

COMMUNITY LIVING CORP.

THE OPEN DOOR

PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

CLC CHEETAHS DEBUT AT SPECIAL OLYMPICS TAKE 2ND PLACE IN HUDSON VALLEY REGIONALS

On March 17, the CLC Cheetahs Special Olympics Basketball Team made its team debut at Albert Leonard Middle School in New Rochelle, NY at the 2018 Special Olympics Basketball Invitational. The team took second place for Division II in the 2018 Hudson Valley, Region South Team Competition!

It was a joyous day for the Cheetahs, which competed for the first time and played three games in this tournament; the first game was a Pairing & Matching against the Hudson Valley Outlaws.

The Cheetahs began their competition right after, playing fiercely and winning against the Sound Shore Stars. The Cheetahs lost



The Cheetahs: First row, from left: Kevin D, Jennifer F, Nicole D, Louise B, Ron C, Jenny M. Back row, from left: Sam B, Brian L & Brian M.



their final game against New Rochelle (White Team).

The players have been working hard in basketball practice every Saturday for the past two years, determined to compete at Special Olympics. Team members showed determination, teamwork, courage, sportsmanship and pride to have made it this far.

One of the highlights for CLC Cheetahs Coach Lori was Kevin D, telling her during a break, "We love you Coach! You are our coach and like a second mother to us. We are like a family." Special thanks to Ange Boh, a CLC staffer at our Prader-Willi program for filling in as Assistant Coach, and Kristen Kiney from Health Services for swiftly facilitating records and medical check ups.

Continued on p. 7

Inside this issue:

- eNews Updates | CLC Cruisers 2
- Home, Sweet Home: A Hidden Treasures Story 4
- Jenny: Artiste Extraordinaire 6
- Sonia Takes the Cake! 7

Next Issue: June 2018

21st Hidden Treasures Show

Thursday, June 21

6pm Art Show | 7pm Performance
Fox Lane High School, Bedford NY

Tickets at the door

eNews UPDATES

WE SEARCH THE WEB TO
BRING YOU THE LATEST NEWS

B&B Will Operate As Working Group Home

In an effort to help make dreams come true for adults with developmental disabilities, a nonprofit organization has purchased a bed and breakfast for just more than \$300,000. It will be run by individuals with developmental disabilities.

A large donation by an anonymous donor allowed Waterloo-based Human Support Services to buy the five-bedroom bed and breakfast in Waterloo, Illinois, which they hope to open in summer 2018. Three adults with developmental disabilities will live there in a group-home setting and operate the B&B with support from staff. The other two bedrooms will be available as traditional bed-and-breakfast rooms.

A B&B offers myriad employment options like housekeeping, laundry, culinary arts, event planning and landscaping, according to Craig Laskowski, chief program officer for the nonprofit. Previously called The Waterloo Inn, a name for the new bed and breakfast is still under consideration as the property undergoes renovations before opening. (condensed version) by Jamie Forsythe, Belleville News-Democrat/TNS)

GOOGLE Maps Made Accessible

With a new Google Maps feature, the technology giant is looking to make it easier for people with disabilities to get around.

Google said it is adding information on its Maps platform to point people to accessible public transit stops. The wheelchair accessible routes feature is rolling out initially in London, New York, Tokyo, Mexico City, Boston and Sydney, with additional cities in the works.

"In city centers, buses and trains are often the best way to get around, which presents a challenge for people who use wheelchairs or with other mobility needs. Wheelchair or accessible Information isn't always readily available or easy to find," wrote Rio Akasaka, product manager for Google Maps. "We're introducing 'wheelchair accessible' routes to make getting around easier for those with mobility needs."

In order to find an accessible public transit route, users can type in a destination on Google Maps, then select "directions" and the public transportation icon. Next, choose wheelchair accessible under "options." When you select this option, Google Maps will list possible routes that take mobility needs into consideration.

In 2016, Google Maps began including information on business listings indicating wheelchair accessibility.

The Disability Source

CLC CRUISERS

CLCers cruised the Atlantic's blue waters on the *Norwegian Gem* recently. Destination: The Eastern Caribbean, docking at the ports of Antigua and Barbados, among others.

Their favorite stop was St. Kitts, where the group toured with a private guide. Located in the Lesser Antilles, the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis have a combined area of just 104 square miles. Despite being only two miles apart, these breathtakingly beautiful islands were widely recognized as being separate entities with distinct identities until they were forced to unite in the late 19th century.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Save this date! On Sunday, May 6th CLC will host an open meeting of all CLC affiliates (*CLC, CLC Foundation, CLC Transportation and the Winslow Therapeutic Riding Center*) with the intent of answering questions regarding each of these CLC entities. There have been large changes in the manner in which we provide services and even larger changes that are on the way. This meeting will present an excellent forum to ask questions and help us determine how we will provide services into the future.

If you are not certain of what a CCO is, or even what a CCA is, this meeting is the place to ask and to have your questions answered. This meeting will be similar to the

annual business meetings we have conducted in the past except that there is so much more to talk about, especially as we continue to settle into our own building.

The large spaces are in good use now. They provide venues for everything including *Hidden Treasures*, basketball practice, staff in-service training and a meeting hub for two dramatically expanded day habilitation opportunities at *Winslow Riding* and with *Culinary Connections*, the purveyor of delicious baked goods and snacks.

I had the pleasure of attending the Special Olympics Regional basketball tournament last Saturday and must admit to a real surprise at the

level of play. This team is serious about its basketball. It was a fast paced game with some amazing shooting – our own Sam B. landed not one, but several three pointers from way, way outside. My favorite was watching the fast breaks with some of our smaller players feeding the ball to the big guys for immediate deposit into the hoop!

On Mondays and Tuesdays *Hidden Treasures* practices their choral, artistic and theatrical talents here at 135, as it's come to be called. The choral group just happens to meet on the ground floor, directly beneath my office. This group is getting "better all the time", just as the Beatles once predicted.

And finally, yes we really did survive four major storms and power outages in the past six weeks. Thanks go out to everyone who helped

keep our people safe and warm during this time of potential crisis.

We had staff coming in early and staying through additional shifts. We had offers of food in case some locations couldn't cook. We had our maintenance department assign its staff to maintain the generators. In one case a maintenance department employee was called in at 10:00 PM, the height of the storm. He remained on location until 2:00 AM, making sure that the house was heated.

Please join me in thanking these CLC staff whenever you see them. Once again they've proven to be the best there is!

John Porcella

Special thanks and photo credit for this issue: Irene Quill, Patrice Thompson, Lorena Rucaj, Lucille McCarthy and Sharon Sinnott.

A Heartfelt Feast

CLC chefs at Culinary Connections (CC) threw a Valentine's Day bash on February 16th at *Infusion Restaurant* in Pelham. CC cooked up a delicious buffet of salads, pasta, a chicken dish, and holiday desserts. The party was open to all CLC individuals, and staff assisted in serving guests. CC is a training program that prepares people with disabilities for careers in the food service industry.



HOME, SWEET HOME: A HIDDEN TREASURES STORY

Lucille McCarthy was the brain-child behind *Hidden Treasures* (HT) and continues her good work with the innovative program to this day. She shares her thoughts about HT:

I began a new career with CLC as a housekeeper at Bedford Manor in 1992, completely unaware of how this job would change my life. After moving to work at London Road, I noticed how many of the individuals loved music. Really, truly loved it.



Drummer Kevin F. keeps the beat for the group.

Who recorded that in 1968! I had a good belly laugh.

As I continued to observe individuals in my group and their connection to music, I thought, why shouldn't they have the opportunity to shine? Why not create a way for them to perform on stage? And that's how *Hidden Treasures* began.

I had a lot of help from great staff, Lorraine, Debbie, Colleen, Robin and John, among others. We put on our first show at WIHD in Valhalla. Our performers sang Karaoke and had a blast. The audience loved it.

We gave three more shows for CLC and practiced in the most unlikely venues -- school gyms, community centers, and yes even in hallways. We were nomads and used whatever space we could find to hone our craft.

In 1997 a CLC parent, Carolyn Scarcello, and I decided to start a bona fide program for developmentally disabled adults, and *Hidden Treasures* got legs. Carolyn had the know-how to get HT going and created the arts and crafts piece, while I ran performance arts.

We continued to practice wherever we could and had successes early on. An individual, Anne Marie E., loved Michael Jackson and could recite his family history as well as all his song lyrics. She was painfully shy with a fear of performing and only sang while standing behind the living room curtains. Anne Marie joined HT and in time overcame her fears. She performed a solo of *Billy Jean* at our first show. The audience gave a standing ovation. Anne Marie beamed.



A talented HT band member for two years, Tommy W. began playing the piano, organ and drums as a child.

This coming June 21st the students will put on their 21st performance. We've come a long way. Today, students choose the scripts and work on them until they are satisfied. It is their choice what the show

I remember driving one of the guys from the house, Ernst, to an appointment when a song came on the radio. I asked Ernst who was singing it and he said *who?* I replied, *if I knew who I wouldn't ask you.* Again he said *who?* My response was the same. Then Ernst said, quite emphatically, *Lucille, The*



Musical Drama is taught by Billy Ayers, who also organizes the production of the annual HT Talent Show.



Founded by John Signorelli under the guidance of the late Lorraine Ruiz, CLC Choral Group is led by Joanne Cerratani along with music director Claude Preece, his wife Kathy, and our wonderful volunteer Betty Dyson. They perform for the Lions Club and The American Legion.

will become. It is produced under the direction of Billy Ayers, a professional in theater and music whom we love and respect.

Twenty five years later, I'm still overcome with joy and relish the excitement and delight that HT brings to our students. I feel blessed to work with such inspiring people. Thank you, thank you, John Signorelli, for having faith in my ability to take on this challenge and for your years of help. My deepest gratitude goes to John Porcella for his steadfast support and unwavering assistance.



The combined HT Dance and Tap classes. Claudia Camachio teaches Dance I Advanced, and Tara Mazurek from the Steffi Nossen Dance Studio leads Tap and Dance II.

I would like to add that a few years after our Hidden Treasures debut, John Signorelli had a dream of starting a choral group for disabled adults. This became a reality and they were directed by

Lorraine Ruiz for many years. The CLC Foundation Choral Group now performs in several venues in our community and is directed by Joann Cerrentini. It is a great addition to Hidden Treasures.

In closing, I want to emphasize how important it is to have a permanent home for HT. We no longer hunt for space to dance or sing, borrow tables to spread out our paints or practice

around others' schedules. We are truly grateful to have a home, and it's a sweet feeling. Thank you all.

Lucille McCarthy



Arts and Crafts is run under the direction of Chevy (Nokyoong) Kwanmaung, Sharon Sinnott and Brittany Sinnott.



Wendy Albano, an art teacher in public school, teaches Studio Art .

On Hidden Treasures

Thoughts from Billy Ayers, HT's Improvisational Integrated Music and Drama teacher.

Working with HT and Lucille for the past 17 years has been a joy and a privilege; a journey guided by inspiration and love.

Over the years I learned we all have a different level of ability. Imagine a person with only 10% of your overall ability. Now imagine that person playing beautiful music, dancing to a song's rhythm like no other and creating inspiring artwork. At other levels, some individuals never fail to bring me a card for every occasion, or write a note of thanks. One person knit me a handsome scarf; I had no idea that this person knew how to knit, or had the ability.

What we value in our society is earning, producing and power. What is most evident with people with special needs is that there's so much more. When you open your heart, the most wondrous and powerful part of you is revealed. That is a true joy of life, and I am lucky to experience it as part of HT.

A multi-award winning teacher/therapist/artist, Billy Ayers is a recipient of Honor Our Heroes and founder of LifelineTheaterinc www.Lifelinetheaterinc.org

JENNY

ARTISTE EXTRAORDINAIRE

First and foremost, Jenny M. is an artist. "My mother and aunt were artists also," she says. "It runs in our family." Twice a month, an art teacher comes to Jenny's home for lessons. "I do pencil drawings, acrylic paint, watercolors, almost anything," she adds. "My dad treats me to the lessons. I really enjoy them.

Jenny and her two roomies Diane and Andrea live in Peekskill, where they share the food shopping and cooking. "Here's my best chicken recipe," she says: Put two to three Cornish hens in a roasting pan, add canned potatoes, fresh carrots and onions. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, garlic powder, add a little water, and spray with Pam cooking oil (keeps the calories low.) Roast at 350F until it's done, maybe an hour plus. You may have to cut the hen by the leg to check for doneness. (Sounds healthy and delicious.)

Most days Jenny travels to Winslow Therapeutic Riding Center in Warwick, NY with other individuals who work on the farm. She helps keep the place tidy, and especially enjoys clearing the horse stalls of hay. "It's fun to move the hay around," she says. "I like to pet the horses; they are



Jenny's drawing of a bird in springtime.

so friendly." Jenny also goes to *Infusion Restaurant* occasionally, where she enjoys baking.

This busy lady is a longtime *Hidden Treasures* participant. "I take Modern Dance classes and will be in the Talent Show in June," she says. "My dad also pays for these classes and I really appreciate it. I have so much fun."

Jenny tells me her Dad lives nearby and the family will be taking him to Manhattan soon for a birthday lunch. "My brother Ross and sister Marian are coming, and so is my stepmother Linda,



Pencil sketches of Jenny's sister Marian, at left, and her self portrait.

along with my brother-in-law and three nieces. It will be a nice day."

When not painting or dancing, Jenny is a reader and favors "funny books." She watches TV; *General Hospital* and *The Housewives of New Jersey*. "Teresa G. is crazy, but I love watching her."

An occasional traveler, Jenny has visited her mom in Arizona and trekked to Georgia to see a friend, Nikki. "A long time ago I went to England and actually saw Queen Elizabeth on a balcony outside Buckingham Palace!" she exclaims.

Jenny's most recent thrill, however, was at last fall's CLC Gala. "I modeled some of the fashions on the red carpet," she recalls. I was a good walker and turner. I'd do it again!" *D. Descloux*

SUPPORT CLC FOR FREE!

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SHOP AT AMAZON THROUGH SMILE.AMAZON.COM

AMAZON WILL DONATE 0.5% OF ELIGIBLE PURCHASES TO THE CHARITY OF YOUR CHOICE. JUST ENTER & CLICK ON THIS LINK:

[HTTPS://SMILE.AMAZON.COM/CH/13-3563609](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/13-3563609)

AND A PORTION OF YOUR AMAZON PURCHASES WILL SUPPORT CLC!

EACH TIME YOU ENTER AMAZON, MAKE SURE YOU GO TO SMILE.AMAZON.COM FIRST (OR RE-CLICK ON LINK BELOW), AND PURCHASES WILL AUTOMATICALLY SUPPORT CLC! EASY PEASY. PLEASE PASS ON TO EVERYONE!

[HTTPS://SMILE.AMAZON.COM/CH/13-3563609](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/13-3563609)

WANTED!

CLC has full & part-time openings for direct care personnel to provide quality care & individualized skill instruction for dually diagnosed, developmentally disabled adults. A positive attitude, ability to think creatively and compassion towards others are prerequisites. Prior experience with developmentally disabled individuals highly preferred. CLC offers competitive salaries and benefits packages.

Required: HS Diploma/GED, valid driver's license for past 3 years, own transportation, background check, drug testing. Candidates should Fax resumes to (914) 241-0578 or email HR at resumes@communitylivingcorp.org

Have a CLC photo or story? email us!

Editor: Deb Descloux at swissx@optonline.net or Editorial Assistant/Reporter: Irene Quill at iquill@communitylivingcorp.org

The Open Door is published quarterly.

SONIA TAKES THE CAKE

It's an unusually warm February in Peekskill as Sonia S. answers the door to her apartment and welcomes me in. She has been a CLC'er since 2015.

Sonia is a good cook and even better baker, she tells me. She works at *Infusion Restaurant* in Pelham, sharpening her skills along with other Culinary Connections (CC) participants. Sonia's specialty is gourmet cakes.

For Valentine's Day, coconut, red velvet and Oreo cakes were some of the flavors available to order by CLC staff and individuals at the main offices. (Sonia's favorite is coconut.) She and fellow CC chefs are already planning bake sales for Easter and Mother's Day.

Sonia's two cousins live in the area. Cynthia is in nearby White Plains, and her cousin Jeanette lives on Long Island. "Next time I see them, I'll bring them a cake." (Coconut, perhaps?)

Nearby Walmart and Old Navy at Cortlandt Town Center are frequent shopping destinations for Sonia and her roommate Anne Marie accompanied by CLC staff. Shoprite is the destination for food shopping. "You just have to read the

circulars before going," she advises. Her favorite dinner? "Mac and cheese. Yum."

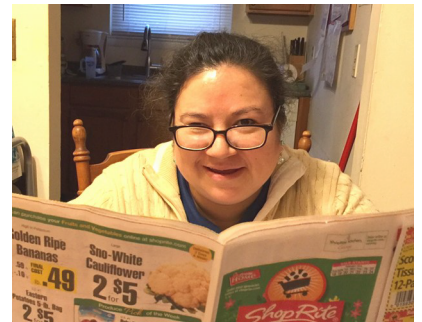
Sonia enjoys watching *The Housewives of New Jersey* and *The Housewives of Beverly Hills* TV shows. She also likes *The Disney Channel* and shows about cats and dogs. When not entertaining at home she goes to the movies with friends Ellen, Louise, and Kristina. "I only like comedies though," she says.

Although she hasn't traveled much recently, Sonia enjoys vacations and has visited Italy, Spain, and California. She's saving up for her next adventure. Notes Sonia, "I hear the trips to Martha's Vineyard are terrific."

We're just about finished with our interview when Sonia gets up from the table. "This is my hobby," she says, pulling open a drawer to display beautifully detailed beading projects of all colors. "They are relaxing, fun and not very expensive, so I always have one in the works." Besides baking cakes, this is what I like to do." *D. Descloux*



Sonia crafting colorful bead art.



Checking the supermarket flyer before going food shopping.

CLC Cheetahs Debut at Special Olympics

Continued from p. 1

For Nicole D., Cheetahs player number 21, this competition "was so much fun and we won Second Place!"

The team is thrilled and proud to have friends, family, CLC staff, and especially JP (CLC Executive Director) root from the sidelines. The competition solidified their sense of ownership and identification with the role of being professional basketball team players.

"This is just the beginning for us," says Brian L., who hopes to play at future tournaments to compete as the main shooting guard of the Cheetahs, which happens to be CLC's first ever sports team.

Congratulations to the CLC Cheetahs who hope to take home the gold next tournament, playing hard and proudly wearing their navy blue and yellow uniforms. Go Cheetahs!

Lorena Rucaj



The Cheetahs show off their awards.

CLC's Basketball Team was born as a lifestyle enhancement opportunity helping CLC individuals keep active as well as build on the developmental and social aspects of sports participation. Their Coach, Lorena Rucaj, a Clinical Support Liaison, and Licensed Mental Health Counselor, began this initiative two years ago under the theoretical framework of Sports Psychology and Performance Enhancement.

The goal in using this framework for individuals is not only to increase physical activity, but also to enhance mental health well-being and mental and social skills development. "Being part of a competitive sports team encourages individuals to expand their social and communication abilities, follow rules of sportsmanship, develop discipline of emotions and physical body (related mobility), and increases their self-esteem and confidence," says Lorena. "On the basketball court, our athletes experience a recognition of athletes first, and persons with disabilities second."

COMMUNITY LIVING CORP.
135 RADIO CIRCLE DRIVE
MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549

**GETTING
REEL
WITH STEPHEN**



Movie and play reviews from
CLC's in-house expert.

**Movie: *Three Billboards
Outside Ebbing Missouri***

Crime Drama R

I saw *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing Missouri*. I thought it was a slow movie. It is about a woman who puts up signs outside of her town because her daughter was attacked and murdered. She is angry and feels the police have not done enough to find the criminals. She starts to do her own investigating.

I only give this movie 2 stars because it was not very interesting.



(Note that this movie was nominated for seven Academy Awards in 2018 and won two Oscars for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actor. Stephen, however, remains steadfast in his review.)

CLC CORP. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ROGER J. COOPER, PRESIDENT; PRISCILLA ORR, VICE CHAIR
SANDRA DAMMANN, R.N., SECRETARY; ROBERT BRODY, TREASURER;
ROBERT HELLER; CHRISTINE JOHNSTON; LEO KAYTES; MINA SALLIS

—
JOHN E. PORCELLA, PH.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR