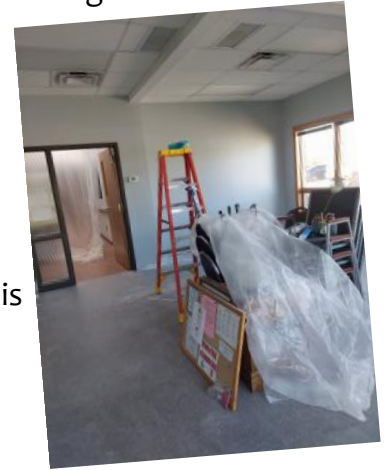


Construction Continues!

The agency continues to implement strategic planning goals to increase program space for Day Program services. With many hands on deck, progress is being made daily!

Two walls were removed in the small program room, joining this room with two former offices to allow for one larger area. The existing counter remains for activities, a television will be installed and new floor tiles have already been laid and waxed. With a fresh coat of paint and a few more touch-ups this room is near complete.



Walls separating the previous music room, exercise room and large program room have been removed to provide one large open space for day program activities. Barn-style sliding doors separate this area from the kitchen.



The wall separating the sensory room and medical supply closets has been removed. The one larger closet will allow more space for program supplies. A former office has been converted into the Community Skills Room, and Roger's former office is now a storage room.

Ebony now has a finished office with a door where the free-standing divider used to be.



Out & About in Community Services



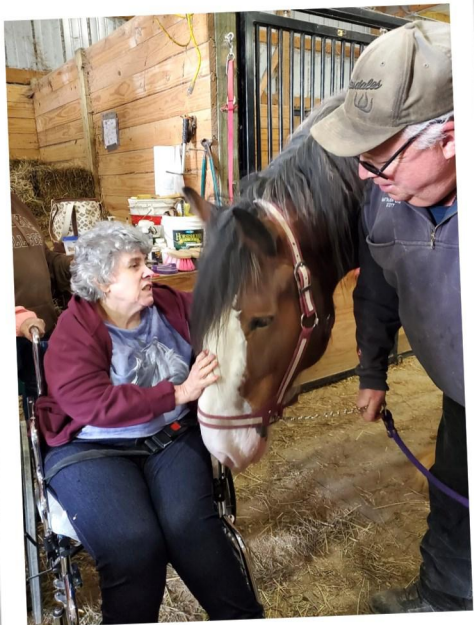
Troy flower name game –David & Kaitlyn were excited that both their names were featured!



Visiting the Big Creek Clydesdales

Big Creek Clydesdales, located in Wentzville, is a Family-owned Clydesdale Breeding, showing and teaching operation. Their goal is to raise colts and educate the public about Clydesdale through farm tours, events and visits to schools and other organizations. Community Opportunities Day Program made a visit and met Tyson, Pattie, Dot, and Connie, along with three week old Charlie and six day old Charlotte, as pictured on the following page. The Clydesdales enjoyed the homemade apple 'n oats horse treats made at day program, see photos below of clients & staff making the special treats.





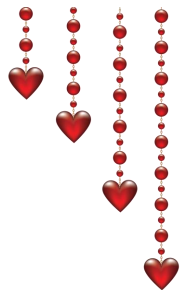
Residential Services



Jeff (picture above) enjoying some fun in the sun on a nice 70 degree March day. Looks like he wasn't the only one enjoying the beautiful weather!



Teresa was working hard on getting her Valentines sent out to all of her sweet friends. She spent the morning of Valentine's Day spreading the love by making her housemates and staff V-Day cards. Teresa used cards she personally crafted and signed them independently.



Donna dressed up for Valentine's Day and colored a festive picture. Donna says that her Valentine this year is her cat, Bella!





We all know that weather can be a bit 'unpredictable', and getting several inches of snow gave some clients an unplanned *snow day*!

Terry didn't mind the snow. He spent his snow day inside playing Connect Four. He had a lot of fun, and the game is great for practicing fine motor skills!



Terry also had a wonderful birthday with lots of smiles & was especially excited to dig into his cake!

He and his housemates had a great time celebrating his b-day!



A Trivia Benefit was organized for Gina Gipson's youngest son Grayson, held February 19th. A group of Community Opportunities staff and family members who participated as a team at the benefit took it to the next level dressing in the theme of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Agency staff also collected money to assist the Gipson's with medical/other related bills.

Thank you to everyone who organized, donated items/ money, and participated in the Trivia Night for Grayson!





Piano Man

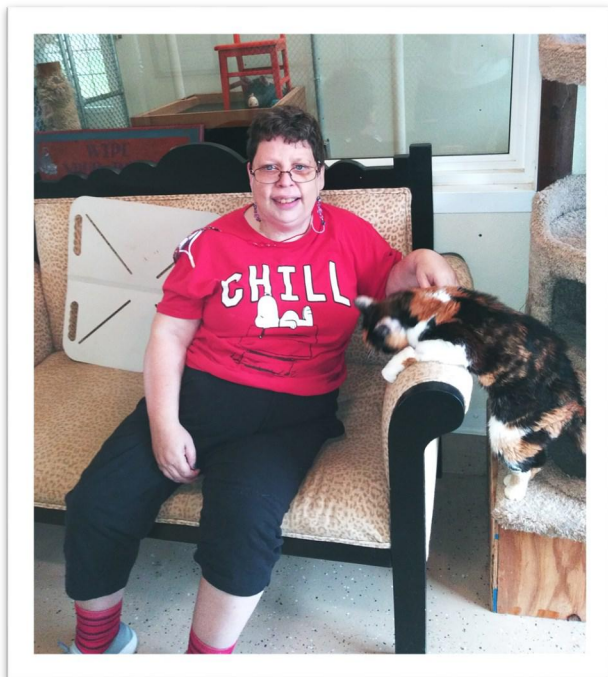
Steven enjoys playing the keys so much during the afternoon at program. He decided to purchase a digital piano for his home. He is pictured on the first day getting to know his new ivory.



What is the story behind Camo Thursdays?
It might be hard to see.



Yvonne's favorite service opportunity is working at PALS. The best part of taking care of the puppies and kitties is when the actual work is all finished and Yvonne can take a rest and pet the animals. Yvonne themes her outfits with pets on PALS days.





Rockin' & Rollin' into the New Year in Employment!



Things sure have been busy in the Employment Department as we *Rock and Roll* into the New Year.

We had 7 new clients start the employment process. We look forward to assisting them plan their journey towards successful employment.

Maddie started her first job in January at Troy Walmart as a stock person! Great Job! We know you will achieve great things!

In the month of January, Kimberly successfully completed her 90 days of Independent Employment at Slim Chickens in Troy. She is a Team Member. In the month of March, we had 2 individuals complete their 90 days of independent employment, one at Slim Chickens in Troy, and the other individual, Caleb, is a Cashier at Walmart in Troy. Congratulations to all three of you!

A continued thank you to our local business partners for your continued support in providing employment opportunities to individuals of all abilities!



If you know anyone with a disability who would like help with getting a job, please contact Darla Gamble, Assoc. Director of Employment Services via email at: darla@commopps.org or ext. 150.



Did you know...

The Autism Society began a nationwide awareness campaign in the early '70s that was adopted by Congress in 1984 and strengthened by the release of the autism awareness ribbon in 1999.

The first use of the Autism Puzzle Piece was in 1963. Gerald Gasson, a parent and board member for the National Autistic Society in London created a logo for the organization that consisted of a puzzle piece along with the image of a crying child.

Our DSP's are **THE BEST!** We are so grateful for our amazing team of DSPs and are currently looking to hire additional DSPs.

Job postings are on our Facebook page. Have your friends call Angela Hager 636-462-7695 ext. 101 for an interview.



HEALTH & SAFETY



By Donna Jacobsen, H&S Chairperson

Spring Cleaning

Before tackling this annual chore, though, you should be aware of the hazards that may await you: handling household chemicals, lifting heavy objects, navigating around clutter, walking on wet surfaces, and reaching or climbing – to name a few.

Here are 10 tips for keeping spring-cleaning safe.

- 1) Declutter before cleaning - Before you start cleaning, clear any clutter that you could trip over.
- 2) Go mild - Limit the use of harsh cleaning or disinfectant products such as bleach and ammonia, and never mix the two – doing so can create toxic fumes.
- 3) Read the label - Each cleaning or disinfectant product should have a label describing proper use of it and safety precautions to follow during use. Take a minute to read the label and follow the instructions.
- 4) Ventilation is your friend - When using cleaning or disinfectant products, open windows or a door, and run a fan to help air circulate.
- 5) Glove up - It's a good idea to wear rubber gloves when using some household cleaners. The gloves can help prevent reactions (e.g., rashes, skin redness) from exposure.
- 6) Get a mop - When you're cleaning floors, avoid working on your hands and knees, which could cause sprains and strains.
- 7) Avoid wet floors - Wet floors are a danger zone for slips and falls. Allow freshly cleaned floors to dry before walking on them.
- 8) Stay safe on step stools - Using a step stool? Be careful! Always place it on a level surface before using, and choose one with a handle or railing so you can maintain three points of contact (two feet and one hand) for optimal safety. One hand can be free for cleaning tasks. Make sure the stool's steps are large enough to properly fit your feet, and face the stool when climbing up or down. Set up the stool close to where you're cleaning, and never attempt to move it while standing on it.
- 9) Lift with caution - When lifting or moving furniture and other heavy objects, ask for help. Bend with your knees – not your back – and use your leg muscles to avoid a back injury.
- 10) Stay hydrated - Spring cleaning is great exercise, so drink plenty of water and take rest breaks.



Offices and Day Program will be closed:

Monday, May 30, 2022 Memorial Day

Monday, July 4, 2022 Independence Day

Monday, September 5, 2022 Labor Day



Equity &



Did you know April is Diversity Month?

Our planet is filled with a rainbow of races and religions — all equal in every way. It doesn't matter if you don't understand them all or even know they exist, but it does matter that you accept them all and do not judge any of them as less than worthy. We are all in this together, and our ignorance of other's beliefs is no excuse for intolerance in any form.

As we enter April, take some time to Celebrate Diversity Month. INVOLVE yourself and others in learning about cultures and religions that are not part of your daily life. Involve your children, family, friends and neighbors; so that we may all gain a better understanding of our global family. There are endless possibilities of how you can do this, but here are a few examples if you need a bit of inspiration:

1. Invite friends and family over for a pot luck meal where participants bring in dishes that represent their ethnicity or their favorite ethnic foods.
2. Create a craft with your children that represents different cultures.
3. Plan an event that brings together different ethnic groups to celebrate.
4. Bring together different religious groups to learn about each other or pray for world peace together.
5. Explore different cultures through art forms, poetry, music, crafts, traditional costumes, language, etc. Have an art show featuring local, diverse artists, or a poetry reading, or a concert.
6. Rent movies that deal with diverse topics.
7. Have a display or flag ceremony of different nations' flags.
8. Read about a religion you have heard of but don't know much, if anything, about.

(Source: <https://dignityandrespect.org/april-is-diversity-month/>)

Equity and diversity will be a regular feature in our newsletter. Email sonya@commopps.org for comments, feedback or request a topic discussion.

Maggie Scherder (19) recently moved with her family to Troy, MO, and is currently attending the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) on the Ruby's Rainbow Hunzeker-Brandt Family Scholarship Award and is a part of the SUCCEED program.



She spends time with her family in Troy on the weekends and lives on-campus during the week in a dorm room. Maggie is balancing the responsibilities of being a student, living with peers, and attempting to gain employment while keeping up with her main passion, swimming. Maggie is an exceptional swimmer who has taken part in competitions around the world. She currently has **the world record for fastest 50m backstroke among all people with Down syndrome** and works with a personal coach during her free time at UMSL. Maggie hopes to become a swim instructor or work with children when she has completed college. For now,

Maggie is currently working with Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in her quest for employment. Maggie hopes to live on her own or with friends in the future. She is working on personal goals of budgeting and meal planning to become more independent and prepare for life after college.

Submitted by: Josh Venable

Upcoming Training & Events

Full Cert Med Class, May 3, 5, 10, & 11, 3:30p-7:30p, Program Bldg

CPI Re-Certification Training, May 26, 2022, 3:30-7:30p, at Troy City Hall

CPI Re-Certification Training, June 16, 9a-1p, at Troy City Hall

Please check your email regularly for automatic Relias required training notifications & reminders!





Employee Anniversaries



One

Jonathan Peine
Miranda Pottebaum

Nine

Candis Pratt

Eighteen

Jessica Ruediger

Three

Amanda Helvey

Thirteen

Jessica Hodge

Twenty-One

Angela Ray

Four

Anna Jaggie
Brandi Pezold

Seventeen

Malinda Derr
Donna Jacobsen

Thirty-Five

Darla Gamble

Thirty-Six

Mary Sullivan-Thomas

FRIENDLY FACES

Name: Quinton Burks (Community Skills Teacher)

Family and pets? Two brothers (Cooper & Hudson) and two dogs (Lucy & Cabin)

Favorite vacation? Estes Park in Colorado

Who inspires you? My dad

What unique talent do you have or hobby? Adult softball

What is the best surprise you have ever received? Albert Pujols coming back to the St. Louis Cardinals

What is your favorite song? There's a lot... Chicken Fried by Zac Brown Band

The movie version of my life should be titled? The Story of Cold Cut

My favorite physical activity is: playing baseball/softball

One thing people are surprised to find out about me is: I started watching The Office last year

If I were a superhero I would be: Batman

What are you passionate about? Being the best version of myself

What is your favorite family tradition? Singing Christmas carols on Christmas Eve

Pet peeve? People who eat with their mouth open

What is the best meal you have ever had? Grilled steak, green beans and mac-n-cheese





New Trainees!

Diana Arseneau 01.06.2022- Community Skills (PD)

Judy Ebert 01.31.2022- Day Program (FT)

Mikayla Wood 02.01.2022– 21 Opportunity Ct. (PD)

Liv Linneman 02.23.2022- Community Skills (PD)

Lillie Conway 03.08.2022– 17 Opportunity Ct. (FT)

Trenton Martin 03.09.2022– 17 Opportunity Ct. (FT)

Welcome Back!

Kelsey Cannon 02.15.2022– Community Skills (PD)

Ryan Williams 03.02.2022– 17 Opportunity Ct. (PD)



Congratulations Millie!



The DSP of the 1st quarter of 2022 is Millie Rhodes!

Millie has worked for Community Opportunities for just over 6 years as a Like Skills Teacher in the Residential department. Millie is known as a hard worker and is a key team member for the Lyons/Hackberry team.

The person who nominated Millie said that “Millie has been our rock through a very difficult time and has done everything in her power to maintain a sense of normal for our clients.”

Thank you Millie for everything you do to support individuals with disabilities and congratulations on your award!



Congratulations to Nathan Honerkamp for now being eligible to receive the \$100 employee referral incentive for referring Rebecca Honerkamp! Rebecca recently completed her 3 month equivalent trainee orientation period, so congratulations to Rebecca as well!



We are still seeking full-time and per diem LSTs, CSTs and Night Attendants....start referring people, it can pay off!



Hats Off to...

- ★ ... Angel for getting the guys home in the ice storm!
- ★ ... Tammy M. for your perseverance and determination! You are always up beat!
- ★ ... Kenzie for your positive feedback and participation in trainings!
- ★ ... TCM team for earning team funds from DMH by providing Covid information to all of their clients!
- ★ ... Day Program & Community Skills Teams for being flexible and keeping services rolling during all the construction!
- ★ ... Duke for keeping up with quick changes with the construction!
- ★ ... Cyndy R. for always bringing ENERGY to the team!
- ★ ... Janelle for being a great supervisor, you always listen and make your staff feel valued!
- ★ ... Kim W. and the Day Program Crew for so kindly taking time out of your personal schedules to plan Grayson's Trivia night and for supporting his family!
- ★ ... TCM team (Sonya, Anna, April, and Josh) for stepping up and caring for consumers through Gina's absence—so she could focus on her son!
- ★ ... Brandi & Jeanette for doing an amazing job helping Sam transition into his new environment!
- ★ ... Day Program team for always rolling with the changes and helping our clients do the same!

In Person Classes & Clubs @ the Program Building

1st Tuesday every month 4p-6p Sci Fi Club- hosted by Greg L.

1st Thursday every month @ 4pm –Craft Class

2nd Tuesday every month 4p-6p Anime Club- hosted by the group

2nd Wednesday every month 4:30-5:30p Exercise Class in the Sunroom

3rd Thursday every month 4:30p-5:30p Art with Josh – led by Josh Venable

4th Wednesday every month 4:30-6p Cooking Class

Space is limited. Contact your CLS or CSS if you would like to participate.

