



# VENTURES ADVENTURE

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

DECEMBER 2015

**Winter weather is upon us. Please remember the inclement weather policy.**

The inclement weather day policy:

Shell Lake Ventures will follow the Shell Lake and Spooner School Districts.

Hayward Ventures will follow the Hayward school system,

Cameron Ventures will follow the Cameron school system.

**Ventures closed:**

**Christmas Break  
Dec 24-Jan 3**

**President's Day  
Feb 15**

**Easter Monday  
Mar 28**

**Memorial Day  
May 30**

## Project SEARCH Grant Received

In the Fall of 2015, Ventures Unlimited was awarded a \$30,000 Project SEARCH grant to begin with the 2016/2017 school year.

What is Project SEARCH you ask? Project SEARCH is an internationally recognized, trademarked model of employment training for young adults with significant disabilities. The Project SEARCH model is for transition age high school students, ages 18-21, which consists of a one year internship program in a business site.

An instructor provides training on employment readiness and independent living skills in a classroom setting. Students participate in worksite internship rotations based on their interests. Rotations teach complex, systematic skills that prepare students for jobs in their chosen business field. Students are given support through job coaching services and worksite accommodations.

The ultimate goals of Project SEARCH is independence and competitive employment.

Project SEARCH was developed in 1996 by Nurse, J. Erin, Riehle, then the Director of the Emergency Department at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. As the flagship program, CCHMC provides technical assistance for replication and over-

all leadership to Project SEARCH worldwide.

There are six partners to the grant, 1. Business Partner 2. School Partner 3. DVR 4. CCCW/IRIS 5. Ventures Unlimited and 6. Student Interns

Ventures Unlimited applied for the grant on April 1, 2015 with letters of support from a number of local business, schools, DVR supervisors, CCCW /IRIS and family members of individuals with disabilities.

On May 6th, Ventures received word that our application was being recommended for an award.

July 14th—17th, Melissa Denotter, Denise Marquardt and Kristin Frane traveled to Glendale, AZ to attend the 9th annual Project SEARCH conference where they learned key information in regards to the grant process.

Since July, Ventures staff have been very busy touring the Walmart Distribution Center and Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells which are two of Wisconsin's 13 sites. They met with Parker Hannifin and Rice Lake Weighing System about the possibility of becoming the business partner for the grant. They also met with the School District of Rice Lake and CESA about the school representation and

Melissa and Shirley Berlin participated in the first State of WI Project SEARCH meeting in Prairie de Sac.

There are a number of exciting details associated with Project SEARCH. The first exciting piece of information to share is that there is a possibility of young adults up to age 25 to participate in this program as well. If enough students to not sign up to participate in this program, the field of participants will be opened up for any IRIS or CCCW participant that may be interested.

The second exciting piece of information is that Rice Lake Weighing System has accepted the offer of becoming the business partner of our grant.

As we move forward, Ventures Unlimited staff is so lucky and fortunate to have been awarded this grant and are excited to build partnerships with the area business and school districts to help further transition for students.



# Director's Corner



**Kristin Frane, CEO  
Ventures Unlimited**

2015 marked our 48<sup>th</sup> year in business. Back in 1967 a group of parents formed a small group in a church basement to provide some respite / activities for individuals during the day and the rest is history. We are already looking forward to our 49<sup>th</sup> year of business as we have many new initiatives in the works! Here's the highlights from 2015:

- Paid off the Shell Lake mortgage
- Ventures was awarded a \$30,000 Project SEARCH implementation grant (more on that in the newsletter)
- Ventures was awarded a Bureau of Persons with

- Development Disabilities "Community Conversation" grant so that we can host a business appreciation luncheon
- For the second year in a row, Ventures was awarded a 5310 vehicle acquisition grant to replace aging vehicles from our fleet
- So far in 2015 we've placed 20 people from Ventures work center into community jobs
- Our staff Melissa and Shirley were asked to do presentations throughout the state on our successful "Community Pre-vocational classes"
- After members completed our community pre-vocational classes, we

experienced a 50% community placement rate. Twenty people took the class and following the class 10 entered community employment.

- We developed many new and successful products including more suet products, more bird feeders and we've expanded our home-made line of cleaning products and hand-made rugs. All made by people with disabilities with proceeds benefiting our organization.
- Our first full year at our Spooner Thrift Store and we made our first small profit.

Thanks to all of you for your support!

*~ Kristin Frane ~*

*Which trips will you choose to participate in for 2016? It will be a fun year of vacations once again.*

## 2016 Trips Announced

2016 will see a decrease in the number of trips that Ventures offers but that does not mean we won't still have great vacations to choose from.

Our first trip that we venture to is Minneapolis on March 2nd to see the Wisconsin Badgers battle the Minnesota Gophers in men's basketball.

In April, we plan to travel to San Diego to visit Sea World, the ocean, the San Diego Zoo

and more.

And of course, we always make a trip to the Chanhassen Dinner Theater where in 2016 they will be acting out "Beauty and the Beast."

Ventures will once again be traveling to the Minnesota State Fair in August.

The 4th annual Ventures Palooza is planned for August 25th and 26th at Hunt Hill.

September, will bring a Fall Fling with an overnight trip to include Fawn-Doe-Rosa, Apple Farm, Trolley ride and more.

We are hoping with the building of the new Vikings stadium to attend a Vikings/Packers game.

And we will end our year with our annual Mall of America trip. This trip has become very popular. So sign up early to reserve your spot.

## Thank You, Thank You, Thank You

The staff and employees of Ventures Unlimited would like to take this opportunity to thank Parker Hannifin, GDSI, Nexen, 3-M, WITC, CCCW, Spooner Physical Therapy, Knoepke Dental, Marsh McLennan Agency, Lein Law Office, Barron Electric, Spooner Economic Develop-

ment, Dog Patch Grooming, Barron Co. Housing Authority, Sawyer Co. Senior Center, Birkie Headquarters, Don Johnson Motors, Haward Insurance, Hayward Chamber/Visitors Bureau, American Family Insurance, Northern Lakes Co-op complex and Regional Hospice for providing

consumers at Ventures Unlimited. We are always on the lookout for new work contracts, if you may know of any, please contact Melissa, Tom or Mike at Ventures Unlimited offices. Thank You!

# 3rd Annual Ventures Palooza is a HUGE Success



What a fine looking group! The 3rd Annual Ventures Palooza was the best one yet. Everyone had so

much fun and made many different crafts such as stepping stones, bird houses, bird feeders, fairy gardens,

bookcases, fishing lures and painted their own tic-tac-toe boards.

Once again, Hunt Hill Audobon Society was more than helpful with our plans and we thank them so much for hosting our group.

A huge thank you also goes out to Ian Okamoto for sharing his talent with us.

Also, a huge thank you to all of the staff and employees who have continued to make Ventures Palooza a success. Let's make the 4th Annual the biggest yet. Who's with me?

*Feed our feather friends suet to replenish depleted stores of energy and nutrients, to help birds survive the long winter.*

## Let's Feed the Birds

With winter just around the corner, it is time to feed our feathered friends suet to replenish depleted stores of energy and nutrients, to help birds survive the long, cold months.

Ventures is celebrating their 15th Anniversary of purchasing Just For the Birds and as like the past years, our consumers are very busy making the various suet items that we

offer to you.

Our woodshop has also been ex-



tremely busy building bird houses and orders are coming in quickly which keeps us very active.

The picture on the left is the PERFECT gift for anyone on your Christmas list. These have become quite popular around the area and can be picked up for \$13.95 at any of the local Ventures Unlimited Thrift Shoppes. Thanks to all of our hard workers.

## Updates on Daily Living Skills Training

Deb's independent living cooking group has become so popular that it has been split into two groups.



The first group is for cooking newbies, for people who are

adapting to life in an apartment. The second group also does some food prep, but are also learning other independent skills—such as budgeting, telephone etiquette, and information gathering (internet, newspapers, radio, etc).

We also stole Shell Lake's idea and have a weekly 'Soup Group'—each week making a seasonal and tasty soup, maximizing our dollars as we shop. Bowls of piping hot soup are offered at lunches for \$1, with the goal to be self-sustaining. So far so good.

Other daily living skills group include: several walking groups, a



dancercise group, library groups, art and coloring for relaxation, creating new all natural supplies, baking club, learning about cur-

rent events and music appreciation. For good measure Deb G created a pit crew that cleans and maintains our fleet of vehicles and Denise has a job club for those on the cusp of community employment. We are always open to suggestions and ideas or volunteers to help folks build skills or experience new activities.





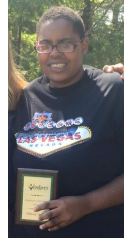
## Summer Picnics celebrates the End of Summer

Celebrate the end of summer? Who wants to do that, we would love summer to go on all year long.

This year, each of the Ventures locations planned their own Summer Picnic.

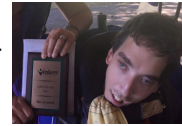


Cameron kept busy with a pizza party inside due to the rain. They had life-size Jenga, a Wii bowling tournament and other fun activities



to last the entire day. The Employee of the Year for Cameron Hayward spent the day in Seeley dancing, singing, fishing and playing games. Employees of the Year for

Hayward were Whitney Baker and Ben Granbom.



In Shell Lake, the sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. We spent time playing games, singing and swimming at the Shell Lake Beach. Joan



Rask and Lila Sargeant were the winners of the Employees of the Year plaques.

## Christmas Word SEARCH



Word search grid containing the following words: CANDYCANES, CHRISTMAS, GARLAND, JACKFROST, JINGLEBELLS, MERRYCHRISTMAS, MISTLETOE, ORNAMENTS, POINSETTIA, PRESENTS, REINDEER, RUDOLPH, SANTACLAUS, SLEIGH, SNOWFLAKE, SNOWMAN, STOCKINGSTUFFER, TINSEL, TREE, WRAPPINGPAPER.

WORD LIST:

- |            |                |            |                 |
|------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|
| CANDYCANES | GARLAND        | POINSETTIA | SNOWFLAKE       |
| CARD       | JACKFROST      | PRESENTS   | SNOWMAN         |
| CHRISTMAS  | JINGLEBELLS    | REINDEER   | STOCKINGSTUFFER |
| DECORATE   | MERRYCHRISTMAS | RUDOLPH    | TINSEL          |
| ELF        | MISTLETOE      | SANTACLAUS | TREE            |
| FROSTY     | ORNAMENTS      | SLEIGH     | WRAPPINGPAPER   |

## Keepin' It Local

The Christmas season is such a great time of year—people tend to be more friendly and upbeat, and more generous. Many of us find ourselves thinking about what we can do to help others get more out of life. A more recent holiday recent phenomenon is “Small Business Saturday”, encouraging people to shop local, small businesses as they are the foundation of our community. In many respects this concept applies to gifts and dona-

tions. Local non-profits, like Ventures Unlimited, are made up of neighbors, old school mates, co-workers, and friends. Ventures provides support services for many area businesses and also serves as a pipeline to train and match workers with special abilities to jobs in the community. Ventures also helps support people living independently in the community become well rounded citizens of our communities. Supporting local

agencies, much like Small Business Saturday, ensures money and resources stay in the area—strengthening our communities from the ground up. As you reflect on your year past and look to the future, consider how your gift could help your friends and neighbors at Ventures achieve personal and vocational goals. The lives you can affect will include your own.



## AIM News from Hayward

Hayward AIM is busy preparing for the holidays. We're making Christmas crafts and decking the halls. The recent snow was perfect snowman snow. Sad news: We recently lost two

beloved members of our group each other. Nate Merz and Dan Jeffries have gone home. Dan was our number one Packer fan, and a die hard NASCAR guy. Nate was a big supporter of all Wisconsin

teams and well as the snappiest dresser at Ventures. They are greatly missed.

Julie Veness, a member of our staff, has taken a new job in Ladysmith. Good luck Julie!

## 2015 Ventures Staff of the Year

Congratulations to 2015 Staff of the Year!



Gail Green-Klopp. Gail is one of two work-floor supervisors. Gail has been with Ventures since 2010 beginning at our Cameron

location and then moving to the Shell Lake facility. Gail has a great personality and attitude which the consumers truly appreciate.

Dale Thompson was chosen Staff of the Year in Cameron.

He has been an employee of Ventures since 2010. Dale is an avid hunter and fisherman and enjoys being outdoors working in his garden or fixing up his cabin on the Chetek



Chain of Lakes. Dale currently is employed as a bus driver, job coach and wood shop supervisor. Dale maintains a positive attitude and makes sure the participants have fun while they learning new skills or being

shuttled from one place to the next.

Alexandra Stone has been chosen Staff of the Year in Hayward. Ali has been with us since 2012 and does a variety of jobs including job coaching and filling in on the work floor but where Ali shines is in her mentor position. Ali is a hard worker with a great attendance track record. Exciting news for Ali...a baby is due to arrive in a few weeks.

Congratulations to all three of these winners. Their hard work and dedication made it easy to choose them as Employee of the Year!!!





**Examples of Pallets that have been painted by the clients and staff of Ventures in Cameron**



## Cameron in A Nutshell

The beginning of 2016 is approaching fast!! If the new year proves to be anything like 2015, the Cameron Ventures Unlimited facility is in for many more exciting projects, activities and learning opportunities. During 2015, we once again made a record number of Adirondack chairs and tables for customers to enjoy on their front porches, around the campfires and in backyards. The Adirondack chair building crew was also featured in the Panorama section of the Rice Lake Chronotype which was very exciting for all of the clients as they got to be interviewed and have their pictures taken by the newspaper reporter. I would like to give a special thanks to the Rice Lake Chronotype for taking so much time and doing fantastic job covering our story. In February of 2015, we began having conversations with the management staff of Parker Hannifin, a giant production assembly company that has one of their facilities located in Chetek, WI. Our topic of discussion was to develop work opportunities for our clients with in their highly competitive manufacturing facility. After many conversations and planning we determined we could develop two groups of clients that had specific skills and abilities to fit Parker Hannifin's packaging department needs and on July 9, 2015 we started Ventures first enclave group at

Parker Hannifin in Chetek. This opportunity that Parker has provided us with is a testament of their commitment to help clients learn more work skills in a highly competitive manufacturing business. Once the clients learn various skills and work behaviors their next step would be to work independently in community employment, whether it is in manufacturing, production, packaging, general labor, retail or customer service jobs, many of the work behaviors that they are learning are transferable to all areas of employment. Back at Ventures in Cameron our production floor has been busy about two days per week with assembly and packaging overflow work that comes in from Parker Hannifin and in the last month we have seen an increase in Parker assembly work. Our staff has been working extremely hard on trying to get new contracts, networking with Parker staff to understand their production assembly needs and spending time at the Parkers facility to train on new production assembly machines that Parker would like us to utilize at our Cameron facility. Ventures would like to extend a big thanks to all the Parker staff and management for providing us the opportunity to help our clients learn vocational skills and earn money in a friendly, thoughtful yet competitive manufacturing setting. I would like to recognize Ven-

ture's staff, Chandra Harmon, who is our production floor supervisor and has been doing such an excellent job at working with the clients and Parker staff to make this project a great partnership. In our Day Service area, clients have been working on a variety of new arts and crafts projects. One of the most popular projects that has recently been started is pallet art!! Ventures staff are using quality pallets to create beautiful artwork not only for someone's house but anywhere it fits your particular style. These pallets are completely painted by Venture's clients and then stenciling and artwork is carefully applied with the assistance of our staff. I would like to extend a thank you to Stacy Roth and Cindy Simons for working so hard to make this a successful and beautiful project that involves client participation and creativity. I would also like to thank all of the Mentors and Job Coaches that work one-on-one with clients in various settings both in the community and in house for all the hard work they do each day as they connect with their clients. You guys are truly special and make a difference in the clients life by providing that personal companionship, care and training. Thanks again, and let's keep looking forward to the new year.

# Ventures Staff Certified in CPR



On Wednesday, November 11th, a number of Ventures Unlimited staff attended a CPR/First Aid training at the Hayward facility. WITC pro-

vided an instructor to teach our staff to be certified in a medical emergency. A total of four hours were spent learning the ABCs and

what to do if you were to come upon someone choking or not breathing. Two tests, a written and practical, were given to prove competency.

Ventures staff spend a lot of time with your sons and daughters and now you know that if there is a medical emergency, all measures will be taken to keep them safe until the medical team arrives.

Congratulations to all of new CPR certified staff!

Dan and Woody "giving back" by providing feeders and seed (weekly) to the Chamber and library for the community to enjoy!



# Shirley and Melissa Present Community Pre-Vocational Class

As earlier mentioned in this newsletter, Melissa Denotter and Shirley Berlin have traveled to various conferences presenting the curriculum that has been developed for Ventures Community Pre-Vocational class. In 2013, Shirley attended Denise Bisonette's presentation on The Art of Creating Opportunity and with the information that Denise shared, it was decided that Ven-

tures would use the knowledge and recreate their pre-vocational program. At that time the name and curriculum changed to better fit today's pre-vocational needs, and Ventures first class was in February of 2014. The first presentation was in February 2015 at the Transition Conference held in Wisconsin Dells, a second was held at the RFW conference in Green Bay and the

third and final presentation was again in Wisconsin Dells at the Transition Academy. Each of these were filled to capacity and the groups had a variety of employment positions including many teachers. Shirley and Melissa have received numerous requests for the manual we are using and we are sharing this with anyone that would like to use it in their class rooms.



Recent Graduates of the Community Education class. Congrats!!!



PO Box 623  
Shell Lake, WI 54871  
Phone: 555-555-5555  
Fax: 555-555-5555  
E-mail: someone@example.com



## Tabby's Toon is Back

