

CHOICES

WEB VERSION - 7/2 - June 2006

A Semi Quarterly Newsletter about Self-Determination in Dane County

Disability Rights Advocates Awarded

Congratulations to Julie and Jason Endres, who were awarded as Self-Advocates of the year award by the Wisconsin Coalition for Developmental Disabilities (WCDD). Julie and Jason were recognized for their relentless efforts to advocate for disability rights, not only for themselves, but for others as well.

The Wisconsin Coalition for Developmental Disabilities hosted its annual awards luncheon on April 20th at the Concourse Hotel. WCDD creates this opportunity each year to recognize people who have worked hard to forward disability rights and make a positive difference in their community. Two Wisconsin Senators and three State Representatives were invited to present awards.

The Department of Health and Family Services was honored for its strong commitment to having people with disabilities live in their communities by reducing the number of people with disabilities living in institutional settings.

A number of media awards were presented (including journalists from the Wisconsin State Journal and the Isthmus Weekly) for stories about people with disabilities in Dane County. These stories featured Dan Spooner of West High School in a Wisconsin State Journal article about integration in the workforce; and Darwin Ness, who was featured in an Isthmus cover story about life after the negative



Julie and Jason Endres

experience of being in an institution.

Congratulations to all of the WDCC award recipients! (Other recognition ceremonies are featured below and on pages 6 and 9). #

Madison Man wins State-wide Award

Congratulations to Donald Pierce of Madison for receiving an Honorable Mention award from Very Special Arts of Wisconsin for his pastel drawing called "Still Life at Night."

Don, who has Cerebral Palsy, was born in Lancaster, WI. He moved to Madison when he was six years old to attend Washington school. At age fifteen, he returned to Lancaster to live with his parents and attend high school. After high school, Don attended UW-Platteville



where a teacher got him interested in art. He graduated with a B.S. in art and a minor in psychology in 1987. Don returned to Madison to pursue a masters degree in rehab psychology. More recently, Don enrolled in an Artsbridge outreach class at his apartment complex. He credits his teacher, Nancy Griffey, and this class for getting him back into art. She is also the one who entered his pastel drawing in the Very Special Arts of Wisconsin contest. Don says that he has always liked art and prefers painting flowers over anything else. #

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Dan Sez

by Dan Rossiter, Manager
Developmental Disabilities
Services, Dane County

So last newsletter I was complaining about the cold weather and wondering if spring/summer would ever come. And as they say, "Careful what you wish for".

There seems to be a lot of stuff blowing in the wind. Long Term Care Reform: the State is wanting counties or groups of counties to get together and make the supports that people depend on look more like a health insurance program, where you get to pick from a list of providers and a new outfit (called a Care Management Organization) sorta directs the whole thing. The idea is to save enough money to get everyone off the waiting list, which is a really cool idea. The one thing that the advocates got into this reform is the idea of self-directed supports. In fact, it's the law, under the Wisconsin State Statutes. So while things may be different in some ways, people with disabilities will still have a voice in how they receive their supports.

Dane County is concentrating on how this is going to work for people with physical disabilities and people who are older and frail. We're going to spend more time figuring out how this will work for people with developmental disabilities. Stay tuned.

A wind from another direction is coming from the County. Our County Executive, Kathleen Falk sent out a letter a few weeks ago, alerting us to the fact that the Human Services Department (that's where the Developmental Disabilities program funds come from) will need to save 5% in what is called General Purpose Revenue. In her announcement, she said "For several reasons, this is a more difficult budget year than last year. Costs to continue - such as personnel and insurance costs - have risen, and cuts in the state and federal budgets continue to hurt the county. As always, it is our priority to continue serving citizens with a high level of quality services while limiting property taxes."

How that is all going to be accomplished will come in the next few months. So, once again. Stay tuned.

People First of Dane County Games Night & Membership Drive

People First of Dane County hosted a games night on April 18 at the Mifflin St. Library. We shared information about the group and played a few rounds of BINGO (for prizes!)

People First is always involved in various projects. Right now, we are beginning work on information for transportation vendors in the area and planning to help with two upcoming

conferences. We also plan social events such as the games night, picnics and holiday parties.

People First usually meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the Mifflin St. Library from 6:30 to 8 p.m. New members are always welcome, so come on out and join us!

For more information contact Nancy Molfenter at 263-5557.



Pen Pal Program Aims to Promote Friendships

Community Living Connections is in the process of setting up a "pen pal" program for people with developmental disabilities. Our hope is to connect people to others outside of their normal circle of friends in a way they may not have experienced before.

We also are looking in to connecting with agencies either within or even outside of Dane County to work with us on this project. We hope that with enough interest we could culminate the project with a picnic



sometime this summer, in which "pen pals" could get together, meet, share stories and fun in person. Our aim is to connect people and promote new friendships for those who may not have otherwise met.

If you know of people who may be interested in this project, either as a "pal" or to assist in writing and sharing in such a project, we would love to include anyone interested. We are looking to enlist assistance from people to help with putting thoughts to paper for those who need support, but cannot know quite how that will fall together until we evaluate the interest.

**If you are interested, please contact
Joy Smart @ 661-7941 or Eric Deml
@877-1003 ext. 224 for more information.**



CHOICES is sponsored by Dane
County Dept Human Services,
Adult Community Services Division
1202 Northport Drive
Madison WI 53704

Dora's Pet Corner

A Morning with Craig and Miles

by Dora Norland

Craig Santiago is a support broker at UCP. Craig was kind enough to introduce us all to his very adorable and well-trained dog named Miles. Miles is a 1 and ½ year old Canaan dog. Miles went to live with Craig when he was just eight weeks old. Craig did some research before purchasing a dog to make sure that he got the type that would be best for him. Canaan dogs are smaller in size, short-haired and typically smart and fairly easy to train. Craig found a breeder in Wisconsin and went to visit. After a few months, a puppy was available and Miles became Craig's dog.

Miles and Craig go for daily walks around their north side home and enjoy playing in the fenced front yard where

Craig lives. Miles listens well and is a friendly dog. He is also good with children and travels well. Craig and Miles have been out to Wyoming together. Miles also enjoys playing soccer (it is his favorite game). Craig described Miles as a good companion and also a little extra security for the house.

Craig pointed out that having a dog is not only lots of fun, but that it is also a big responsibility. Craig has to take Miles out for walks every day (even when the weather isn't so great) and he has to be home to care for Miles or make arrangements for someone else to take care of him. There are also expenses that come with dog ownership – like food and vet bills.



Craig and Miles

Having a dog – or any pet – can be a wonderful experience, but you have to be prepared and make sure that you are ready for the responsibility.

“Lizz’s Food For Thought”

Exploring Self-Employment, by Shannon Munn

Have you ever wondered if you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur? Maybe you’ve found yourself thinking “I’d like to be my own boss” but quickly become baffled about how to proceed to make your dream a reality? How do people start their own businesses anyway??

Lizz and her team had all of these questions. After 9 years of unemployment and trying a variety of jobs, none of which lasted long-term due to the nature of Lizz’s disability and frequent health concerns, Lizz’s team decided to explore the idea of self-employment. They felt strongly that Lizz has enjoyed work in the past and that she is able to contribute to her community through work. In the fall of 2004, they got Lizz involved in the Supported Self-Employment Pilot Project to explore self-employment ideas. With the help of the Self-Employment Coordinator, Lizz’s team brainstormed and evaluated different business ideas through research and by consulting with small business owners. Based on Lizz’s interests and input from businesses and community members, two potential business ideas were generated: 1) a

mobile coffee cart business and 2) a towel laundering/delivery service for local pubs and cafés. Next, the team set up some trial situations that would help Lizz and the team



validate which form of business would best suit her interests, abilities and support needs. As luck would have it, a training by Income Links on starting your own business was also

offered during this time and Lizz’ team attended and left with even more of a conviction that this was the right direction for Lizz. Next came several months of trial and error to refine the business idea. The team conceptualized “Lizz’s Food For Thought” – a personalized delivery service specializing in healthy and unusual snacks, refreshments and “boxed” lunches to area businesses for their trainings and staff meetings. With the support of ICW staff, Lizz has expanded her delivery service to 4 local businesses and will continue to expand in the coming months.

The journey to entrepreneurship has been well worth it for Lizz. Not only is she more connected with her community by being a business owner, but with the extra money from her business, Lizz plans to enjoy more sessions with her music therapist; her favorite pastime!

*

**For more information
about the Supported Self
Employment Program,
see article p. 6**

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Neighborhood Connections Celebrates 15 Years

by Kathy Lemke

Neighborhood Connections celebrated its 15th year birthday with a benefit concert at the Harmony Bar & Grill on April 2.

The music was great. Bobby Bullit and his band started the afternoon with some country rock classics. Our own Sid Nichols played a bluesy piano in the next band, The Blue Wazoo. A rare appearance by the remaining two members of the Goose Island Ramblers followed. Bruce Bollerud and George Gilbertson entertained with stories and polkas. Bruce changed his hat with each new story and played varied and unusual instruments. Next to play was Ken Burns of the Junkers who wore an enviable cowboy hat that showed his class and his intensity.

He sang the country blues. The Cash Box Kings closed out the concert with a full dance floor of people celebrating their music. All the musicians generously donated their time and talent.

In between bands Megan Lemke announced the winners of raffle prizes donated by the friends and families of Neighborhood Connections. Many of the prizes people donated were one-of-a-kind hand-made gifts. Ken Vogel, who made most of the puppets in Ella's Deli, made a puppet of Bob Dylan. Matt Christy made a hand blown water fountain out of colored glass. Teresa Abing crocheted an afghan and Barb Mancl sewed a quilted wall hanging. People donated their skills baking bread, organizing, giving astrology



readings. Photographers donated their pictures or their time. Artist donated their art. And we can't forget those folks who worked so hard to sell tickets, put up posters, and work on publicity. It was a group effort that reflected the group from which it came.

Consumers, employees, families and friends danced with each other, some of us together for over 15 years. "The thing I really liked about the party", one person told me, "is you weren't sure who was who. We were just all there together."

In this time of shrinking budgets and fund-raisers, did we make a lot of money? Not really. But did we have fun and celebrate each other and Neighborhood Connections? That we did!



Adult Family Home Providers Recognized

by Nancy Molfenter

Each year an event is held to recognize the hard work of Adult Family Home (AFH) Providers in the adult service system. For those of you not familiar with the AFH support model, it is designed so a person with a disability or need for daily supports lives in a home with one or more persons to assist them. Adult family homes can provide stability and long-term supports with the same people and are they are very important to the people who live and get



Linda and Kim at the AFH Dinner



Dennis and Carolyn

support in this way. Adult family homes can truly become like a family for people receiving supports. The responsibility for AFH providers can be very big and for some it is a twenty-four hour a day, seven day a week job.

That is why the annual recognition event is so significant. It is one time every year when county staff and others working with AFH providers designate an official time to say "thanks" for all of the long hours and tricky situations they deal with.

So, for all of the AFH providers out there, we hope that you enjoyed the dinner and thank you for everything you do! #

High School Grads Hire Support Brokers

by Monica Bear

This June, 34 high school grads from across Dane County will begin receiving adult services. Throughout the year they have worked with either transition coordinator, Kurt Svennson, their Family Support case manager or county case manager to plan this transition. Before starting adult services these grads first hire a broker.

On Tuesday May 16 more than a dozen young adults and their families spent the early part of their evening at the 2006 Broker Fair. An annual tradition hosted by Catholic Charities Support Broker Services and sponsored by Dane County Human Services, the Broker Fair serves as an opportunity for individuals to meet potential brokers. Most individuals attending the 2006 Broker Fair were high school grads but a few people who have directed their own support for several years and were "window shopping" in hopes of changing brokers in the near future were also there.

All brokers and broker agencies with two or more vacancies attended the annual broker fair. Brokers shared resumes, passed out business cards and answered lots of questions. Individuals and their families came prepared to put a face to the resumes they had received in the mail. They shook hands, asked questions and scheduled broker interviews. In between all this networking people stopped to snack on a submarine sandwich or to grab a slice of watermelon. Hopefully everyone left the fair one step closer to selecting and directing their future adult services and supports.

If anyone requires additional support to identify and hire a support broker please contact self-directed services coordinator, Eric Miller at 242-6447. #

People First of Dane County, self-advocacy group

* FUTURE MEETINGS *

June 20 – Mifflin St. Library, Madison

6:30 – 8 p.m. Dan Rossiter will be the guest speaker

July 18 – Mifflin St. Library, Madison

6:30 – 8 p.m.

August 22 – Summer Picnic

Location to be determined

(see related article, p. 2)

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

**A group for support brokers
to attend with their
consumers
who are aging and may
benefit from additional
socialization. If you would
like to attend, please e-mail
MNovinska@aol.com**

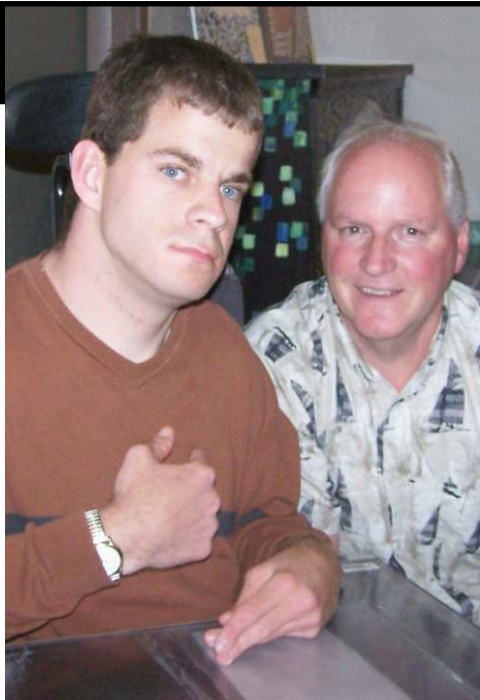
Arts4All

TOTAL Success at Gallery Night 2006

by Cindy Kernan

It will be no surprise to all you fine arts aficionados that Arts 4 All was a TOTAL success on Gallery Night 2006. Each year around the first of May, Madison opens up its doors for a city wide gallery night. Partnered with Escape Java Joint, 916 Williamson, a profitable and enjoyable evening was had by all. The operational expression for the evening was "WOW" as customers walked into the gallery packed with an impressive array of original jewelry; painting; prints; pottery; glass work and photography. Kudos to the artists who shared their work that night. Opening to closing, the place was packed by well wishers and shoppers. Thanks go out to Willy Street Co-op for elegant snack platters and to Escape for gracious service and free coffee in the gallery.

Arts 4 All is organized to help artists create, promote, display and market their art. This organization takes a special interest in assisting artists with developmental disabilities use their artistic talents to earn an income. For more information about Arts 4, All contact Marie VandeBerg at 244-3894.



Supported Self-Employment Planning Services Available

by Shannon Munn

Dane County's Supported Self-Employment (SSE) or Micro-Enterprise program is an alternative to traditional supported employment and sheltered work. The SSE program is uniquely suited to address the movement, communication, stamina, and behavioral barriers to employment often faced by individuals with significant disabilities. Dane County has seen that these micro-businesses can create employment opportunities for individuals in our service system who have had limited

success in traditional employment.

The goal of the SSE program is to provide business planning services to people with developmental disabilities in an *individualized* way that will lead to the development of a *gainful* and *sustainable* micro-enterprise. The program incorporates a person-centered planning model known as Vocational Futures Planning (VFP) that identifies barriers and assets to self-employment. Through an individualized approach, recommendations are made to overcome these barriers in order to establish or grow the consumer's micro-enterprise.

Whenever possible, DVR is asked to provide resources needed to enhance the consumer's business while the County contributes long-term support dollars to fund on-going vocational services.

Shannon Munn with Progressive Community Services coordinates the Supported Self-Employment Program and provides technical support to consumers (and teams) engaged in self-employment ventures. For more information, contact Shannon Munn at 318-0700 or at shannonm@pcsdane.org

Is Co-Housing in Your Future?

Co-Housing Fosters Neighborly Inclusion

by Howard Mandeville

Two co-housing communities are being developed in Madison and both want people with disabilities to be part of their shared communities.

What is co-housing? It's a way to be intentionally included in your neighborhood community while also owning your own home. Each

household in a co-housing community owns its own condominium and also shares use of common facilities such as community dining and kitchen space, and, perhaps, craft room, tools, media room, and overnight lodging for guests.

Co-housing is a good option for people who want to feel closely connected to their neighbors and to share a significant amount of time socializing and contributing volunteer time to the community while also maintaining one's own space and privacy when at home. For people who want their home be a refuge from the world and prefer not to hob nob with neighbors, go to lots of meetings, or get drawn into volunteer activity, this would *not* be the option to choose.

Arboretum Co-Housing. Arboretum Co-housing, Inc., is a new non-profit developing a co-housing community near the



Arboretum Co-housing, Architect's drawing

Vilas Park Zoo in Madison. The finished development will have 40 owner occupied dwellings. Ten of these units have subsidies available to qualified buyers that make them affordable to low-income households. Movin' Out may be able to help with additional down payment assistance. The co-housing group is now accepting commitments to purchase. Move-in will be in 2007. For more information, go to the website at www.arboretumcohousing.org or call 608/229-7906.

Troy Gardens. Troy Gardens has 30 condominium homes on 31 acres of shared green space that includes nature trails and the Troy Community Gardens where scores of families grow vegetables, herbs and flowers on rented garden plots. Troy Gardens will have a community building shared by the residents and gardeners, plus other amenities to foster friendly neighbor interaction among

the home owners and the gardeners. Two and three bedroom condos are available for sale. Some of these can be tailored to be fully accessible. All the units are "visitable," which means that anyone, regardless of mobility status, can be invited to enter the front door and

first floor of every neighbor's home. Several units have subsidies making them affordable to home buyers with low incomes. Movin' Out may be able to help with additional down payment assistance. The first phase of Troy Gardens units are for sale now with move-in targeted later this year. For more information, go to the web site at www.affordablehome.org or call 608/280-0131.

Wonder if you or someone with a disability you care about can afford to buy a home? Would you like to figure out if owning or renting is a better option for you? Just curious about what help is available to make home ownership possible? Contact Movin' Out at 608/251-4446 or check out the web site at www.movin-out.org.

Resources Available on the Dane County Website

Check out the new, improved Dane County Human Services website for DD services: <http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/disability.htm>

These handy references may be viewed and/or printed from the website:

- * *The Source: Guide to Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities in Dane County.* Reference copies are also available at all County and City public libraries, including branch libraries. http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/pdf/the_source_2006.pdf
- * *Support Broker Manual:* http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/pdf/broker_manual_complete.pdf
- * *Quality Standards for Support Brokers:* http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/pdf/quality_standards_support_brokers.pdf

Arlo Spies...

...at the 8th annual Self-Advocacy conference held in Atlanta, Georgia May 26-28: (below, left) Cindy, Barry and Daira from People First Wisconsin; and Jeffrey Johnson and Craig Rossomando (below, right). Jeffrey also presented information about Self-Advocacy efforts in Dane County along with Nancy Molfenter of the VOICES program.



The ARC of Dane County's 56th Annual Awards Banquet, 2006

by Jeffrey Johnson (with a little help from his dad and his friends)



The Arc of Dane County had its 56th Annual Award Banquet this year at the Concourse Hotel in Madison Wisconsin on April 27. This year's Banquet was hosted by newscaster, Joel DeSpain. Dan Remick and Joel DeSpain gave out the awards to everyone.

The 2006 award recipients were as follows:

- * The Community Support Award went to Dan Rossiter of Dane County Human Services.
- * The Corporate Support Award went to Capitol Centre Foods.
- * The next award was the Volunteer Award that went to Sue and Bob Webb.
- * The Educator-Teacher award went to Randy Converse.
- * The Employer- Private Award went to my friend and former boss Carl Miller, who works for Miller and Sons Supermarket in Verona, Wisconsin.
- * The next award was for Employer- Public, which went to Bob Ross, who is also my former boss at U.S.D.A. Forest Products Lab.
- * The Media Award was given to Sandy Cullen, Eric Franke and also Doug Erickson.
- * The Self-Advocate Award went to Jeffrey Johnson.
- * The Direct Care Giver award went to Beth Clark and Craig Rossomando.

- * The Elected Official Award went to Representative Terese Berceau.
- * The next award given out was a brand new award. It is called the Landlord Award, which was given to Valley View Leasing.
- * The next Award is a Special Award goes to Pooley's Sports Bar and Valley Packaging Industries. It is a special award because the ARC wanted to thank Pooley's for use of their space for past Halloween parties.
- * The next award was the Lifetime Achievement Award that goes to Leone Babler
- * The final award was the President's Award which went to Paul Yochum, who has been with the Arc of Dane County for many years now.

My dad's name is Ron Johnson who is the president for the Arc of Dane County. My dad was helping with the awards. When I got my award for self-advocate of the year for the second time, my dad shook my hand and to said me "Jeffrey, you did a great job here tonight." My dad was very proud of me for what I did.

It was a wonderful banquet. Many thanks to the ARC of Dane County for a great banquet and for working hard all year to help advance the rights, choices and dignity of people with disabilities in our community!

Save the Date for a Fabulous Conference!

When:
Monday July 10th

Where:
**The Hyatt in
Downtown
Milwaukee**

Training and Consultation has teamed up with People First of Wisconsin to offer a conference to inspire self-advocates and support staff alike!

David Hingsburger will give the keynote and work with self-advocates to develop their own Bill of Rights.

For registration information, please call Rachel at (608) 890-0777.



**Friends First is a
social group for people
with disabilities and
without disabilities.
We go out and do fun
activities
and new members are
always welcome.**

**If you are interested
in finding out what we
have planned, call or
e-mail Jeffrey
Johnson at
608-263-5556 or
jjohnson1@wisc.edu**

Who is Going to Work for Me?

**Nancy Molfenter
Self-Advocacy Coordinator**

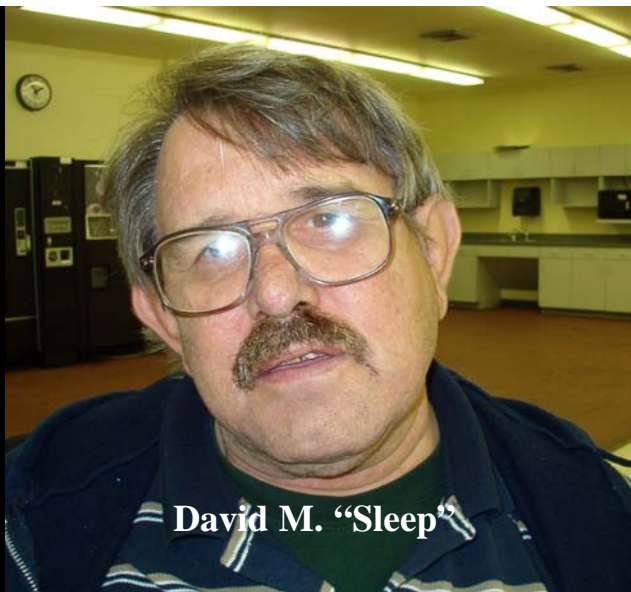
Self-Directed services in Dane County has increased choices for people with disabilities. Individuals interview and hire their own support brokers and many have made decisions about their residential and vocational providers too. It seems like a logical next step in the evolution of self-directed services would be the leap to allowing individuals to participate more fully in the hiring and evaluation of the staff who work for them.

From what self-advocates are saying, that does not yet seem to be the norm for most agencies providing services to people with disabilities. Although meeting the prospective support staff is a typical part of the hiring process, individuals report that they are told that a new staff member is going to be (or already has been) hired and that the last step is to meet the individual(s). If people with disabilities don't feel like they really have a choice about hiring decisions, then they may not feel comfortable expressing concerns about someone working with them. If you think about the types of things that many individuals need help with – and the amount of time that they spend with support staff - it is really important that they like and feel comfortable with them. In addition, individuals could and should be a primary source of information for evaluating the performance of staff who works with them.

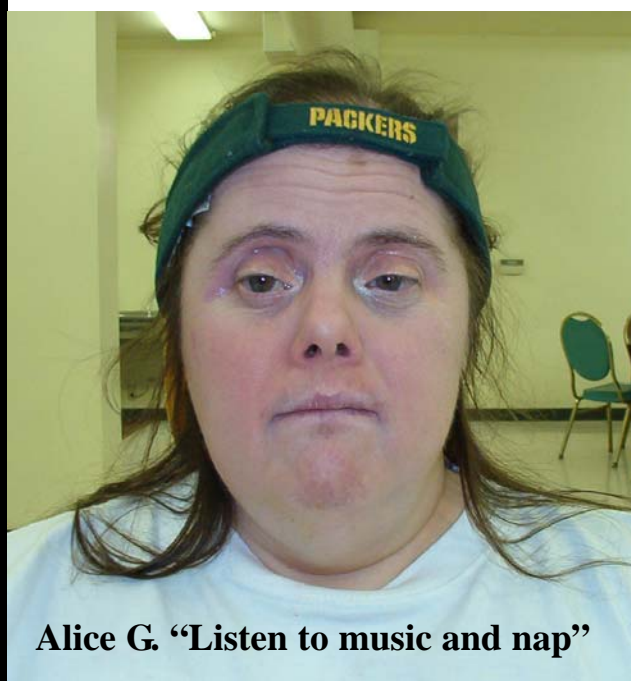
Hopefully, the continued movement toward choice and inclusion for people with disabilities will lead the entire system into new ways of doing things and seeing things like including individuals more fully in hiring and evaluation of those who work with them. Power to the People!

ON
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10 Interviews by Nancy Molfenter



David M. "Sleep"



Alice G. "Listen to music and nap"

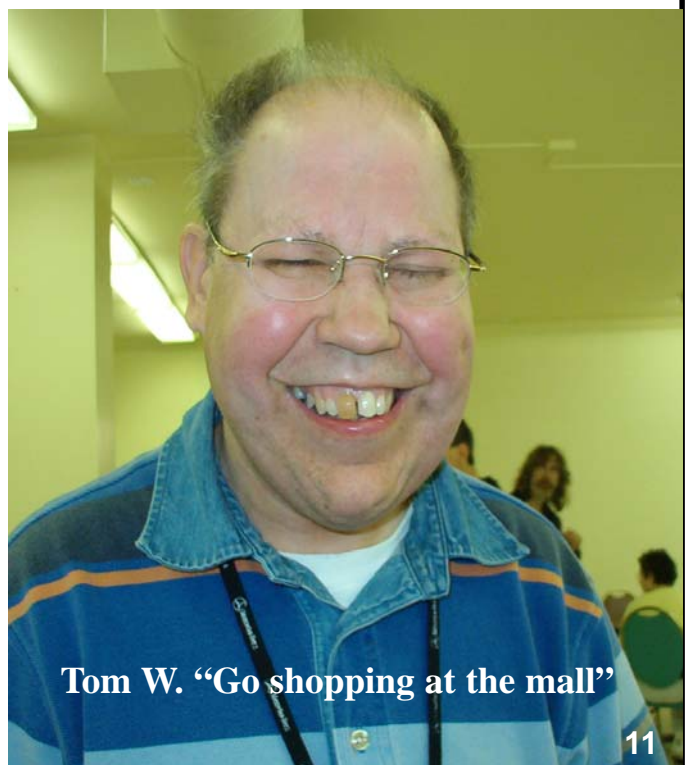


Linda D. "Watch T.V."

For this issue, we asked:
**"What's a good
thing to do
on a rainy
Spring day?"**



Tina H. "Watch T.V."



Tom W. "Go shopping at the mall"

the Oh, Yah's...

To place a Connections Ad

Connections is a column to help people with disabilities meet a new friend, find someone to date, or sell some stuff. We will run your ad for 3 issues unless you tell us otherwise.

Announce a Transition

Tell us about a new job, an engagement, a marriage, a new place to live, or say goodbye to someone who has passed away.

Please Send Your Stories, Comments & Suggestions

Contributions, comments and suggestions are encouraged and may be directed to:

Nancy F. Molfenter
122 East Olin Ave, Suite
100 Madison, WI 53713
Phone: (608) 263-5557
e-Mail: molfenter@wisc.edu

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CHOICES Newsletter

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