

COMMUNITY LIVING CORP.

# THE OPEN DOOR

PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE THROUGH COMMUNITY LIVING

## HIDDEN TREASURES CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!



Twenty years ago a unique arts program was launched specifically for people living with developmental disabilities. *Hidden Treasures*, the brainchild of then CLC staffer Lucille McCarthy, has grown to become an outstanding music, dance and arts and crafts program and a favorite of CLC consumers.

The annual *Hidden Treasures Art and Talent Show* never disappoints, drawing a wide audience of family, friends and

supporters, many of whom have not missed a single show since its inaugural appearance.

Held on June 15 at Fox Lane High School in Bedford, NY, this year's performance began with an imaginative art show, followed by live entertainment, and ended with thunderous applause! HT's cast thrilled the audience with popular numbers such as *It's Great To Be a Cat*;

*Can't Stop The Feeling*; and *Uptown Funk*.

Produced by Lucille McCarthy, Director; show staff included Denyele Urciuoli, Assistant Director; Sharon Sinnott, Assistance and Choral Director Joann Cerretani. Instructors are Wendy Alano, Billy Ayres, Claudia Camachio, Chaveman Kwanmvang, Tara Mazurek, Patricia McGuire-Corbi, Lynn Minzloff, Claude Preece and Brittany Sinnott.

*Continued on p. 6*

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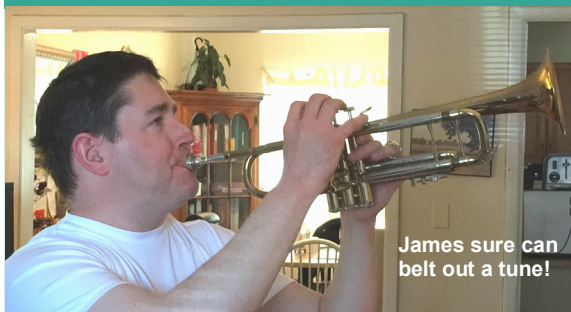
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Lucille McCarthy



## RENAISSANCE MAN



James sure can belt out a tune!

When you hear James Lawther talk about his love of music, the classical guitar and work as a local missionary, you can't help but think, a Renaissance Man! Then he tells you about his daily exercise regime, cross country competitions, work at Winslow Farm feeding chickens, riding horses and a career as a coffee barista. Now you think, a modern Renaissance man!



James with his classical Ibanez guitar

Let's back up a bit. James' early childhood was spent in New Jersey. His family later relocated to Westchester County, where he attended school and received his musical training, first learning to play Trumpet in the Ossining middle school band. "My favorite song to play on the trumpet is still *The Star Spangled Banner*," he says smiling. He began running and later competed in cross country at Briarcliff High School and expanded to biking and most recently ab workouts.

James' mom Ann is a minister at Community Bible Church in Ossining. He often joins her working with inmates at local prisons, bringing Bible study and prayer to the faithful. "I have a sister, Lynn, who lives in Briarcliff Manor, and my sister Jane is in Virginia. My brother Mark lives in Nashville. Now that's a great place for music!" he says. I could tell you more about James and his musical career, but couldn't do as good a job as James himself. The following is an excerpt from his writing.

D. Descloux

### My Music

By James Lawther

I would like to tell you about my experience in music. I started performing musically by playing the trumpet. In September 1979, when I was a fifth grade student at Claremont Elementary School in Ossining, NY, I was offered the opportunity by Mr. G. to play in the school band. I started to play in school concerts. My family came to see me and they enjoyed the concerts.

In middle school I went with my band to see the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in Manhattan! We ate in Chinatown! I continued to play in school bands and my family

continued to come and see me play all through high school. I even played at graduations. In college I played trumpet in the King's College Bank.

I started playing guitar in March of 2013. There were free guitar classes at my church. I borrowed a guitar until a friend found a used guitar and gave it to me.

I took music lessons at Mike Risko Music School. It costs \$480 per season and I learned a lot. I could play *Silent Night* and also songs like *Wake Up Little Suzie*, *The Thrill is Gone*, and *Obla - Di - Obla Da*. I performed in Briarcliff and at many places other plac-

es. My family came to see me play. I liked that.

One day a few years ago, I clipped an article from *The Westchester Guardian* and left it in my mother's bedroom. It was about the Ready, Set, Sing course by The Westchester Chordsmen.

My mom said I should call and I did. I took the course. I received a certificate at graduation and we sang *Jeepers*, *Creepers* at our first live performance. My family and friends all came.

I continue to sing with The Chordsmen and we now sing at many events. We sang at the New York

Botanical Garden's tree lighting ceremony and our songs included *Feast of Lights* and *Jingle Bells*. Before the show. I helped to set up in the morning and then saw the Train Show with another Chordsman.

We also performed at a synagogue, Kol Ami, where we practice every Monday night. We wore tuxedos and sang, and then had dinner and sang some more. My family and friends were there.

Any man can join The Westchester Chordsmen. If any man graduates from the six week course they may join our chorus. Any man.

**GO FUND ME!**      **GO FUND ME!**      **GO FUND ME!**  
**HIDDEN TREASURES**

HAS A GO FUND ME PAGE: [HTTPS://WWW.GOFUNDME.COM/R7JJW](https://www.gofundme.com/r7JJW)

Hidden Treasures is an educational arts program designed to enhance the quality of life for developmentally disabled people by nurturing creativity, self expression and self esteem.

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Just recently, a U.S. Senator stepped up to the microphone and announced that there would be no vote on any health care act tonight. Some thought this was wonderful, that their position was safe for a while longer. Others thought not voting will give the authors and sponsors all the wiggle room they need... that we will have a sensible and equitable solution to the health care crisis in America.

I write of this situation because we find ourselves at a critical juncture at every single level of health care and especially so for the care of the disabled. The only thing that is certain are cuts in funding.

Right now, New York spends more money on long term care than any other state in the union. Unfortunately, this distinction is being vigorously challenged right now by both the New York State and the Federal governments.

After years of "rate rationalization," only one thing is perfectly clear - there will be deeper funding cuts and less supports for the developmentally disabled. If, in the end, our legislators decide to go

with a block grant approach, we can expect even deeper cuts.

I attended a seminar last week geared to explaining the changes that have already occurred and those which will go active in the next few months. More than 200 administrators and financial officers of OMRDD licensed agencies were present.

In the next few weeks requests for proposals will be circulated. CCO (coordinated care organizations) will be responsible for creating the service package for our consumers. The Medicaid service coordinator model will be replaced with a "conflict free" care coordinator. There will be a small number of managed care organizations; families and agencies will need to choose the one they believe will provide the best services to their loved one. Value based treatment will be the basis for service payment.

The first cycle of voluntary sign up for CCO begins January, 2018. The enrollment schedule will be complete 48 months later. It is anticipated that the current MSC force will have the opportunity to be trained in the CCO system.

The most maddening aspect of our dilemma is being unable to plan for the coming changes. We simply cannot predict what the revenue stream will look like until the Federal Government deals with the current Health Care Bills. The paucity of cost of living increases has pretty much squeezed out the last efficiencies.

We need to plan for these changes as best we can while simultaneously being ready to adapt instantly to an entirely new care model. There are almost 200,000 people under the state and voluntary umbrellas requiring services every single day and night. They are not going anywhere. And we will be challenged in the foreseeable future.

So we have a choice – we can take a seat at the table and participate in the new model or we can do nothing and allow ourselves to be placed on the menu.

See you all at the table!

*John Porcella*

## SHOPPING COUNTS!

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## SIX FLAGS IN NEW ENGLAND...

...turned out to be a terrific trip for a group of CLC consumers! This past May, staffers Kami and Kerry escorted the fun-seekers to the largest theme park in New England, Six Flags, located in Agawam, Massachusetts. There they experienced all the thrills and chills promised, and more!

At left, KK and Jill pose with a few smartly-dressed characters.

Far right, Kerry, Jill and Ron right after they got off *The Joker* ride.

Photos: Kami Quast



## MEET YVETTE!

Yvette, the new woman on the block, moved to CLC's Mount Kisco apartment from Elmsford less than a year ago. With her two roomies, Angela and Alma, she has settled in and enjoys her independence.

Yvette has many interests, but her yearning for discovery has inspired her to become an accomplished puzzle solver. Whether picture or crossword, Yvette enthusiastically sets out to solve them all. Her biggest obstacle? Puzzle inventory needs constant replenishment! "I need puzzles, people!"

Yvette is also an avid movie buff. "The Westerns are classics for me. The original *Magnificent Seven* with Steve McQueen is just so great. I also like other kinds of movies. Doris Day in the *Pajama Game*, and Olivia



de Havilland and Montgomery Clift in *The Heiress* are the best. I can watch them over and over."

Although Yvette loves the changing seasons in New York, she sometimes needs to get away to warmer climates. She's visited her native Jamaica in the past and recently

toured the Cayman Islands aboard a TCM (Turner Classic Movie) Cruise.

But Yvette hasn't satisfied her travel bug quite yet. "I really want to visit Paris, London, Rome, and all the great cities of Europe. I especially like to read about Roman history."

Yvette is also a self-proclaimed *foodie*. If not dining out at her favorite *Red Lobster*, she likes to cook pork chops or chicken for her roommates. "We take turns," she notes.

To help fund her travels and occasional shopping trips to specialty fashion shops, Yvette is employed as a teacher's assistant at Cerebral Palsy of Westchester, working with students up to 21 years old. "They are a bit noisy sometimes, but I love the children. I must, I've been there for 15 years!"

With such a whirlwind of activity and interests, Yvette seeks rest and relaxation and looks forward to holidays. So what is her favorite holiday? "It's my birthday, February 15, of course!"

D. Descloux

## TALK DERBY TO ME!

With over 150 people attending the event, Winslow Therapeutic Riding Academy's annual Kentucky Derby fundraiser on May 6 at Warwick Wine Garden and Piano Bar was a resounding success. Thanks to event organizer John E. Desibia and volunteers Rose Seaman and Janice Krauss-Brigante, nearly \$1,800 was raised.

Live music and Southern-style fare added to the racing excitement. Awards were presented including those for best, most creative and most fun hats. Special thanks to hosts Chris and Marilyn Littell and staff of the Warwick Wine Garden & Piano Bar.



From Left, CLCers Ron Carter and Karen Marcovici at the event chatting with riding instructor Stacy Lenz.



Event coordinator John Desibia with hat award winner Rebecca Reinle.



Winslow TRC Executive Director Sue Ferro.

### WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

Would you like your son, daughter, family member or friend featured in this newsletter? Do you have a story idea or interesting photo?

If so, email Deb Descloux at [swissx@optonline.net](mailto:swissx@optonline.net) or Irene Quill at [iquill@communitylivingcorp.org](mailto:iquill@communitylivingcorp.org)

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## PRADER—WILLI SYNDROME

By Carol Smith

*Prader-Willi syndrome (PWS) is a rare genetic disorder due to an abnormality on the 15th chromosome resulting in an excessive preoccupation with food and constant hunger, which in turn can lead to obesity and obesity-related health problems. Various behavioral problems can arise in individuals with PWS, including compulsivity and emotional outbursts. Overall, individuals with PWS are happy, healthy and fun to be around. Although they have health concerns, they can lead very full and productive lives.*

Continuing education for staff is vital in order to provide the best of care to CLC consumers. Last month, CLC's Prader-Willi Coordinator Carol Smith and five coworkers attended the Prader-Willi Alliance 27<sup>th</sup> Conference in Albany, NY. "I've attended many, many conferences over the years," says Carol, "and I always come back with new insights and information."

Carol reports that at this year's event, she learned of new studies being

done on swallowing techniques, an issue affecting other groups and not just those with PWS.

One method is to take a sip of water after each bite of food. "In addition, we learned that fresh and raw produce may not always be the best choices," Carol reports. "Thorough cooking is now thought to be beneficial. This softens the food, making it easier to swallow. We're already trying new recipes and alternative preparation methods."

Another take-away from the conference for Carol was the realization that CLC provides more choices for consumers. "For example," she says, "we allow some PWS consumers to cook for themselves, with supervision, while most other programs do not, believing it is too overwhelming for the consumer."

"We feel that, if a PWS consumer wants to cook for him- or herself, it should be encouraged. If the sessions are successful, they can continue."

At CLC, staff even occasionally brings a PWS consumer food shopping,



Carol

letting the person help by pushing the cart instead of choosing the food. This is almost unheard of in other programs. "Of course," adds Carol, "not every PWS consumer should cook or go food shopping. We take an individualized approach." It should come as no surprise that Carol's presentation at this year's conference was about choices and change.

Carol joined CLC in 1993 and oversees Todd and Curry Street, the agency's two residences dedicated to consumers with Prader-Willi Syndrome. Each residence has five consumers.

Asked how she feels about the agency, Carol sums it up in one sentence, "We have the best staff in the world."

## GETTING REEL WITH STEPHEN



Hi, it's Stephen M. with my latest review!

## MOVIE: THE FATE OF THE FURIOUS



I recently had the pleasure of seeing *The Fate of the Furious*, the rating is PG-13, and the main actors are Charlize Theron and Vin Diesel.

They were the two that were causing all of the trouble in the movie. The movie was filled with car racing and fancy cars. The movie was action packed and it was so exciting! It was an awesome movie.

I give this movie two thumbs way up!

## WANTED!

CLC hires the best and brightest talent around and always has an eye out for experienced professionals. Currently, the agency has full- and part-time openings for direct care personnel to provide quality care and individualized skill instruction for dually diagnosed, developmentally disabled adults.

A positive attitude, ability to think creatively and compassion towards others are prerequisites. Prior experience working with developmentally disabled individuals highly preferred. In return CLC offers competitive salaries and benefits packages.

Applicant must possess a HS Diploma/GED, valid driver's license for past three years, and have own transportation. Background check and drug testing are required.

If you or someone you know is interested, resumes should be sent to Human Resources via email at [resumes@communitylivingcorp.org](mailto:resumes@communitylivingcorp.org) or Fax to (914) 241-0578.

## A TRIP TO THE BRONX... ZOO!

Consumers from Todd and Curry Street spent an early spring afternoon with the animals, and they couldn't have enjoyed it more. Staffers Kami and Taylor planned the visit, making this a wonderful day out for the group.

Photo: Kami Quast



Continued from p. 1

## HIDDEN TREASURES CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!

**Congratulations to the *Hidden Treasures* cast for another superb performance. Well done!**

Troy Allocco Maria Aucello Nancy Autolitano Louise Baller David Bigelow Michoal Blesofsky Elizabeth Bruni Jessica Bunyea Janet Calciano Ron Carter Anna Charitou Margaret Comouche Robin Cooper Howard Cox John Decola Cindy DiLonardo Roberta Dutt Eric Eaton Cynthia Evans Susan Felicione David Fils-Aimes Donna Fiorillo Kevin Fredeman Timothy Gilligan Barbara Girigliano Richard Grossman Danny Hackett Pamela Hines Thomas Hwang Anthony Johnson Anthony Johnston Julie Joseph Philip Junker Joyce Kim Diane Langley Lynne Lanza Andrea Lenski Jason Lester Elizabeth Lewis Ben LoBalbo Shaquan Lovell Mary Lou Lyons Karen Manzi David Martin Jessica Martino Judy Middleton Suzanne Minoff Brian Mitchell Stephen Mitchell Clarice Moccio Ricardo Molina Frank Mondello Taylor Montel Patricia Morabito Eileen Morra James Morra Jenny Moskowitz Robert Mountain Alan North James O'Connor Michelle Offenberg Bridget Oshea Joshua Patterson Christine Persanis Emily Pinsker Edward Preiss Donald Prigge Sharmils Rambissoul Damian Ramos Diane Retzlaff Diane Rosen Petra Sallis Leslie Sandler Ernst Schuttrumpf Kathleen Shortall Harvey Simons Jay Simons Megan Sinnott Hayley Smith Michael Sullivan Robert Tabena Steven Tamas Patricia Trahey Edward Uysal Cary Walker Timothy Walker Kate Warren Holly Whitlock. For news, pictures and videos, please LIKE CLC Hidden Treasures on Facebook.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAYS!

In February, friends and staff celebrated the birthday of long time Highland resident Roberto. In his honor, the buffet included his favorites - pizza, fried chicken and cupcakes! ↓



April showers not only brought flowers, but a birthday celebration for Jonathan. His party also featured plenty of pizza! ↑

SAVE THE DATE!  
SAVE THE DATE!  
SAVE THE DATE!



## eNEWS UPDATES

WE SEARCH THE WEB TO  
BRING YOU THE LATEST NEWS

**FRIENDLIER SKIES** The skies will become friendlier for passengers with disabilities, according to The U.S. Department of Transportation. The agency will move forward with new regulations to improve access to on-board entertainment such as captioning and audio descriptions and greater safety and maneuverability standards for on-board wheelchairs. Accessible lavatories on single aisle aircraft is another issue under review. Currently, only planes with multiple aisles must meet the requirement. A proposal is expected in 2017.

**FEDS SET DISABILITY HIRING QUOTA** With a new hiring goal, the federal government will use affirmative action to grow the number of people with disabilities on its payroll. Twelve percent of each entity's workforce should be people with disabilities and two percent should have *targeted* conditions including intellectual and developmental disabilities. The rule applies to all federal employment and requires agencies to provide assistance services to those who need help with basic activities during the workday. Regulations will take effect January 2018.

Source: *The Disability Scoop*

**ZAPPOS DELIVERS** Online retail giant Zappos has made it a little simpler for people with disabilities to find clothes that meet their sensory and physical needs. The retailer launched a special section on its web site to highlight "functional and fashionable products designed to make life easier for those who have challenges getting dressed." *Zappos Adaptive*, features items that are reversible, soft to the touch, without tags, buttons and zippers and includes slip-on shoes, easy-to-use fasteners and orthotic-friendly footwear. Zappos said the idea came from just one customer interaction.



"Zappos Adaptive started with a single phone call from a customer looking to exchange a pair of shoes for her grandson who was unable to tie his laces," said Saul Dave, director at Zappos. "My disappointment in not being able to replace the shoes inspired this initiative." In addition, Zappos has a dedicated team of adaptive specialists trained to help those shopping for people with special needs, and are still adding to the collection. "We discovered there's a huge underserved community needing clothing and footwear that is both functional and fashionable," Dave said. "This is just the beginning."

## CLC GALA

Sunday, October 15

THE GREENTREE  
COUNTRY CLUB

NEW ROCHELLE, NY

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914/241-2076

at the  
CLC Foundation

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## **DANCE, DANCE, DANCE, DANCE, DANCE, DANCE, DANCE, DANCE FOR A CAUSE!**

On a recent Sunday afternoon in May at Equinox Gym in Armonk, NY, 30 participants danced for a great cause — *Hidden Treasures!*

Everyone worked up a sweat during the lively 45-minute Zumba class. Afterward, dancers enjoyed refreshments and full use of the gym. Check out our HT Facebook page for fundraiser videos at [Facebook.com/clchiddentreasures](https://www.facebook.com/clchiddentreasures).

*Hidden Treasures* is an arts education program for people with special needs.

Denyele Urciuoli



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