



# *dFs News*

5454 East State Street  
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Hermitage, PA 16148  
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[www.diversifiedfamily.org](http://www.diversifiedfamily.org)

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Layout Design: Chris Maurice

Spring 2009

## Diversified Family Services

# OPEN HOUSE

Come visit **dFs**

- Adult Training Facility
- Community Employment
- Foster Care
- Hab Aid Services

**Thursday, March 26, 2009 – 2:00pm-7:00pm**  
**Diversified Family Services**  
**5454 East State Street, Hermitage**

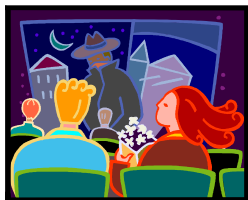
Group Homes Tours By Appointment Only!  
Please call

724-346-2123, Ext. 5529 to make a reservation.

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February 2009  
At  
The Drop-In Center



**February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4pm-6pm: Dinner & a Chick Flick**  
It might be a romantic movie, but everyone will be sure to enjoy it!  
Please RSVP by 1/30/09 to ensure availability!

**February 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, & 25<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-5pm: The Biggest Loser Club competition**

Join in our Biggest Loser competition every Wednesday through April and compete for prizes all while losing weight and having fun! Pick up a registration form at dFs.



**February 13<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-8pm: Sweetheart Dance**

Come dance the evening away with your sweetheart and listen to the cool music courtesy of DJ Joe.



**February 18<sup>th</sup>, 5pm-7pm: TSS Night**

TSS's, looking for a low cost winter activity? Come to the Drop-In Center and utilize our many resources for those after school hours.

*\*This activity is reserved for TSS workers only and will not be open to the general public. \$3 fee per child, TSS is free.*

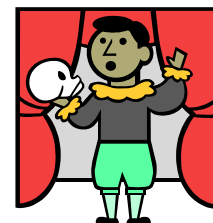


**February 19<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Cooking Class**

A class for beginners, no experience needed! Come learn how to cook something tasty and learn your way around the kitchen. Spacing is extremely limited! RSVP ASAP to ensure a spot.

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Acting Class**

Learn the basics of movement and stage presence. Practice different techniques for being on stage, and work on scenes. *\*Members who attend every class will be eligible to participate in a recital later in the year.*



**February 25<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm-7pm: Scrapbook Club**

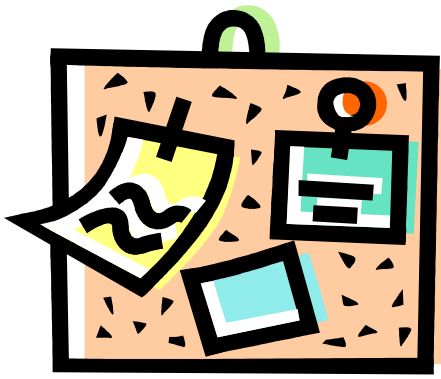
Love pictures? Want to make a scrapbook? Have a great time making mini scrapbooks at the Drop-In Center. RSVP required by 2/20/09 to ensure availability. *\*Please bring pictures that you want to include in your scrapbook!*



**All Drop-In Center activities are FREE unless otherwise noted**

For information or to RSVP please call Mary James at:

(724) 346-2123 ext 5533



## FROM THE SUGGESTION BOX

**Sherry Ehrhart**- for her suggestion to start a Wii Bowling League.

**Melissa Flickinger**-for her suggestion to create digital photo scrapbooks for dFs residents.

**Karen Gould** - for her suggestion which improved the security of payroll information mailed to employees.

**Mary James**- for her suggestion to create a direct care professional's "Activities Team" to plan & organize activities to promote a higher level of client participation in the community.

**Tiffany Johnson** – for her suggestion to create & maintain a Community Activities calendar on Office Tracker. This will help the entire staff plan for meaningful activities for our clients.

**Jennifer Ketcham** - for her suggestion to use more natural cleaning products to clean the office, to avoid chemical smells and create a more pleasant environment

**Nora McElhinny**-for her suggestion to include the location of the emergency kit on the job shadowing checklist so that new employees will know where the kits are located.

**Jennifer Minett** – for her suggestion to mail CHAPS items to service personnel to show support of our troops.

**Jennifer Minett** – for her suggestion to keep a digital camera in the on-call bag. It will be useful to take pictures of accidents or incidents which might require further reporting or investigation.

**Jennifer Minett** – for her suggestion to make announcements regarding office procedures at the beginning of trainings which are held in the conference room in order to reduce the distraction of people wandering through the halls and interrupting work.

**Harriett Pascarella** – for her suggestion which improved the on-call information which SSA, received.

**Dr. Michael Stern** – for his suggestion to offer dance lessons as an activity at Drop-In.

# TSS Night at the Drop-In Center

Calling all TSS's! Are you looking for an inexpensive activity to fill those long winter evenings? The Drop-In Center at dFs will be opening its doors once a month exclusively for TSS's. Come and use our many resources in our kid friendly and confidential environment. For more information or to request a Drop-In Center schedule, contact Mary James at (724) 346-2123, ext. 5533.

## dFs to Award Annual Robin Kralevich Memorial Scholarship

The Robin Kralevich Memorial Scholarship fund will award its fourth annual scholarship to a college student currently enrolled in a human services major course of study. Robin Kralevich was a Sharpsville High School graduate and an employee of Diversified Family Services who died tragically several years ago in an automobile accident while on her way home from work. This scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$500.00. The student must be a resident of Mercer County.

Any qualified student may obtain a scholarship application from the financial aid office of their university or by contacting dFs at (724) 346-2123, extension 5529.

Anyone wishing to make contributions to the dFs scholarship fund in honor or memory of another individual may do so by completing the donation form and returning it to:

Diversified Family Services  
ATTN: Nancy J. Tusinac

\*\*\*\*\*

### Robin Kralevich Memorial Scholarship

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

I would like notification of my memorial/honorary donation sent to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to Diversified Family Services**

Diversified Family Services, Inc. is a qualified 501(c) (3), Charitable Organization. The official registration and financial information of Diversified Family Services, Inc., may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



**Record Number of dFs  
Clients Turnout  
to Vote!**

**During the past year, the Client Voting Committee, led by Mary James and Michele Groover, has worked to find out which clients of dFs are interested in voting, and for those who wish to vote, offer assistance both with the registration process and with voting in the elections.**

**By March, 2008, the committee organized an effort to register all clients who were interested in voting in the April, 2008, PA primary election and provide educational material. In the April, 2008 PA primary election, 6 clients voted at the polls and one client voted absentee.**

**For the general election in November, a record number of dFs clients voted: a total of 14 dFs clients voted at the polls, and one client voted absentee- more than twice the amount of clients voting in any previous election!**

**Congratulations to all the staff whom, with care and respect, provided the support, education, and transportation to the clients of dFs who wished to vote. There is no doubt that dFs clients will continue their interest in participating in the voting process in future elections!**

**Open House – Open Doors**

**From the Desk of**

**Marilyn Klemens  
Executive Director**

**dFs** will be hosting an Open House on Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> in order to open doors for those with intellectual disabilities. Our Open House will give the community the opportunity to see the services we provide and foster greater understanding of the individuals we serve.

We will make group home tours available upon request and will be operating CHAPS (adult training facility) from 2:00 pm until 7:00 pm so that interested family and community members can see our services in action.

Our staff will be available to provide information and answer questions about Life Sharing thru Family Living, Habilitation Aid, Community Employment and Foster Care.

We will also have recruitment information regarding becoming a foster parent, family living provider or **dFs** employee. Please join us!



## Congratulations!



Contributed by:  
Stacey Llewellyn, Personnel Assistant



Becky Brown, Direct Care Professional, was selected as November's "Star of the Month."



December's "Star of the Month" was Debbie Treichel, Direct Care Professional.



Direct Care Professional, Jay Antoniotti, was January's "Star of the Month."



Audra Kosmowski, Board Treasurer, is the "Star of the Month." for February.

A certificate was placed in the office waiting area in honor of each "star." Each "star" receives a \$50 gift certificate. In addition, each "star's" name was added to the "Star of the Month" plaque that is located on the "dFs Wall of Fame."

Congratulations to all recipients of this award!  
Keep up the good work!



Looking for a gorgeous greeting card or handmade gift? Shop the showcase at dFs. All of the beautiful items featured are made by the workers at CHAPS. Need a different theme or larger quantity? Place an order with CHAPS. CHAPS products make great special occasion presents, shower gifts, and are a great way to say "Thinking of You". Be sure to check the showcase often for new and exciting products only from CHAPS.

## How to nominate a "Star"

Have you ever thought "Wow, that person is doing a great job and really makes a difference?" That's the perfect opportunity to nominate someone to be a dFs Star of the Month.

Stars of the Month can be employees, family living providers, foster parents, members of the Board of Directors or other volunteers.

Nomination forms can be found in the mail room in the reception area. When completing the form, you should include specific reasons as to why you are nominating the person. The nominee should be someone who "goes above and beyond" their normal duties. All nominations are reviewed and awarded monthly by the Executive Team. Staff are eligible to be honored once every three years.

So the next time you see someone "going the extra mile," take some time to complete a nomination form so that person gets a chance at being recognized as a dFs Star.



### GO RED!!

Diversified Family Services will again raise money to donate to the American Heart Association's GO RED, for the fight against Heart Disease and Stroke. GO Red Day will be celebrated Nationally on 2/6/09. We will be offering an extra opportunity to wear jeans on Monday 2/9/09. Office staff may purchase a pin for \$5.00 to wear jeans and red on Monday 2/9/09 and also a chance to win a great heart healthy basket donated by Stacey Cannon, RN. Bracelets will also be available to purchase for \$5.00, and \$1.00 donations will be taken for post cards to honor or to remember loved ones that have lost the fight against heart disease and stroke. If anyone outside the office is interested, they too may purchase pins which would allow them to be entered in the drawing for the basket. The more participants, the more money we can collect...If you have any questions, please contact Stacey Cannon, RN, Health Services Coordinator, at 724-346-2123, extension 5530.

**RESOURCE ROOM FEATURE**  
**GETTING EMPLOYED, STAYING EMPLOYED**  
**BY: LORRAINE LIVOSKY**



This practical book provides expert guidance in the job development, placement, and training process for persons with severe handicaps. Answered are the difficult questions job developers and trainers confront daily:

- ~How does one secure quality employment for individuals with disabilities?
- ~What steps will help in conducting successful negotiations with potential employers?
- ~How does one deal with an employee's problem behavior on the job?

With the authors' step by step guidelines that encourage readers to adapt strategies to their services, job developers and trainers master the skills needed to:

- ~Identify job leads
- ~Research prospects
- ~Project a businesslike image
- ~Prepare a job evaluation
- ~Match employees with jobs
- ~Increase production

Plus, trouble-shooting techniques help sidestep the difficulties that can occur at any stage. With 18 detailed appendices that offer sample forms and procedures, *Getting Employed, Staying Employed* helps bring success to the employment process.

If you are interested in reading this book, you can find it in our Resource Room.

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## **Staff Earn Surprise Awards**

Contributed by: Andrea Davidson, Quality Improvement Coordinator

**Congratulations to the group home staff that were surprised at their staff meetings in October and November with certificates and gift cards from the Staff Retention Committee!**

### **October, 2008 Medication Accuracy Award**

The staff of Clarksville Group Home each received a \$15 Wal-Mart Card to recognize having the least medication and documentation errors:

***Diane Anthony, Karen Arden, Marcia Burgard,  
Janeen Hall, Angel Karenbauer, Eileen Kidd***



### **November, 2008 Clean Vehicle Award**

Unannounced inspections of agency vehicles were completed during November using a checklist derived from **dFs** policies on safety and cleanliness. The staff of Shenango Group Home each received a \$15 Gift Card to Coates Car Care Express to recognize the high standard of cleanliness maintained in their vehicle:

***Kenneth Avery, Da-Trice Burns, Randi Hall-Lee,  
Simone Kirkland, Rob McArthur, Candance Whippo***

Look for winners' names posted each month in the **dFs** office. Each month a different award category is selected! Congratulations to the group home staff from the Staff Retention Committee!



# Secret Santa Gift Drive

For many years **dFs** has supported toy drives in the community and staff have been very generous. Over the past year **dFs** has seen a significant increase in the numbers of clients served. Many of them are in financial situations which would not allow for a joyous Christmas. Therefore, instead of participating in a community toy drive, we collected gifts for clients receiving services from **dFs**

We would like to thank the following donors for contributing to the Secret Santa gift drive:

Jill Andes  
Jay Antoniotti  
Gina Benson  
Mike Boldish  
Stacey Cannon  
Andrea Davidson  
Barb Develli  
Kelly Dickey  
Sherry Ehrhart  
Kim Gadola  
Debra Gadson  
Beth Anne Gregg  
Michele Groover

Randi Hall-Lee  
Leslie Jackson  
Mary James  
Tiffany Johnson  
Jennifer Ketcham  
Marilyn Klemens  
Julie Klingensmith  
Nicole Lawrence  
Peggy Lee  
Lorraine Livosky  
Stacey Llewellyn  
Chris Maurice  
Jamie McFerren

Domonique Milhouse  
Jenn Minett  
JoAnne Minett  
Cathy Proctor  
Kelly Puller  
Elaine Shardy  
Christina Sheirer  
Sue Tomski  
Nancy Tusinac  
Barb Wolford  
Jacki Zanoni

All participant names were entered in a drawing for a gift card valued at \$25. Congratulations to Debra Gadson who was the winner from that drawing!

## WELCOME New Employees



### PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW EMPLOYEES

#### Residential Program Supervisor

Andrea Spriggs

#### Driver

Joe Hilko

#### Direct Care Professionals

Anna Ampy  
Kenneth Avery  
Michelle Byham  
Courtney Connelly  
Carolyn DeVenney  
Brandi Haggerty  
Karen Minnick  
Catherine Rodgers  
Amber Smith  
Edward Underwood  
Kathy VanHorn  
Richard Walker, Sr.

#### Therapeutic Activities Aide

Suzy Snyder

If you would like to receive your next newsletter via e-mail,  
Please contact Chris Maurice at  
(724) 346-2123 ext. 5513 or [cmaurice@diversifiedfamily.org](mailto:cmaurice@diversifiedfamily.org)

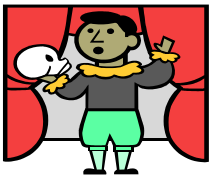
March 2009  
At  
The Drop-In Center



**March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4pm-6pm: Taco Bar**  
Everybody loves tacos!  
Please RSVP by 2/27/09 to ensure availability!

**March 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, & 25<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-5pm: The Biggest Loser Club competition**

Join in our Biggest Loser competition every Wednesday through April and compete for prizes all while losing weight and having fun! Pick up a registration form at dFs.



**March 5<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Acting Class**

Learn the basics of movement and stage presence. Practice different techniques for being on stage, and work on scenes. *\*Members who attend every class will be eligible to participate in a recital later in the year.*

**March 13<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-8pm: St. Patty's Dance**

Celebrate the holiday where everyone is Irish by dancing to the sounds of DJ Joe!



**March 19<sup>th</sup>, 5pm-7pm: TSS Night**

TSS', looking for a low cost winter activity? Come to the Drop-In Center and utilize our many resources for those after school hours. *\*This activity is reserved for TSS workers only and will not be open to the general public. \$3 fee per child, TSS is free.*



**March 24<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Cooking Class**

Some experience needed. Know a measuring cup from a spatula? Great! Sign up for this moderate level cooking class and expand your knowledge and skills. Spacing is extremely limited! RSVP ASAP to ensure a spot.



**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm-7pm: Quiz Night**

Quiz nights are a fun way to spend an evening. Compete to win prizes and show off how much you know.

**March 30<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-8pm: Art Class**

Paint your own masterpiece at the Drop-In Center. Spacing is limited! RSVP ASAP to ensure a spot.



**All Drop-In Center activities are FREE unless otherwise noted**

For information or to RSVP please call Mary James at:  
(724) 346-2123 ext 5533

# The Pill Box

Contributed By: Stacey Cannon  
Health Services Coordinator, R.N



A New Year is here. I know this because as I read the Sunday paper, I am inundated with sales flyers from department stores hoping I feel the need to buy organizational household items so we can get organized for the year. We may even want to transform our homes into something new looking...If you flip through the sale ads you will also see diet food and exercise equipment on sale.

Most of us have a New Year's resolution of losing weight, getting more organized, spending more time with family or cooking healthier. But when it comes to health issues, everything is so important. I can never decide which subject is more important to talk about when writing this article. At home I have quite a pile of magazines waiting for that right moment when it is quiet enough to just sit back, relax and read or maybe they are waiting for me to run out and buy some organizational totes to place them in.

Well, I had the chance to do some reading over last weekend while the snow was falling and found something I wanted to mention. While flipping pages in the Prevention magazine, I was curious about something and hopped off the couch to check it out, it was on the Prevention website... and what a great wealth of information I found. This website has a lot of very interesting pages of information regarding medicine, health, diet and exercise. They also have vitamin and herb encyclopedias along with recipes and nutrition facts. And it is FREE. With the extra pounds that come with winter and the holidays and the fact that The Biggest Loser starts in a few days here at work...this is a place I plan to go for a few months while watching what I eat as I try to lose a "few extra pounds". Check it out at [www.prevention.com](http://www.prevention.com).

## THE SAFETY CORNER

Contributed by:  
Leslie Jackson  
Administrative Officer  
Safety Committee Chairperson



### Fall Prevention Measures For the Home

- ✓ Wear proper footwear with non skid bottoms.
- ✓ Remove throw rugs, runners, cords and small objects.
- ✓ Remove clutter from pathways.
- ✓ Tack down or tape any loose carpet edges.
- ✓ Use night-lights.
- ✓ Commonly used items should be stored on countertops or on a shelf at waist or shoulder height.
- ✓ Avoid using step stools.
- ✓ Use bath mats with non skid backing in and out of shower or bath.
- ✓ Install grab bars at tub or shower.
- ✓ Install light switches at the top and bottom of stairs.
- ✓ Use rough texture paint or abrasive strips on outdoor steps.
- ✓ Clear all objects from the stairs and keep them clear.
- ✓ Install railings on both sides of the stairs (Railings to extend the full length of the stairs.)
- ✓ Keep phone cords out of walking areas.
- ✓ Make position changes slowly.
- ✓ Remember to use all assistive devices with proper technique.

APRIL 2009  
At  
The Drop-In Center

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, & 29<sup>th</sup> 4pm-5pm: The Biggest Loser Club competition

Join in our Biggest Loser competition every Wednesday through April and compete for prizes all while losing weight and having fun! Pick up a registration form at dFs.

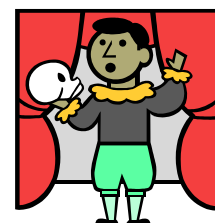


April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Cooking Class

Some experience needed. Learn a new recipe and improve your cooking skills. Spacing is extremely limited! RSVP ASAP to ensure a spot.

April 9<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Acting Class

Learn the basics of movement and stage presence. Practice different techniques for being on stage, and work on scenes. *\*Members who attend every class will be eligible to participate in a recital later in the year.*



April 9<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm-7pm: Poker Night

Learn to play Texas Hold 'Em. Know how to play already? Challenge your friends to a game.

April 14<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-8pm: Egg Hunt

The Easter Bunny hits the Drop-In Center last, come find what he left. Fun for all ages.



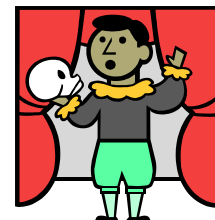
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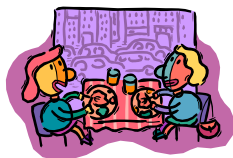
April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 4pm-5pm: Acting Class

Learn the basics of movement and stage presence. Practice different techniques for being on stage, and work on scenes. *\*Members who attend every class will be eligible to participate in a recital later in the year.*



April 27<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-6pm: Dinner & a Movie

Enjoy dinner and a good flick with your friends. Please RSVP by 4/24/09 to ensure availability!



All Drop-In Center activities are FREE unless otherwise noted

For information or to RSVP please call Mary James at:  
(724) 346-2123 ext 5533

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*"Helping Families Since 1985"*

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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- Member .....Rosemarie Janosko
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- Member ..... Dr. Frank McElree
- Member .....Meg Mirizio
- Member ..... Russell Swauger

