

Porter County Aging & Community Services Inc.
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NEWSLETTER



Board, community discuss adult guardianship program

Community members are bringing their backgrounds and expertise to the conversation surrounding adult guardianship needs in Porter County.

Porter County Aging and Community Services' board of directors and staff members are working with these interested individuals as well as Amber Poff, executive director and staff attorney at LaPorte-based Indiana Guardianship Services, who is pictured above.

IGS is already serving a limited number of individuals in Porter County who are in need of a guardian, but many more are on a waiting list, said Bruce Lindner, PCACS executive director.

"It all started with a casual conversation with Amber. The reason for the meeting with our community members was to get a handle on what our organization can do and receive some insights from the community," he said.

Poff had recently detailed to the PCACS board what her agency is all about and how it serves the community. The program allows the agency to serve as a guardian for adults who have been adjudicated incapacitated and have no other viable alternative for a guardian. The agency utilizes trained professionals as well as volunteers to advocate for at-risk adults.

Attorney Christopher M. Ripley of Blachly, Tabor, Bozik & Hartman, who does work in the elder law arena, Marti Pizzini, who is retired and had worked in the home health care industry, and Joe Frankus, who had served an Illinois legal aid organization as an elder law attorney, all joined the discussion.

"Guardianship can be for those without anyone or who are alienated from their families," Pizzini said.

"If a family has always been dysfunctional, getting older doesn't make it any better."

"We can think about educating with forms on the (PCACS) Web site," Frankus said, which would help with situations where the families are involved. "This is a growing problem with Baby Boomers aging and living longer and having to be taken care of longer."

"Collecting information and having knowledgeable volunteers on-site periodically could be initial first steps to establishing a larger presence for an adult guardianship program in Porter County," Lindner said.

"We will continue to discuss this much-needed service and evaluate the best steps to move forward."

PCACS MISSION

PCACS extends a helping hand to seniors, people with disabilities, and the low-income residents by providing compassionate services to improve their quality of life while maintaining their dignity and independence.

Join us on social media!
Facebook: facebook.com/PCACS
Twitter: twitter.com/PorterCACS
Instagram: instagram.com/PorterCACS

For more information on the services provided by PCACS, contact:
Bruce Lindner, executive director,
via phone at 465-7144 or
via e-mail at bhlindner@portercountyacs.org.



PCACS is proud to be a member agency of the United Way of Porter County



Programs impact community members



PCACS staff, board and community members recently gathered for the annual meeting, which is an opportunity to spotlight PCACS programs and how they continue to make a difference year after year.

Many programs reached even more individuals with higher numbers of clients served than previous years.

The agency's door-to-door demand-response transportation program now has eight buses running to help individuals reach their destinations from doctor appointments to everyday errands.

It continues to succeed with PCACS staff's dedication, attention to detail and genuine caring for those served. The agency has seen a reduction in no-shows, which helps the program run more efficiently.

The Section 8 Housing Program allows low-income families to acquire adequate housing.

"Our Section 8 Housing Director Valerie Martinez has worked with the community for five years in this role taking it from 230 to 339 clients over the years," PCACS Executive Director Bruce Lindner said. "She is extremely sharp at helping clients find additional

BY THE NUMBERS

Transportation Program: Buses ran 94 average trips per day, making 23,148 one-way trips and reaching 171,161 passenger miles

Energy Assistance: 1,220 clients assisted with \$471,667

Ramp program: 19 ramps completed

Section 8 Housing Program: 339 clients

United Way Emergency Assistance Grant: 60 clients were helped with \$31,425 in emergency funds

Medicare Savings Program: 35 applications submitted

Medicare Part D Extra Help: 12 applications with \$4,624.89 in funding

State Health Insurance Assistance Program: More than 200 clients counseled during the open enrollment period

resources and cultivating relationships with landlords and clients."

The year also included updates and remodeling to the building.

"We are so happy with the updates done to our building by Chester Construction Services in the last year," Lindner said. "We have had such positive feedback from our staff and community members who have commented on the vibrant and uplifting feeling that the remodeling has prompted."

PCACS long-time board members include: Diane Bates, Kimberly Wiseman and treasurer Michael Lipp (pictured) as well as president Ethan Lowe, vice president Bob Macmahon, secretary Barb Kubiszak, Cathy Ellis, Rondi Wightman, Sylvia Graham and George Iemmolo.



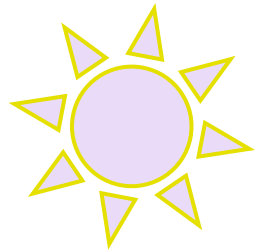
Executive Director Bruce Lindner is honored to welcome new board members: Tom Crnarich and Rhiannon Martin who fill roles left open by a move and the passing of long-time board member and community activist Ed Gottschling. Martin is the family service advisor at Graceland Cemetery in Valparaiso and Crnarich is the president of Rebuilding Together Portage. Meet the two in the next newsletter!



With the support of funding and a talented team of builders from the UAW/ Ford Community Service team as well as the Valparaiso Noon Kiwanis Club, Thrivent for Lutherans, Task Force Tips (pictured) and Porter County Habitat for Humanity, PCACS' ramp building program continues to assist individuals who need access to their homes.

"Sometimes, a community member needs a temporary ramp for a few weeks due to surgery and we have metal ramps that serve just that purpose, instead of construction of a

Welcome new board members!



Community Service Continues

more permanent wooden ramp," said PCACS Executive Director Bruce Lindner.

"We are very fortunate to have so many organizations that bring their time, skill sets and sweat equity to our program year after year."

If you or someone you know is in need of a ramp, visit www.portercountyacs.org/ramp-program for details or call 464-9736.

More pictures: www.facebook.com/PCACS.