

VENTURES UNLIMITED MAGAZINE

SPRING 2022

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Notes from the Director - *Kristin Frane*

First-Quarter Update - 2022

We are pleased to report that we are back to capacity following an interesting few years! We have resumed most of our volunteer sites, community employment, and our work center is really busy which helps keep those we serve happy!

Here are some highlights from the first quarter of the year:

- We hired a new job developer, Beth Metcalf, who will be focusing on job placement, supportive home care, and housing counseling. With the addition of Beth to the team, we hope to be able to serve even more people!

- Recruitment for our Project SEARCH program continues and it looks as if we will resume in the fall of 2022! Project SEARCH is a 9-month internship program held at Rice Lake Weighing Systems in Rice Lake. We are so proud of all of our previous graduates who are working successfully in community jobs!

- Our trips are back on the schedule! We look forward to taking our folks on small day trips and also our big trip to Moab, Utah! Over the years, we have been able to take people with disabilities many places including Las Vegas, Walt Disney World and the Smoky Mountains to name a few.

- In January, we celebrated 20 years of being open in Hayward! We are so honored to have been able to touch the lives of so many during the last 20 years.

We love our mission statement:

"providing innovative services for individuals with disabilities so they may lead meaningful lives."

Without the work of our incredible staff, our ability to positively impact people with disabilities

would not be possible. We also have a wonderful Board of Directors committed to making sure we make all business decisions with our mission statement in mind. Thank-you!

Dates to Remember

April 18
Easter Observed
VENTURES CLOSED

May 30
Memorial Day
VENTURES CLOSED

June 17
Mall Of America Trip

July 4-7
July 4 Holiday Week
VENTURES CLOSED

August 25
Ventures Palooza

September 5
Labor Day Observed
VENTURES CLOSED

September 27-
October 1
Moab, Utah Trip



Shania from Shell Lake library leading craft class

Cameron News

Hello from Cameron Ventures Unlimited!

It's been a busy and interesting winter as many of you know with the up and down temperatures and snow but spring is just around the corner. The AIM group has been very busy doing a variety of fun seasonal craft activities that include making Christmas décor items, personalized kitchen cutting boards, Valentine cards that were sent to the Senior Citizens Center, Birdseed ornaments and St. Patrick Day plaques. Our staff members



Sue and Linda have been taking people on many community outings such as Bowling, Library outings, Norske Nook, mall walks, shopping, casino, ice fishing and we have also been volunteering at the Benjamin House and Cat Coalition. In addition to those fun things, staff has also

been holding daily and weekly classes where they teach basic math skills, money handling skills, cooking skills, exercise/stretching basic computer skills and sign language.

Our pre vocational and woodshop groups have been extremely busy too with assembling Parker Hannifin parts and building Adirondack chairs for the upcoming spring and summer rush. We have two new participants this year who have really helped us out a great deal in the production room, they are Missy and Tanya, a big thank you to both of you ladies for catching on so quickly to the assembly projects and putting forth a great effort.



Jenny and Ryan at the Cameron thrift store

Cameron Ventures Spotlight Shines Brightly on *Tony*



Finally, our friend Tony had a big birthday party March 6th at Skate City in Rice Lake and his mom was nice enough to rent the entire Skate City facility for his party. Many of Tony's Venture's friends were there to celebrate his birthday and enjoy pizza, pop, cupcakes, skating, games and or just hanging out in a fun environment with friends. Thanks again to Jess, Mark and Tony for making everyone feel so welcome.



Hayward News

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Karen!

When we talk about interesting co-workers there are few with more history than Karen Weingarten. Karen just celebrated her 80th birthday, and guess how she celebrated? She worked. Karen and her family have lived in the Seeley-Hayward area for a long long time. She inherited her work ethic from her family, back in the day you either worked or went hungry. Karen has a great sense of

humor, and loves to be outdoors. Perhaps her favorite activity is painting; she has been painting for a long time and has sold a number of her paintings. Karen is a cancer survivor; it has not slowed her a bit. As they say, God didn't put any quit in her, she's an inspiration to all of her friends and co-workers.

*Here's to you
Karen!*



Joan teaching jewelry making



Beth leading employment class

Working Hard & Having Fun!



AIM room with suncatchers made with Shania of the SL library



Brooke working on Nexen



Josh in health and wellness class



Exercising in health and wellness class

Shell Lake News

Shell Lake Shining Star **DAN Z.**★



*Keep up the great
work Dan!*

Shell Lake's shining star of this newsletter is Dan Z. He works on hand assembly and in cleaning. Dan wanted to share with you some of his favorite things to do while working at Ventures. His favorite job at Ventures is to clean at the Thrift Store in Spooner. If you ask him why, he will state that he likes to help people, and that is the truth, he truly enjoys working with Kristina, Carol, Kim, and Helga. But Dan has a strong knack

for keeping things neat and clean. He loves to vacuum and sweep the floors at the store, and never complains about doing other cleaning tasks. And his love for cleaning carries over to volunteering as well. When Dan was asked where he liked to volunteer the most he said the fire hall because he likes to see Mr. Vik. When Dan is at home, he enjoys sweeping and vacuuming and also putting the groceries away.

The Shell Lake Ventures work floor is buzzing with activity. Parker Hannifin parts have been flying in the door at record numbers which keeps the press and hand assembly workers busy, busy, busy! Participants are eagerly working to break personal best records-not only to keep the parts moving fast, but also to receive a reward for the hard work they put into producing the parts. The Spooner Rodeo dropped off 5000 brochures that needed to be stuffed into envelopes and sealed. It was all hands on deck for a week or so to get that job completed. And Nexen literature remains a staple in the repertoire of work for all. We welcome the challenges of meeting each partner's deadlines!

The AIM/Day Services people have kept the winter doldrums away by connecting with employees and staff that are out on medical leave. They make and send cards, pictures and well wishes.

This group of hard workers also keeps up with decorating the building with seasonal décor. People assist Stacy and Jess with soap making. Shania, Shell Lake Library Program Coordinator, brings in crafts and projects to do together with people in the Day Services room once a month.

Even with the heavy workload, we still make time for Community Connect pre-vocational and recreational outings. Volunteer cleaning at the

Spooner fire hall is one of the pre-vocational experiences for employees to participate in. Practicing work skills is only a part of this experience. The people that make up the crew of cleaners have connected with fire Chief Darren Vik in a way that has had a positive impact for both sides. So much so, the crew gave him birthday cards and a treat when they heard it was his birthday! And finally, we will be returning to the Washburn County Area Humane Society within the coming weeks! Yes, we told you in the last newsletter that we would be returning, and then an up-tick in COVID ended the brief return. For those who attend Shell Lake Ventures and would love to have a job in the community working with animals, this is a great volunteer work experience for them where they are able to practice known skills plus learn new and transferable job skills in the area of their interest. Stacy has done a fantastic job with Health and Wellness class offering exercise, cooking and meditation to those that choose to participate.

We are busy, but we feel blessed!

Read the Spotlight section to learn more about how Ventures connects with the community at all three locations!



*Victoria working
hard at press
assembly.*



Paul & Poppits!

SPOTLIGHT

What is it that makes life meaningful?



Could it mean being healthy? Is life more meaningful when shared with family and friends in your community? Is it earning money and gaining self-worth through employment? Having options or choices? Is life meaningful by living independently?

One of the goals of the Ventures staff is to help each individual come to understand what is meaningful to him/her. And one of the tools used to aid people to reach their potential and live a meaningful life is the Community Connect program.

Community Connect is just what the name implies; connecting people to the community in which they live. How? Ventures Unlimited offers members opportunities to volunteer as one example. Participants volunteer their time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community as a social responsibility or activity, not for a material reward; Cameron cleaning at the Benjamin house, or Shell Lake cleaning at the fire hall, or Hayward helping to prep and serve at the community suppers. The benefits participants reap go beyond the "feel good" achievement.

They receive the sense of belonging to something outside of Ventures, and perhaps some recognition of their abilities, networking opportunities, support and encouragement. Another way to connect to the community is in outings; grocery shopping, the library, out for lunch. Through exploration and discovery, each person has the chance to verify to themselves their likes and dislikes, practice known skills while picking up new ones which can strengthen both communication and employability abilities.

And how does the community benefit? Communities are enriched by recognizing a potential employee, or being the recipient of the work of volunteers. Communities are enhanced with new friends, who offer new ways of thinking about, and navigating, the world. Communities miss out on valuable voices and perspectives when people with disabilities are left out.



HIGHLIGHTS

A Day To Remember



Birthdays are also fun day for the participants of Ventures and last month Ashlynn had a special guest appear on her birthday; Kidd Buffalo a 6 month old highly trained pet, owned by Shane Jorgenson of Cameron came to see everyone at Ventures. Kidd has made many appearances at different events around the area over the last few months but we sure had a

great time seeing him and giving him a little scratch on the head. Thanks, so much for making Ashlynn's birthday and everyone's day a day to remember.



Welcome to new Job Developer in Hayward

My name is Beth Metcalf and I'm very excited to be a part of the team at Ventures Unlimited! I was born in Hayward, WI and raised by my grandparents on a farm. My grandparents also took care of my great Aunt Sarah, who had an intellectual disability, and also lived on our property with us. Our hobby farm taught me responsibility, work ethic and delayed gratification at a young age. My "normal" growing up was much different than most of my friends, but I wouldn't change a single thing!

My college journey wasn't a straight forward path. Being a first generation college student, I elected to attend WITC (now Northwoods College) and UW-Barron County for my first two years of general studies. It was during my time at UW-Barron County that my aptitude in the sciences really started to blossom. Professors noticed me and I was the only student member nominated to the UW Institutional Review Board (IRB) for all research

projects across the UW system. After UW-Barron County I transferred to UW-Green Bay to finish my Bachelors of Science in Psychology.

During my time in Green Bay I was self-employed as a nanny/babysitter. Over the course of 3 years, my clientele grew and with that growth came along the need for a caregiver/babysitter for children with special needs. It shocked me that so many parents struggled to find someone willing to watch their special needs child for a few hours. This is when I gladly started working for families who had children with special needs. After all, they're pretty cool guys and gals once you get to know them!

Seven years after I graduated from UW-Green Bay, I finally found an opportunity to work in my field of study at Ventures Unlimited as a Job Developer. My time at Ventures has only begun, however it's been very fulfilling so far. I'm looking forward to being a contributing team member at Ventures Unlimited!



110 N Industrial Drive
PO Box 623
Shell Lake, WI 54871

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Providing innovative
services for individuals
with disabilities so
they may lead
meaningful lives.*

Ventures Board of Directors

Dan Ringwelski
Vern Lokken
Wayne Kupsch
Phil Soltis
Barb Muench
Robert Washkuhn

Indianhead Community Action Agency



**Food
Pantry**
at Shell Lake Ventures
Open Friday and Saturday's
9:00-Noon

Contact Tammy at

tammy.magdzas@indianhead.org
for more information

715.415.0384



*Spring is for
the Birds!*



*Visit Your One Stop Bird Feeding Shop!
Three Great Locations!*

SHELL LAKE	110 N Industrial Drive, Shell Lake, WI	715-468-2939
HAYWARD	10140 Highway 27 S., Hayward, WI	715-934-3035
CAMERON	700 N 1st Street, Cameron, WI	715-458-5005