



ODC OUTLOOK

OPEN DOOR CENTER

March/April 2020

Quality Management & Strategic Planning for Open Door Center for 2020-2023

On February 6, 2020 approximately 50 people met at the AmericInn in Valley City, to create the Quality Management and Strategic Plan for Open Door Center. The people represented all segments of the Open Door Center including people served, staff representing first line supervisors, DSPs and Management. Also present were family members, community people, members of the Open Door Center Board of Directors and other service agencies.

Bruce Murry, Executive Director of the North Dakota Association of Community Providers, a licensed attorney and registered lobbyist with over fifteen years of experience working with people with disabilities facilitated the meeting.

The Basic Assurance factors were the foundation of the meeting guiding the group to determine what people needed in their lives to increase their quality of life and what the organization should do to improve the quality of services and meet the needs of those involved with the Open Door Center.

Welcome:

The planning meeting was called to chart the pathway the community that makes up Open Door Center wants to travel. Members attending included individuals served, caregivers, and stakeholders.

After introductions of all attendees, the facilitator determined an incredible **1000 years of experience serving people with disabilities** was present in the room!! Attendees included DSPs, frontline supervisors, program coordinators, nurses, management, board members, partner agencies, and local legislators.

Ground rules established included:

- Ideas leave here, not quotes of participants.
- Positive Regard/Assumptions of Goodwill for all participants.
- Share Openly.
- Have Fun!

Strategic Planning mission for today: Try and find a place where we want to be to meet the needs of individuals we serve but remain adaptable to change. Our ability to change things increases over time, but our ability to guess the situation declines. We agreed about one to three years out was the sweet spot where we could hope for both knowledge and influence.

We reviewed the Mission Statement of ODC and how participants restated it:

- Excellence in serving people with disabilities by:
- Respecting dignity and rights
- Providing opportunities for growth
- Foster independence
- We believe this is best accomplished by working together with mutual trust and respect for one another throughout agency programs

Top Points to the Participants:

- Respect and Dignity
- Independence
- Broader and better opportunities for our "folks!"

We discussed that CQL, Open Door, and the stakeholders present all believe in rights and freedom. Many pointed out that without reasonable safety and health, exercising any other rights is problematic at best. As such, we all agreed that safety is very important. We look forward to discussing these ongoing issues, and the tension between them, during CQL's visit.

CQL Basic Assurances — 10 Factors:

.....Continued on Page 2

Factor 1. Rights and Protection

Where are we at — values and practices:

ODC's system of Human Rights and Behavior Intervention Committees provides a robust review of any restrictions to rights and behavioral responses. Members like both meetings together because they get the whole picture, and they can be aware of all the interventions that might be used to support an individual.

- They meet quarterly and touch base via email with any changes that come up.
- Individuals are aware of any changes that they have. They review at yearly meetings.
- Individuals served should be involved in anything that is about them.
- There are yearly Rights Assessments that the individuals participate in. There is interest in how individuals who want to can participate in their Behavior Intervention/Rights Committee meeting. Some people openly don't want to hear the issues discussed. Others have not expressed an opinion. There is concern about how to present the nature of the meetings to people with more cognitive impairments so they can have meaningful participation.
- The United Nations Statement of Rights is a guidance for us, especially because it has been formatted in accessible language with picture support.

A strong self advocate identified himself and shared:

- He likes the Rights Assessments.
- He likes giving his input and having his say and giving his advice on things at the Thrift Store in his town.
- He is very proud to be a part of the store in the mornings.
- He likes working and giving back to others.
- As part of the rights assessment, a lot of the individuals like the picture part of the assessment, helps them understand easier.
- Accommodations like pictures and accessible language allow individuals to have due process. Participants agreed more "process" is "due" the more any restriction or intervention affects fundamental rights.
- The Open Door Center literally has an open door policy. Everyone knows they can go talk to anyone.
- Families or guardians are much more engaged in ODC than years past. Much more involved in all aspects of individuals lives at ODC.
- Satisfaction Surveys: They help us find out things we didn't know about individuals or things that have changed over the years. Provides good guidelines for futures.
- Fundamental Rights – Voting for example, gives us real choices in our lives.
- It is getting more important to our individuals that they can go vote. They are informed and then they can go vote. Advocacy Group helps get this information out. It is important for individuals to go out and get direct contact with people running for offices.
- Training will be offered in May at the NDACP Conference from Project SAFE at Minot State University, focusing on helping people with all levels of ability have a chance to form intimate relationships.
- For some people, intimate relationships may remain a matter of discussion with trusted family, friends, and staff for years before they are ready to take affirmative steps.
- Community embraces the rights of individuals.
- Training in due process is required. It is important for both individuals and staff to receive this training. If anyone has any issues with our process, literally everyone is welcome to visit with Mary.
- Assessments within our agency can be talked about and changed if necessary through Management meetings.
- P&A would visit with us, staff and individuals regarding different ways to view the rights and protection of our individuals – it is an option.
- We are working on individual's book, one per individual and they are picking out and showing what is important to them. There are pictures, symbols and write ten explanations, etc., showing what is important to them.
- We need to be open to CQL ideas for our individuals' rights and safety concerns

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continue with voting education and encouragement.

Consider program such as safe for those with intimate relationships or wanting to form one.

Training in due process should continue.

Learn more about people's rights and safety concerns.

FACTOR 2: Dignity and Respect

A lot of these factors interact with each other and share a lot of same concerns.

- We don't have a lot of restrictive programs in our agency.
- Human Rights committee helps with some of these.
- How do we avoid them?
- Educating the person served. Nutritionist talks to the individuals regarding diet restrictions, for example, gluten free diets, diabetics.
- Talk to them about the risks involved if they don't follow guidelines. We need to make sure the individuals are safe.
- Staff need to be educated and trained on what individuals needs are too.
- Is the right training happening at the right time? We do follow the states guidelines, but these are creating real frustration among staff and managers.
- We as staff appreciate the refresher trainings every year. Some of the other changes which are more specific to an individual in our working area, we review at monthly staff meetings.
- When at initial training, it seems like a lot at first, but when staff go work specific areas, it makes more sense to them, when working with each individual.
- Staff also learn a lot from other staff when they see how each other deals with different situations. Certain circumstances are talked about at staff meetings, house meetings also.
- State is working on making 6 core modules for staff, with a reading/learning ability of 5th graders. That's not saying Agencies can't train deeper. They are also working on doing them in 3 different languages, Spanish, French, and Arabic, to make the underlying concepts more accessible to New American workers. Sometimes other cultures respect people with disabilities by doing for them, not helping them do for themselves as Americans value. Testing will continue in English.
- Use our knowledge of people who do not speak. We know their day to day personalities and can know when something is going on with them. This type of information can be added to the individuals likes and dislikes sheet, which is reviewed at yearly meetings.
- Taking a lot of knowledge, compassion and experience to advocate for our individuals who are non-verbal.
- POMS:
 - Strength areas are people respected, people treated fairly, people perform different social roles and participate in life of the community.
 - Areas that ODC would like to improve: People choose where they live or with whom. People live in integrated settings.
 - Why is this a challenge: staffing, affordable housing, handicap accessibility. This problem may be bigger than our agency or community.
 - Group Homes are being downsized over time toward a goal of six or fewer housemates. ODC is working toward all single rooms, as most people served would like their own rooms. These are normal issues and desires for adults who need to pool their resources.
 - Accessibility to use their yards, size of their yards. Neighbors, making relationships with them. Balconies allow having alone time, visiting with neighbors.
 - Some settings allow for apartment building BBQ's. Staff would like to offer to facilitate hosting neighborhood parties for individuals so inclined. This would help with living in integrated settings and forming natural relationships.
 - People at ODC make good use of their environments, like neighborhoods workplaces and recreation area. Physical accessibility may hinder some outings in older settings. Building relationships with businesses is key so they see our perspective and want to meet or exceed the ADA.
- People exercise their rights – we are working on this to make it better by :
 - explaining to the individuals their rights
 - bringing them to trainings to learn same as staff, and to give their opinions and to feel proud of their input
- Volunteering is important here throughout ODC, we do a lot of volunteering with staff and individuals around town and that is important. Most people served find volunteering fosters natural relationships and friendships.
- Employment Rights – WIOA – is it important? Can we improve on it? What can we learn from it? Our integrated businesses, and our individuals working for them, give them a lot of opportunities, pride, choices of where to work.
- In the upcoming years, sub-minimum wage jobs will become more and more difficult to justify, even if they seem consistent with the individual's choice. If sub-minimum wage jobs are banned, we will need to find ways for people to produce higher value for their employers, and maybe expand on tax credits to close the economic gap. Self-employment may allow some people to have a little income if traditional employment seems too far off.
- Integrated Living Environments:
 - Staff willingness and availability. Schedule Hours- certain shifts don't have the staffing interest as before. It used to be that ODC rotating shifts were desired, now it may be just weekdays, day hours shifts are desired. ODC will continue to research scheduling ideas and work with NDACP's Workforce Development person.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continue to discuss Right's Meeting Attendance.

How to continue work and pay as WIOA and Worker's with Disabilities and subminimum work disappear.

Push more integrated living arrangement and more choices. However, is difficult to do with changes and less interest in rotating shifts. How do we meet these challenges?

POMs most important continue to help with these.

Continue to expand volunteer work as a mean of developing; plant the seed for new relationships.

Need an "Inclusion Revolution"

Factor 3: Natural Supports

- Real life – stuff we really care about!
- Relationships bring positive feelings of belonging and purpose.
 - Reconnect with family and other old relationships. Start small — overcome guilt — build on trust and common interests and memories.
 - Access to phones and computers offer more ways to connect with others — lots of different groups in our community. Social media.
 - Plant the seed for a new relationship — getting involved with others in different groups/agencies.
- Educating community formally and by example so more relationships are possible.
- Special Olympics involvement – inclusive teams. *Inclusion Révolution*. Our Valley City State University/Special Olympic involvement is extensive.
- Valley City's Special Olympics are moving toward being fully inclusive: same teams with college athletes.
- Personal boundaries are key in healthy relationships – having relationships that are sustainable.
- People served many water stations during Crop Walks — major community events.
- On the Move – Leading Walk Away the Pounds.
- Active in churches. Staff are in attendance in the background, only if needed, individuals participate in what they want.
- Emerging supports take a lot of work and time which is sometimes not available and have to think of the safety side. It is very important to have supporting staff around to make sure to redirect if not safe, or behaviors that undermine relationships, and give Positive Behavioral Supports.
- Taking part in community activities helps to educate community. Answer any questions.
- People served are now missed if not in everyday activities.
- Staff/Individual friendships may be difficult away from working hours. Different situations, social settings, ethics, Labor Laws. These can't be the main source of relationships but can supplement if done with care.
- Allow those everyday opportunities, parties, birthday gatherings and not discriminate.
- Expand horizons for the people we serve as we all need to emerge from our comfort zones, including people we serve. Different people can stretch more quickly than others.
- In our small community, we don't have many formal arts and entertainment opportunities, but we try it out if there is anything new.
- Advocacy Group – individuals pick their subjects they want to learn about – government, law enforcement, nutritional, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Plant the seed for new relationships.

Inclusion Revolution.



Factor 4: Protection from Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

- A new word in disability services: mistreatment. Seemed to Open Door like a blanket term, that abuse, neglect, and exploitation fall under. Criminal behavior is also a form of mistreatment. Open Door will explore how this word should fit into North Dakota law during CQL's visit.
- Our statewide association, NDACP, is working with P&A and the DD Division to tune up their ANE regulations and procedures. The shared goal is for provider agencies to do more of their own investigations to be timelier and more sensitive.
- P&A is co-hosting national level ANE investigation training during the NDACP training in May in Fargo using common language and common methods. Participants were interested in common training with P&A so we can better prevent ANE and respond better to it.
- P&A is working on changing their way of concluding an investigation.
- They want to work directly with a well-trained person at provider agencies to arrive at the best outcome for the person served and peers.
- Staff want to move further away from a relationship of fear with P&A into mutual trust, respect, and shared values for individuals.
- Participants believe timelines matter when reporting incidents and shifting more of the fact gathering and QA processes to the provider will be good for individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mistreatment: what is it, does it encompass the other three definitions; why needed.

Work with P and A to create a less adverse relationship; work toward relationship of the person not agency desires such as P and A, agency or CQL.

Factor 5: Best Possible Health

- Health should be thought of as physical, medical, nutritional, and other holistic concepts.
- PCP (primary care practitioner) of their choice. A choice of provider is more realistic in a small town than choosing the best you've ever heard of.
- Have PCPs help us do our part. They can trust our information we have on our individuals. Sometimes staff doesn't need to be present during appointments. Privacy as much as possible. Need proper staffing in certain community settings.
- Education remains key for staff to assist with medication assists. Training must be personalized to staff and individuals, and individual implementation is at least as important as the medication module.
- We offer training on infection control, blood-borne pathogens, and antibiotic stewardship. We have great availability of nurses across different settings. We also have a Psychiatrist who comes a couple times a month.
- Are we getting what we need from our CARES (outreach by scarce specialized experts from the state Life Skills and Transition Center) people we work with? Mostly, a few situational times. We need to keep asking CARES to provide what our people served need in a timelier way.
- AED training and availability is great. We have 12 throughout our agency in VC, including the more remote sites at The Ranch and Lisbon.
- Valley City's community Wellness Center offers a lot of choices.
- EAP helps staff for many different things. Staff health is important for health of people served.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Work with PCP especially since Dr. Buhr is leaving in August and new Dr. is arriving.

Can we improve on medication training by personalizing it to person and staff such as examples of how to do and what to watch for?

Wellness Center is great.

Continue to use EAP.

AED training is very good and glad they are in the buildings.



Factor Six: Safe Environments

- Emergency drills – assists individuals prepare for an emergency. Some still have a very hard time if a situation comes up, but mostly the drills help.
- We have a designated meeting spot in drills.
- State EMS Drills – we have been part of those. When we recently thought the Ranch was going to flood, we did have a hard time preparing an alternate place to stay. In past years, we have had to relocate to different cities with individuals and staff. Some went home to families. Staff has had some state training for EOP (Emergency Operation Plan).
- Avoiding and managing trauma – we have been lucky and haven't had any real situations. We have had training through Workforce Safety in different scenarios.
- We have random drug testing. Concerned about people who are applying that have a medical marijuana card, but we haven't hired as there is no test to see what kind of influence/impairment they are under during work. This remains an area of tension locally and statewide.
- We have a good balance of community integration vs. safety issues and safe residential areas. ODC really seems to be doing the best we can do with what is available.
- We have Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training for staff, which helps to keep individuals and staff safe. Staff cannot work alone with individuals until they have this training.
- Avoiding power struggles. Avoid Antecedent Behaviors. These are the best long-term solutions to risks from behavioral challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continue with drills, they do meet some needs, always different when the real thing.

Flooding how to prepare for it.

Training is good such as training for power struggle and antecedent behavior programs.

Medical Marijuana not useable by staff or individuals due to regs.

Factor 7: Staff Resources and Supports

- Resource challenges: Resources are approved, i.e. staff, but not necessarily available. Approved resources are "Good".
- Access Barriers: Specialized trainings – there is a shortage of social workers, business.
- So many different specialty trainings for different areas, N.A., M.A. Use the same module but require different trainings.
- Internal Work Force Challenges/What works: ODC Board has approved some good raises plus legislative raises, increase in PTO.
- EVV - if we know change may be coming, we may need training for staff to understand changes/reasons for changes. Individuals also need accessible education on this, when and if changes come about.
- Wage barrier – national stats say it is top 3 reason for staff turnover. Top reason is supervisors and 2nd is co-workers. NDACP has been bringing NADSP.org in to train the trainers of front-line supervisors.
- Wages are a big deal in ND due to our low job openings in ND. Benefits are also important to the job to most people. Great benefits.
- Time off is important to the younger work population.
- Paperwork is a huge barrier, very overwhelming, having to do the 15 minute tracking. DSP's must do this paperwork and it takes away from individuals. DSPs are frustrated by paperwork affecting their real work.

Bonus Issue: Internal Communications.

- When the facilitator was going through our surveys, he gathered some information that would be beneficial.
- To help within our agency the individuals have combined their day and residential programming books/Crossover Books. All information is available to all pertinent staff. Travels Books in Lisbon are working out great for them. Shows key points of their day.
- Qualitative info – How was their day.
- Information that centers on the individual.
- Communication Committee is coming up with a sheet that highlights the stuff that should be important to record, or how to record it. More training on why this information is needed and what to put in.

- Just because someone has a bad day, and staff reads about it, we must make sure to start anew, with a fresh look.
- Memos – being short and to the point. Template fashion. If it's long, put the conclusions in the first line.
- Stress of other workload sometimes prevents good communication, but this can backfire.
- Our DAC/WAC units are very different than the residential units. All staff need to be understanding the others' work perspectives — Home vs Day services — Different jobs/tasks/environment.
- We need to realize we are all here for the same reason – the individual. We need to find a way to value each other, communicate with each other for the person/people we work for.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Universal training for NA, CNA, Med Tech programs.

Internal Committee to staff abreast of staff needs from their generational work ethics.

Increase communication to better support people.

Natural Consequence training.

Qualitative Communication training.

EVV training.

Dealing with stress training for staff and people.

Template for useable, short and quick memos to keep all who need to be in the loop.

Increase communication to better support each person.

Factor 8: Positive Services and Supports

- Making sure the right people are getting invited to individuals yearly meeting. Need to know what is most important to the individual. Their goals, their values. Flow is really good, focusing on the individual.
- Timing of the meeting is planned in advance, works out for the individuals schedule, guardians, parents, Case Manager schedules. School staff is also included in Children's Program individual's meetings. (Partner Agency included today and at meetings, and they really appreciate this).
- The IPOPS and other Assessments are a great tool in planning things at the yearly meeting.
- The individual is involved in writing up this yearly plan.
- We have gotten to the point of letting the individual lead the meeting, talking about the important things to them first.
- Some parts of an OSP, individuals choose not to be a part of it so they accommodate that too.
- For our non-verbal folks, Staff always include them, asking if it is OK to start meeting, assist in introductions, etc. Communication is always possible to some extent.
- Individual is Chairperson regardless of their communication skills or choices.
- Evidence shows efforts are paying off.
- The 15 minute increment reporting takes away from the individuals best care.
- Stress Education and support individual decisions as much as possible. Help individuals benefit from and manage natural consequences.

Factor 9: Continuity and Personal Security

Agency has regular board meeting by the Directors. There are 11 members and at least one is a person served. Others include four family members. One of the 4 members is a Holistic Nurse, and another is a professor at VCSU in the area of Special Education. The other two people are a retired farmer and a retired vocational programmer from the State Hospital. Other board members include a retired principal, a retired DD worker from California, a retired attorney, and a retired Lutheran minister. A Physical therapist is also a member of the board. Fiscal information is provided monthly by the Financial Director with the Executive Director's report and information from Human Resources.

Eide Bailly completes an audit annually that includes the Open Door Center, a 133 regarding the Prairie Inn and the Center's Retirement Plan. Center currently in good financial status.

Individual accounts are audited to assure money is spent for the individual.

Personal records are protected. Staff trained in HIPAA.

Have popcorn fund for any problems with money or supplies.

Most people have a checking or savings account.

Agency meets licensing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continue with HIPAA training.

Continue with response to maintenance need.

Review surveys for safety and security.

Review and respond to maintenance and supply needs.

Factor 10: Basic Assurances System

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to assist Open Door Center in assuring that the services are delivered efficiently and effectively as well as being beneficial to individuals.

A. The Executive Director/designee shall assure that reports regarding agency performance will be collected at least annually and recorded into Open Door Center Management Report including Basic Assurance Assessment, Quality Management Summary and Strategic Plan.

B. Reports will include collecting data in the following areas:

1. Employees

- Assessment of staff training needs.
- Evaluate effectiveness of staff training program (including required staff training and elective participation in various workshops or in-services).
- Evaluate staff orientation program -- Include method to audit staff who have been orientated to see if supervisor is following the guideline (i.e. reviewing the personnel policy item as written in the Orientation Manual). This could be done the Program Director/ Staff Trainer to choose some newly hired staff and ask them questions about orientation.
- Evaluate volunteer program when active.
- Staff Turnover – which may include unemployment data, annual performance review.
- Wages.
- Work related injuries.
- Drug Screening

2. Support Services.

- Medication Errors -- may include frequency, type, location or other area that might concern for improvement following the necessary GER and THERAP reporting.
 - Injuries.
 - Abuse & Neglect -- may include frequency, type, location or other area that might concern for improvement.
 - Performance Outcome Measures – will include accumulative assessment of each measure.
 - Satisfaction Surveys.
 - Rights Restrictions.
 - Behavior Intervention Programs.
 - Production Surveys (data from work contracts / employers).
 - Complaints.
 - Demographics of Client Information – may include summaries of age range, types of diagnosis or other categorical information regarding the people enrolled.
3. Space/equipment.
4. Cooperation with other agencies in the service delivery system.
5. Reports of research conducted at the agency.

C. Basic Assurances- Basic Assurances are essential, fundamental and non-negotiable requirements. The Open Door Center is committed to maintaining and evaluating a system of Basic Assurances. This evaluation focuses on both the individual's and the organization's system of supports. There is no substitute for direct knowledge of the issues impacting people's health, safety and personal security. The Open Door Center has a formal plan that outlines how it will monitor and evaluate the presence of Basic Assurances.

The Open Door Center uses a conglomerate of methods including personal interviews, assessments, surveys, questionnaires, reports, data from systemic requirements, committee reports, etc. to monitor Basic Assurances. The information is obtained from people served, committees, community people and the organizations system of support. The results of these reports and data are collated and analyzed. Together these various areas of information provide oversight, evaluation and recommendations regarding the Basic Assurance. Actions steps are formulated to improve the implementation of services encompassed by each factor.

People receiving services, family, guardians, staff, board of directors and people from the community meet to review the recommendations of the evaluations of each factor and offer a quality management/strategic plan for the agency.

The agency promotes the attainment of personal outcomes through the use of the Basic Assurances System by encouraging the attainment of person outcome measures and by providing service and support coordination within the agency and with other service entities and the community.

The Executive Director, Board of Directors, Committees and Management Team are responsible for overseeing and implementing the plan as indicated in each factor review.

Many participants expressed appreciation for the meeting.

Many felt it was good information about the agency and the basic assurances.

Other areas:

Land/Building: need more room for WAC.

Possible Succession Planning.

Introductory Thoughts for CQL:

Setting a strategy for a plan for the future: Today's discussion gives us an excellent review and checklist for the next couple of years.

Like to see state surveys (ICF and Waiver) and CQL to maybe coordinate their visits someday. Same information and a lot of work for both and other surveys. Maybe alternate years. Maybe not both ICF and CQL same year.

Different standards for different surveys too are a problem. Background checks.

Acknowledge impact of surveys on staff and individuals. Avoid surveys that stretch on and on.

We have a story, an agency, and people served who are ready for CQL!

Closing Quote attributed to both Thomas Jefferson and others:

"Freedom is the right to choose: the right to create for oneself the alternatives of choice. Without the possibility of choice, and the exercise of choice, a man is not a man but a member, an instrument, a thing."

(The original used the historic term, man, but a more modern, inclusive and diverse term is appropriate for today's reader.)

*Bruce Murry, Executive Director of ND Association of Community Providers
And*

*Mary Simonson, Executive Director
Open Door Center is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.*

*(Mary's columns are written monthly for the
VC Times Record)*

**Open Door Center is a
non-profit corporation
serving
people with disabilities.**

Board of Directors

Bill Cook, President

Al Adams

Mark Diede

Grant Goven

Deb Kohler

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Jackie Owen

Gail Pederson

Randy Schlecht

Leo Schmidt

MARCH

APRIL

REDUCE ~ REUSE ~ RECYCLE



Excellence in serving people with disabilities by:

***Respecting dignity and rights**

***Providing opportunities for growth**

***Fostering independence**

*Open Door Center is an equal opportunity
provider, and employer.*

Mary Simonson, Executive Director
Marcy Svenningsen, Director of Finance
Sherri Horsager, Human Resource Manager

ICF/MR

Tana Plecity

Erin Halland, Staff Trainer

ISLA

Elaine Almberg

Jessica Meland

Ben Simonson

Program Directors

Matt Jensen, Children's Program

Audrey Bredeson, ISLA

Marshall Hopp, Prairie Inn & ISLA

Cindy Schopper, Work Activity

WE WANT YOUR CANS

Open Door Center is looking for donations of *pop cans* for our individuals to crush. Once crushed they are turned in to be recycled.

Our folks get paid to crush cans and look forward to the paychecks they receive.

Cans can be dropped off at the Day Activity Center (north of Pizza Corner).

OR

If you live in the Fargo area, you can take your cans to the MinnKota Recycling center and tell them you want to donate them to Open Door Center in Valley City. They send us a check quarterly.

Please help us,
won't you?





On December 17th, 2019 a big group headed to VCSU Vangstad Auditorium to attend the Magical Medora Christmas show. The crew entertained us with a lot of holiday music to help get us in the Christmas Spirit. A great evening was had by all!



Bekah, Rita and Ina headed to Fargo to take in the "A Charlie Brown Christmas Live on Stage" show that was held at the Fargo Theater in downtown Fargo. What a great entertaining night !!



MEMORIALS DONATED:

***In Memory of Kent Syverson:
Curt & Terri Stevens
Jim, Josie & Randy Prescott
Robert & Joyous Bartle
Greg & Nancy Winterquist***

***In Memory of Sam Pederson:
Patricia & Steven Nielson***

***In Memory of Deloris Roller:
Carol Elston***

***In Memory of Mike Workin & Fyrne
Berthold:
Bonnie, Mike & Michael Jr. Johnson***

***Donation to Open Door Center:
Susan Snyder***

***The Open Door Center
would like to sincerely
THANK YOU for your
donations.***

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2 - Justin Horsager
- 3 - Jennifer Bennett
- 3 - Mackenna Sherman
- 5 - Steve Myers
- 5 - Mckenna Taylor
- 6 - Marshall Hopp
- 6 - Denine Duffy
- 8 - Ashley Tostenson
- 9 - John Andrus
- 11 - Austin Doornbos
- 13 - Cara Sorensen
- 15 - Audrey Bredeson
- 16 - Shane Kay
- 16 - Evan Lang
- 17 - Renee Larocque
- 18 - Gary Prochnow
- 18 - Tannier Thompson
- 20 - Ryan Mathias
- 21 - Trevor Berg
- 21 - Jessie Brackins
- 22 - Deb Egan
- 23 - Rita Grant
- 25 - Matt Jensen
- 25 - Mariah Olson
- 26 - Colleen Hehr
- 30 - Brett Volk
- 30 - Teri Ronning
- 31 - Jessica Ronning



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 28 Years
Chris Dvorak - Ranch
- 23 Years
Carol Grotberg - ISLA
- 22 Years
Mel Lindgren - GH 2
Bekah Cook - ISLA
- 20 Years
Chris Merkes - GH 3
- 14 Years
Denise Stanley - ISLA
- 12 Years
Kim Esch - GH 2
- 10 Years
Missy Leroux - ISLA Supervisor
RoxAnne DeKrey - ISLA
- 9 Years
Jessa Hafele - GH 4 & DAC
- 7 Years
Jackie Grant - WAC & ISLA
- 6 Years
Patty Altringer - ISLA
Nicholas Levers - FSS
- 5 Years
Mara Heinze - ISLA
Nicole Anderson - Prairie Inn
Karla Lyon - Lisbon
- 4 Years
Megan Perdue - GH 2 & WAC
- 3 Years
Sheryl Solberg - Thunderbird/Amberland
Cheryl Jacobson - Lisbon
- 2 Years
Evan Lang - ISLA
- 1 Year
Fallon Rufsvold - GH 5 & WAC
Alexius Hajek - Lisbon
Amanda Erickson - GH 1
Amy Elstrom - Nursing
Aliyah Kennedy - YAP
Trevor Berg - Prairie Inn

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1 - Nancy Bjerke
 2 - Scyra Agard
 2 - Jade Oksendahl
 5 - Rachel Kilmon
 6 - Tammy Devitt
 7 - Matt Harrington
 7 - Jaycee Kilborn
 7 - Nancy Knutson
 8 - Lynn Priebe
 11 - Lindsey Jacobson
 11 - Nicholas Levers
 12 - Keici Nelson
 13 - Chelsea Straabe
 14 - Aliyah Kennedy
 15 - Raymond Nelson
 18 - Hunter Olson
 19 - Cory Duven
 19 - Tiffannie Justesen
 19 - Alaina Hanson
 20 - Taresa Gresham
 21 - Sarah Parkman
 22 - Jennifer Kriewald
 26 - Sherry Anderson
 26 - Charlet Malard
 26 - Haleigh Earles
 27 - Chris Dvorak
 27 - Mike Venhuizen
 27 - Holly Sabinash
 27 - Kiley Lauf
 29 - Phillip Hill
 29 - Travis Donnelly
 29 - Denise Stanley
 29 - Aaron Shoemaker
 30 - Jodee Ukestad



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

35 Years
Lori Reimers - ISLA

32 Years
Darnelle Bakke - ISLA

29 Years
Linda Christensen - ISLA

28 Years
Wanda Schwab - ISLA

24 Years
Jeremy Williams - ISLA

22 Years
Barb Anderson - GH 2

19 Years
Josh Kracht - ISLA

18 Years
Garrett Greenwood - GH 4

10 Years
Aarika Thornton - GH 4 & DAC
Sam Ihry - GH 1,
Todd Clark - GH 4
Mitch Fitzell - DAC

9 Years
John Dyrness - Bookstore

8 Years
Kaitlin Anderson - GH 5

7 Years
Heather Cunningham - Lisbon
Michael Johnson - ISLA

4 Years
Lynne Lang - ISLA
Jennifer Bennett - WAC
Holly Sabinash - YAP

3 Years
Teana Peltier - Prairie Inn
Aidyn McCombs - GH 1

2 Years
Mya Anderson - GH 4
Ruth Dorlus - GH 2,
Beverly Vleck - GH 4
Anthony Anderson - GH 1
Marah Pickell - GH 3
Shane Hoffman - GH 4



A Life Remembered

IN LOVING MEMORY OF KENT SYVERSON

1-25-1954 - 12-30-2019

Provided by Terri Stevens - DAC Supervisor

People have often said that it takes a special person to do what you do...how many times have we as DPS's heard that? But you know what, they are right, it does take a special person and that person was Kent, he was one of the best.

Kent was fortunate to live at home until 1969, growing up on the farm, with all of the freedoms of being a farm kid. We have enjoyed stories from his brothers and sister about his life back then. One story in particular is about Kent jumping on a running snowmobile, grabbing the throttle and heading straight for the grain bin at warp speed.

Kent lived at Grafton from 1969-1989. From there he moved to Valley City, living at Group Home 5 for the past 30+ years.

Kent was quite the character. He was always up to something and the smirk on his face often gave it away! He was quite the prankster too, locking staff in the med room, throwing his meds in the cat food when nobody was watching, overflowing the bathroom with bubbles while in the tub or refusing to take his meds unless Mary Simonson would come up and fix his hair. He was also quick to mimic others, giggling and making sure everyone knew he was doing it. That laugh and the twinkle in his eyes...I smile thinking about it! Kent worked at the ODC crushing cans, washing tables and garbage's at the DAC and administration building. He very much enjoyed going to the office to work as there was always candy and pretty girls! Kent needed those jobs to support his shopping habits. To say Kent had style is an understatement. He enjoyed dressing well, looking nice and wearing fancy watches. He wouldn't go shopping just anywhere, He was a Scheels, Macy's kind of guy.

Kent also thought with his stomach. He always had a cup of coffee or a diet coke with him at all times. He has a friend who would bring him several bottles of diet coke and candy bars, he really appreciated that Don. It was funny how every Wednesday he would perk up and gladly participate in finishing all his jobs as it was Taco day! The workers at TJ's would know his order and start getting it ready before he made it to the counter. Friday's were always Burger King for supper, Whopper Jr with cheese please.

Kent enjoyed spending time with his family. In the past years he was able to go on vacations with them and a few of his friends. He traveled to many places and got to experience a lot of fun new things. For holidays Kent was able to go to his brothers in Jamestown, he would always tell us he didn't get enough to eat, but Sue tattled and told us she made extra potatoes, gravy and dressing for him. He cherished the visits from his brother Jerry, mostly because he would bring him donuts or goodies baked by Sue. They would call Joan on those visits too. Jerry would NEVER be allowed to leave with out giving his little brother a few bucks to get him by. Two peas in a pod those two!

Kent enjoyed so many things, sitting outside at the end of the GH driveway sipping coffee and watching birds and traffic mosey by. He would always let us know when the van would arrive or a parent, such a help. He loved fresh haircuts and beard trims, bubble baths, the Ellen show, his recliner and favorite blanket, singing and dancing to Justin Bieber, Cindy Lauper and the Grease soundtrack, comforting others and being a friend. Jerry, Jim and Joan, we all feel so honored that your family trusted us for the past 30+ years to help Kent live his life. We are all better people for knowing him and spending time with him. He may not have been a man of many words, but to us he spoke volumes and enriched our lives. He made us better people, how lucky are we. Our loss is heavens gain. He is free now. Thank you and God Bless.

Viva Las Vegas

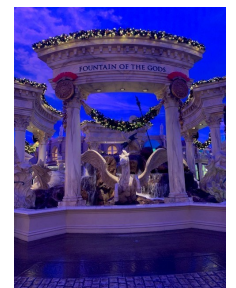
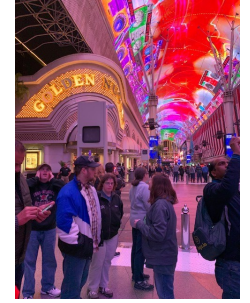
Leaving snow covered ND, NDSU Bison Fans, Matt, Marshall, Kelly and Cassie were ready to enjoy some Las Vegas, NV sunshine and warm weather. The McCarran Airport itself had amazing Christmas decorations welcoming us. Our hotel was a mere 5 minutes from the airport and within a 10 minute walk from the University of Nevada Las Vegas's Thomas and Mack Center Area which hosted the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo.

After a quick hotel check-in we were off to see the sites and check out the lights of Las Vegas Blvd as we used our bus passes to head downtown for the "Fremont Street Experience". We found everything from an oriental supper, to watching the zip liners and enjoying the worlds largest covered street show. The music of different rock bands were featured with photos of the bands in the lights. Fremont Street is a "SHOW" OF IT'S OWN. We saw folks dressed in costumes like Darth Vader, Mimes that were contortionists, one man bands playing on upside down plastic pickle buckets and stages with live bands for visitors to dance to the music. We even found Mickey Mouse out on the town, meeting and greeting the out of town visitors for photo Ops!!

We were a quick study on the bus system. We learned the bus stop sign's gave you information you could use your phone to tell how long before they would be to your stop. The Las Vegas Convention Center hosted the Junior National Finals Rodeo. We sure enjoyed seeing rodeo athletes from ages 6 to 18 riding bulls and bucking broncs. We were lucky enough to see Valley City's own, Sage Kvien ride! He and his horse did not agree how long he should ride, but it was fun to be able to cheer for a home town rodeo star. We also saw a lady with a dog with hot pink ears, feet and tail. The Convention Center was host to Cowboy Christmas. They boasted it was "All Here". Everything from Bull Riding, helmets for \$499.00, to western wear, jewelry for people and their pets, be it a dog or cat or horses and cattle.

The travelers got autographs from some of the contestants in the Finals. Cassie even ran into a friend of her dads that was a vendor.

After some morning Junior Rodeo action, we headed to Caesars Palace to see the amazing Building features and the Atlantis Show. We found just a little time to shop at the Forum Shopping Plaza. We were on a quick trip so we were traveling light with just personal carry-on luggage. When Bath and Body had a deal; if we pooled our shopping they would ship it home for free. Thus we were within the space and liquid requirements. Our gifts arrived home in time for Christmas!





An AMAZING highlight of our trip was the Reba McEntire, Brooks & Dunn Concert at Caesar's Palace. With seating for 4,300 guests, the Colosseum may not be the biggest, but it is one of the best venues in Vegas. That trio was OUTSTANDING !!

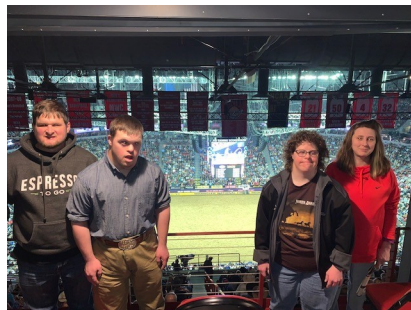
Sunday our first stop of the day was The Bellagio. They are the host of the Coca-Cola Bears and Cinderella theme, jaw dropping, beautiful floral display. The hotel itself features a lobby with amazing blown glass by a Japanese artist.

With great sunshine weather, we walked "The Strip", visiting the Chocolate Statue of Liberty, M&M Store where we saw the new M7M 3D Movie, tasted coke floats at the Coca-Cola store, had our photo taken with the Coke Bear, rode in the outside of the building Coke Bottle elevator to the top floor and soaked in all the traffic and visitors. One of the travelers favorite stops was a restaurant with outside dining. They had outside games just like you see at Bison tailgating. Just relaxing and being outside was great.

Sunday evening we were treated to an outstanding contest of skills between the World's Best Cowboys and Cowgirls, and also the worlds best rodeo livestock. What an evening to remember. Our birds eye seats had easy access to restrooms, an elevator and seating with no cowboy hats obstructing our view!! We did not miss a thing. The sites, sounds and smells of the whole event included concession vendors with corn on the cob, fajitas, grilled burgers, cattle trucks and house trailers to an event schedule orchestrated to the minute for national television. The big screen instant replay and contestant standings were great.

We were fast sleepers and on the hotel shuttle by 5:30 am with all our luggage in tow. We headed for our flight to the frozen tundra of North Dakota. And boy, was it cold for our arrival. It was sunny when we got home BUT it sure did not feel like the 65 degrees we left in Vegas.

Until next time !! It was a great "Eight Second Ride".





A van full of the Oak Ridge Boys fans headed to Mahanomen, MN to the Shooting Star Casino to take in the Oak Ridge Boys Christmas Concert. The Oak Ridge Boys have one of the most distinctive, recognized and silky country sounds and their four-part harmonies are smoother than Tennessee whiskey. They have earned many Grammy, CMA and ACM awards. Along with some holiday music they performed some of their well-known favorites like Elvira, Bobbie Sue and Thank God for Kids. Our group also enjoyed supper and a great photo opportunity by their gorgeous Christmas Tree.



Prairie Inn Folks rang in the New Year with a group supper served at AVT prepared by Ina. Plenty of fresh fruit and colorful veggies added sparkle to the meal.

As an activity for the evening, all the individuals had a clear glass salad plate with their name masked and picked so it was ready to apply etching goo. You can see the folks checking the underside of the plate to make sure all the picked portions were covered completely with goo. While the etching goo processed, we played several rounds of Bingo with sweet treats for prizes.

We may not have made it until the "Ball" dropped in NYC, but it looked warmer here than NYC and was fun while it lasted!!

Corner

Katie's



*As I see it from
where I sit!*

By Katie Sand

Hello everyone out there!

We are getting Spring Fever over at WAC. We have had a great couple of weeks of 30 or 40 degree weather and it was nice to not have to bundle up. But - Not so fast friends... we still have a lot of Winter to go so don't count your chickens before they hatch. Just throwing that out as a reminder for my fellow WAC friends - you know who you are !

This week is the ND Winter Show and all of it's festivities. We have a concert, horse show, bull riding and the Women's luncheon for the ladies and lots of other activities like the Chili Cook-Off and the Community Olympics. We can't forget about the rodeo either. I know a lot of my friends like to go that that event. I would like to remind everyone to have a good time and to be patient while at the Winter Show. There will be a lot of people there so we can't push our way through the crowd. We will make it through it if we are polite and take turns and remember our manners. I just want everyone to enjoy the Winter Show and come back to work in one piece!

One last thing I need to say is to dress warm! Enjoy yourself and have fun!

Until next time.....KATIE

CONGRATULATIONS

To

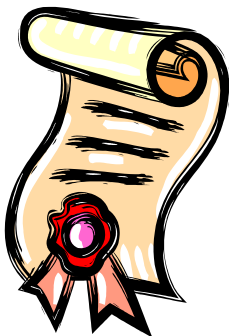
Direct Support Professionals for completing
their modules!

Full Time:

*Amber Webb, Tina Mudge, Grace Pilkawo,
Dawn Larson Schock, Tammy Devitt,
Jesse Juelfs, Demi Olstad & Gabrielle Harms*

Part Time:

Ron Volk



At 2:00 am on
March 8th, remember
to turn clocks ahead
1 hour.

COMING EVENTS

MARCH:

1 - 7—NDWS Activities
8 - Daylight Savings Time Begins
17 - St. Patrick's Day
20 - 1st Day of Spring

APRIL:

10 - Good Friday - *Center Closed*
12 - Easter
22 - Earth Day

MAY

10 - Mother's Day
25 - Memorial Day - *Center Closed*

Have news???
Let Nancy know.
Your news is our
news!

All Staff
Door Prize Winners:

February:
Sally Hatcher, Michelle Grebel
Sandra Ley &
Kassie Wenzel

CONGRATULATIONS



**The Merry & Bright Christmas Choir
CD is available for sale now. You can buy
one for \$15.00 cash at the Eagles Nest
Bookstore or the Open Door Center
Main Office.
THANK YOU!**

A BIG



TO NEW STAFF WHO HAVE JOINED:

**Tara Anderson, Amanda Bjork, Jose Casanova, Richard Clark, Madison Cruff
Tierra Earles, Abigail Grossman, Alaina Hanson, Analise Hanson
Catherine Keppeh, Jaycee Kilborn, Kyley Lauf, Shayden Luna
Aurora Nelson, Sarah Olson, Hunter Olson, Miranda Reister
Joseph Ruge, Aaron Shoemaker and Victoria Vollmer**

OPEN DOOR CENTER
129 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072
701-845-1124

Address Label Here

Celebrating 59 Years

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
ODCVC.COM

Charitable Donation

Please consider us when making your charitable donation. Open Door Center is a non-profit organization which receives support from the North Dakota Department of Human Services. Although it is our main funding source, it is not enough to cover all the costs of our corporation. The money received will help provide continued support and assistance to those supported by Open Door Center. We are very appreciative for the support we do already receive. If you would please consider a financial contribution to help meet the extra needs of our children and adults with disabilities, please fill out this form and return it to Open Door Center, 129 3rd Ave. NE, Valley City, ND 58072.

ENCLOSED IS MY TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION:

I would like my contribution:

☐ \$ 50 ☐ \$250
☐ \$100 ☐ \$500
☐ \$150 ☐ \$Other

☐ In memory
of: _____

☐ In honor of: _____
☐ Other: _____

May we publish your name? ☐ Yes ☐ No Your thoughtful gift will be acknowledged to the family indicated:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

