

# JACIL

Jacksonville Area Center for Independent Living

December 2017

## CONNECTIONS

*Happy Holidays From JACIL!*



*Happy Retirement Larry Whewell!*

# Associate Director Larry Whewell retires from JACIL

by Roger Deem

One of our longest-tenured staff members will step down on December 22, 2017, as Associate Director Larry Whewell completes his service to JACIL and retires.

Larry began working with JACIL in 2001 as an intern while working towards a Social Work Degree at MacMurray College. After completing his internship, he came on as a member of the staff, working part time until he graduated.

He served as an independent living advocate as a mainstay working with consumers involved with our Older Blind Grant. He gradually branched into other areas of responsibility including disability awareness and community outreach.

In 2007 Larry joined the management team as an associate director supervising several staff members and programs. He also became the gatekeeper for those contacting JACIL in need of services.

"I have really enjoyed working at JACIL and am very proud of all we have done as an agency to affect attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities," Larry said. "Though there is still much work to be done, we have made great strides in educating the public in our four-county service area, especially through our disability awareness education programs in the schools."

The biggest challenge Larry encountered during his years at JACIL was the Illinois State budget crisis in the past three years.

"We had a tough time keeping JACIL afloat," Larry said. "When our funding from the state dried up we were forced to take drastic steps to keep going, including layoffs and furlough days. But we have tremendous staff members who gave us their best efforts and we succeeded to meeting the challenges."

Larry is looking forward to retirement where he is anticipating a little time to relax and rest and spending a lot of quality time with his wife, Barb, also a past advocate for JACIL.



Above: Larry Whewell addresses the entire eighth grade assembly at our Disability Awareness Day event in 2007 at what is now Jacksonville Middle School. Below: Executive Director Becky McGinnis honors Larry on his 10th anniversary with JACIL in 2011.



Larry and Barb are also active with the Jacksonville Lions Club where he currently serves as second vice president. He anticipates increased involvement in the club's mission to support efforts for people who are blind or have low vision.

"JACIL will continue to be a vital agency in central Illinois helping people with disabilities to live independently in the community," Larry said. "I am so proud to have had this opportunity to share in that mission."

# Principles of Independent Living

*Note from Larry Whewell:*

*I will miss JACIL after my retirement, but I will be back to volunteer from time to time.*

*As I was cleaning out some things in my desk, I ran into these major principles of Independent Living. I have written numerous articles for JACIL' Connections Newsletter over the years and I thought I would end with this article. I just felt it was appropriate for you to review and live by in the future.*

*Credit to the Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois for making this list.*

- Civil Rights - There must be no discrimination on the basis of disability.
- Consumerism - A consumer or customer is the best authority when purchasing a service or product and his or her wishes must be respected.
- Equal access - All community activities must be fully accessible to all people with disabilities.
- Community-based services - All programs and services that are community-based must be physically located in a non-institutional setting in their community and be responsive to the needs identified by people with disabilities in that community.
- De-medicalization - Individuals with disabilities are not always "sick" and may not require help from certified medical professionals for daily living.
- Self-help - People learn and grow from discussing their needs, concerns and issues with people who have had similar experiences
- Advocacy - Systemic community-wide change activities are needed to ensure that people with disabilities benefit from all that society has to offer.
- Cross-disability - Programs and services must stress the full equality and participation of all persons with disabilities regardless of type or extent of disability.
- Barrier-removal - Architectural, communication and attitudinal barriers must be removed to ensure that people are able to fully participate in their communities.
- Consumer control - The organizations best suited to support and assist individuals with disabilities are governed, managed, staffed and operated by individuals with disabilities.
- Community-based living - No person should be institutionalized on the basis of a disability.
- Peer support - The individuals best suited to support, assist, and guide people with disabilities are other people with disabilities.
- Confidentiality - All people have a right to receive assistance without sacrificing their privacy.

## New JACIL website links

Two new links have been added to the Helpful Links section of our JACIL internet website.

One links to information on the Dept. of Justice ADA Complaint form. Effective March 15, 2015, email complaints are no longer accepted by the DOJ. Complaints will be accepted by U.S. mail, fax and the new online complaint form. If a complaint is filed on-line, a reference number will be assigned to it and will be used whenever there is an inquiry regarding the complaint.

The National Deaf/Blind Equipment Distribution is a program that provides free assistive equipment/devices to those with hearing and vision loss. A link for that has been added to this section as well.

Visit our website at [jacil.org](http://jacil.org) any time for information on JACIL's many services.

# Action Club Members at Speak Up and Speak Out Summit

by Cyndy Benton

On November 1, a panel of five members from both of the Action Clubs JACIL co-sponsors were presenters at a statewide conference for people with developmental disabilities called the Speak Up and Speak Out Summit.

The session was entitled "Action Clubs Can Make A Difference" and was presented by three members from the People First Aktion Club in Jacksonville and two members from the Friends Helping Friends Action Club in Beardstown.

The break out session provided those who attended with information on how to organize and operate an action club in a way that promotes member involvement and demonstrates through club actions that people with disabilities can make a difference in their community, state and country.

The presentation emphasized how a club can operate in a way that allows Club member participation in the decision-making process and in helping provide and organize club activities.

The speakers also reviewed the clubs' overall mission and the five major areas they focus on that impact the lives of members, and other people with disabilities and their communities. The areas covered included Advocacy, Community Services, Peer Mentoring, Education and Training, and Fun Day Activities.

The Speak Up and Speak Out Summit is provided by ARC of Illinois and funded by the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities. Approximately 300 people attended this year's summit with about 35 attending the breakout session presented by Ralph, Connie and Judy from the People First Aktion Club and Sarah and Raji from Friends Helping Friends.

The People First Aktion Club's co-sponsors are JACIL and the Kiwanis Club of Jacksonville and Friends Helping Friends co-sponsors are JACIL and Washington Place Group Home in Beardstown.



*Some of our Speak Up Speak Out presenters.*



*Session attendees enjoy the presentations.*



*Cyndy Benton and Larry Whewell at JACIL's display table.*

## JACIL to close for holidays

The JACIL offices will be closed for the end-of-year holiday period.

JACIL will close at noon on Friday, December 22, and will not reopen until January 2, 2018. No one will be in the office during this period.



## Come celebrate the holidays with JACIL!

JACIL invites everyone to join us for our annual celebration of the holiday season.

On Thursday, December 21, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., we eagerly invite you to attend JACIL's annual Holiday Open House Party at our 15 Permac headquarters in Jacksonville.

All of our JACIL friends and supporters are invited to attend as we celebrate the holiday season.

A variety of games and activities are being planned for the gathering. Holiday refreshments will be provided by the JACIL staff.

***A Joyous Holiday Season  
From your friends at JACIL!***



If you plan to attend, please register in advance by Wednesday, December 20.

There is no charge to attend this event. A sign language interpreter will also be available.

For more information or to register for the event, please call the JACIL office at (217) 245-8371.

### **QUICK FACTS:**

- When: Thursday, Dec 21
- Time: 1:30 to 3:30
- Annual holiday party
- Games
- Refreshments
- Call (217) 245-8371
- Register by December 20
- ASL interpreter: Yes!

## People First Aktion Club sponsors Holiday Warming Tree

*by Cyndy Benton*

The People First Aktion Club will again have a "Warming Tree" put up in JACIL's front office through the holiday season.

The purpose of this "Warming Tree" is to gather new hats, gloves, mittens, socks and scarves for children of all ages.

The clothing items donated for this project will be used to decorate the tree until after the holiday season when the People First Club members will take all the items from the tree and donate them to the School District 117 Foundation.

The foundation will distribute the donated apparel to children in need who attend one of the schools within the district.

Members of the People First Aktion Club are asking citizens in our region to please help them with this project by bringing one or more

outerwear items to JACIL for placement on the tree.

All items brought to JACIL for this project will remain on the tree throughout the holiday season and will be donated to children in the Jacksonville area in the hope that no child will have to face the severe winter weather conditions without appropriate protection against the elements.

The People First Aktion Club is co-sponsored by JACIL and the Kiwanis Club of Jacksonville. The club greatly appreciates the tremendous support it received from the community with this service project and its members wish all our supporters a very happy holiday season.



## Photos from the F.A.N. Fair

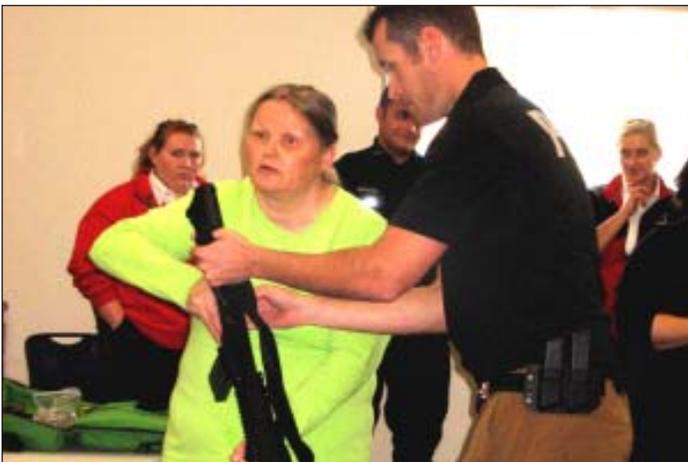
JACIL recently co-sponsored an interactive disability awareness event designed to help first responders understand the needs of people with various disabilities in emergency situations. Here are a few photos from that event.



*First responders for an automobile accident.*



*Using a walker in different conditions.*



*The police department demonstrated firearm use.*

## WHO HEARS A H OT?

*by Susan Nolls*

If you could hear what I hear, you would say "Huh?" just like I do.

For a fancy term, I have a sloping moderate to severe bilateral sensorineural hearing loss. Huh?

It took some 35 years for me to learn what that meant. I was already quite familiar with the numerous events that are depicted by this particular loss. What I learned was WHY all the misunderstandings came out the way they did.

So many times people have asked me, "Did you hear that?" What? I didn't even know which direction to look. Then it was, "Shush. Listen." Still nothing. "Pay attention!" I started to become allergic to people who wanted me to listen to nothing.

I hate talking after dark in a dark or dim room. I can't read lips in that kind of light. I developed a few noncommittal grunts to encourage people in their speaking so that eventually I could catch up with what they were talking about, never mind the details. I guess they thought that I heard them. Boy, were some of them so wrong but I can't tell them that because then I "wasn't listening". Of course I tried harder but it always seemed to be my fault for not trying hard enough.

Social development requires verbal interactions with people. Some people are difficult to understand because of an accent, talking with things in their mouth, chin resting on a hand or simply mumbling. I did not learn to say "Excuse me I am having trouble understanding what you are saying. Could you . . ." because I believed I was doing the wrong thing.

I have now learned to take care of myself when it comes to conversations. If I don't care, you will hear my noncommittal grunts. Pay attention to my eyes not my voice.

Next month: Tips for Understanding.

Larry Whewell  
as Santa - 2008



## DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tue 5 Knollwood 20/20 Support Group - 9:30
- Wed 6 Friends Helping Friends Action Club - 3:45 to 4:45 p.m.
- Thu 7 Making Computers Fun with Dan Thompson - 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
- Wed 13 Retirement Reception for Larry Whewell - 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
- Thu 14 VisAbility Support Group - 10:30 a.m. to Noon
- Tue 19 Cass County Vision Support Group - 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- Wed 20 Visions Support Group in Havana - 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.
- Wed 20 People First Aktion Club - 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- Thu 21 Consumer Holiday Party - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
- Fri 22 JACIL office closes at noon.
- 25 Christmas Day to January 2, 2018 - JACIL office closed.

"JACIL Connections" is published by the Jacksonville Area Center for Independent Living. JACIL is organized to serve people with disabilities in Morgan, Scott, Cass and Mason Counties. JACIL is committed to serving persons with disabilities to gain control and direction of their lives in the home, workplace and community. JACIL's goal is to stimulate and promote a growing sense of personal dignity through individualized services designed to provide the tools necessary for maximum independence and community participation. We invite your comments and suggestions.

JACKSONVILLE AREA CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING  
15 Permac Road, Jacksonville, IL 62650

Office Hours:  
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

217-245-8371 Voice/TTY • 217-245-1872 Fax  
888-317-3287 Toll Free  
In Mason County call (309) 543-6680  
866-790-5311 Deaf Advocate's Toll Free Videophone Line  
E-mail: [info@jacil.org](mailto:info@jacil.org)  
Website: [www.jacil.org](http://www.jacil.org)



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Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

