

## *Nonprofit of the Week - Up, Up and Away - Independent Living Resource Ctr*

### *Nonprofit Chamber of Services Nonprofit of the Week*

*This series has been established with the intent of increasing awareness of the many causes and efforts taken on by our nonprofit brethren. If your nonprofit has a particular event taking place during the course of a week, an anniversary for example, please make this known and we will do all possible to accommodate a spotlight that coincides. On behalf of our membership, we wish to say "thank you" for taking a few moments from your busy schedule to learn a bit more about our community of nonprofits.*

Don't miss your opportunity to go up, up, and away in "Serena's Song", the World's First Wheelchair Accessible Hot Air Balloon. Tethered balloon rides will be available (weather permitting) at the **1st Annual Walk & Roll Stroll-a-thon**, sponsored by this week's *Nonprofit of the Week*, Independent Living Resource Center. The *Walk & Roll Stroll-a-thon* will be this Saturday, October 22, 2005, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and will be at Sedgwick County Park.

In addition to walking through beautiful Sedgwick County Park, taking tethered hot air balloon rides you can also ride in a horse drawn carriage accessible for persons with disabilities provided by Sundance Farms of Inman, Kansas. The day will also include ILRC's 1<sup>st</sup> annual Oldies Car show, the MERN (Medical Equipment Recycling Network) equipment drive, food, fun and over 20 vendor booths.

The money raised from this event will be used to provide training and services to help people with disabilities in Independent Living Resource Center's service area live healthier, more independent lives.

Empowering people with disabilities to lead independent lives by providing advocacy, community education and direct services has been the mission of Independent Living Resource Center since 1984. In the 21 years since they were incorporated as Project AID Resource Center (PARC), ILRC has grown from serving a few dozen clients a year out of offices located in the Orchard Park Community Center to serving over 2,000 clients a year out of their new 26,000 square foot office facility at 3033 W. 2nd.

ILRC offers home and community based services through Medicaid, which provide Independent Living Counseling/Targeted Case Management to individuals with physical disabilities or traumatic brain injury and payroll services for non-medical attendant services. A major focus of ILRC is working to eliminate barriers that keep people from fully participating in the community. They provide information & referral, advocacy and education/training to enhance the understanding of the abilities and needs of people with disabilities.

The outstanding growth that Independent Living Resource Center has seen in the last twenty years can be, in large part, attributed to their dedicated staff. Judy Weigel, the Executive Director, is no exception. Twenty four years ago, Judy and her husband moved to Wichita from Hays to become trainer/coordinators for PARC, an attendant training program that led to the development of the ILRC. As the independent living center grew Judy has been involved in developing and implementing the numerous programs and services offered. Judy became their Executive Director in 1996.

If you would like more information on Independent Living Resource Center, please call 942-6300 or visit their website at [www.ilrcks.org](http://www.ilrcks.org).