

Community News

A Newsletter for Friends of Residential Resources, Inc. November 2017

Apple Picking In September

Connie Loiselle, Participant
Emerald St., Keene, NH



Sarah and I picked apples at Peak Orchard in Henniker, NH. It was a beautiful day and I really enjoyed myself. I love fall, it is one of my favorite times of the year. My home provider, Rachel, and I baked apple pie with some of them.



Decorating for Autumn

Tabitha Storer, Lead DSP, &
Anne Guay, Participant
Emerald St., Keene, NH



A great way to greet autumn is with pumpkin carving. On September 30th, 2017, Anne was able to assist staff with drawing a face to carve on her pumpkin and cleaning out the gooey seed. Jack-o-lanterns are a staple in fall decor, and Anne has a great one sprucing up her home!



Empathy

Steve Witek, Program Manager
Scarborough, ME

It's natural for human beings to gather into groups. We are social creatures. The need for companionship and relationships with others is hardwired into our brains. From family units all the way up to nation states, people are joined together.

Empathy is a key element in what makes any relationship work. To empathize with someone is to walk a mile in their shoes, so to speak. The ability to imagine yourself experiencing the viewpoint of another person is an essential part of what makes us human. Empathy allows us to recognize when other people are in pain or distress, and compels us to act. Empathy gives us the ability to adjust our behavior or approach with others to facilitate more effective communication. It's a wonderful trait to have.

For Direct Support Professionals, empathy is one of the most important tools we can use in supporting our consumers. It can be so easy to dismiss what is going on in their lives as just 'part of their disability'. But a person's disability does not define them, and everyone shares the common bond of being human. By building a relationship with our consumers, the opportunity to be empathic with them is always available.

Imagine that an individual you support is having a difficult day and is being uncharacteristically rude with people. How does a DSP deal with this situation? While the nature of a person's disability might influence the DSP's approach, everyone knows what it's like to have a bad day. It's easy to imagine being rude to people because you're not in a good mood. Why should the individuals we support be any different?

And so the DSP may quietly speak to the individual having a bad day and let them know that if they need to talk or have some time alone, the DSP is there for them because everybody has tough days, and that's okay. By saying this, the DSP is using empathy to communicate that they know what it's like to lash out at people when they're having a bad day. We can always empathize with the individuals we support based on our shared experiences as people.

No one wants to be alone in the world. As DSPs we have a unique opportunity to be a positive influence in the lives of the people we support. It's when we treat people as problems to be solved that we fail more often than we succeed. We're all people, and we all need each other. That's what makes us all.

The Great Outdoors

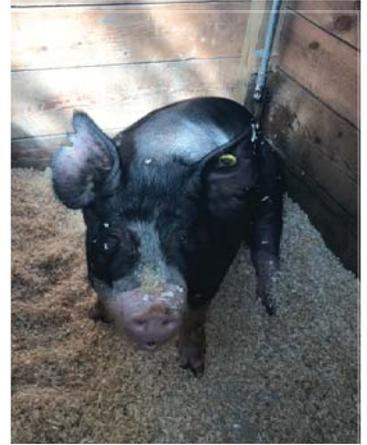
Carol Ann MacDonald, Participant & Christina Fogarty, DSP

Fall is the time of year for apple picking, leaf peeping, hayrides, collecting colorful fall leaves for projects, and of course, the fairs.

Carol Ann has done some apple picking at Sunnycrest Farms to make apple butter and pies. We are able to hike and trail walk to see all the colorful leaves and to collect them. Carol Ann had the opportunity to attend the Deerfield Fair where she attended a horse show. The horse she liked won the blue ribbon! She also got to experience milking a cow; even though it wasn't real she said "This is fun!"

Halloween is her favorite time of the year. When walking around in stores we both press all the buttons to make the witches move. Carol Ann laughs, saying "This is the funniest!"

Next on our to-do list is to go on a hayride to the pumpkin patch to pick out a pumpkin to decorate. And of course to have some hot apple cider and apple cider donuts. Fall is our favorite time of the year!



Companion Pets: The Unsung Heroes in the Lives of the People We Serve

Anne Rejack, CIC
Ballston Lake, NY

Junior. Koda. Jocomo. Morey. Baby Girl. Baracus. Kasper. Dottie. These are just some of the cats, dogs, and yes, even a turtle who have assisted in their own quiet way with the rehabilitation of their owners.

The research is replete with the benefits of having a companion pet. According to some of the articles I read, companion animals can "provide social support," "enhance well being," "provide a care taking role," and lead to fewer visits to doctors. One researcher said that "findings are encouraging so it makes sense to conduct more studies on how human-animal interaction influences our health."

I have provided services through the TBI Waiver program as a Community Integration Counselor since 2001. I personally witnessed the tremendous difference a pet can make to people who have suffered unimaginable changes in their lives. While I have seen amazing work on the part of so many of my co-workers through the waiver program, it has not been lost on me how important people's pets are to them.

Often after a brain injury a person experiences isolation, loss of friends and/or family, drastic changes in living situation, and severe mental and physical complications. Relatives have told me time and again how the person with the TBI has "changed" and "isn't like she/he used to be." It requires a great deal of courage to stand by a person who has had a TBI, and for some relatives and friends, it is just too strange and impossible.

Not so for our companion friends. They remain faithful to their owner. They don't see the house that hasn't been cleaned, or the physical or mental changes in their owners. They are fiercely devoted to their owners and are a source of love and support.

So the next time you visit a person with a TBI (or any disability, for that matter) thank their companion pets for assisting you with the range of services that we provide.

I Taught the Class!

Chelly Leger, Participant
Emerald St., Keene, NH

We have arts and crafts class once a week at RRI. Last week I got to teach the class. We made masquerade masks.

First we cut paper plates in half. Next we cut out eye holes and a notch for the nose. We decorated them with markers and feathers and then added straws for the handles. It was fun and everyone looked cool with their masks on.



Turkey Lane

Sarah Boucher, former DSP
Scarborough, ME

What do the words “total care” mean to you? When I began working at Residential Resources, I thought it meant doing everything. After my time with the two wonderful souls I had the pleasure to be in the company of, I have a very different definition of those words.

I met Zack and Ryan at Turkey Lane about 10 months ago, right before Christmas. My first shift I was a nervous wreck about doing brief changes, using a Hoyer lift, and just the general fact that I was responsible for providing safety and quality of life to two people every day. After my two weeks of training were complete, I worked my first 14-hour shift on my own, and when I left that night, I felt much more confident in what I needed to do to take care of these two. They were people like everyone else, just in need of more help than others were.

There have most definitely been days that were easier to get through than others were. Yelling that seemed like it would never end (especially if I was out of viewing range), spitting food out and thinking that was the most hilarious thing, and standing in a crouch position until it was ok to move again. Both guys have very different interests which also made it difficult at times to find activities that everyone would enjoy as Ryan loves animals and Zack loves sports.

Despite the difficulties and potential issues that are present, we have a lot of fun too. Both guys thoroughly enjoy outings, whether it is to Fort Williams, Old Orchard Beach, the animal refuge league, and going out to eat (IHOP is always a crowd pleaser). These days were busy and sometimes a bit stressful, but to see the complete joy on both of their faces was always worth it. The laughter that comes from these two can be quite infectious.

As my time with Residential Resources ends, and I move on to forward my career, I leave with much more than experience. I take with me the lessons I have learned from these two wonderful men, even though they never knew they were teaching me.

They taught me patience...frustration can easily build in this field, and patience is a necessity to succeed for both the staff and consumer. They taught me how to listen...really listen. Even just a grunt in a certain way is communication, and before I never would have taken a sound like that seriously. I think the most important thing that they taught me is true human compassion. It takes a certain kind of individual to do what we do, and to do so takes a level of caring that goes above and beyond. Zack and Ryan taught me that the best thing I can take away from this job is knowing that I helped to make a difference in someone else's life.

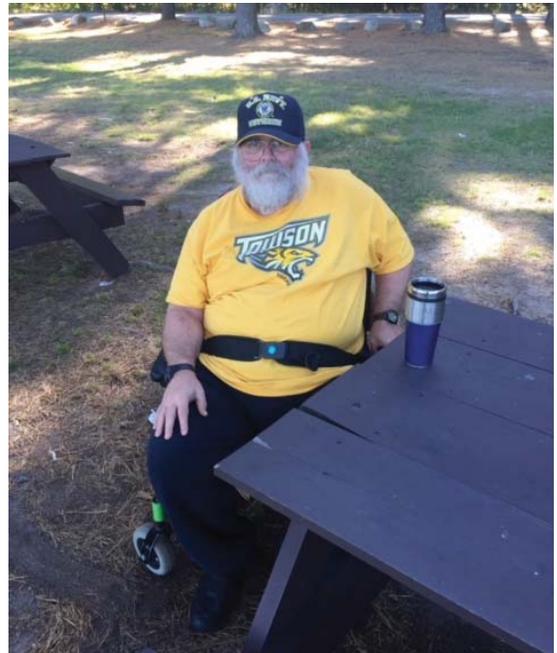
I invite you as a fellow DSP within Residential Resources to take the time to meet these two guys at Turkey Lane. Don't be stressed over the words “total care” like I was. What those words really means is “quality of life”, and all that is included. Take the time to learn from these two everything they will teach you. I will always be thankful for what Ryan and Zack have taught me about life, and how to live it in a way I never thought of before.

Lunch at the Lake

Samantha Duda, DSP
Manchester, NH

Mike, John, Anna Liza, and I went to Lake Massabesic in Manchester to enjoy an afternoon picnic. We rode to the lake in Fremont Road's new van, which is a huge improvement from the old one. Loading in and out is much faster and more comfortable for both residents and staff, and it is a very smooth drive!

After arriving at the lake, we sat down at a picnic table and ate lunch. It was a beautiful day! There were a lot of boats on the water, so we watched them while chatting and enjoying our food. Mike is an avid bird watcher and was particularly happy about the large number of ducks floating on the lake. We counted more than 20! John enjoyed watching the motorcycles that passed by. Overall, it was a great trip. We were happy to take advantage of the nice weather, enjoying the fresh air and each other's company.



It's The Little Things

Kaylee Childs, Service Coordinator
Plattsburgh, NY

I started working with Braden almost four years ago. When I first started working with him the only service that he had was MSC. Braden talked about wanting to be more independent and someday living on his own and he first started off going to the respite house. I explained self-directed services to Braden and his family and they thought that sounded like the route to go. I helped him get SDS and before you know it he was going out into the community with his staff and establishing relationships. Braden has had self-directed services for a couple of years now. He's held a job at Walgreens for over a year and has moved out into his own apartment, for the very first time. Braden has been traveling and is looking into enrolling in college in the very near future. His long term goal is to move out of the state. Braden recently earned his driver's license and has his own car. I am very proud of Braden and all that he has accomplished over the last four years. I can't wait to see what the future has to bring for him!

Thank you to everyone who contributes 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 first business day 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.

Community News

Edited by Diana VanAlstyne

Layout by Mary Lynch

Residential Resources, Inc.

39 Summer Street

Keene, NH 03431

P: 800-287-2911

F: 844-281-0423

www.resresources.com

William K. Schofield, Ph.D.

Founder and Owner

Our Guiding Principles

Creativity We foster creativity by exploring and learning, embracing change, and pursuing best practice. We always ask ourselves, 'Is there a better way?'

Truth / Honesty We foster an environment where open and honest feedback and sharing are expected, encouraged, and supported. We honor commitments; and we share feelings, opinions, experiences, ideas, and information in order to optimize each individual's personal and professional growth and development.

Empowerment We empower people through a process which includes giving them the opportunities, the authority, the information, and the examples necessary to become successful decision makers.

Diversity We welcome and value different perspectives, contributions, and capabilities. We promote growth, opportunity, and experience.

Quality We continually improve our services by: Promoting positive change; Increasing knowledge and skills; Encouraging personal growth; Valuing individual differences; Learning from our experiences.

Respect We believe that respect is a right, and we conduct ourselves accordingly. Our standards include the exercise of human dignity; the honoring and valuing of self and others; and communication that is clear, direct, and honest.

Trust We create trust by being consistent, stable, honest, and reliable. Trust also requires sincerity, knowledge, and capability.



www.resresources.com/facebook



www.resresources.com



www.resresources.com/twitter