

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Beyond the Library
- Adopt a Pet
- Deb's Desk
- IL Text Alerts
- The "Wils"
- Common Ground
- With WILS Wifi



# THE WILS WAY

MAIN OFFICE – 612 N. Ridgeview Drive, Warrensburg, MO

## WILS and Trails Regional Library hit the road to bring tech access to your community!

To meet the increasing demand for internet and internet-capable devices to connect to virtual programs, telehealth, and community support, Trails Regional Library and WILS have partnered to provide a pilot program to lend both internet hotspots and devices to those in need.

WILS and Trails Regional Library will host back to back Beyond the Library community days this spring. April 27 they will be in Johnson county at the Knob Noster branch of Trails Regional Library (202 N Adams) and they will be in Lafayette county at the John Knox-Meyer Care (1201 W. 19th St.) parking lot on April 28. Both events will run from 10am – 4pm.

Living independently not only involves obtaining needed supports, it also includes individuals doing the activities they enjoy. WILS' partnership with Trails Regional Library for the Beyond the Library community days offers a way for people to learn new things and engage in "living". Having access to materials that provide pleasure, fun, learning, or entertainment can help release pent-up negative emotions, reduce stress, lessen anxiety, and diminish the feeling of loneliness. We want to assist in improving an individual's overall well-being.

Participants will be able to apply for library cards, use wireless internet, check out devices, and browse a selection of library materials

available for check out with assistance from WILS and the Library's Public Technology Assistants.

Participants will need to wear masks and maintain social distancing. COVID cleaning protocols will also be in place.

More information about Trails Regional Library services, branches, and program activities can be found at [trailslibrary.org](http://trailslibrary.org).



John Knox – Higginsville



WILS provides options that can make Independent Living a **choice**. WILS encourages participants to take **control** by setting & accomplishing their own personal goals. Learning to make informed decisions allows participants to **change** from unnecessary dependency to full inclusion in community life.



## Adopt a Pet

It's raining cats and dogs! Well, kind of. Robotic pets are being used by consumers in their homes to combat COVID-19 social isolation. Through a partnership with Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT), interactive robotic pups and cats will be delivered to project participants in WILS six-county service area. "Our participation in this project will help people with disabilities improve their sense of emotional well-being because of the companionship provided by the interactive pets," Kathy Wyatt, Director of Independent Living. "They are a solution for many who want the companionship of a pet yet cannot or do not want to manage the day-to-day care of a real pet."

Consumers "foster" a robotic pup or cat for 5 weeks of companionship but must agree to participate in weekly check-in calls. The adopter must sign an adoption certificate and provide a name for their pet. The pup/cat responds to touch/petting, motion within a room, and will bark/meow when wanting attention.

# Deb's Desk

## *A note from WILS Executive Director*

Greetings WILS Consumers!

I hope this letter finds you soaking up some sunshine and that Vitamin D we have all been missing! Spring brings hope to my heart. I have hope for better days ahead as we are emerging from a year of pandemic protocols. I know we must still be cautious and that we are not on completely solid ground, but I am encouraged by the progress that has been made.

Thank you to all that have reached out to your elected officials in support of reversing the CDS budget cuts. It is so important that you advocate for yourselves and tell your story of living independently. Your voice really does count. As I am writing this, we are still waiting on the State Budget Process to finalize. We will keep you posted.

COVID numbers in Missouri continue to stabilize and vaccination numbers

increase each day. If these trends continue, we hope to bring you some in-person activities very soon. We have many new things to share with you: a new van for transportation, mobile hot spots with free data, new arts and crafts, outdoor activities, and a summer celebration of ADA.

Please remember how important you are to each of us at WILS. As always, reach out if you need resources of any kind that will help you live full, independent lives.



With Warmest Regards,

Deb Hobson,  
Executive Director

## MOBILE TEXT ALERTS



Receive information about remote activities, independent living, advocacy, & peer support. Consumers can opt-in by texting the phrase:

**ILPEER**  
to **74121**





**Say hello to the “Wils”.** The clan begins with Wilma; she’s the mother hen/grandest grandma of the whole clan, but she had to learn to pace herself when she started having heart troubles. Wilbur is hard of hearing, is an amputee, & currently uses crutches, and he has a heart the size of Texas. They both love arts, crafts, and travel. Their whole family loves telling everyone about their local Center for Independent Living, WILS! Sign up for Wilma’s monthly e-news to follow their adventures.

## Valuing Differences

**“R-E-S-P-E-C-T Find out what it means to me.”** Whenever you see the word respect spelled out, Aretha Franklin’s hit song automatically begins to play in your mind.

In March, WILS staff participated in In-Service training to continue education and learn to better serve our favorite people – you!

Associate Executive Director, Allison Easterwood created a special presentation on Valuing Differences and Discovering Common Ground and how we can all better practice showing respect.

She says, “WILS values the diversity of our staff and consumers greatly. We strive to help everyone with knowledge, kindness, and

understanding. Through valuing our differences, we are able to discover things we all have in common.”

We can all work on practicing R-E-S-P-E-C-T. Let’s work together to make everyone feel valued!

The way we interact and think is partly a result of our own experiences. Other people may have different ways of thinking and interacting and that isn’t bad—it’s just different. These differences are worth learning about.



### Recognize

Not everyone is like you.

### Examine

How you value or devalue differences.

### Start

Paying attention.

### Practice

How you talk about and to others.

### Engage

In conversations. Actively listen.

### Choose

To be kind.

### Together

We are better.



## What is diversity?

*Variety*

Diversity refers to things that are different from each other. There are many dimensions of diversity.

## Stereotype

[ an opinion ]  
An oversimplified judgement.

## Prejudice

[ an attitude ]  
An irrational viewpoint without sufficient evidence.

## Microaggression

[ indignities ]  
Derogatory or negative comments or behaviors.

## Racism

[ a belief ]  
The idea that people not like you are inferior.



## Discrimination

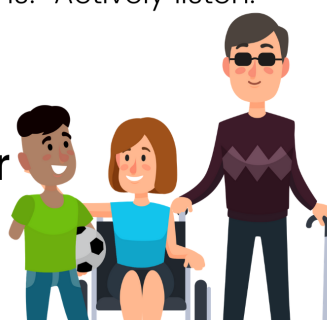
[ unfair ]  
Being treated differently than the majority.

## Privilege

[ advantage ]  
When life has not been made more difficult by something outside your control.

## Inclusion

[ an action ]  
The effort to include others and allow them fair opportunities for success.



# WEST-CENTRAL INDEPENDENT LIVING SOLUTIONS

## SAY Hello!

WILS is a consumer driven, non-residential, 501(c)3 nonprofit resource center that serves people with disabilities in Benton, Henry, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, and Saline counties.

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