

Having a
place to go is
HOME,

Having
someone
to love
is
FAMILY,

Having both
is
A
WONDERFUL
LIFE!

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INVOLVED**



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Lifesharing; What's it All About?

ISSUE 7

WINTER/SPRING 15/16

From Our Roots, Together We Grow

Written by: Debbie Brewer, Passavant



Pennsylvania's Lifesharing Coalition held their Third Annual Lifesharing Conference October 19 & 20th, 2015 at the Ramada Conference Hotel in State College, PA. This year's theme was "From Our Roots, Together We Grow". David Hingsburger was the keynote speaker. His presentation was insightful and entertaining. Mr. Hingsburger (*pictured lower left*) gave voice to the individuals we serve with Interactive activities involving them during his time. The Conference also included speeches from Ms. Nancy Thaler and Pennsylvania State Representative Tom Murt (*Pictured at top left*), who

again recognized October as Lifesharing awareness month. Attendees chose from a variety of topics for breakout sessions each day. If these sessions were not of interest to the individuals, they could attend scheduled events in the Activity Room. The first event was a dance party to get to know one another. David Hingsburger presented "Learning about Your Rights" to our individuals. Kevin G. again presented "Learn Not to Burn." Crafts topped off the events in the Activity Room. Thanks again to Conference Sponsors for providing a Social Time of food, drinks, dancing, and fun on Monday evening. Everyone enjoyed a time of

socializing and relaxing while catching up with old friends and making new ones. Thanks to co-chairs Jamie Walker (*pictured at right*) and Anna Rankin along with all committee members that did a fantastic job of lining up quality speakers. Their choices of t-shirt colors, the conference theme and logo, menus, etc. were all top notch planning. Everyone should try to attend the Fourth Annual Lifesharing Conference this October!



Quick...What is Lifesharing?

Written by: Jamie Walker, BHDS

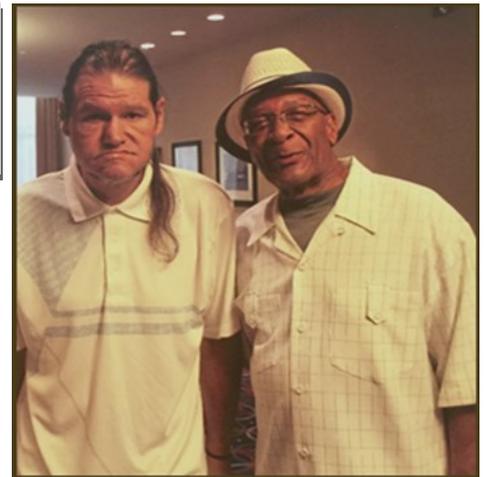
So, the question comes up often, "What is Lifesharing, anyway?" What do you say? Well, the last thing we would want is for you to have that "deer-in-the-headlights, look." So, we thought we would give you some quick, concise replies to this question. Please, use these descriptions, along with your very own twist when trying to fully explain this concept! Together, we can make this a commonly recognized term!

- ◆ An alternative to a group home
- ◆ A long-term family living lifestyle for someone wanting to increase independence
- ◆ An answer for someone looking to be a part of a family
- ◆ Less turnover than other residential options
- ◆ High quality of life reported
- ◆ A current, state-wide initiative
- ◆ Individualized and based on a match between the family and individual
- ◆ A rewarding way in which you can open your home to an individual with a wide range of needs
- ◆ Helps an individual become an active part of the community

2015's Excellence in Lifesharing Awards

For 9 years the PA Lifesharing Coalition has recognized individuals and families for their outstanding achievement in Lifesharing. Nominations are collected annually across the state from June until August. Upon reviewing the nominations, the leadership committee is tasked with designating 4 winners from across the state (one from each region.) This year the winner from the western region was Thomas Bailey, NHS Human Services.

Tom has been sharing his life with Ron (Pictured to right) for the past 4 years. Tom and Ron met through Tom's work at an Adult Training Facility. Despite ups and down that come and go with any relationship, Tom and Ron have grown close and Ron has been embraced by Tom's large



extended family. Ron has grown so much since embarking on this journey. We are very pleased that Tom has been chosen to receive the Excellence in Lifesharing Award. He has truly been an excellent provider due to his commitment, advocacy, creativity, and quality in supporting Ron.



*Written by;
Ian Legeion, Program Specialist with NHS Human Services, Inc.*

From Left; Tom, Sheila (Tom's Wife), Ron, & Ian

What is Lifesharing? Find out More!

Jamie Walker	Westmoreland County LS Point Person	(724)830-3944	walkerj@westmoreland.swsix.com
Dawn Brown	WCSI LS Point Person	(724)837-1808	dbrown@wcsi.org
Ian Legeion	NHS Human Services	(724)600-0120	ilegeion@nhsonline.org
Katie Warrick	Passavant Memorial Homes	(412)820-1010	kwarrick@passavant.org
Stacy Wadsworth	The Arc of Westmoreland	(724)837-8159	swadsworth@achieva.info
Sharon Roskovich	Community Living Care	(724)836-8747	s.roskovich@communitylivingcare.com
Joni Zarnick	Lifesteps, Inc.	(724)283-1010	jzarnick@lifesteps.net
Cathy Wargo	Pennsylvania MENTOR	(724)228-2423	catherine.wargo@thementornetwork.com
Christy Markel	Milestones Centers, Inc.	(412)371-7391	cmarkel@MilestonePA.org
Jane Minich	New Light Inc.	(814) 226-6444	jmini@newlightnewlife.net
Sandra Orr	Mon Yough Community Services	(412)672-1815	orrsi@mycs.org
Anna Rankin	Step By Step, Inc.	(412) 655-8677	arankin@stepbystepusa.com

The Mission of Westmoreland County's Lifesharing Coalition is to increase awareness, so that Lifesharing is a commonly recognized concept for providers, Supports Coordination Organizations, individuals and the community as a whole. We aim to encourage people to expand their family circle by inviting others to share their homes, their families, and their lives.



Do you have something to say?

Any suggestions or questions, please contact Jamie Walker
724.830.3944

walkerj@westmoreland.swsix.com

We would love to hear from you!