



Community News

A Newsletter for Friends of WKS, Inc. ♦ October 2009

DSP RECOGNITION WEEK

Jane Perham,
Chief Executive Officer

All of us at Residential Resources fully recognize and appreciate that your commitment to your profession allows the 250-plus individuals supported by you to live meaningful, productive lives in their own home and in their own community. We know, through our very own lives, just how important this is. The trend of home care is projected to grow over the next decade. Residential Resources will continue to strive to be in the forefront of attempting to realize adequate wages and benefits to attain reduced turnover and vacancy rates throughout our company.

I am pleased to announce that Residential Resources is actively participating in recognizing every Direct Support Professional during DSP week. In maintaining our goal of "Being Green", RRI has purchased tote bags to be given to each employee to supplement the specific regional recognition. These items are symbolic of our utmost level of gratitude and appreciation for what you give every day of the week. As a dedicated Direct Support Professional, you have built a close, trusted relationship with the people you support on a regular basis. Please take some time to reflect upon how important you are in the daily lives of everyone.

Thank you very much.

Job Fair & Outreach

By JoAnn Dickenson, Residential Director
Cobleskill, NY

On September 1, 2009 Tore Lofving, TBI Participant, and JoAnn Dickenson, Residential Director, participated in a job fair at SUNY Cobleskill. It was exciting to meet students and listen to them talk about their goals and life expectations for the future. Tore gave information regarding his perspective of receiving services from our agency providers. He discussed the aspects of living with a traumatic brain injury and the struggles he faces in his day to day life. He emphasized the joy of regaining skills that we often take for granted each day. JoAnn explained the services Residential Resources can provide and shared the dedication and difference that ordinary people can provide in the life of a survivor. Twenty-five students took applications and showed a genuine interest in working with people who have Traumatic Brain Injuries. It was nice to see a small community reach out to people in need.

Giving Back

By Tina Cox, Program Manager
Hampstead, NH

I would like to tell you a story of someone that inspired me. Kathryn is one of the members at Team Fremont in Sandown. She is a woman on a mission to inspire people! She recently spent the past year growing her hair long to give to the organization "Wigs for Kids".

Kathryn was a Pediatric Nurse in California. Kids are in her heart. She recently donated 16 inches of hair to the organization. All donations are utilized to fashion wigs for children battling cancer. If you have the notion to give back, this may be one option for you. Then you too can inspire someone else and so on and so on. WE CAN ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Joanne's Limo Ride

By Patti Fortier, Program Manager
Scarborough, ME

Joanne B. from the Saco II Program in Maine had a wish and goal to ride in a limo. She took this limo to a program barbecue in No. Yarmouth, Maine and she beamed the entire ride to and from!!



Veggies and Flower Blooms

By The Bow Garden Club, Bow NH

The growing season continues as we head into fall with cooler weather approaching sooner than expected. The flowers bloomed and our garden produced an array of bold and beautiful color. The varieties of flowers planted included Zinnias, Petunias, Bachelor Buttons, large Sunflowers, Poppies and Cosmos. The producers in our vegetable varieties were Broccoli, Carrots, Green Beans, Snap Peas, Onions, Radish, Beets, Spinach, Lettuce and Cauliflower. A total surprise was the appearance of 3 Eggplants.

Our wide variety of vegetables and herbs kept our volunteers working weekly to maintain and harvest. As mentioned in our last Bow Garden Club news, the rain certainly raised eyebrows and kept everyone guessing what plants would do well and which would not. One of our volunteers noticed our corn did not grow "too small", she said. As for the tomatoes the only ones that truly produced were the "volunteers": cherry tomatoes that sprouted from fallen fruit last year, the planned and planted tomatoes suffered blight.

WELCOME BARBARA!

By Pam Cadmus,
Director of Business Administration

The Business Office would like you to join us in welcoming our newest staff member, Barbara LeBlanc. Barbara began working as Medicaid/Accounting Specialist on August 12 and has very capably taken on all things New York Medicaid, and continues to learn more every day! Barbara is also now the "go to" person for new program numbers, census updates and corporate insurance issues. She brings a multitude of experience and skills with her and we are very pleased to have her join the WKS Team! Please introduce yourself and say hello, her extension is 23, and email is bleblanc@resresources.com.



Residential Resources Helping More Seniors Through New Program

By Jeremiah S. Papineau

Article printed in the Clinton County Free Trader on July 18, 2009

PERU- Residential Resources, an organization which connects those with developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injuries with services to help them live “independent, meaningful lives in the community,” is now able to help in a way unlike it has before.

Through the Nursing Home Diversion and Transition Waiver Program, Residential Resources is now able to assist individuals, ages 18 and up who require and qualify for nursing home level of care, live at home in the community.

Amanda Maggy, a representative for the Residential Resources office in Peru, said the program is new for New York State, offered through the state Department of Health. Historically, Residential Resources has only been able to enroll individuals between ages of 18 to 65 for services, Maggy explained. However, through the new state program, those services will be made available to those older than age 65.

That’s a big win for senior citizens who have suffered a paralyzing stroke or who suffer from dementia, said Maggy.

“In the past, services enabling seniors to continue living in their homes were limited. Before, if someone had a stroke at the age of 66, we couldn’t help them,” said Maggy. “Now, with this new program, we can assist them to get what they need to live at home.”

Kevin Defayette, Regional Director for Residential Resources, said it’s exciting to provide supports for people who choose to live in their home as an alternative to residing in a skilled nursing facility.

“We work closely with a wide variety of organizations in order to secure services that meet the specific and unique needs of each individual,” Defayette explained. “We, along with the SUNY Traumatic Brain Injury Program, North Country Home Health Care, North Country Center for Independence and Catholic Charities, are the first to pioneer supports of this nature to individuals in our community.”

Those applying for services must be eligible for Medicaid, said Maggy, though Residential Resources is able to help with information about that as well.

“The paperwork here at our office will tell them exactly what they need to do,” she said.

“I think people don’t know these services are out there,” said Maggy. “And it’s important to get the word out.”

For more information about the Nursing Home Diversion and Transition Waiver Program or services offered by Residential Resources, call their office in Glenwood Plaza on State Route 22 at 643-0300 or visit their website at www.ResResources.com.

A Night of Magic

By Ken Lee, Region Director
Bow, NH

On the evening of July 12, 2009....Bill Blagg III came to the Capitol Center for the Arts. His is a superb magic act in a league with David Copperfield, Doug Henning and Lance Burton. A few of us from Residential Resources, including Arthur from Pittsfield and Phillip from Londonderry, attended his show and we all say that his act is worth seeing!

His show is very audience interactive; he utilizes a great light show and lively music in support of his jaw dropping magical presentations.

In Arthur's opinion his best trick was when Bill Blagg produced what appeared to be an ordinary paper drawing pad; he then began sketching various items on the pad, in pictures big enough for the audience to clearly see what the object was. Then an actual item of what he had just drawn would drop out from behind this seemingly simple pad of paper. One of the items was a 15 pound bowling ball. This trick was seamless and seemingly impossible at the same time.

Phillip says he was impressed with a trick that every magician seems compelled to do, that of sawing his beautiful female assistant in half. He also performed something that he claims no other magician does, which is to walk through a plate of solid steel. This plate of steel was tested and closely observed by several audience members who attested to its authenticity. This was mystifying to say the least.

We were all entertained by his final demonstration which included the telling of a wonderful story regarding a favorite childhood memory. He spoke of his recollection of a unique and amazing time in his life. When as a child growing up in Milwaukee, he first experienced what it was to be outside in a magical winter snowfall. As he spoke he went about creating a full fledged beautiful snowfall within the theatre. Originating from just his moving hands, the snowfall then began

engulfing the stage and it continued snowing from out of nowhere and yet at the same moment everywhere. Snow was falling on every witness in the theatre, and just as quickly began melting, leaving all of us with just the memory of this magical evening!

You can visit Bill Blagg III's web site at WWW.BillBlagg.com.

An Outstanding Provider

By Deb Aherrera, Program Manager and
Ken Lee, Region Director
Bow, NH

Kim Vincent was recently recognized by our local Area Agency for her outstanding commitment.

When Community Bridges, Inc., of the Concord region, approached us for a Home Care Provider nomination for DSP of the year, how could we not consider Kim? Her upbeat and caring personality shines above the rest. Kim has graciously opened her home to two dynamic ladies. Together they routinely visit the local eateries, the farmer's market, go to local cinemas to see preferred movies and shop at their favorite stores (Bon Ton currently). All three are patrons of a local salon, and all are fans of being pampered by the salon staff. Trips taken to upstate NY to the family vacation home are a luxury all members of the household are routinely afforded during the summer months. Kim offers opportunities for the ladies to experience new and exciting things such as 4-wheeling, boating and hiking. Through their shared adventuring they have each discovered some new interests along the way.

Kim has always been eager to learn more and not give up when struggles arise. We were very pleased to learn that Kim was selected by Community Bridges as the top nominee. In addition to being chosen for the award, Kim will receive a monetary gift.

THANK YOU, KIM, FOR ALL YOU DO!!!!

In Memory of Joy Herrick

By Dee Fedorowicz, Office Manager, and
Sharon Cleary, QA Specialist
Emerald St., Keene, NH

In August of this year we lost a long time member of the Emerald Street team.

Joy Herrick joined our organization in 1991 and quickly earned the reputation of a hard working and compassionate member of the team. She was recognized as dedicated to the individuals she served and met her duties head on. Quickly, Joy moved up to Lead Educator and then Manager. One supervisor described Joy as having a professional demeanor and a positive effect on her team.

In 2006, Joy stepped in the Direct Support role once again. There, she continued to demonstrate her positive attitude and was always a strong advocate for the consumers she supported. In May of this year, Joy had to step down due to failing health and in August lost her valiant fight with cancer. She is greatly missed by consumers and staff alike and will always be remembered as a kind and compassionate woman who believed in and fought for the rights of the disabled.

One of the issues Joy was faced with when she was battling cancer was an immediate loss of income and she was burdened with a dramatic increase in health related expenditures. Not wanting to place a financial strain on her husband, she applied for Social Security early retirement benefits. She received her determination letter within two weeks of application. Unfortunately, she was informed that she would not receive her first payment for seven months. Joy applied in late May of 2009. She was to receive her first check in December 2009.

Under current Social Security law, if you are diagnosed with a terminal illness and have a life expectancy of six months or less, you are entitled to an expedited determination of benefits under the TERA Act. However, you are still required to wait five months before you are technically eligible to receive your benefits and then another two months before you receive your first payment. Obviously this was problematic for Joy and is for many others who are in a similar situation.

Because this wait period is mandated by law, it will literally take an Act of Congress to change it and that is what Joy was working for and her family continues to work for.

This bill currently sits in the Ways and Means sub-committee on Social Security. It has 12 co-sponsors. In order to get this passed into law it needs to be referred to the House and the Senate and then sent to the President who will sign the bill into law.

How can you help? Write a letter to your local Representative and ask them to support this bill by becoming a co-sponsor. Ask your friends and family to do the same. Please spread the word. To find contact information for your local representative go to:

<http://www.house.gov/>

A sample letter can be found on our "What You Can Do..." page. If you would like us to send you a copy of the sample letter that you can personalize and send to your representative - please contact Joy's family at:
odetojoy2009@gmail.com.

RRI ADVENTURE

By Renee Capone, Program Manager
Ballston Lake, NY

Recreate –

Definition: To create anew. To refresh physically or mentally. (Random House Webster's Dictionary, Second Edition)

On August 14, 2009, some of our risky undertaking folks from the programs in the northern New York region experienced the genuine hospitality and a welcomed opportunity to renew, refresh and nurture spirit, mind and body!

We all set off in the wee early morning on our adventure heading to the Adirondacks and the beautiful 700 acres of water, woods and charm where we would spend the day. This was a place that we all looked forward to so we could relax and take in the sheer classroom of nature and come out of our daily routine. The Silver Bay YMCA is known as the best kept secret on Lake George, it is an historic setting and a very welcoming atmosphere, alive with beauty. Our goal was to have fun and "do things differently", a kind of breaking out of and creating our own meaningful experiences. There's something to be said about getting out of our box at times and renewing our minds and bodies - creating lasting memories. Our mission was to simply enjoy the surroundings, the spectacular waterfront, sports and recreation, nature, and the fellowship of one another. Some of us even did some "soaking" by just listening to the sounds of the string quartet playing in the chapel and meditating on things that are lovely. We even had a resident chipmunk come on in to the chapel and spend the time with us as we communed with nature and practiced contemplative reflection. Shuffleboard, walking the beach, basketball and relaxing on the huge porch of the lobby were just some of the activities that we enjoyed.

The conference center is indeed a buzzing place where programs are custom designed for individuals, families and groups to enrich their life and engage in meaningful

opportunities of their choosing— watercolor painting, crafts, lectures, sitting on the porch taking in the view, spiritual classes, drama instruction, writing workshops, team building and leadership development exercises, canoeing, tennis, indoor rock climbing, fitness classes, a nature program along with a labyrinth, hiking trails, shuffle board, swimming at the beach, motorized boating and whatever inspires you.

The lunch was truly wonderful with an array of fresh fruit, deli and salad bar, specialty wraps, soup of the day, and almost a camp, yet conference center, atmosphere at the same time. The Silver Bay YMCA was a real treat for everyone. From the time we arrived until the time we left, everyone enjoyed their opportunity to get away and talk about the next retreat.

MY SUMMER FUN

By Davis
Bow, NH

I have been enjoying my summer and one of the reasons is the Friday BBQ. My roommates and I have been spending our Fridays hosting BBQ parties for our friends. We have friends that have special children. The BBQs allowed them to come over, swim, play, and swing and feel very comfortable. These kids with Rett, Mowat-Wilson and Down Syndrome made me so happy. They laughed and hugged everyone and looked so happy. They even liked my car collection and my Star Wars books. I know I am lucky and very happy too. I have met so many wonderful new friends this month. I am so grateful for my roommates and my friends. The last Friday BBQ we had was very sad. We said goodbye and everyone had to go back to work and school. My roommates planed Football Sundays to replace Friday BBQ, so I hope all my friends will come over again. I have been to the beach and shopping and eating a lot. I got a new bed too and I like it so much. I still have more fun to do. Go to Boston too, then to the seafood party at the beach again with Darin and all the friends there. I have had a very happy summer.

Patty Attends the Fast Friends Greyhound Reunion

By Sharon Cleary, QA Specialist
Emerald St., Keene, NH

Patty and Sharon and Gene Cleary attended the Fast Friends Greyhound Reunion here in Keene on Aug. 23, 2009. Fast Friends is an organization that provides care and adoption for retired Greyhound racers. Patty enjoyed the luncheon, interacting with about 35 greyhounds that were attending the reunion as well. She socialized with a lot of greyhound owners who enjoyed hearing about her Black Belt accomplishment, her interest in dogs and of course, the Red Sox. As you can see by the picture Patty is very kind and loves to interact with the animals.



HAMPSTEAD OFFICE SUMMER PICNIC

By The Hampstead, NH Office

August 26th marked our annual picnic at Kingston State Park. The weather was great, the food was tasty and the bees were plentiful!!!! Fortunately, the bees behaved themselves and we had no incidents of stings. Not to worry, we had several Nurses in attendance this year....



There was plenty of conversation and laughter, catching up on life and activities. A few folks even went swimming and really enjoyed their dip. It was a great turnout this year, really good to see everyone having fun.



Thank you to all who attended and assisted with preparation and clean up afterwards.

Until next year....

EXPRESS IT!

Story by: Susie B, John D, Derek G,
Karen L, Joanne B, John C, and Sarah L

Our group is named Express It! We meet every other Monday at the Maine RRI office for an hour. We meet with Patti Fortier, a manager of a house in Westbrook.



Above is a picture of our group. The only person missing is John C.

We start with some exercises, reaching for the ceiling and crossing our arms, right hand to left ear and left hand to right ear, then our knees and feet. We practice our addresses and phone numbers in case we have to call 911 in an emergency. Sometimes one of us has a problem with a co-worker, roommate or staff person. We share how we would handle it and practice what we would say.

We talk about what makes us really happy and how to let staff know we need time alone. We call that being a "One". Things that make us a "One" are spending time with staff one on one, having friends, going out to Dairy Queen, watching wrestling, animals, pizza and a good joke. We are now talking about being a "Five," which is when we get angry or frustrated.

We do fun stuff, too. We made posters and asked the group to say one good thing about us and we put it in our rooms at home. We have gone outside to blow bubbles. We

celebrate birthdays with little cupcakes and when it is really hot we have ice pops. We talk about goals. Not like goals for our PCP, but stuff we can do everyday to accomplish something. We want to go out to eat or to a sporting event and we are practicing how to order from a menu, manners, and using the proper tone in a restaurant or at a ball game.

We like the class and want to tell everyone about it!

THANK YOU to everyone who contributed articles and pictures to the newsletter.

Articles are due by the second Friday of each month for the following month's newsletter. The newsletter will be posted at www.ResResources.com on the fourth Friday of each month.

If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of the newsletter mailed to you, please contact your local Residential Resources office to make arrangements. ♦

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