

The Inside Connection

A Newsletter From CCAR Industries

Charleston, Illinois

Winter 2009/10

Holiday Happenings!

The Locust day program had its annual Christmas celebration on December 22, 2009. The party attendees included many of the consumer's family members. The consumers and their family ate a big meal and afterwards opened presents. A special thanks to all the guardians and staff who helped make our annual Christmas/winter celebration a success.

At the Senior Program all of the consumers and guests enjoyed their dinner, opened gifts, danced along to music by the Rhymer Whymers. JR also had a surprise visit from his nephew Caleb who has been stationed in Iraq!



Clarence shows his skills on the harmonica by joining in with the Rhymer Whymers

DT Lincoln has had a very busy December! In addition to our recycling activities, we have



Some people always want to be the center of attention

been busy shopping and getting prepared for our much anticipated Christmas party. Ninety eight consumers, family, friends and staff members attended the dinner and enjoyed the meal. After our meal, entertainment was provided by several consumers playing in the First CCAR Holiday Band. The performance included renditions of some of our favorite holiday songs including keyboard solos performed by Jarrod M. and Ethan B. After the performances, it was time for everyone's favorite part of the party... opening presents. Travis H. was excited to get the newest installment of the Twilight movie and Sharon D. was pleased with her phone card just to name a few of the pleasant surprises that were found under the tree.

On the 31st, we had another

celebration as we got ready to ring in the New Year. Carol and Joe Techau were generous enough to bring in doughnuts and cider for everyone to enjoy during break time, and that afternoon we were amazed by the Amazing Andy who came to entertained us with some magic tricks.

The Holidays found the staff and consumers of the Sheltered Workshop doing what we like to do best... Havin' a party!

As an activity, consumers made plans for the menu, and the table decoration. This year it was decided to make gift bags and fill them with hot chocolate mix.



Mary appears to be enjoying the festivities!

After food and presents it was time for the party to really get started including Karaoke and another workshop Tradition; Christmas BINGO!

TRANSITION PROGRAM GOING SMOOTH

The transition program which was created for three students exiting the local school system has been rolling along since it started in the fall. The organizing group continues to meet and review the structure of the program and the ability of the program to meet the needs and preferences of the families and the three individuals that participate.

In the past months this group has been actively involved in many activities as they spend some of their days at the DT Lincoln program and others out at Camp New Hope. All three of the program

participants have enjoyed working in the recycling program at



Lincoln, volunteering time at the local animal shelter, doing arts and crafts items, using the

Charleston library, visiting the Douglas Hart Nature Center, as well as some seasonal events at the Pumpkin Patch and shopping for Christmas gifts for their families.

Hopefully long term funding for this group will be secured in the current DD Conversion project so they will have the ability to continue to do the things they enjoy each day. We want to express our thanks to the individuals and organizations who donated or helped raise funds to make this all possible.

WORKSHOP OPENS A COMPUTER ROOM



Workshop program consumers requested and then worked with the vocational staff to turn one of the vacant staff offices into a computer room for the consumers and staff to use.

The Vocational Evaluator Chastity Parker organized the activity which started with selecting a new paint color for the room. A tan tone was selected which looked more purple under

the lighting. The group also selected some furnishings to place in the room. Most of the furniture and wall pictures were found in the basement of the CCAR Administration building.

Rules were established for the computer lab. Some of the rules that were developed for use of the room are: no food/drinks, wash your hands if you sneeze, no fighting, sign-up

for the computers, no inappropriate websites, and keep the lab clean. At this point, some of the rules have been difficult to follow. I'm sure this will improve over time.

The lab was set-up to allow one computer for staff use and two computers for the consumers to use. All machines have internet access with some games.

NURSE SHARON HOUCHIN RETIRES

This article was written by Amber and Sherry who are regular contributors to the CCAR workshop newsletter.

After 40 years in nursing, Sharon Houchin is retiring on January 29th. Sharon has worked at CCAR since August 2002, and previously worked here from 1980 to 1983. She gave us our medications, helped at our Dr. Chopra appointments, explained why we were sick, and always had time to help us. All of the consumers will really miss her. We wish her good luck with retirement!

We interviewed her on January 22nd about her retirement and her experiences. Here is what we learned about Sharon:

What are the other places that you worked as a nurse?

She worked at nursing homes for many years. Then, she spent 17 years working for the State of Illinois as a nurse surveyor in nursing homes.

What did you do in those jobs?

As a surveyor, she checked nursing homes' charts and services. She made sure that they were following the rules and that everything was in order.

What are you going to do in your retirement?

She plans to practice guitar, read, watch TV, and may exercise at the hospital. She plans to take care of

her husband and of herself.

When did you start working for CCAR? She worked at CCAR from 1980 to 1983 as a nurse at the Sheltered Workshop. She started working with CILA and CFS in August of 2002.

What are you going to miss most about CCAR? The consumers.



Sharon at her desk during her final days with the agency. She always had time to stop what she was doing and speak with a consumer!

Are you still the Mayor of Oakland? Yes. She is still the Mayor. She presides over council meetings, goes to committee meetings, and signs off on checks.

Where did you go to college? In 1970, she went to Lakeland College and graduated as an LPN. In 1980, she became an RN through a program hosted by Lakeland that was called Illinois Eastern Community Colleges. She considers herself a Lakeland graduate.

Do you have any advice for the

nurse that is going to take your place? "Try to keep cool, do the best you can for consumers, kind of go with the flow, and do no harm."

After all your years in this business, what do you think about the budget cut? "It stinks!" She said that she realizes Illinois doesn't have a lot of money, but thinks

people with developmental disabilities (along with the geriatric population) are the hardest hit with no way to make extra money.

Over your 40 years, what changes have you seen?

Technical and computer improvements, less hands on, and more equipment. LPNs aren't allowed to do as many procedures as RNs. When she started out, Medicare allowed them to do more procedures in nursing homes and hospitals.

Is there anything that really grosses you out like blood or broken bones? False teeth! She'd rather give enemas than touch dentures.



Sharon will also be missed by all the CCAR Staff

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State Funding Update

As I'm sure most of you are aware, the State of Illinois has been experiencing difficulties funding programs that serve individuals with disabilities in community agencies. In an attempt to secure matching Medicaid funds the Illinois Department of Human Services has encouraged agencies like CCAR to convert the existing grant funded programs and turn them into programs that qualify for the Medicaid match funding. If this process is successfully completed the federal Medicaid system would then pay for half the expenses leaving the state to cover the other 50%.

CCAR decided to participate in this conversion process to

hopefully secure funding for those individuals served through four of the old grant funded programs. Those programs currently funded through the grant system are the Client and Family Support program, Regular Work program, Supported Employment program and the Vocational Developmental program. Other CCAR programs such as the CILA (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) program and the Developmental Training are already part of the Medicaid match funding system.

Staff working in those programs currently involved in this process are making every attempt to secure services for individual program consumers who

do not qualify for the Medicaid match funding. Referrals are being made to other community agencies and funding is being sought from other sources such as the Illinois Department on Aging.

At this point in the process the CCAR staff have been able to submit their plan for conversion to the Illinois Department of Human Services as one of the early steps to move these changes along. We are expecting to hear back from the state during the first part of the year and receive their input on the plan we developed.

We are getting every indication that 2010 will be yet another challenging year.