



# PreVAIL

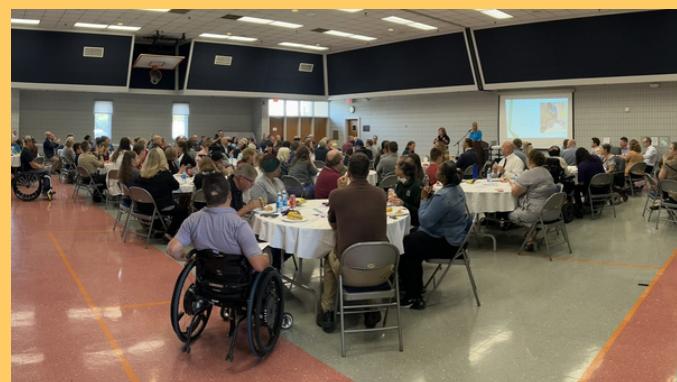
Valley Associates for Independent Living, Inc.

Promoting self-direction among people with disabilities and removing barriers to independence in the community.

“  
VAIL taking over basketball and hopefully more in the future it would have had such a huge impact on my life early on so I'm looking forward to the impact that they can have on younger kids that unfortunately might have the same accidents.

-Doug Galica

## Community Leaders Luncheon



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VAIL was excited to host the 2023 annual VAIL Community Leader's Luncheon on September 21st. VAIL shared that in October they will celebrate 35 years of being incorporated.

This year's speakers were Luther Vucic, the Harrisonburg Grad Class, Anthony Streiff, Terri Bsullak, Doug Galica, Inger Kniley, and Nora and Char Sandberg. VAIL also had the best turn out ever, we had 152 individuals attend the luncheon.

You can see all of the presenters, on VAIL's YouTube channel.

# VAIL

## Community Leaders Luncheon

### Sidewalks



Nora and Char Sandberg talked about the need for curb cuts and accessible sidewalks. Char discussed, "When a child grows up around a person with a disability of any sorts they learn a sense of awareness and compassion that is beyond their years. Kids everywhere have so many questions and are fascinated by my chair." Char's granddaughter Nora, spoke about difficulty they faced when they took a stroll to the Dairy Queen at Harmony Square. Nora read the letter she wrote to the mayor, "I am writing this letter to ask if you could put sidewalks in Park View Neighborhood."

### Accessibility



Anthony Streiff spoke about the comradery of being on VAIL's Harrisonburg Cardinals Wheelchair Basketball Team. "I began to wonder if I could find anything fulfilling. Attitude is a choice. A man named Butch entered my life Butch was wheel-chair bound but he would never let you think that and that he couldn't do anything Butch would push his chair down the steps and off ledges if it meant proving something. I learned so much from this man. VAIL is given the opportunity to be someone's else's Butch."

### OAR



Terri Bsullak spoke on VAIL's new Outdoor Accessibility Program (OAR). "I am a volunteer with OAR, live near Lexington, and love the outdoors. Somewhere in those years of 'I can't,' I met Joan Manley, Joan had quadriplegia and worked for VAIL. I love making new friends as well. People with mobility impairments have unique challenges for which peer support provides the best health. We have learned if you can get out there and swim in that lake, I can too. OAR participants inspire each other to do anything."

# Adaptive Recreation Sports - VAIL Harrisonburg Cardinals

The VAIL Harrisonburg Cardinals hosted an exhibition game on September 21st at Horizons Edge Sports Campus in which the team faced off against community leaders. We would like to thank all those who stepped out of their comfort zone by getting in a wheelchair to play and help us promote the team, as well as adaptive recreation as a whole. We would also like to thank all those who came out to support the team and community leaders, as this was our highest attendance at an exhibition game, with over 150 fans in the stands. Lastly, thank you to Horizon's Edge Sports Campus, for allowing us to host the event, as well as for our team practices every Thursday night. With the exhibition game being the kickoff for the season, the team had their first games on Saturday, October 21st with a doubleheader against the Virginia Sun Wheelers at the Fort Monroe Community Center in Hampton, VA. For information on other upcoming events, please check the VAIL Harrisonburg Cardinals Facebook page, where game results and pictures will be posted, as well as information about future games. We're all looking forward to another successful season after finishing last season ranked 6th in the country for Division III, traveling to Wichita, Kansas championships and placing 13th in the national championships. For any questions about the team, please reach out to [intern@govail.org](mailto:intern@govail.org). Go Cardinals!



# Outdoor Adaptive Recreation (OAR)



Outdoor Adaptive Recreation (OAR) is an innovative program offered by VAIL, designed to engage individuals with mobility impairments in the Lexington/Rockbridge area in the great outdoors. The program's primary focus is to facilitate outdoor experiences, exercise, and social interaction. OAR organizes a variety of accessible outdoor adventures, such as bird watching, hiking, leisurely strolls, wildlife photography, handcycling, kayaking, and many other activities.

OAR events are scheduled. Many of these events include snacks, potential transportation coordination, and a guaranteed good time! Upcoming events include:

1. Saturday, November 4th at 1:30 pm: Fall Foliage Stroll & Stretch at Augusta Springs Wetlands, located west of Staunton.
2. Thursday, November 16th at 1:30 pm: Visit to the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton.

For additional details or to sign up for these events, please get in touch with Terri Bsullak, the OAR volunteer coordinator. You can reach Terri at [tbsullak@yahoo.com](mailto:tbsullak@yahoo.com) or by calling 540-460-3473. Feel free to contact her for more information as well.

## Congrats!

Please help us in congratulating Carlton Hutcheson for completing his internship with VAIL. He graduated from Broadway High School in 2018. In 2021, he graduated from Blue Ridge Community College and is currently finishing up his degree in Sports Management through Liberty University Online (LUO). His major is sports management. After taking a few more classes this fall he will complete his degree at LUO. In his free time he loves to watch various sports on his TV.

Thank you for your time this past summer!



# KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR UPCOMING DETAILS ON THE ANNUAL ARCTIC DIP FUNDRAISER THAT WILL TAKE PLACE ON FEBRUARY 17, 2023. DETAILS COMING IN NOVEMBER!

The VAIL Arctic Dip is structured much like a walk-a-thon or a fun run, where participants rally support and secure sponsors from their friends and family for their chilly plunge. VAIL's primary goal is to generate essential funds that enable us to maintain our commitment to delivering top-notch services and support to individuals in our community who live with disabilities. This event offers a chance to enjoy yourself, allows VAIL to raise vital funds, and empowers people with disabilities to actively engage in their communities and live independently in their own homes.



Valley Associates for Independent Living (VAIL) is very excited to have partnered with the Department of Aging & Rehabilitation Services (DARS) again for the Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program (RAMP). There are currently seven youths enrolled in RAMP at VAIL. We continue to be impressed by the youths' dedication to their future and their strong drive to succeed. We are delighted to see youth interacting with advocacy activities. We continue to look for additional mentors of any age willing to make a year commitment.

Please contact Tessa at [tessa@govail.org](mailto:tessa@govail.org) with further questions.



Valley Associates for Independent Living, Inc. (VAIL) has an EnergyShare program in collaboration with Dominion Energy. This program provides for a \$500 credit to be applied to your energy bill (gas, electric, or propane) for individuals who meet the criteria. If you are interested in applying, please contact the VAIL staff person that you work with regularly or Andrea King at [andrea@govail.org](mailto:andrea@govail.org). You must reside in Harrisonburg, Lexington, Buena Vista, Waynesboro or Staunton City or the counties of Rockingham, Augusta, or Rockbridge.

- Must include a recent bill from your energy provider and complete an application
- Must not have received energy share assistance in the past 12 months
- Must have an open goal with VAIL that you are working on with VAIL staff
- Cannot have your payment set up for automatic payments
- Cannot reside in subsidized housing or receive a housing voucher

This is a first come first serve program. We make no guarantee that payment will be made until after the whole process is complete. It is imperative that you continue making payments on your account. Please reach out with questions.

# Virginia Housing Modification Programs

**NEW**

## OWNER-OCCUPIED MODIFICATION VIRGINIA

Owner-Occupied Modification Virginia Housing's Owner-Occupied Modification Grant makes funding available to assist with modifications to homes to make them accessible to elderly individual owners with disabilities. The modification must directly address barriers created by the disability. These funds are available to persons earning 80% or less of the area median income, based on HUD guidelines. These income limits are available here:

<https://www.virginiahousing.com/.../rental.../income-limits>.

This program is targeted at homeowners aged 65 and older. Applicants under 65 must provide written documentation of the need for the accessibility improvement, such as a doctor's letter, insurance documentation, or social security documentation showing the nature of the disability. Applicants must provide documentation of their ownership of the property. It opened on September 1st and goes to May. 2024 depends on remaining funding.

Please contact Taylor Hinkle at [taylor@govail.org!](mailto:taylor@govail.org)



Virginia's Military Home Modification Grant Program

Granting Freedom is a grant program for home modifications for disabled veterans and service members who sustained a line-of-duty injury resulting in a service-connected disability.

Funds of up to \$8,000 can be used to make a home wheelchair accessible, to install grab bars in a bathroom, or to make other modifications that help eligible recipients become independent. Funding to pay for modifications to houses and apartments is available on a first come-first served basis.



## Rental Unit Accessibility Modification Grant

Landlords are required by fair housing laws to allow modifications to an apartment or rental house to make it barrier-free to the tenant. However, tenants usually bear the cost of these modifications, which can be substantial. Fortunately, help is available through grants offered by Virginia Housing.

Individuals with a disability who rent a home and who earn 80% or less of the area median income may be eligible for grant assistance up to \$8,000.

**Applications for all of these programs must be submitted by a Virginia Housing-accepted agent. VAIL is a registered agent in Planning District 6.**



Follow the VAIL Harrisonburg  
Cardinals on Facebook!  
[https://www.facebook.com/  
HburgCardinals](https://www.facebook.com/HburgCardinals)

“Thank you for your  
wonderful presentation at  
Gayl’s accessibility training.  
It was both informative and  
engaging.”  
-Community Member

## Schedule of Events

Nov. 7th	VAIL Closed-Election Day
Nov. 10th	VAIL Closed-Veterans Day
Nov. 23-24	VAIL Closed - Thanksgiving
Nov. 28th	Board of Directors meeting
Dec. 22 & 25	VAIL Closed - Christmas
Jan. 1	VAIL Closed - New Year's Day



Covid-19 test  
kits available  
for  
consumers!

Please contact your VAIL staff member or  
call 540-433-6513 for more information.

## Ways to Support VAIL

Scan the QR Codes below to donate via  
PayPal or Venmo!



PayPal



venmo



amazon



Use your Kroger Rewards card to create donations for VAIL! Visit the Kroger Community Rewards website, log into your account, and choose Valley Associates for Independent Living. Each time you use your rewards card, a portion of your purchase will be donated to VAIL.

Find us on 

<https://www.facebook.com/ValleyAssociatesforIndependentLiving/>



<https://www.youtube.com/user/govail>



[https://www.instagram.com/  
valleyassociatesil/](https://www.instagram.com/valleyassociatesil/)

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