

Progress Notes



Providing residential and support services to persons with disabilities since 1971.

July 2012

It's Construction season – Duluth and Two Harbors

It's going to be a busy and exciting summer for DRCC!

We are moving forward with the construction of two new, fully-accessible homes. One of the homes will be in Duluth at 1810 Basswood Avenue North. Individuals who are currently living at the Wheeler home (near Wheeler Field) will be moving to the Basswood Avenue location. Construction began on April 23rd and we anticipate the home will be completed by this Fall.



The second home will be in Two Harbors at 421 4th Avenue – on the site of the old high school. The individuals who are currently living at Harbor 15 will be moving to the new home. Construction on this home began the first week of June and will also be completed some time this Fall.



Efforts have been underway for more than a year to make this happen. These efforts have involved finding suitable land, developing floor plans, and obtaining the necessary financing. A team of DRCC employees worked together to create a home design that will make a comfortable home for the individuals who will be living there. We worked to incorporate the many ideas into the final plans. The homes will include large individual bedrooms, two living room/family room areas, two dining areas, two bathrooms, and specialized equipment throughout to assist individuals who rely on wheelchairs and need physical assistance.

Watching these homes come together is exciting for everyone involved.

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Golf with the Stars, New Name Same Great Fun!!!!

The Thirteenth Annual formerly “Golf with the Stars” event now called “Evening Under the Stars” will be held on Friday, August 17th at Big Lake Golf Course in Cloquet.

DRCC has raised over **\$80,000.00** since the inception of this event. Proceeds are used to provide funding for requests made by our clients. A committee comprised of DRCC staff meets to review and approve grant requests.

Below are some specific examples of how funds have been used:

- Purchase adaptive equipment that assists our clients with independence.
- Provide funding for Friday Fest, a recreational/social program for DRCC’s clients.
- Purchase recreational equipment such as bikes, snowshoes and sleds as well as canoes and kayaks for the DRCC cabin.
- Assist clients with travel costs to visit family.

- Purchase memberships/passes for area fitness clubs.

Through the annual golf event DRCC is able to meet many of the unmet needs our clients have due to their limited financial resources. We want to thank everyone who has contributed to this event and invite you to consider participating this year.

For more information on corporate sponsorship and team registration call Michelle Hooey at (218) 722-8180 ext. 101 or Sandy DeZeler at ext. 110.

Donations to DRCC:

We want to thank the following individuals and businesses for gifts made to DRCC during the past six months.

Odyssey Development
 Joe and Cindy Johns-Giesen
 Laurie and Marty Roller
 Nicholas Ostapenko
 Marsha and William Driscoll
 Maryann Rot
 Dave and Theresa Corbin
 George and Dadee Reilly
 Dennis and Kari Ramberg
 Warren and Marjorie Spannaus
 Greg Kamp
 Chuck and Judyth Babst

In memory of: Lillian Berntson
 Debbie Berntson-Gutz

In memory of: Etta Potswald
 Judy and Gerry Bakken

In honor of: Cheryl Moeller
 Beverly McIntosh

Thank You!

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Friday Fest 2012

Friday Fest is a monthly social event partly sponsored by money raised at the DRCC Golf Event. 2012 is the fourth year of Friday Fest, which brings in close to 100 people to each event. While some activities are repeated, new things are also on the calendar this year.

In **January**, the group met at the Copper Top Church to play bingo. \$5 gift certificates were given out for most of the games, but there were two \$15 grand prizes as well. The location was the same for our next two events.

In **February**, we met the Friday before Valentine's Day so that everyone could create Valentine's arts and crafts. Fridge magnets, greeting cards and coasters were the three craft opportunities for everyone to do. Ice cream floats and sundaes were served after everyone washed their hands of paint and glue.

In **March**, Dave the DJ returned for a "Spring Fling" dance. The dance floor never emptied.

In **April**, the group visited Stadium Bowl for strikes, spares and splits. Gift cards were given out for random occurrences on the alleys, such as a strike in the seventh frame, a final score of 111 and a 7-10 split.

In **May** the group kicked the summer off properly with a barbecue at Park Point.

Upcoming events include a Huskies game, a fiesta at the DRCC Cabin, and a return to A-1 ranch for a hayride. There are two dances still on the 2012 calendar, including our DRCC gala, which includes a live band and a catered dinner.

ARRM Cares 2012

The Annual ARRM Conference was held on May 22nd and 23rd at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in St. Paul. ARRM (*Association of Residential Resources in Minnesota*) is the lobbying provider support agency in Minnesota. As part of the conference, providers nominate direct support staff for ARRM Cares awards.



This year DRCC nominated the following individuals:

Pam Hagenah - *Triplex*, **Bill O'Neill** - *Noumenon*, **Debbie Rees** - *Northside*, **Deanna Nygard** - *Daniels*, **Angela Valine** - *Laverne*, **Jennifer Lundberg** - *Meridian* and **Dominic Haugen** - *IHFS-Duluth*.

Each was recognized at the ARRM Conference. We thank each of the nominees as they are great representatives of the DRCC mission and work to assure that our clients are served with integrity and a true commitment to individuality.

Congratulations Scott!

Scott Suomi set a goal for himself early on with DRCC that some day he would live on his own. He has finally achieved his dream! In October, Scott moved from *DRCC-Wheeler* to his own apartment on Haines Road. He continues to learn daily of the skills necessary to maintain his own independence and with staff assistance he has excelled beyond expectations.

Scott continues to set goals for himself. He has stated that he would like to find a job where he can help others gain independence like he did. Scott enjoys spending time with his friends, volunteering in the community and most of all living on his own.



Employee Milestones



The work of DRCC is carried out by its many dedicated staff. We are again recognizing employees who have reached a milestone anniversary between January 1, 2012 and June 30, 2012. Without exception, the following employees have shown a commitment to the people they work with - staff and clients, loyalty to DRCC, and a desire to make lives better.

15 YEARS

Edgewood Smith – Winona

Teresa Stratioti – Oneota

10 YEARS

Nancy Berg – Carlton

Sandra Leino – Carlton

Robin Bolen – Soft Hands

Brenda Danielson – IHFS-Duluth

Connie Lanser – Northside

David Miller – Noumenon

Ricky Lenning – IHFS-Lake

Stephanie McAdamis - Melrose

Tributes



Loren Gradine from DRCC-Noumenon passed away on March 25, 2012. He was 80 years old. After leaving home, Loren lived at Brainerd State Hospital, Moose Lake State Hospital, and RSI before moving to Noumenon in 1992. Loren loved to volunteer and over the years he volunteered with the MDA, Salvation Army, Grandma's Marathon, Lion's Club, People with Disabilities for Change, Choice, and Animal Allies. He was always looking for more ways to volunteer. Loren was known for his sense of humor and for smoking his cigars. Loren will be missed by his housemates (Jeff, Otho, and Lyle), by staff, and by the many friends that Loren made over the years.



On May 15, 2012 **Stephanie Anderson** passed away. She started in the *Soft Hands* program in March of 1990. A year later she married her husband Dan. Her son Alex was born in October 6, 1994. He was the light of her life and she doted on him. She moved to the 14th program in April of 2001. She was employed at the Dollar Store. In the last few years, Stephanie traveled to Las Vegas to see her idol Donny Osmond. When she came to a Friday Fest dance she would always request a song by him and would sit with a peaceful look on her face while it was playing. Stephanie always wanted to be remembered as a good mother. She will be missed.

Employee Promotions

DRCC is very appreciative of our staff and would like to recognize the following employee promotions over the first half of 2012.

The following employee has been promoted to Program Coordinator:

Angela Valine - Rockridge



Hope: trains, buses and boats

Hope Kochendorfer went on an Amtrak trip to New Orleans in April. She and her staff, Deb, boarded the Empire Builder at the St. Paul/Minneapolis Amtrak station. Eight hours to Chicago's Union Station with a four-hour layover, then boarded the City of New Orleans Amtrak for New Orleans for another 19.5 hour ride. Hope and Deb spent three nights in New Orleans. Hope enjoyed eating where she wanted, had a latte every day, shopped all over the French Quarters, went on a city tour, saw Bourbon Street, and a St. Louis Cemetery. She viewed sites where the levees broke and saw the lower 9th ward being transformed with greenhouses started from Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's "Make It Right Foundation". She had dinner on the Steamboat Natchez. It was about 80 degrees most days.

Hope especially enjoyed spending time in the observation car sewing as the train made its way to Chicago.

In New Orleans, Hope enjoyed shopping in the Riverwalk Marketplace where numerous vendors sell clothing, beads, purses, food, souvenirs, and much more. She also saw the French Quarter, it's walls, pillars and motels with paintings, usually of musicians.

Hope (and Deb) really enjoyed the diversity that this trip had - lots of scenery, good food and sites; not to mention trains, buses and boats.

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2012 Legislative Session

Believe it or not, legislators actually addressed issues other than the Viking's Stadium during the 2012 legislative session. The Legislature quietly passed a Health and Human Services bill that was signed by the Governor. Fortunately, the state was not facing another budget deficit so the focus didn't have to be on finding more ways to reduce funding. Below are a few key highlights of what passed:

- The legislature delayed the implementation of a 1.67% rate reduction until the next biennium (2013). This rate reduction was passed last year and was scheduled to go into effect July 1st of 2012.
- The legislature delayed the implementation of the new statewide rate-setting system. The new system is intended to provide

equitable funding for individuals based on each person's support needs. Progress on developing the new rate system has been slower than projected.

- Plans to reduce the number of Foster Care beds in the state were modified to encourage voluntary reduction rather than the mandatory closure methodology that was passed during the special session.
- Modifications were made to housing rules opening up more options for individuals.

— *Michael Mills*

Rory to the Capitol

On April 4, 2012, **Rory Johnson** had the opportunity to visit the State Capitol for *Disability Day at the Capitol*. He, along with many other self-advocates, boarded a coach bus and took the two-and-a-half hour ride to the capitol to meet with legislators. Rory also attended a disability rally and listened to Governor Mark Dayton speak about the issues on everyone's mind. The issues included voter ID and pay cuts to PCAs.



Rory also had the chance to meet Representative Kerry Gauthier and Senator Roger Reinert. In his meeting with Reinert, Rory was able to discuss a letter he had previously written to the Senator that took Senator Reinert just two weeks to reply. Rory enjoyed touring the capitol and learning how to pull representatives and senators from session and is looking forward to more trips to the capitol in the years to come.

Day at the Capitol

Each year ARRM (*Association of Residential Resources in Minnesota*) sponsors a Day at the Capitol. This event encourages constituents to meet and speak with their legislators on matters that impact their lives. This year a group from DRCC went down for the event. A large rally was convened in the Capitol Rotunda where participants listened to a variety of speakers.

The DRCC delegation spent some time watching the House of Representatives in session and then went to the Governor's Reception room where they met with Lieutenant Governor Yvonne Prettner Solon, her chief aide Luke Kuhl and Senator Thomas Huntley.





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MISSION STATEMENT

*DRCC is a non-profit agency
committed to providing quality services
to individuals and families across the age
and disability spectrum.*



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