

# The RCAL Independent



"Your Independence is Our Mission"

## Volume 1, 2018



### LOAN CLOSET HOURS

Monday through Friday

**9 a.m. – 3 p.m.\*** If these hours are not convenient, please call 331-0541 x 27 and other arrangements can be made.

\* Please note the loan closet is not an emergency service.



# RETIREMENT PARTY

• HONORING •

*Susan Hoger*

On January 16th friends, family, and **RCAL** staff gathered at the Chateau in Kingston (pictured above and on page 2), to celebrate Sue Hoger's retirement as CEO of **RCAL**. Thank you Sue for many wonderful years as our fearless leader.

\*\*\*Special thanks to deejay Brian Rittie, for providing fabulous music for the event! \*\*\*

Congratulations!



Pictures from Sue Hoger's retirement party (continued from page 1).



## **Disability Community to Hold Congress Accountable for Attacking the ADA**

by Alex Thompson

KINGSTON, NY -- On Wednesday, February 7, 2018, the political action committee Disability Action for America released a statement in opposition of the so-called ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 620). This harmful legislation would undermine the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the landmark civil rights law for disabled Americans.

Do not be misled by the name of this bill; this bill is not an attempt to educate or reform, but an unabashed attempt by Congress to undermine the ADA and discriminate against individuals the ADA was meant to protect by allowing public accommodations to remain inaccessible. Furthermore, this bill would force people with disabilities to jump through bureaucratic hoops to secure the same rights that were promised to them under the ADA 28 years ago.

Disability Action for America's call to action highlights the importance of holding incumbents responsible for "ripping away disabled people's rights to access public accommodations," stating, "it's our time to defeat and unseat elected officials who refuse to promote disability rights, and repeatedly commit disability wrongs. Last year, we exerted our power through protest: Let's make 2018 the year that demonstrates the power of the disability vote!"

Disability Action for America is calling upon people with disabilities to hold their members of Congress accountable for threatening the rights of disabled Americans. The National Council on Independent Living and The Resource Center for Accessible Living, Inc. (**RCAL**) fully support this call to action and will continue to fight with our community against the unjust treatment of Americans with disabilities.

"We recognize there are problems with unscrupulous lawyers who pursue lawsuits to make a quick buck, but this bill won't solve that problem," said Kelly Buckland, Executive Director of the National Council on Independent Living. "We tried to work with Congress to find a real solution that won't undercut our rights but they slammed the door in our face."

**RCAL** urges people to contact Representative Faso and make it clear we oppose this harmful bill. H.R. 620 seeks to restrict the ability for persons with disabilities to fight for their rights in court and undermines the original bipartisan intent of the ADA.

"Members of the House will have the opportunity to vote on this destructive bill soon. We will not forget who votes to overturn long settled law that is responsible for nearly 30 years of historic civil rights progress," said Alex Thompson, an advocate at **RCAL**.

Disability Action for America (Full Statement): <http://www.disabilityactionusa.com/2018/02/07/action-needed-to-save-the-americans-with-disabilities-act/>

## **Can't find that SSA-1099 that just arrived in the mail?**

No problem.

The SSA-1099 or the SSA-1042S, also known as the Benefit Statement, is available online. Now our beneficiaries have the ability to download it anytime and anywhere using our online services. There's no need to visit a field office.

For those that live in the United States and need a replacement form SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S, they simply go online and request an instant, printable replacement form within their *my Social Security* account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount).

# RCAL

Come join  
**RCAL**

(Resource Center for Accessible Living, Inc.)

## Color FOR A Cause

Thursday, March 15th

5-7p.m.

Hudson Valley Mall

*A team from **RCAL** will be there to raise awareness and color a 6' mural.*

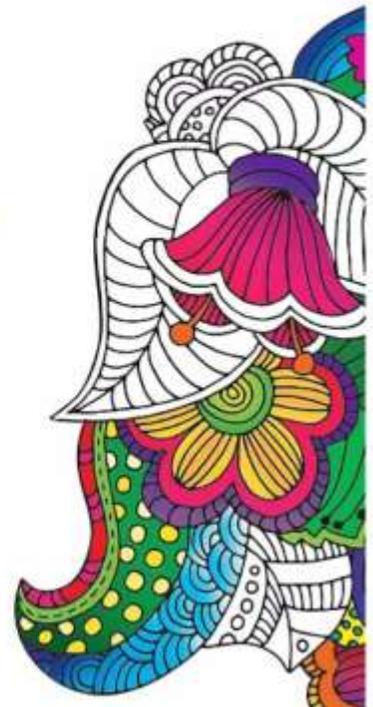
### *Shop in Support of **RCAL**:*

Shoppers who show their receipt during the event can earn a point for a participating organization.

All organizations receive \$1 for each point earned.

The organization with the most shopping points will win a \$250 donation.

For more information call Carol at 331-0541 ext. 20



# LOAN CLOSET NEWS



**RCAL is excited to share that its Loan Closet now has a new entrance, new ramp with rails, new awning, and a new window! Come on in!**

Every year hundreds of individuals receive help through the services provided by **RCAL**'s loan closet. We just wanted to share some excerpts from a letter sent to Sue Hoger, CEO (retired), from a grateful individual, about the help she had received from Gilles Malkine, Architectural Modification Consultant and **RCAL** staff member in charge of the loan closet.

The individual stated about the help she received, "It not only changed my life for the better but improved the quality of life for my elderly parent."

"Your agency has been incredibly caring and extremely helpful in my time of need."

"I have been struggling with caring for my elderly mother who has been progressively declining in her ability to maintain her own care at home. About five months ago I came across your agency was in desperate need of help with finding equipment to maintain my mother's quality of life and being able to continue to keep her at home."

She speaks of Malkine, "If it wasn't for his true dedication in helping me figure out what my next step was, I don't know what would have happened to my mom."

Thank you to the individual for writing such a kind letter. Feedback like this reminds us of why we do what we do here at **RCAL**.



**Adult Diapers & Disposable Underpads**

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**Available in the Loan Closet**

**FREE**

- **Adult Size Diapers & Disposable Underpads** are available for free at RCAL's medical equipment loan closet.
- Available in a variety of sizes.
- Loan Closet hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Please spread the word!

**For more information call:**  
**845-331-0541**



## **RCAL appoints new Interim CEO and COO** by Alex Thompson

**RCAL** (Resource Center for Accessible Living, Inc.) is happy to announce that long time employee and Chief Operating Officer Anthony Mignone is stepping up to fill the role of Interim Chief Executive Officer. Former CEO Sue Hoger chose to retire this past year and many at **RCAL** had trouble imagining the organization without her at the helm. Her retirement party was celebrated in January amongst family, friends, **RCAL** staff, and the community.

Anthony brings many years of experience to the position. He started at **RCAL** as a benefits advisor and has worked his way up through the organization. Anthony has had other careers that bring a diversity of knowledge to his new role that will help keep **RCAL** true to its mission and strong.

Kathy Hochman, who started at **RCAL** soon after Hoger became CEO, will now fill the role of COO. Kathy brings to the role a large depth of knowledge on the community services **RCAL** provides. In her previous role as Director of Community Based Health Services she oversaw several programs including Open Doors, Olmstead Housing, and the Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Medicaid Waiver Program.

While people and offices move, **RCAL** remains committed to its mission of enabling people to lead independent lives.

## **RCAL's Board of Directors has elected its Board Executive Committee Members**

by Carol Ray-Hudson

**RCAL** (Resource Center for Accessible Living), a not-for-profit in Ulster County, dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities since 1983, is proud to announce its Executive Committee of the Board of Directors: Claudette Ford, Chair; Paula Kindos-Carberry, Vice Chair; Brad Bernard, Treasurer; Paul Scarpati, Secretary; and Anthony Mignone, Interim Chief Executive Officer.

The new officers are experienced members of the Board of Directors at **RCAL**, having served in different positions over previous years. As Executive Committee members, they will continue working to promote independent living, **RCAL**, and to expand the agency's services to meet the growing demand in the community.

The Board of Directors is a policy-making board that works diligently to execute the mission of **RCAL**. The Executive Committee, in combination with its members, works to assist in short and long-term planning for the agency. All participants take an active role in establishing, monitoring, and upholding policies and procedures of **RCAL**, helping to reach all intended goals and objectives.

## JOIN OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

*RCAL* is recruiting interested individuals with diverse backgrounds in finance, fund development, nonprofit management and/or program development to serve on its Board of Directors.

For more information, please contact:

Anthony Mignone, Interim CEO

(845) 331-0541

# PART-TIME FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT

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*RCAL*  
727 Ulster Avenue  
Kingston, NY 12401

Available Opportunities:

## **Part-Time Respite Provider**

RESPIRE IS A SERVICE THAT PROVIDES RELIEF TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRIMARY CARE AND SUPPORT OF AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY.

&

## **Part-Time Community Habilitation Support Staff**

COMMUNITY HABILITATION IS A SERVICE WHICH PROVIDES EXPERIENCE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT TO INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES WHO LIVE AT HOME, IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY LIVE MORE INDEPENDENTLY.

&

## **Part-Time Employment Specialist**

BE A PART OF A TEAM TO WORK COLLECTIVELY TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO ACQUIRE THE SKILLS NEEDED TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY.

**For more information contact *RCAL* at:**

**(845) 331-0541**



*RCAL* operates in accordance with the conviction that people with disabilities can and should make their own choices and decisions, and take control of all aspects of daily living, including education, employment, housing, health care, recreation, etc.

## **RCAL Welcomes New Staff:**

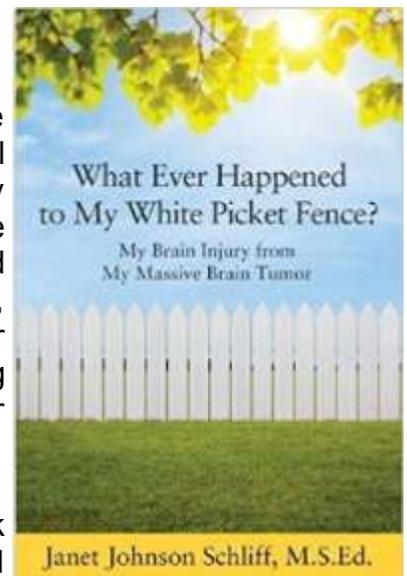
- \* Jan Melchior has come to **RCAL** as a Support Specialist to maintain employment records and provide interviews and orientations for new and prospective employees. She will also be responsible for graphic design projects such as the annual report, and for updates and maintenance of **RCAL's** website and social media accounts. Jan has many years of experience working with not-for-profit organizations as a volunteer and as a professional and says she is thrilled to have the opportunity to work for such a wonderful, worthy cause. She additionally states, "I am a mother, an animal lover, an artist, an actress, and gardener—not necessarily in that order."
- \* Qiwan Hylton joins **RCAL's** fiscal department as a Fiscal Assistant. Qiwan has over 20 years experience between the financial field and the human services field, making her position as Fiscal Assistant to the Rep Payee department a perfect fit. In her spare time she likes to read, catch a good movie, and hang out with her children.
- \* Katie Clayton was recently hired as a Medicaid Service Coordinator at **RCAL**. She graduated in May of 2017 from SUNY New Paltz with her Bachelor's in Communications. Prior to coming to **RCAL**, Katie was working as a PCA throughout Ulster County. She loves being out in the field and working directly with individuals and is more than excited to take on her new role as a Medicaid Service Coordinator so that she can continue to work and advocate for people with disabilities.
- \* **RCAL** welcomes Rachel Fischetti as a Medicaid Service Coordinator. She has previously worked as an MSC at the ARC of Ulster Greene and Eagle Case Management, and also has worked in numerous residential and day habilitation settings. Rachel is currently working on her MBA at SUNY New Paltz, and received her Bachelors in psychology from Roosevelt University in Chicago in 2010. When she is not at work, she enjoys spending time with her children.
- \* Tom Caplan joins **RCAL** as its Olmstead Housing Subsidy Specialist. Tom comes from a background of helping professions; from teaching elementary and middle school, to prevention education and advocacy on sexual crime, to training in and directing a bias awareness program. He likes to hike, meditate and do and teach Improvisational Theater. He's been hearing good things about **RCAL** for years and is really excited to be a part of the team!



## **RCAL to host a book signing for local author,**

### **Janet Johnson Schliff**

"How Do You Rewrite Your Life's Script after You've Suffered a Massive Brain Tumor? Janet Johnson Schliff was an award-winning special education teacher for 25 years. But, as her abilities began to fade away with no medical explanation, she suffered from obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) behaviors that wreaked havoc on her much-loved teaching career.... A massive brain tumor was discovered, and finally, after brain surgery, the odd behaviors it caused that had ruled her life for years were gone, only to be replaced by a different set of life-long challenges due to her injured brain. Her story will inspire and inform her readers." (quote from Barbara Sickler)

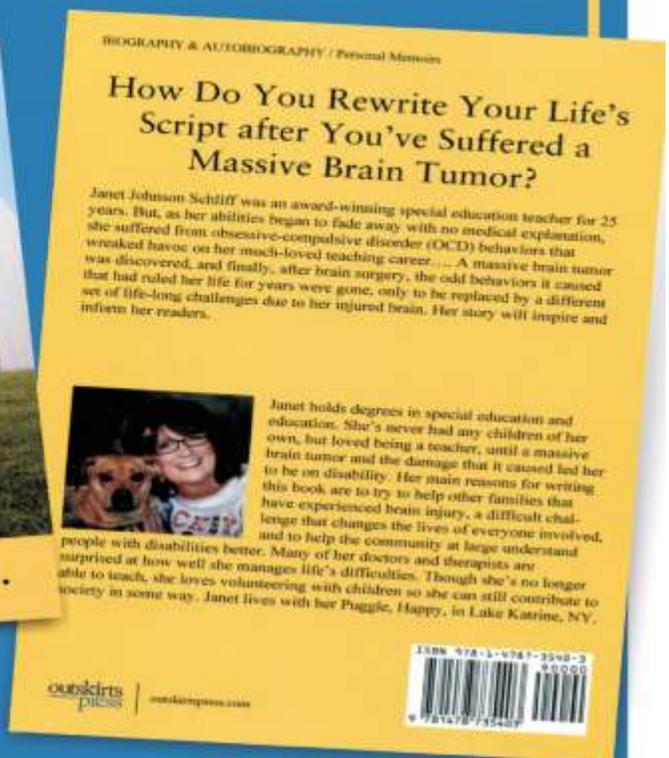
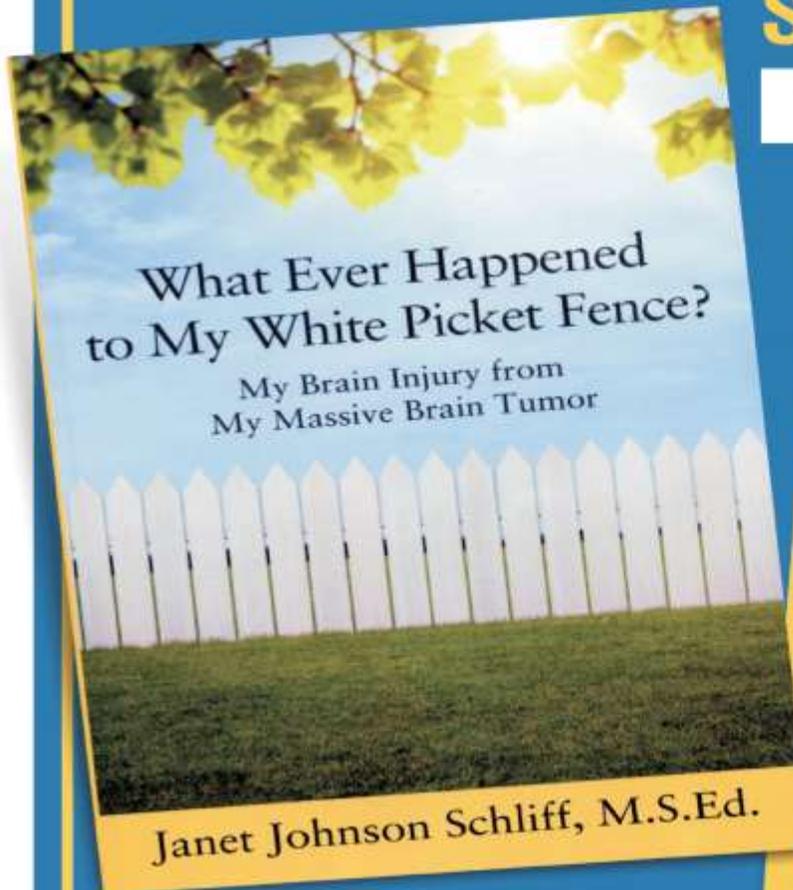


Come join us at **RCAL** (727 Ulster Avenue, Kingston, NY) for a book signing and to hear more of Schliff's amazing story, on Tuesday, April 3rd, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

# New Book!

## Signing Date:

Tuesday, April 3, 2018



## Time:

4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

## Location:

RCAL, 727 Ulster Avenue, Kingston, NY

## **New York Will Be The First State To Require Students To Learn About Mental Health In Its Schools** Kenza Moller

When it comes to mental health, there's still far too much miseducation and stigma around the issue—and those invisible barriers continue to create very real challenges for people when it comes to getting help. Fortunately, one state is enlightening its citizens by starting with kids. Beginning July 1, New York will become the first state to require mental health education be taught in all its schools. (<https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/new-york-will-first-state-require-mental-health-education-schools-165851365.html>)

Starting next September, the health curriculum for elementary, middle and high school students in New York will need to include a mental health component. According to Albany's Times Union, local districts will be in charge of creating their own curriculum, but will receive oversight from the Mental Health Association of New York State, in conjunction with the New York State Department of Education.

According to the World Health Organization, one in four people will experience mental or neurological disorders during their lifetime. And while effective treatments exist, two-thirds of those with a mental illness will never seek help from professionals. ([http://www.who.int/whr/2001/media\\_centre/press\\_release/en/](http://www.who.int/whr/2001/media_centre/press_release/en/))

New York's new mental health education plan is expected to teach students to recognize signs of mental illness, whether in themselves or in friends and family. They'll also learn about the help available for people dealing with mental illness and how to gain access to it.

"Frankly, we need this and we need it more than ever I believe," Karl Shallowhorn, a board member of the Mental Health Association of New York State, told Buffalo's WGRZ-TV. "Students will be more knowledgeable, and so will their teachers, about what to look for if a person is in need of help ... it will also normalize the topic of mental health." (<http://www.9news.com/article/news/education/mental-health-education-required-for-new-york-students/73-489238713>)

Making mental health a regular part of children's discussions around health is a step forward in raising a generation that's able to name, discuss and get help for mental health issues without feeling ashamed of the topic.

Do you think the topic of mental health should be a mandated part of children's regular school curriculum?

This story originally appeared on Simplemost. (<https://www.simplemost.com/>)



Starting out with only 3 staff members in 1983, *RCAL* is thrilled that its 35th Anniversary is just around the corner! Stay tuned for celebration information in future newsletters and publications!

Please help **RCAL** conserve its resources and switch to our electronic newsletter if you are still receiving the paper edition in the mail.

You call us with your email address at 845-331-0541 ext. 20 or email [office@rcal.org](mailto:office@rcal.org).

Thank you!

Friday, December 22, 2017 - **RCAL** Staff gathered at the Marbletown Inn (Route 209, Kingston) for an annual holiday luncheon. Pictured right is Keith (nephew of Courtney Frantz, MSC) and Sue Hoger, CEO (now retired) who can never turn down the chance to hold a baby.



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Amazon Gives!

## How does it work?

- ◆ Go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com)
- ◆ Enter your Amazon username & password
- ◆ Choose **RCAL** as your charity
- ◆ Shop Amazon Smile to donate 0.5% of your eligible purchase to **RCAL**

For questions call (845) 331-0541. Happy Shopping!



Resource Center for Accessible Living, Inc.  
727 Ulster Avenue  
Kingston, NY 12401

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Fax: 845-331-2076  
TTY: 845-331-4527  
E-mail: office@rcal.org  
Website: www.rcal.org

MEMBER OF  
UNITED WAY OF ULSTER COUNTY

**RCAL'S MISSION:** THROUGH  
ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION,  
WE CREATE ACCESSIBILITY  
AND PROMOTE INDEPENDENT  
LIVING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES AND THE  
COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.



**RCAL—Board of Directors**  
Claudette Ford, Chair  
Paula Kindos-Carberry, Vice Chair  
Paul Scarpati, Secretary  
Brad Bernard, Treasurer  
Anthony Mignone, Interim CEO  
R. Marie Altenau  
Joan Gundersen  
Keith Gurgui

**RCAL—Officers**  
Anthony Mignone, Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Kathy Hochman, Chief Operating Officer  
Sherry Crescini, Chief Financial Officer  
For a complete staff directory go to:  
[www.rcal.org](http://www.rcal.org)