

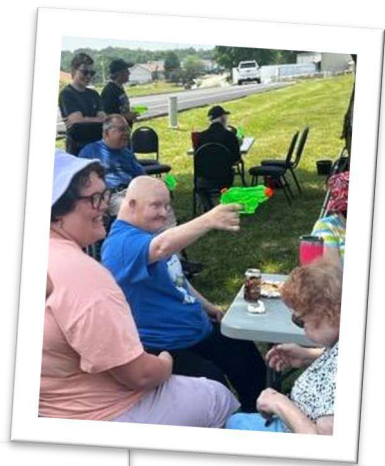
Opportunity Times News & Views



“Welcome Summer” was the theme for the residential department on Friday, June 16. The shade tree in front of 17 Opportunity Court provided a nice comfortable setting for the picnic as everyone enjoyed awesome burgers grilled by Duke – our maintenance fella turned *chef for the day!* Other sides, such as Jackie’s wonderful Pea Salad were also available. Thanks Jackie for bringing a side dish.

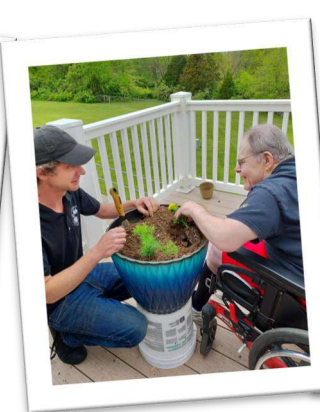
Outdoor games - Ax Throwing (plastic axes that is), outdoor bowling and Corn Hole were played. However, the big hit for the afternoon were the water guns! Who knew little plastic pistols filled with water would be so much fun for both clients and staff. Lera and Susan kicked off the fun with Richard, Angie and Jerry quickly joining in. Just about everyone got in on the action... we have some sneaky, strategic individuals in our group.

A Sundae Bar brought the afternoon to a close with a sweet selection of toppings for cold, tasty vanilla ice cream. Thanks to all those who helped in any way – by moving tables, chairs, providing food or just coming by to enjoy the day.



Thank you, Building Beyond!

The outreach ministry at Journey Church joined us on Saturday, May 6th for a day of beautifying our grounds. The ministry, Building Beyond, goes outside the walls of the church to serve and love others. They worked with the residents and staff on Opportunity Court to spruce up the yards and landscaping. The crew also worked at the Administration and Program Buildings. Everyone worked really hard – pulling weeds, planting flowers, spreading mulch and much more. After all the work everyone enjoyed a pizza party. Many thanks to Journey Church.



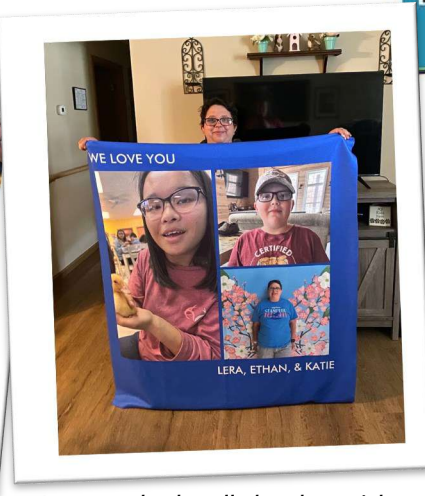
Residential Services



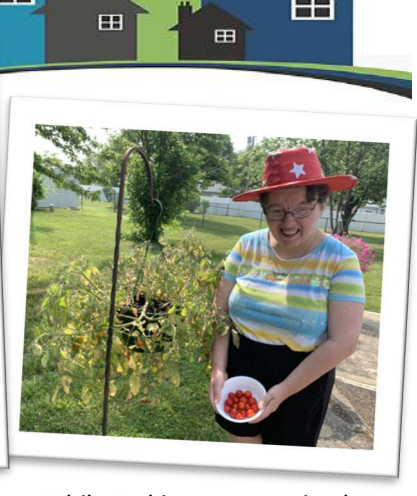
Josh is decorating his porch for Independence Day!



Doug enjoyed painting the porch bench and sprucing up the sitting area!



Lera worked really hard on picking out a great Mother's Day present for her mom! Lera, it looks great!



While Jackie was watering her plants today she harvested her ripe cherry tomatoes!



Yvonne is thrilled to meet some Wentzville Police in uniform while at Wentzville Days.



Lanny and Richard enjoyed visiting the St. Louis Art Museum.



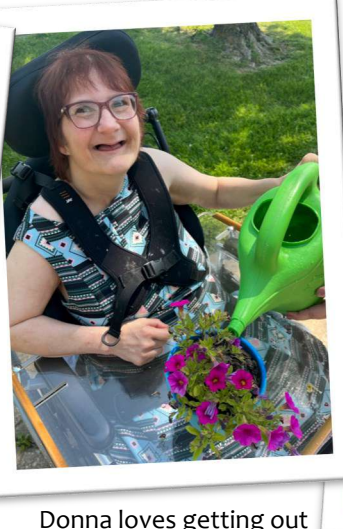
Doug and Kailey take great care in watering the plants at his house.



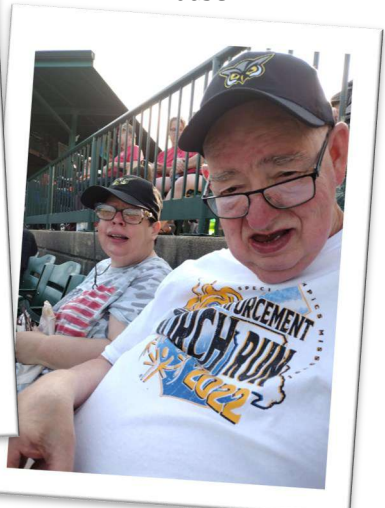
Terry enjoyed a Sponge Bob Musical put on at Southeast Missouri University Theatre.



Josh swimming with Lindsey.



Donna loves getting out and watering the plants around her home.



Jerry and Yvonne fit in a Hoots game!



community

Skills



Jacki, Adam and Nick enjoyed the afternoon at the park.



Megan harvested the first radish from the garden at Day Program.



Eddie is assisting Duke with installing rails.



Curtis has to check out chick days at Rural King!



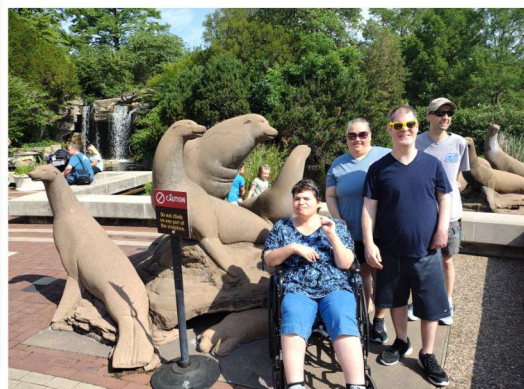
(Pictured above) Mickey brought his goats to Day Program to show off to his friends! The goat took a nap on Amanda's lap. (Pictured below) A fun summer day at the St. Louis Zoo!



(Pictured above:) Winners of the Kentucky Derby! 1st: Steven Askey, 2nd: Lizzy Penny, and 3rd: Jerry Blocker.



Tyler, Lacy, Diana and Sarah, planted zucchini and onions for the LCCOA Garden Club.



Shelby, Mikey, David and Jen had a great time at the St. Louis Zoo.

Employment Services



The Employment Department is headed into the summer with a bang! Several individuals have started jobs recently including the following:

Natie R. is working at Burning Creations Pottery as a Shop Helper and started in April.

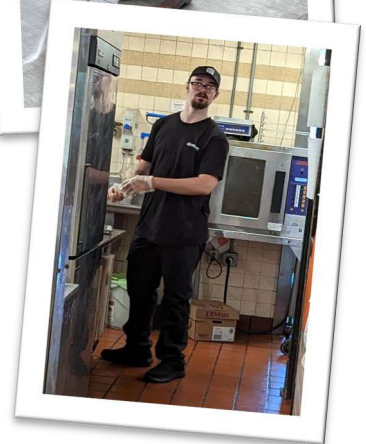
Caleb F. (pictured top right) is working at Friendship Farms as a Dishwasher and started in April.

Brant W. (pictured middle right) is working at Sonic as a Lot Attendant and started in April.

Dylan H. (pictured bottom right) is working at Burger King as a Crew Member and started in June.

Summer Work Experience is also in full force and students have been busy working at Cuivre River State Park and County Market to learn some valuable work skills for their future. We'll have lots of photos to share in the following newsletter... stay tuned!

This quarter also welcomed in a few new faces to Employment as well! Jennifer C. started in Discovery and Exploration and Amanda P. for Employment Services.



Congratulations Angela!

The DSP of the 2nd quarter of 2023 is Angela Schnuriger!

Angela has been a Life Skills Teacher for 14 years. She comes to work each day with a joyful attitude while supporting the ladies. Through her years of experience, she has learned to adapt to situations to meet the needs of those she supports and she does it all with an infectious smile!

The nomination for this award stated many wonderful attributes and skills she brings to this position, such as: "She is always at her best, caring, and conscious" of those she supports, "She is a great example of what we should all be as employees- in every way," and "She inspires others on the team with leading by example and encouraging a team approach."

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

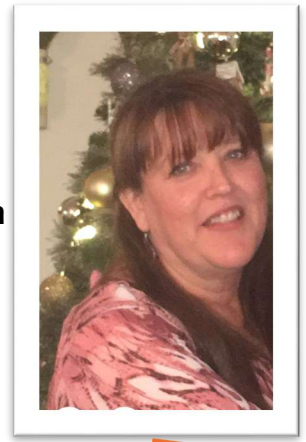


HEALTH &

SAFETY



By Connie West, H&S Chairperson



As we welcome in summer, we should also prepare for episodes of extreme heat. Many people struggle in these extreme temperatures. If you will be spending prolonged time in the sun, make sure you assist clients to apply sunscreen to avoid sunburns. Everyone should also drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Wear light colored, loose fitting clothing. Summer fruits like watermelon are great outdoor snacks and quite refreshing! Find some activities to enjoy outdoors with the temperatures in mind.



We recently had an outdoor party with our residential clients where squirt guns were available. The clients and staff both thoroughly enjoyed playing with them and squirting each other. What a great way to cool off! We also have a few passes to the city pool that are available for clients and their accompanying staff. Picnic lunches are fun too! There are several covered picnic areas in the Troy area.



Get creative, enjoy the summer, try to keep cool and stay safe!



Healthy Living



Do you wake up in the morning with dry mouth? Do you often have nasal congestion or asthma? Do you sleep poorly? Do you notice breathing through your mouth? Do you experience a lot of stress and anxiety?

If you can say yes to these questions, you are likely not breathing properly. Patrick McKeown is the leading expert on breathing and is the founder of the Buteyko Clinic International and author of the books, "The Oxygen Advantage" and "The Breathing Cure: Develop New Habits for a Healthier, Happier & Longer Life," which is based on Dr. Konstantin Buteyko's Buteyko Breathing Method.

According to McKeown, learning to breathe through your nose, lightly and slowly is the secret to better health and overall wellbeing. Many people breathe through their mouths, breathing fast and shallow, which negatively affects our health and increases our stress and anxiety. When our emotions are activated, we start to breathe more rapidly, and we don't sleep well. Even when the stress lessens, the habit of breathing incorrectly reinforces low-level anxiety, which creates the cycle of poor sleep. He also advises we not eat late at night, because food digestion affects the diaphragm, which affects our breathing and sleep.

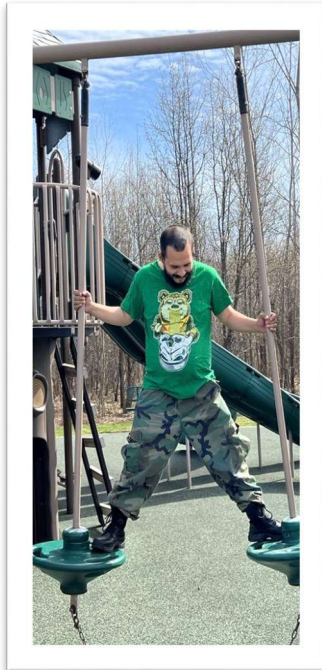
The link below is an interesting talk between Patrick McKeown and renowned British physician, Dr. Rangan Chatterjee about the importance of breathing properly for optimum health and the general lack of teaching and knowledge about the affects of improper breathing.

<https://youtu.be/FdXQ6K0zlj4>



Equity & Inclusion

Zachary Suchland is doing great these days. After the last few years of social isolation, Zach really wanted to get more actively involved in the community and asked to attend the new day program in O’Fallon by Initial Independence. He started in February of this year and attends five days a week. The program is housed in a gym. The attendees have access to all of the gym equipment, and they use it almost every day. Zach really enjoys using the weights, since he was taught how to properly lift in a weightlifting class in high school. He’s been a great coach and support to other participants, as he shows them proper techniques. He is working on goals to become more fit and lose weight, and he’s making an effort to make his lunch and bring it, which is not only healthier but it’s saving him money. Since starting the program, he’s gone out to see a movie, went bowling, to the library to research volunteer jobs in the area, visited the Daniel Boone home, the St Louis Science Center, the Lion’s Club for a cooking class, and the O’Fallon Rec Center, to name just a few.



Congratulations, Zach, on your accomplishments!

Community Opportunities provides services to several individuals who identify as transgender. We may have staff who identify as trans as well. The identity of transgender is not easily understood by the vast majority in our society, but we owe it to ourselves, our clients, co-workers, and others to seek understanding.

In a study released by Reuters in June 2022, 1.64 million people over the age of 13 identify as transgender. Unlike the identities of gay, lesbian or bisexual, transgender is not a sexual orientation. People who are trans may identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, pansexual, heterosexual, asexual, etc. They are found in all communities, from all backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and abilities. The Trevor Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to LGBTQIA+ youth suicide prevention, released data from nearly 34,000 trans youth ages 13 to 24, showing alarmingly high rates of suicide attempts, depression and anxiety across both liberal and conservative regions. Many report experiencing discrimination and are being prevented from accessing mental health care.

From an article in the The Guardian dated 12/17/22 titled “More than 50% of trans and non-binary youth in US considered suicide this year, survey says”, Bamby Salcedo, the president of the TransLatin@Coalition in Los Angeles stated, “There are not enough mental health providers who understand who we are as people and who are sensitive and non-prejudiced. And when we can’t access basic healthcare or housing, or continue to be discriminated against in employment, it all impacts our mental health.”

Inclusion is about ALL and EVERYONE. That means you. Whether you’re white, black, a person of color, have a disability, heterosexual or not, politically conservative or liberal, we’re all imperfect humans trying to get along, take care of our families, and do our jobs the best we can. We all bleed red. We all want to belong and be understood.

We might not convince each other to change our views, but let’s strive to listen, ask questions and understand each other. Email sonya@commopps.org for comments, feedback or request a topic discussion.

Welcome, Sonya!



I know most of you have already met me, but thought I'd formally introduce myself as your new Nurse Consultant at Community Opportunities. Better late than never! I am a wife and mother of 4 great kids, ages : 23, 20, 18 and 13 (daughter Mary also works here). With only one kiddo left in school it isn't quite as busy as years past, but it still keeps us on our toes. I am also the office manager of my husbands electrical contracting business. My hobbies include: reading, gardening and cooking/baking. I graduated with my BSN in nursing in 1999, and have worked in all areas of health care: home health, oncology, medical/surgical, emergency room, infusion center and I even helped a local midwife with home births in our community! I have a wide base of knowledge to pull from to better serve the clients at Community Opportunities but still have a lot to learn and I am eager! I am very excited to serve as the new Nurse Consultant and work with such a special group of people in our community. I know I have large shoes to fill with your previous RN's, but I hope to be an approachable, flexible team player. -Sonya Mitts, RN, BSN



**WE WILL BE
CLOSED
LABOR DAY**

Offices and Day Program

will be closed:

Monday, September 4, 2023

Staff Training



- CPI Recertification, 07.12.2023, 8:30a-12:30p, Troy City Hall
- CPR & First Aid, 07.17.2023, 5:30-7:30p, Program Building
- CPI Recertification, 07.18.2023, 3:30-7:30p, Program Building
- CPI Full Certification, 08.14 & 15.2023, 3:30-7:30p, Program Building.

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

Tips for Workplace Etiquette

1. Offer a Polite Greeting: Say "hello," "good morning" or "good afternoon," smile and make eye contact when you see coworkers or clients. Greet people by name. Introduce yourself to new people.
2. Be Mindful of Others: Stay mindful of those around you. Hold the door open for the person behind you. If you need to complete tasks for others to perform their duties, try to finish them as quickly and accurately as possible. Use "please" and "thank you."
3. Silence Your Cell Phone: Silence your cell phone in the workplace so you don't disturb others. Use the vibration mode for notifications, especially if you share a workspace and while in meetings.
4. Keep the Workplace Clean: The workplace is a shared environment that everyone should contribute to keeping clean. Wipe down any dirty surface areas, such as tables and counters, push in chairs, turn off lights when you are the last in the room and wash your dishes.
5. Take Sensitive Call in Private: Respect personal space and boundaries by closing your office door during personal or loud calls and conversations. Make personal calls on breaks or after working hours.
6. Speak Professionally: Avoid using slang or controversial terms in the office. Do not swear out loud. Instead, speak clearly and professionally when at work.



FRIENDLY FACES

I'm... Mary Mitts

My parents are Jake and Sonya (Sonya is our RN Consultant). I have an older sister Maddy and a younger sister Lana. I have one brother Jake, who is also younger than me. I have a chocolate lab named Dorothy and two cats named Peter and Wanda.

My favorite vacation was... My senior trip when I graduated high school; St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Who inspires me is... My Aunt Nelene because she is always kind and brings the best out of people. She always has a smile on her face and treats everyone fairly.

My hobby right now is reading. I have gotten back into reading now that I am not taking as many classes. It is really relaxing to me.

My favorite quote is... "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." — Maya Angelou

The best surprise I have ever received... Finding out I got to go on my senior trip to St. John

My favorite song depends on my mood but my go to song right now is Things A Man Oughta Know, by Lainey Wilson

The movie version of my life should be titled... Beautiful Disaster, my life is pretty chaotic being a full-time student on top of my many other responsibilities but I wouldn't change a thing. I enjoy the organized chaos.

My favorite physical activity is... Running. I ran cross country and track in high school and still enjoy running. I don't do it nearly as often as I used to.

If I won the lottery I would... Travel the world. I love traveling and would like to start seeing other countries.

One thing people are surprised to find out about me is.... I love being outdoors. Hiking, swimming, fishing, etc... are all my favorite ways to spend my free time in the summer. I don't strike people as the outdoorsy type usually.

If I were a superhero I would probably want to be Jean Grey from the X-men. I just think she's cool.

I am passionate about... My future. My future career is very important to me. I work really hard in school to make sure I can reach my goals of becoming a social worker and therapist.

My favorite family tradition is... Our Christmas eve celebration. We always go to a Christmas eve service at church and have a big meal after of all our favorite foods while we watch a movie.

My pet peeve is... Messes. I hate messes and have to have everything organized. When things are unorganized and messy it stresses me out.

My favorite meal is... Steak with a baked potato and asparagus.



Classes & Clubs @ the Program Building



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

1st Thursday every month 4:30p Craft Class \$3/hosted by Emily

2nd Tuesday every month 4-5p Music Class/hosted by Diana

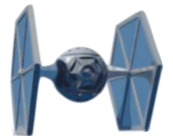
2nd Thursday every month 4p-5:30p Anime Club/hosted by Kelsey C.

3rd Thursday every month 4-5p Karaoke & Dance/hosted by Jen W., Amanda & Katy

4th Wednesday every month 4p Cooking Class \$3/hosted by Lacy

Last Thursday every month 4-5p Sit 'n Fit Chair Exercises/hosted by Kelsey M.

**Space is limited. Contact your CLS or CSS if you would like to participate.
Check the monthly activities calendar for more activities & changes.**





INCREASED Employee Referral Incentive Could you use \$250?

It literally PAYS to refer! If you refer someone who is hired, and completes their three-month training, you get paid a **\$250 referral incentive!** Our staff are our best recruiters because you know the job better than anyone... so spread the word & possibly earn yourself some extra money!



“The Residence of Herbert George Wells”

~A short story by Gregory L.

At the residence of esteemed authors who happen to be; Jules Verne, Bram Stoker, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Samuel Longhorn Clemmens. There are also two women who are guests at the table they are; Nellie Bly, and Sonya DeMerchant. Then, Herbert George Wells walks into the room. He then sits down at the head of the table. His close friend and colleague, Dr. Ian Pascoe, walks into the room. H. G. Wells says, “Welcome! Welcome! We still have some fresh roast beef and some brandy for the chill.” Ian Pascoe responds, “Thank you, Herbert. I need some brandy.” Then he walks into the dining room and sits down.

H.G. Wells says, “Ladies and gentlemen, I am going on a journey but I won’t be leaving my laboratory or even London. I’m talking about traveling through time. I have invented the world’s first time machine. When I build up enough courage I will travel eighty years into the future. According to my calculations I will arrive in a place called Burbank, Southern California and the year will be 1979. I intend to be just an observer, if my theory is correct, in the future there will be a perfect utopia, there will no longer be separate counties or governments ruled by kings or Tsars. The world will be governed by a world government which will be like the Government of The United States for all people, men and women will live like brothers and sisters. Who knows, we may even someday in the future accomplish space travel.”

Ian Pascoe replies, “Herbert, I must differ with your theory. Human beings are a savage barbaric race we hunt and we’re hunted we live in a cosmic child house, it’s been that way for thousands of years and it will never change.” Then, Inspector Lastraud and several policeman from Scotland Yard arrive. The police officers begin searching the house. Sonya gets up from the table and leaves the residence. Ian Pascoe quickly and quietly also leaves the residence. Sonya walks down the long dark cobblestone street. Ian Pascoe quickly grabs her from behind. H. G. Wells quickly arrives and exclaims, “Ian! Let her go!” Ian Pascoe responds, “Herbert, you fool! Do you know who I am?” Sonya screams, “Yes! I do! You’re Jack the Ripper!” Ian Pascoe says, “Yes, and you are my next victim!” Then, at a safe distance, the 4th Time Lord arrives. He pulls out his sonic screwdriver and he aims it and then he fires it. Ian Pascoe’s device will not work. He pulls out his golden pocket watch and he activates it and disappears. H.G. Wells walks up to her and says, “You’re safe now. I believe that’s the last we’ll hear about Jack the Ripper. The 4th Time Lord, who is also known as Dr. Who, walks over to her and says, “I am known as the doctor and I chose you to be my companion. Then, they both walk down the cobblestone street, into the Tardis and it then disappears.

