



CHOICES

A Newsletter about Self-Determination in Dane County written by individuals with developmental disabilities, for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and supporters.

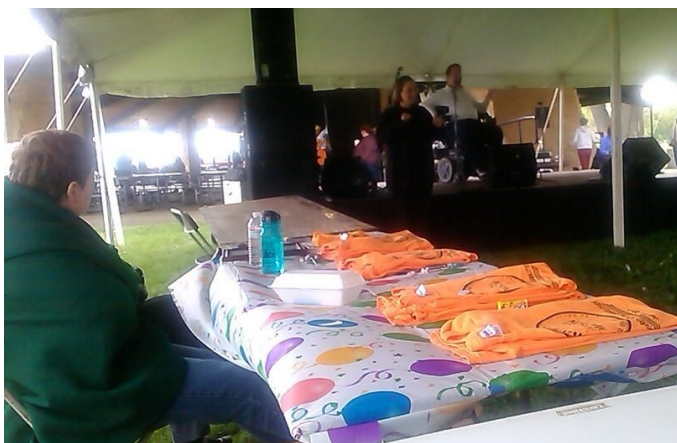
Vol. 15 No. 4, December 2013

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Disability Pride Festival

By Jeffrey Johnson



Disability Pride Festival was on Saturday July 27, 2013 at Birmingham Park in Madison. There were many people there with disabilities. I saw Ricardo Vasquez, the Marimba Man, play at the festival. There were also booths set up. Groups that had booths there included: Rhapsody Art Center, Brandon's Books, Community Liv-

ing Alliance (CLA), Colors by Fulton, Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW), Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Mobility Store, and the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI). The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Dane County handed out information about their organization.

One of the booths had a spinning wheel with numbers on it that were white or orange. If it lands on white, a person wins one prize. If it lands on orange, a person wins two prizes. I saw some old friends from Access to Independence at the festival. I saw Tracy Miller and other friends, Kory and Kelly. It was good to see them again. Tracy and I talked for a little while and then I went and talked with Kory and Kelly. They miss me a lot and I miss them a lot too. I saw Cindy Bentley from People First Wisconsin and Fil Clissa from Board for People with Disabilities.

Dane Arts Center displayed some artwork done by people with disabilities. There were many food vendors for people to enjoy, including L'uang Prabang Thai Food and Brittingham Boat house. There were also retail vendors selling earrings, necklaces, cups and t-shirts. It was a cloudy and cold day but everyone still seemed to enjoy Disability Pride Festival.



Bear in Mind...



Monica Bear is Dane County's
Community Services Manager for
Developmental Disabilities

My spring bulbs are planted, leaves raked, and turkey ordered. While the house still needs a good vacuuming before out of town family arrives, the season of thankfulness is upon us.

On October 18 and 19th, national leaders, Beth Mount and Connie Lyle O'Brien facilitated a person-centered planning process called Pathfinders. About 50 people spent a day and a half thinking, reflecting and helping seven young adults and their families

imagine the next steps in their lives. As individuals created posters identifying the people and places they value, I was struck by the social change that has occurred in the last thirty years.

Local advocates, like the retiring Dan Remick, helped blaze a trail for community-based supports in Dane County. Dan and his peers spoke tirelessly about the indignities of institutionalization, helping motivate bureaucrats and providers to develop community supports. When I first participated in a person-centered planning process it was to help people like Dan move from institutions back to our community. Individuals often had one or two paid staff who cared about them, no family connections, and no community setting where they hung out or belonged.

In October at Pathfinders, the groups created posters that reflected the positive impact of family involvement, school inclusion, integrated employment and community belonging. The posters listed parents, siblings, multiple generations of extended family members, co-workers, classmates, neighbors, church members, libraries, local restaurants, retail shops, faith communities and a variety of neighbor-

hood haunts. Each participant shared dreams such as attending college, getting a better job or moving into their own place. I am grateful for the generation of advocates, parents, educators, service providers and policy makers who laid the groundwork that makes these dreams attainable.

I am grateful to live in a community that continues to have high expectations and a willingness to roll up their sleeves as we imagine new ways to help people live full lives. Jeffrey Johnson writes about LOV-Dane's expansion of their Bridge Builder project. This is one of four capacity building initiatives currently underway in Dane County. In future issues you will read about projects in Sun Prairie, Stoughton and Cross Plains/Mazomanie. All seek to strengthen social relationships, increase community participation and offer family members some relief from their caretaking responsibilities.

Jeffrey Johnson reports that employment for people with disabilities in Wisconsin is an abysmal 37%. We still have plenty of room for improvement in Dane County. However I am grateful to live in a community where approximately 74% of the adults with developmental disabilities who receive county-funded services have jobs at local businesses. This includes sixty young adults who finished high school in 2013.

Finally, I am grateful to live in a community where people with disabilities, family members and service providers turn out by the hundreds to protest budget cuts and provide public testimony about the quality of supports they receive. This year's advocacy efforts successfully reduced the 2014 budget cuts from a proposed 2.65% to 1.25%. These reductions will be a challenge to implement. However, our community cared enough to act and their actions got positive results.

With the holidays upon us, I hope that you have reason for gratitude and take the time to share it with others.

Attention Residential Support Providers!

Cooking Skills - Teach the Teacher

This four-part class is geared toward residential caregivers and focuses on how to promote healthy eating habits using the USDA's MyPlate in the home. **This class will teach you how to teach nutrition skills to the people you support.** Through this class, you will learn how to prepare some simple, yet nutritious recipes, tricks to manage portion sizes from WebMD's Portion Size Guide, how to read food labels, and how to prepare vegetables in easy ways that taste good.

This series will be held Tuesdays, Jan 7-28th: 1:00—2:30 PM at BLW Neighborhood Center.

For more information visit:

<http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/learningtogether.html>

Or call: 608-265-9440

To register: <https://www.surveymk.com/s/COWRegistration>

Pathfinders

What:

Come join a small group of Dane County young adults and families who are interested in building a better life for themselves. Bring your closest friends and family so you can relax and think. Over the course of the next 12 months; set aside 2 or 3 times to come together for reflection and renewal. Share what you have learned and your successes. Build your circle; explore your possibilities, and take steps to achieve the life you want.

Who:

Approximately 6 to 10 people and their families from the Dane County area and their supporters: facilitation by Beth Mount and Connie Lyle O'Brien with local follow along by Cindy Kernan and Angie Klemm.

When:

January 24 (5-9pm) and 25 (8:30am-4pm). Meals are included and the training is free.

Contact:

Please call or write Cindy Kernan at ckernan@charter.net or 608-322-7966.

LOV-Dane Bridge Builder Project

How can we find the “good life” for our loved ones with disabilities?

Everyone wants to be valued members of a community with employment, recreation, independence and meaningful relationships. As family members and individuals with disabilities, we have felt isolated in pursuit of this vision. We also know that sometimes a little bit of high quality support can create great outcomes! Since 2009, families in LOV-Dane have realized that working together to hire and train this high quality support is very productive and energizing. Individuals with disabilities and their families designed and run the Bridge Builder project which collectively hires staff to support the building and maintenance of a full life. While our values of full community inclusion remain the same; the substance of the support changes based on the needs of the project members.

With funding from the Capacity Building Initiative, LOV-Dane was able to double the size of the Bridge Builder project this year. Below are the stories of two individuals who have been in the project since it was created, but are now benefitting from the Capacity Building funds.

Bridge Builder Project

By Jeffrey Johnson

I interviewed Sadler Bell about the LOV-Dane Bridge Builder project. He said the Bridge Builder project is a program to help people with disabilities in the community. There are two Bridge Builders. The first is Rachael Kramer and the new Bridge Builder is Eric Chase, who started in September. They help people with disabilities work on goals that are important to them.

Sadler was one the first people participating in the Bridge Builder project. It started in 2009 and 8 people with disabilities were involved. Bridge Builder was originally called the community connector. The Bridge Builder project was set up to help people with disabilities get connected to groups in the community. The group helps people expand their imagination. It gives people with disabilities a chance to try new things and have new experiences.

A community organizer brought families together to start the Bridge Builder project. Amanda Bell from LOV-Dane helped bring this group together to hire a Bridge Builder. The community organizer would then work with different people to focus on what they needed and what they want to focus on in the community.

Sadler has used the Bridge Builder to get connected to his neighborhood association, and the Y. He’s also working with the Bridge Builder on sharing responsibilities with his roommate.

Daniel and the Bridge Builder Project

By Jeffrey Johnson

I interviewed Daniel and the LOV-Dane Bridge Builder at Java Cat Coffee. Together, they are practicing cooking a pancake recipe. They use a tablet with a slide show of systematic pictures to follow instead of a traditional written recipe. Using this tool is helping Daniel to be able to make pancakes on his own. Daniel’s favorite pancakes are chocolate chip but he compromised for healthier whole-wheat blueberry pancakes.

Bridge Builder is a LOV-Dane project that promotes independence and connects people to their community. The Bridge Builder project started in 2009. Twenty-five people are currently being supported and that number is continuing to grow. Daniel and other LOV-Dane members collectively hired a Bridge Builder to work with them; someone they felt was a good match. Daniel has specific goals that he and his family chose. His goals are to cook on his own, and to get



Daniel and Sadler hanging out at Culver's

LOV-Dane Bridge Builder Project

Daniel and the Bridge Builder Project, continued from page 4

out of his house more and exercise. Daniel meets with a Bridge Builder once a week, sometimes more. He has been involved in the project since 2009.

Daniel said that being part of the Bridge Builder project has been a lot of fun. He has made many new friends, including a friend named Tom. The Bridge Builder introduced Daniel to Tom in 2009. Amanda from LOV-Dane knew Tom's wife. Daniel and Tom do many activities together, including woodworking, drinking coffee, and chatting. They have built small, wooden libraries and a tackle box. Bridge Builder has been a good way for Daniel to meet people that he enjoys being around and to be more involved in the community.

NEW FACES

New WIN Nurse

By Jeffrey Johnson

Joanne Law started working in Scotland as a direct care provider in 1991. She helped people with disabilities move out of institutions in Scotland. This was her first introduction to people with developmental disabilities.

Joanne moved here in 1997 and she went to UW Madison to get her degree in social work. From 1998 to 2007, she worked at Avenues to Community as a Support Broker. Joanne then went to Herzing University in Madison and got a degree as a Registered Nurse. Afterward she worked in a nursing home and provided home care for an individual with cerebral palsy. She wanted to get back into the developmental disabilities field.

Joanne started her new job with the Wellness Inclusion Nursing (WIN) program at Waisman Outreach on September 3, 2013. Since becoming a WIN nurse, Joanne has worked with people that are aging and have several issues going on like heart concerns, special diets, kidney problems, and skin issues. She works with people in rehabilitation also, such as after surgery, to make sure they get the support they need when leaving the hospital or nursing home. The locations Joanne has worked in Dane County are homes, nursing homes, hospitals, and the hospice center.



New to Intake: Heidi Stringer

By Jeffrey Johnson

I interviewed Heidi Stringer about her new job at Dane County Human Services at the intake unit. As an intake worker, she works with individuals and their families on the waiting list. She helps to get formal and informal support for them as well as how to get assistance.

Heidi got into this field by accident. She got to know some people with developmental disabilities and they hooked her into the work. She wanted to see all of the ins and outs of how the system worked. Heidi wanted to see the behind the scenes. She wanted to be a part of helping people and their families get most out of life so she became an advocate.

In 1997, when she graduated from UW Madison, she took a position as a skills teacher and she ended up loving her work. In 2002, she went back to school to get her master's degree in Social Work and she focused on intellectual disabilities and social policy.

Heidi worked for a residential agency supporting people with disabilities and was a supervisor for other case managers. Before working at the intake unit, Heidi worked at Dane County Human Services as a case manager for people with disabilities. That position is similar to being a support broker.

Heidi started at the intake unit August 1st after she trained her replacement case manager so that people got the help they needed. Her new job challenges her to find new ideas and strategies to help people. She finds it engaging to work with the families and people with disabilities she loves working with her colleagues as well as everyone on the teams.



Columnists

Golf Outing

By Dan Remick

I was at the Arc of Wisconsin Dane County Golf outing on September 20, 2013. The golf outing was in Waunakee. The weather was very good. It was very warm. I was there from 7am to 1pm. I had a real good time. Well this is all for now.



Dane County 2014 Budget

Public Hearing

By Dan Remick

I was at Dane County Public Hearing. The hearing was on budget for Dane County. All of us know that Dane County does not have a lot of money to go around right now. I am supported by Options to Community Living and our budget is going down.

I spoke at the hearing. I did tell our County executive that I don't need money to get cut from our budget right now. I don't want Options to lose any more money. A lot of people spoke at the hearing.

Retirement

By Dan Remick

I am going to retire sometime in October of 2013. I am 65 years old now. Sometimes I like to travel around our State of Wisconsin. I am going to miss coming to work on Wednesdays. I will stay in contact with everyone at the Waisman Center. All of you are my friends. Well this is all for now.

Cindy's Commentary

By Cindy Wegner

Arc of Dane County 25th Annual Golf Tourney

Arc of Dane Co. had its 25th annual Golf Fundraiser in Waunakee on September 20th. They had a silent auction and food. I donated some of my pottery and paintings for the silent auction and all of them sold.

Taste of Dane County

Waisman Center had a meeting with new supporters for people with disabilities. I was on the panel answering questions. I will get paid for being on the panel.

Homecoming Parade

My Best Buddy was in the Homecoming Parade. They gave out candy and pizza. I watched the Homecoming parade.

People First Meeting

People First had a meeting on October 15th, 2013. We had a potluck where everyone brought something to share. We played Bingo after we ate.

Snow blindness

By Dale Buttke

*It just snowed one day,
And I was seeing ok,
But on that day, I could not see,
And then I was in believe,
On that day, I was blinded,*

*I could not see clearly,
Things was seeming dreary
But then I realized,
Snow blinded my eyes*

*And I had to wear,
Sunglasses when I go anywhere,
And it became clear,
With my great fear,
That I had to wear dark sunglasses
When people are walking pass,
But with no kindness
Do not know that I have Snow blindness.*

Interesting News

Building A Network for Caregivers

By Jeffrey Johnson

Twenty-five years ago Ted Kuntz, a family therapist in Vancouver, British Columbia was working on his will and asked family members and friends if they would help to be a full time guardian for his son Josh, who has a cognitive disability. Everyone he asked said no. They said it would be too much responsibility and they could not handle it.

Kuntz was very lucky because he lived in Vancouver, which is home to one of the largest disability support advocacy organizations. The organization is called Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN). Josh's parents' duties don't stop when they pass away. Kuntz made a plan for Josh and found other people to help.

Josh has a cognitive disability that requires long-term support. In the past, people with disabilities lived in institutions and their life may not have to change dramatically when their parents passed away. Now that long-term support is provided in the community it can be challenging to figure out what happens after the parents pass away and how to maintain the lifestyle the person with a disability was used to.

As the parents are growing older, it will take new approaches to ensure that people with disabilities have good lives after their parents or siblings are gone. Etman-ski and Cammack established PLAN. They spent years teaching others how to construct a network of care and putting these principles into practice. One of the hardest parts of family passing is that a person with a disability might become isolated and lonely. PLAN helps put together a way to help have a circle of people around a person with a disability to keep them active in their community.

To learn more about PLAN, check out their website: <http://plan.ca/>

Insurance Exchange

By Jeffrey Johnson

The health insurance exchange is an option for people that don't have health insurance; it is an online marketplace for private insurance. The health exchange opened on October 1, 2013 for individuals and small businesses.

There are about 800,000 people in Wisconsin and that are qualified to use the exchange. This includes about 500,000 people that don't have insurance and 92,000 who are losing Medicaid. Approximately 180,000 people buy insurance on their own and about 25,000 people are signed up in a special high-risk plan.

Niko Skievaski, 26, a consultant and entrepreneur from Madison wants to try the health insurance exchange. He likes bike racing and worries he could be very badly injured and create many large medical bills. Phyllis Leikness, 61, of Stoughton has been rationing her thyroid pills to make them last longer. She has been missing her health insurance since she lost her job at the nursing home. She is going to try the health care exchange as well.

People that don't use the exchange and remain uninsured after March 31st will have to pay a fee of \$95; this fee will increase to \$695 in 2016.

One of the places people can enroll is the Dane County Job Center in Madison, the other places you can enroll at are healthcare.gov, or call 1-800-318-2596.

Summarized from: "Uninsured Prepare for Exchange Opening Tuesday," Wisconsin State Journal, October 1 2013 by David Wahlberg.



By Bill Worthy

Spotlight on Employment

DVR Services Helps Find People Jobs

By Jeffrey Johnson

Justin Peebles, a 32-year-old man who lives in Wausau, Wisconsin, has a seizure disorder. He is worried about going back to the homeless shelter because he cannot pay his rent at the halfway house where he lives now. Peebles is concerned he is not getting the services he needs. He applied for services from Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) but had to wait five to six months on a waiting list. DVR helps about 17,000 people a year, while 4,077 are put on its waiting list. DVR helped find jobs for about 3,200 people with disabilities last year. Agency officials are happy with their success in cutting down the waiting list from its peak of about 13,000 in 2009.

Nick Zouski, of Access to Independence, a Madison nonprofit group that helps people with disabilities, feels that DVR's services are not available to help many people. Zouski sees the importance of agency services as both a client and a case manager. He lost most of the use of his arms and legs from a diving accident in 1996 and DVR services helped him. Zouski now helps others apply for agency services.

Wisconsin will receive funds at the start of the new fiscal year to run its employment programs for people with disabilities. Wisconsin will get \$55.6 million in federal funds and \$15.1 million in state funds. That is the minimum amount the state can spend per year without being subject to federal penalties. Wisconsin could get an additional \$14.2 million in federal funds if it were to come up with a \$3.9 million match to cover funding for the next two years. The Wisconsin Legislature's Joint Finance Committee voted to keep the state's contribution to \$15.1 million minimum. The vote was 12 to 4. The Republican Party was in the majority.

DVR Funding

By Jeffrey Johnson

People at Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Rehab Council support a new bill to add more money for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Governor Walker is agreeing to support this new bill even though Jennifer Shilling of La Crosse and other Democrats introduced it.

The bill would have an additional \$3.9 million of Wisconsin money to be given to DVR over the next two years. It would help bring in an extra \$14 million in federal money.

Just because the governor is in favor of this bill does not mean the Republicans will pass this bill. It would

have to pass both the Senate and Assembly, and gain support of Republicans and Democrats.

The Legislative Joint Finance Committee was not convinced, even if DVR got full funding they felt things would not change and stay as they are right now. Back in May, Republicans voted to leave the amount of money for DVR at its current level of about \$15 million. This is the least amount the federal government will allow before handing out penalties. Wisconsin gets about \$55 to \$56 million in funds from the federal government at the rate they already contribute to Wisconsin's DVR.

Jennifer Shilling thinks that Walker may feel a sense of urgency for job creation and training of workers. Linda Vegoe from Wisconsin Rehab Council who oversees DVR is glad to see that there would be support for more staff at DVR. DVR helps about 17,000 people and over 4,000 people are on the waiting list to get services. Over 3,000 people found jobs last year through DVR. DVR said the additional money would help them by getting people off the waiting list and help them get jobs.

Disability Workforce

By Jeffrey Johnson

In Wisconsin, the employment rate for people with disabilities is only 37% and for people without a disability, the rate is 70%. The Wisconsin disability community welcomes a new Better Bottom Line Blueprint by the National Governors Association. This Blueprint is working on ways to help people with disabilities get jobs that pay well.

The Blueprint is looking at how to get workers with disabilities into the competitive job market. The Blueprint is focusing on how to prepare young people with disabilities for work. Project SEARCH and Let's Get to Work are two programs that are part of the Blueprint to help give people with disabilities support and be employed with jobs in the community. This Blueprint focuses on more than funding.

Misperceptions of employers about people with disabilities in a company include liability concerns, cost of workplace accommodations and negative feelings about people with disabilities. After hiring people with disabilities and the person has been given the right training and support they can be an asset to the jobsite and community. Tailored Label Products in Menomonee Falls has grown its profit in the last ten years. They hired an employee with Down syndrome that has become one of their most valued employees. Walgreens has hired several employees with disabilities. Walgreens has seen that they can count on people with disabilities with the right training and the right support.



**Ticket requests must be received on/
before Monday, January 13, 2014!**



2014 WINTER BALL

– sponsored by **The Arc-Dane County, Epilepsy Foundation** and the **Madison Concourse Hotel** – will be held on **Sunday, January 26, 2014** from **2:00 – 5:00 p.m.** at **The Madison Concourse Hotel, 1 West Dayton St., Madison, WI.** Tickets must be **pre-purchased** from The Arc-Dane County for each person. (Sorry, no free tickets for staff, attendants, or family members). The ticket includes the Ball and light snacks. The Epilepsy Foundation will be sponsoring some hot and cold snacks at the beginning of the festivities [‘til they are gone’ (2:00-3:00 p.m.)]

COST: \$3.00 The Arc-Dane County member
\$5.00 Non-member

In order to make preparations for food and plan for this event, **ticket requests must be received by Monday, January 13, 2014.** Upon receipt of the ticket request and payment, the tickets will be mailed prior to the event. Each person, family or agency is responsible for distributing the tickets purchased. If you have ordered too many tickets or need more tickets, please network with others so that the tickets may be used. Tickets will be distributed on a first come-first served basis.

NOTE: All individuals must carry emergency contact information at the Winter Ball.
All individuals/provider/family are responsible for own transportation arrangements to and from the Winter Ball.

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2014 Winter Ball TICKET REQUEST FORM

Note: The name & address below is where the tickets will be sent!
Thanks for getting your ticket requests in on/before January 13!

Name: _____ **Agency:** _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone #: _____ **Cell #:** _____ **Emergency Contact #:** _____

E-mail: _____

_____ **TICKETS @ \$3.00 (current paid Arc-Dane County member) . . . \$** _____

_____ **TICKETS @ \$5.00 (Non-member) \$** _____

TOTAL DUE: \$ _____

SEND FORM & PAYMENT payable to The Arc-Dane County:

The Arc-Dane County
Paul A. Yochum, Exec. Dir.
6602 Grand Teton Plaza
Madison, WI 53719

FAX #: 833-1307

E-MAIL: arcdane@chorus.net

TELEPHONE: 833-1199

Web site: www.arcdanecounty.org

CHOICES Newsletter



The University of Wisconsin-Madison
Waisman Center
Room A 109
1500 Highland Avenue
Madison WI 53705

...And the “Oh, Yeah’s...”

CHOICES Newsletter

is published quarterly to provide information to consumers, families, guardians, and service providers about Self-Determination Services in Dane County.

CHOICES by e-mail

Prefer to reduce paper coming in the mail? Choices newsletter is now available electronically via e-mail. If you would prefer to receive a PDF or link, please e-mail Stefanie Primm:
primm@waisman.wisc.edu

The Next Issue of CHOICES

will be out in February 2014. Contact the editor with ideas for articles before December 20 Articles due by January 6, 2014 or until the issue is full.

To Place a Connections Ad:

Submit Connections Ads to:
Stefanie Primm, Editor 122 E
Olin Avenue Suite 100
Madison WI 53713

263-5557, or
primm@waisman.wisc.edu

We will run your ad for at least 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.

Choices is on the COW Website?!

Did you know that Choices newsletter has a fun color version that you can view online??

<http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/publications.html>

Web versions do not include Connections ads or Transitions information.



Contributors to this issue:

Jeffrey Johnson, Dan Remick, Cindy Wegner, Dale Buttke, Bill Worthy, Paul Yochum, Monica Bear and Rachel Weingarten

Next issue: February 2014

Ideas by: December 20

Articles due January 6, 2014

Please send your stories, comments and suggestions

Contributions, comments and suggestions are encouraged and may be directed to Stefanie Primm, Editor

Stefanie Primm, Editor
The Waisman Center
122 E Olin Avenue Suite 100
Madison WI 53713
Telephone: (608) 263-5557
Fax: 263-4681
primm@waisman.wisc.edu