

Transitions News!



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A LIFE DEDICATED TO SERVICE: 2010 MYRTLE YOSHINAGA AWARD FOR CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

Daniel Patrick DeVaney received the Clinical Excellence Committee's 2010 Yoshinaga award for Excellence at the May 7th quarterly training event. Mr. DeVaney was honored for devoting his 36+ year career to improving the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. He has served as the only Supervisor for Transitions which he started in 1973. Initially, Dan worked with a few consumers while de-institutionalization caused the enrollment to swell to over 400 today!

Mr. DeVaney insisted that the program be fluid and flexible in order to respond to consumer needs and requests. What was once contained in portable classrooms at the Beckman Center has now wiggled its way into over 200 locations throughout Clinton, Eaton and Ingham counties. He upheld high standards for quality by developing and monitoring quarterly program evaluation data. He listened to requests by consumers, as conveyed by support staff, in an effort to encourage creativity and consumer choice. Daniel was a constant source of encouragement for new ideas and worked tirelessly on making dreams become reality.

Dan continues to ask, "Is this the best that it can be?" As he approaches retirement June 30th, he continues to address needs by planning to open a new satellite location for Eaton County in Grand Ledge.

Daniel was humbled by the Clinical Excellence award. He was thankful for the honor and his name will be added to the award plaque in the main office lobby on Jolly Road in Lansing.

Congratulations and thank you for your dedicated service.

"YOU CAN OVERCOME OBSTACLES"

By Beth LaFleche-Hall and Simone

On March 19, 2010, Simone, a consumer served by Transitions Central, attended Community Mental Health's Annual Meeting and Report to the Community, featuring "Normal People Scare Me." The event was held at the Lansing Center and was provided to the public by Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton-Eaton-Ingham Counties, Capital Area Health Alliance Mental Health Partnership Council, Mid-Michigan Autism Association, Wycoff Wellness Center, Forest View Hospital, Dean Transportation, Inc., Essence of Behavior and Tom Motz of Motz Homes. During the event, CMH's Annual Report was presented. In addition, Distinguished Service Awards were presented to the Gallery Cafeteria at Michigan State University and Nan Simon with the St. John's Kiwanis Club. Mayor and gubernatorial candidate, Virg Bernero, also spoke at the event. A highlight of the event was key note speakers Taylor Cross and his mother Keri Bowers. They presented film clips from one of their recent films and spoke of Taylor's challenges and triumphs. In addition, Taylor and Keri also held two workshops later that day, on Mapping Transitions to your Child's Future and What Professionals Need to Know. Following the event, Simone chose to write this about her experience:

Back in the early spring of 2010, CMH had an annual breakfast. This was awesome, and I learned about a lot of things. The best part was when there were two speakers Keri and Taylor. They talked about autism and how she raised her son all his life from a little boy to his adult years. He is artistic and learns in his own way. In the film it showed how Taylor is now in college and how he has come a long way. Any one of us who are disabled can overcome anything in this challenged world, and I know I can too!

TRANSITIONS OPENING NEW LOCATION!

Eaton County is well served by Transitions Charlotte but there are more opportunities waiting in Grand Ledge. Transitions is developing another satellite program with a Drop In Center in this city to serve consumers living in and near Grand Ledge.

Currently, a location is being secured and eventually staff will be hired. A group of consumers have been identified and approximately half of those served will be from Transitions North which will help to relieve the overcrowding at that facility. The remaining people are currently served by Transitions Central and Charlotte.

This Satellite is a pilot designed to serve some consumers with more intensive needs. It will have more staff available to meet the needs of the consumers. Another way this is different is that it is being started at Transitions North while the location is secured. Susan Speers, Transitions North Coordinator is assisting with initiating the program by loaning 2 Transitions North staff - Lanya Aldrich and Gayle Lee to the effort. Once a location is secured, staff will be hired to report to Deb Voss, Transitions South Coordinator. This new location is expected to be fully operational by October 2010.

If you have any suggestions about opportunities for volunteer or free to very low cost activities in or near Grand Ledge, please contact Deb Voss at voss@ceicmh.org or phone (517)694-5098 ext. 234.



TRANSITONS PROGRAM CLOSINGS
Monday, July 5th.....Independence Day
Friday, August 20th.....Inservice Day

LOOKING FORWARD TO SUMMER FUN!

By Michelle Sheren

Now that temps have risen into the 80's questions about what kinds of special plans we have for the Summer, are bubbling to the surface.

Speeding toward us is the Blossom Time Dinner/Dance. The garden is being planted at Giving Tree Farm and the fishing group has been trying to find a summery

Tuesday morning to go to Sleepy Hollow for fishing. Lunches at City Park are back! The group anxiously awaits opening day at the new Motz County Park - a fully accessible County park.

Squeezing sand between our toes at Holland State Park is an annual event that everyone enjoys. Watching the Luggies knock out an opponent in Thomas M. Cooley Park and picnicking at Rainbow Lake brings out the smiles for everyone.

Other ideas that are still percolating are possible trips to the Detroit Zoo, Binder Park Zoo, Meijer Gardens and maybe Greenfield Village...So much to do, so little Summer to do it all in.... It's just never long enough!

TRANSITIONS MASON RECOGNIZED BY MASON HIGH SCHOOL

By Elizabeth Putnam

One of the biggest transitions for young people living with a disability is moving from school to the community. For several years, Transitions Mason has worked in partnership with Mason High School's Cathy McCormick, Coordinator/Teacher for their Community Based Instruction Program. Each school year, interested students choose Transitions Mason as their "work site" and participate several hours each week at the drop in center. This collaborative effort helps students and their families avoid the "gap" in services that frequently affects many. By the time graduation rolls around, students are more familiar with their communities and the transportation options available to navigate their options. Kudos to Cathy for recognizing this valuable connection. At a May BBQ/banquet held at Hayes Park, Transitions Mason was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for support of Cathy's program. Ian B., a Mason High School graduate accepted this award for Transitions Mason.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE "ART LADY"

By Patti Bruinsma



Carolyn Texera is known by everyone at Transitions North as the "art lady". She faithfully volunteers her time, money for materials and art expertise each Wednesday. Weekly, consumers get to go home with a bona fide "work of

art" thanks to Carolyn. Not one for the spotlight, I was able to get Carolyn to sit down with me for a few minutes to answer some questions about the great work she does at Transitions North.

PB: Tell me a little bit about yourself.

CT: I've always known how to draw. People told me that I drew well but I didn't think much of it. I never seriously considered a career in art. Instead, I studied biology and medicine in college. When I was in my forties, I bought some art supplies and began drawing on my own at home. Within weeks, it was clear that I should pursue art seriously and that art is a full-time job. So I quit my medical job and took some art classes at a local college. I haven't looked back. I love to paint (specializing in oil painting) and plan to do so as long as possible.

PB: What brought you here to Transitions North?

CT: When I became a full time artist, I realized I missed the opportunity to give back and help others. I decided that I wanted to volunteer and saw an opening at Transitions North. At first, I was just helping with filing and copying. Then, there was a need to do an art group and I was asked to help. It has grown from working with one team to four teams today.

PB: How long have you volunteered at Transitions North?

CT: I have been coming for about five years. It is something I truly enjoy and look forward to each week.

PB: What do you do at Transitions North?

CT: I want to help consumers learn about art and how art can enhance lives. I've learned to choose projects that consumers can participate in such as general painting or use of stickers. The goal is for them to use their creative energies and have something to show for it at the end of the session.

PB: What is your favorite part about coming to Transitions North?

CT: I love the interaction with the consumers. My reward is in doing. I feel that I'm the one who has benefitted most from volunteering. The consumers give back to me each time by showing their interests, skills, and friendliness.

Transitions North staff would like to thank Carolyn for her true dedication and selflessness that she displays on a weekly basis. She is extremely faithful, kind and dedicated to our consumers. Transitions North is a better place because of Carolyn's presence! To learn more about Carolyn's artwork, visit www.artfaces.com.

SPOTLIGHT ON RELIEF STAFF

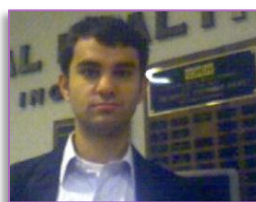
Many of the Transitions Staff started their CMH careers as a relief staff person. It is one of the most challenging positions because they are required to know all of the consumers for their sub pool. There are only 2 sub pools: one at Transitions North and the other at Transitions South. These 2 pools provide coverage for all 7 Transitions locations. Subs have to know several different communities and programs. They have to know how to drive full sized vans and operate a variety of wheelchair lifts. The amount of knowledge is endless while the job offers erratic schedules and no guaranteed hours. This new regular feature of the newsletter introduces the relief staff from both Transitions North and South.



Kate Kuck accepted the challenge of being a Relief Community Support Technician for Transitions South, Charlotte and Mason! This is her second "tour of duty" with CEI. Initially she worked for AMHS

Residential for approximately 7 years. Life took her away from the area then brought her back! She has a BA in Psychology from MSU and a MA in Counseling from Central Michigan University.

Ms. Kuck keeps life interesting by working 3 jobs! She is involved with a family health study through U of M and she works for Community Mental Health Services of Livingston County. Her goal is to find one full time professional position here at CEI CMHA. Can you blame her for wanting that?



Transitions North introduces John Pizanis. He is a new relief staff to Transitions North. He is a recent graduate of Saginaw Valley University, with a social work degree. You may have seen and heard him entertain

with his violin at the 2009 Transitions North Christmas party. He also played his violin at our recent Transitions Inservice day event, where he accompanied us in singing a specially composed version of the MSU fight song in honor of Dan Devaney's upcoming retirement. We appreciate his participation in such events, as well as his ongoing work with the consumers.

EVER HAD ONE OF THOSE MORNINGS....

By Dawn McLeod

.....where you just didn't feel like making your lunch? Transitions Charlotte has the solution! Beginning in June, we will be providing lunches twice per month from 12:00 - 1:00 as a fundraiser. Why would we put all this extra work on ourselves, you may ask? Well you SEE - consumers have elected to REALLY think outside of the box for the summer! Funding to make as many of these summer dreams happen as possible, is the whole reason for doing this.

The lunch dates will be as follows: June 8th & 11th
July 15th & 27th
August 10th & 24th
Sept. 7th & 21st

Menu items will include: Sloppy Joes, homemade enchiladas, salads and many others. Prices will range from \$3.00 to \$6.00, depending on the entrée that day.

Please help Transitions Charlotte make some dreams come true. If you are in the area on any of the above dates during lunch hour, stop in and enjoy a readymade lunch.

Your financial help will be contributing to realizing these dreams:

- Gizzard Fest in Potterville
- Indian PowWow
- Red Cedar Jubilee
- Water Park
- Greenfield Village
- Lugnuts Game
- Trip to Lake Michigan
- Classic Car Show
- Tigers Baseball
- Renaissance Festival
- County Fairs
- Movies at Jolly Road
- Frontier Days
- Binder Park Zoo
- Down Home Days
- Cristo Rey Festival

SO REMEMBER TO PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDER so you can stop in at the Drop in Center, 551 Courthouse Drive, Charlotte.



MichoMash

Hours: 10 - 4 o'clock program days

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