they learned a lot. “We learned about different relationships like family, and friends, and romance. It was a good class,” said Brian.

The class also taught the students how to advocate for themselves in their relationships, and that it was important for them to think about what they want from a relationship and stand up for it. We talked about the difference between being ‘bossy,’ ‘shy,’ and ‘assertive’ in the class. Over the weeks we really saw the students come out of their shells, and start trying out some of the skills we were teaching.

LIFE CIL’s Independent Living Skills program aims to teach consumers with the skills they need to live independently and manage life with a disability. Meri Helbig, Program Director at LIFE CIL, said “we have received requests for classes like this in the past, and are happy we could schedule one for this year. It was a great learning experience for the staff and the students.”

LIFE CIL plans to offer the class again in the fall of 2018. Please call us at 309-663-5433 if you are interested in being contacted when the fall class is scheduled.



*Photo: Four participants of the Healthy Relationships class pose with their certificates of completion at graduation on March 9, 2018.*



YOU'RE INVITED!

# GAIL KEAR'S

## RETIREMENT RECEPTION

**THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018**

**OPEN HOUSE FROM 3:00 – 6:00 P.M.**

LIFE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (LIFE CIL)  
2201 EASTLAND DR., STE. 1, BLOOMINGTON, IL 61704

GAIL KEAR HAS SERVED AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SINCE 1996 AND WILL RETIRE ON APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>. PLEASE HELP US CELEBRATE HER DEDICATION TO LIFE CIL AND THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT. ERIN ENGLE, PRESIDENT OF THE LIFE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SAID, "WHILE WE COULDN'T BE HAPPIER FOR GAIL AS SHE BEGINS A NEW CHAPTER, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HER TIRELESS WORK ETHIC, TREMENDOUS EXPERTISE AND SKILLED ADVOCACY WILL BE DEEPLY MISSED BY ALL WHO HAVE WORKED WITH HER AND HAVE BEEN SERVED BY HER. WE WISH GAIL THE ABSOLUTE BEST, AND THANK HER FOR HER COUNTLESS CONTRIBUTIONS OVER A VERY SUCCESSFUL CAREER."

TO RSVP CONTACT: BRIANNE @ 309-663-5433 OR [BRIANNE@LIFECIL.ORG](mailto:BRIANNE@LIFECIL.ORG)

## COMMUNITY ADVOCACY TRAINING

**Learn how to positively affect change in your communities  
about the issues you care about.**

- Eligibility:** Persons with disabilities residing in McLean, Livingston, Ford, or DeWitt counties.
- Particulars:** Program involves six weekly classes at LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) in Bloomington, and two separate one-day trips to Springfield.
- Classes:** Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:45 pm, April 10<sup>th</sup> through May 15<sup>th</sup>. Classes will include sessions on affecting community change, meeting and communicating with a legislator, how to actively participate in the legislative process, advocacy, disability rights, and the disability rights movement.
- Cost:** **FREE** All transportation, trips, meals, and accommodations provided.

Anyone interested in this opportunity should reach out to Rickielee Benecke at LIFE CIL by  
Friday, March 30, 2018

Voice/TTY: 309-663-5433 or 888-543-3245 or via email: [rickielee@lifecil.org](mailto:rickielee@lifecil.org).



## Join us for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Accessible Easter Egg Hunt



The Kiwanis Ability in Aktion Club will once again partner with other local Kiwanis clubs to offer an accessible Easter Egg hunt for kids with disabilities and their families.

**Where:** Uncle Bill's Miracle Field located behind the Corn Crib on Raab Road in Normal, IL

**When:** Saturday, March 31

**Time:** 1:00 p.m.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March: Multiple Sclerosis Education Month, and Save Your Vision Month!

**Saturday, March 31:** 1:00 p.m. Kiwanis Accessible Easter Egg Hunt (See Page 6 for more details)

### April: Autism Awareness Month!

**Sunday, April 1:** Easter, April Fool's Day

**Tuesday, April 3:** Personal Assistant Orientation - Pontiac office (contact Vicky Hogan for details).

**Saturday, April 7:** Wheelchair Basketball Game! (See page 2 for details)

**Tuesday April 10:** Community Advocacy Training Class Kicks off!

**Thursday April 19:** Gail Kear's Retirement Reception (See page 5 for details)

**Thursday April 26:** Personal Assistant Orientation (contact Vicky Hogan for details).

### May: Awareness month for Mental Health, Stroke, Arthritis, Cystic Fibrosis, Lupis, & more

**Tuesday, May 1:** May Day

**Wednesday, May 9:** CAT Class Day trip to Springfield (Tentative)

**Sunday, May 13:** Mother's Day

**Tuesday, May 15:** Personal Assistant Orientation - Pontiac office (contact Vicky Hogan for details).

**Wednesday, May 16:** INCIL Advocacy Day Rally (contact Rickielee Benecke for details)

**Monday, May 28:** Memorial Day (LIFE CIL is closed)

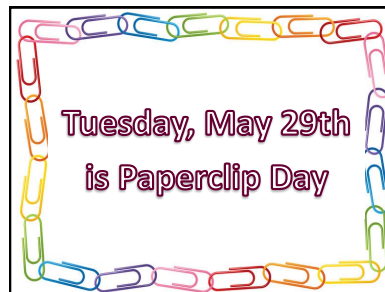
### June: Awareness month for Cataracts, Men's Health, Scoliosis, Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness, PTSD, Alzheimers, and more

**Sunday, June 17:** Father's Day

**Thursday, June 21:** First day of Summer!

## JUST FOR FUN...

**Friday, April 20th is  
National High-Five Day!**



## OUR MISSION:

LIFE Center for Independent Living advances equality and integration of all persons with disabilities. To achieve this mission we:

- Promote local, state, and national advocacy
- Educate persons with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities
- Provide support services
- Raise community awareness about disability issues

In DeWitt, Ford, Livingston, and McLean Counties

## 5 CORE SERVICES

- 1) Advocacy
- 2) Information and Referral
- 3) Independent Living Skills
- 4) Peer Support and Mentoring
- 5) Transition

### CONNECT WITH LIFE CIL! Visit us or call:

#### BLOOMINGTON:

2201 Eastland Dr., Suite 1;  
Bloomington, IL 61704  
PHONE: 309-663-5433  
FAX: 309-663-7024

#### PONTIAC:

320 W Madison St; Pontiac, IL 61764  
PHONE: 815-844-1132

OR, Find us on [FACEBOOK](#)

If you would like to stop  
receiving our e-newsletter,  
please e-mail  
[brianne@lifecil.org](mailto:brianne@lifecil.org).

LIFE CIL is a proud member of INCIL

