



**DRCC**  
Supporting Abilities

# PROGRESS NOTES

*Providing residential & support services to persons with disabilities since 1971.*

## September 2016

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Tributes & Donations  
Day of Caring  
Board of Directors  
Our Mission
- 3 Developing a  
Green Thumb
- 4 Anniversaries  
Promotions  
Milestones  
PCP and PCT
- 5 Celebrating 50 Years



## Spirit Valley Days

*DRCC at the Spirit Valley Festival*

DRCC has been working very diligently to make sure we have a visible presence in our Spirit Valley neighborhood. We have become active members in the West Duluth Business Club and most recently participated in the Spirit Valley festivities that took place August 3 through August 7.

Individuals from our In Home Family Support Program sponsored a bean bag toss game to earn money for the 2017 Self-Advocacy Conference. Individuals from Endion, Carlton and In Home Family Support served as

parade volunteers organizing the line-up of floats for the parade. And last but not least members of DRCC's PR committee designed and built a float for the parade. All enjoyed the experience and want to participate again in 2017! Thanks to Rhea Harvey and Adam Esterholm for creating the float design.

DRCC sponsored KAT Country radio that provided a live feed from the DRCC office the day of the parade. We thank our Spirit Valley neighbors for welcoming us into the community.





## Donations

Eric Gibson  
 Jerry DeMeo  
 Martin and Laurie Roller  
 George and Dadee Reilly  
 Bentson Foundation  
 Charlotte Rantala

In memory of Teresa Shega  
 Teresa's family and friends

## A Day of Caring

Last year, we looked at ways that we could get our name out within our community, looking for prospective employees as well as letting the community know we are here and we contribute. From those ideas, DRCC developed

our PR committee. Comprised of several Program Managers, Directors, Coordinators and Assistants, we began meeting. From those meetings, our Facebook page was created. We participated in several job fairs, had T-shirts made and

participated in the United Way Day of Caring. A group of staff and clients worked at the CHUM Food Shelf. We look for other opportunities to show through action that we all are good stewards regarding the needs of our community.

## Tributes

### TERESA SHEGA

Teresa Shega, 53, died Friday, April 1, 2016, at her home in Duluth of Down Syndrome-related dementia. Teresa was a happy, kind and loving person who made friends easily. She was always interested in "trying something different," which led her to mastering many activities such as playing the saxophone and recorder, learning to scuba dive and medaling in downhill skiing, swimming, and gymnastics in the Special Olympics. She loved to sing, dance and listen to music, read the sports page, cheer on her favorite political candidate, make chili, walk, fish for "the big one" and play UNO.



### SHIRLEY J. VILLA

Shirley J. Villa, 91, of Duluth passed away peacefully at her home on January 28, 2016. Shirley had lived at DRCC-Rockridge for many years. She was preceded in death by her parents, A.L. and Marie Anderson, and her brother and sister-in-law Bud and Betty Anderson. She will be dearly missed by her friends and staff at DRCC and the staff and friends at Benedictine Adult Day Services.



*DRCC's Mission:*

*To support individuals with disabilities by creating opportunities to live rich and meaningful lives with family, friends, work and community.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Myron Stevenson, President  
 Pam Sedor, Vice President  
 Kirk Wimmer, Secretary/Treasurer  
 Tony Mancuso  
 Jessica Durbin  
 Julie Seidelmann  
 Nancy Lane  
 Mickey Ferguson



From left to right: Matt Bahl, Steve Cox, Don Waksdahl

## Developing a Green Thumb

Several individuals from the Soft Hands program have been involved in the DRCC community garden in recent years and were interested in developing a garden at the program's location. Matt Bahl, Don Waksdahl and Steve Cox are all preparing

to grow some vegetables in our new raised garden box recently purchased with grant money and assembled and finished by Don and staff Sarah Nord. Having the garden close at hand will allow others that hadn't been able to enjoy the community garden

to experience the fun of growing and harvesting food to take home and use at our program. We are hoping for a good growing season this summer and an incentive to spend more time outside in the fresh air and sunshine.

## Living the Life

Hi my name is Doug Jussila. Here's my story: I went to visit the Lambert house with my case manager and family on April 21, 2014 and moved in that night. Previously, I had lived twenty-four years in an apartment close to downtown Virginia. The truth is I wasn't doing the best. I was 52 and my health had been declining and it hurt to walk. Moving in with three ladies...well let's just say that part I wasn't opposed to, but, you want me to clean my room, and sometimes other rooms, cook and clean-up? Wait a minute, this isn't what I was thinking. You mean

to tell me this isn't like the Holiday Inn? Really, really... it was the best thing that happened to me.

I had been retired for two years before my move to Lambert. I thought that was my life. Over the past two years at Lambert I had a stay in the local hospital's ICU, which I don't recommend to anyone. The good news is, as my friend Lowell says, I am still on this side of the ground and I intend to stay that way for a while. I am happy to say my feet don't

**"I like being a part of the community"**

hurt anymore and I am out of retirement! I work five days a week, nothing like getting back into work slowly. I do like my job and I really like the jingle in my pocket.

I want to keep working at MDI. I make totes for the postal service. I also

want to continue getting healthier, so I can notch off a train trip on my bucket list.

Everyone tells me they are proud of me and you know what, I am proud of myself. I like being a part of the community.



## 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, 2016 and September 1, 2016.

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.

## Anniversaries

### 25 YEARS

**Coleen (Connie) Smith** started at DRCC-South Grove as a Program Coordinator in August of 1991. She became the Program Director at DRCC-Northside in December of 1997. She welcomed the individuals into the new Northside program in February 1998. In early 2000, Connie served as the Program Director of IHFS until that program expanded and required its own full-time Program Director. She enjoys traveling with friends, playing cards, and spending time with her grandchildren.

### 20 YEARS

**Beth Anderson** has been the Program Director for DRCC-Two Harbors since 2003. During her employment with DRCC she has worked in several programs - Triplex, Laverne, Thalasic, Jitney, Merritt and IHFS Lake - in the varying roles of Program Assistant, Program Coordinator and Program Director. Beth's interests include reading, music and antiques. She also enjoys spending time outdoors gardening, kayaking, hiking and occasionally challenging herself with a 5K.

**Kathy Gilbertson** started at DRCC-Triggs as a part-time Program Assistant when the house first opened in June of 1996. She remained in this role, while also working at a local high school, until she became full-time as a Program Assistant in February 2007. In May of 2010, Kathy retired but continues to do fill-in work at the house. Kathy has been a very big part of the Triggs team and remains a valuable employee. Since retiring, Kathy loves long rides on hot buses, watching foreign movies with foreign people, and playing Pokemon Go around the fountains in Canal Park. Kathy also enjoys spending time with her family and grandchildren.

### 15 YEARS

Maryann Leoni – South Grove  
Jane Lilya – Fairview  
Jennifer Gallant – Triplex  
Vicky Blais – Triplex

Carolyn Sturdevant – Meridian  
Desiree Menuey – Noumenon  
Kevin Sternal – Melrose  
Wendy Ledoux - Triplex

### 10 YEARS

Heather Kobes – Bishop Woods  
Dave Frankenfeld – Jitney  
Brandon Butler – Mankato

Angela Pass – IHFS-Duluth  
Donna Busha – Lambert

## DRCC Welcomes New CFO

DRCC is very pleased to welcome Lara Goebel as DRCC's new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Lara comes to us from the Five Lion's Hotel Group (Labovitz Enterprises) where she worked in the accounting department for the past 19 years. For the last 13+ years she served as Controller – overseeing and managing their financial operations.



## EMPLOYEE PROMOTIONS

DRCC is very appreciative of our staff and would like to recognize the following employee promotions over the first half of 2016.

### Program Director

Kelsey Roche - Aspen  
Corey Jeanette - Triggs  
Sarah Meador - Willow

### Program Coordinator

Danette Kealey –  
Two Harbors  
Laurie Graber – Glendale  
Joe Hanson – Oak  
Tasha Jokela - Willow

Riley Jussila - Triggs  
Lesa Holm – Aurora  
Mike Thompson – Daniels  
Keban Yessak – Triplex  
Stephanie Cagel - Spruce  
Brianna Fabish - South Grove  
Jennifer Miller – Riverside  
Taylor Sundberg – My House  
Jefferey Shultz – Juniper  
Sara Russell – Galere

## PCP and PCT

Yes, as you may have noticed already, there are some new acronyms working their way into our everyday language at DRCC. Every few years there seems to be a need to change the words we use to describe our services and our goals. Although it's uncomfortable having to adjust our language, it serves an important purpose. We say things differently to better clarify the concepts and values we are trying to convey.

So what do PCP and PCT mean? PCP stands for Person-Centered Plan and PCT stands for Person-Centered Thinking. When we first started hearing these phrases our reaction was that we already are doing this – this is just another faddish language change. Our organizational philosophy has always been to value each person as

an individual with unique abilities and needs. We looked for strengths and we worked to teach individuals skills they wanted to learn. But then, as we listened and began paying closer attention, we learned that we could build upon what we were already doing and make it better. The questions that are being asked with person-centered thinking challenge us in new ways to understand individual's preferences, rituals, and dreams. We are now incorporating this new language into our training and the plans that are developed with the individuals we serve. We believe these changes will help us to better focus on what is most important to each person we serve.

# What's trending? #ARRM 2K16: The 2016 ARRM Annual Conference

Approximately 600 attendees gathered at the DECC in Duluth for ARRM's 2016 Annual Conference. The ARRM (Association of Residential Resources of Minnesota), Annual Conference provides excellent training opportunities for Direct Support Professionals as well as managerial staff.

Once again one of the big highlights of the conference is the ARRM Cares Awards honoring dedicated direct support professionals for their exceptional work with people with disabilities across the state. The Award program began in 1996 to recognize professional caregivers who provide exemplary services to people with disabilities. Recipients must demonstrate a commitment to providing innovative, professional services to people.

This year DRCC is proud to announce that we had an ARRM Cares Winner! Congratulations to Brianna Fabish from DRCC-South Grove. Brianna has been employed by DRCC for 5 years. In that 5 years Brianna supported the individuals served through some very difficult times. Her nomination included the story of how she supported Delores, an 86 year old woman who had been diagnosed with cancer. Brianna did all she could to make Delores' time meaningful including pushing her in her wheelchair through the rain to the finish line of the Merritt

5K. Deniese Lussier, Program Director at DRCC-South Grove stated "Brianna is an exceptional caregiver and she is a true gift to our home."

DRCC is very proud of all of our other nominees including:

- Judy Sausen
- William Hecker
- Beth Sheppard
- Adam Dargatz
- Tamara Schmidt
- Brittany Burhans
- Suellen Vorderbruggen
- Jathan Barker
- Jimmy Isaacson and
- Tami Granlund.

We congratulate each nominee and say Thank You for your ongoing commitment to the people we support.



## Celebrating 50 years

This is DRCC's 50th anniversary year. We will be celebrating by hosting a gathering at Clyde Iron on Tuesday, October 18, 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. We will have a slide presentation and our guest speaker will be Alex Bartolic, Director of Disability Services at the MN Department of Human Services. Invites will be mailed shortly!





**DRCC**  
*Supporting Abilities*

(218) 722-8180  
5629 Grand Avenue  
Duluth, MN 55807

*RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED*

## Friday Fest News

The first half of the year has been a hit for Friday Fest events. In January, we gathered at the Copper Top Church for a night of wrestling and watched all the action-packed matches of Wrestle Mania XXXI. In February, we celebrated Valentine's Day with a dance. In March, the church tables were full of anxious people waiting for the ONE number to be called to give them a BINGO. Unlike other BINGO venues around the community, when someone calls a BINGO at Friday Fest, everyone claps and applauds the lucky winner. The weather did not deter the committee from planning a Spring Fling Dance. Even though it was windy and snowing outside, the inside was decorated in spring colors and flower bouquets. The weather is always hard to plan around, so to have better odds, this year the committee moved the Gala to May. The hope was our outside June event would have better weather. It did not rain on the group when we were at Billings Park in Superior, but there were times it looked like it was close. In July, we tempted the weather again and tried to cheer the Duluth Huskies on to a victory. It did not rain, but the Huskies did not win. As we get ready for the second half of 2016 the Friday Fest Committee is planning some awesome events. In August, we are getting ready for the cabin and if the rain keeps up we will not have any trouble having boat rides on the pontoon. This year we are going to add an event in December. On Saturday, December 31st we are going to have a New Year's Eve Dance to ring in the New Year.



"Enjoying the DRCC gala."