



VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

SERVING ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOR OVER 50 YEARS

The Village View - Fall 2021

Volume LIII Number III



Director's Note:

As many of you know, I am a minister in a small Protestant denomination. I stepped down from the pastorate to lead the Village of Progress. It's still startling to me that I made that move seven years ago. It feels more like three.

All that is to say that this week I'm attending a national meeting of my denomination. When colleagues here ask about what I do, I tell them that I lead a nonprofit that serves adults with developmental disabilities. Invariably, someone then thanks me for my work.

But as I've reflected this week on my role, it's occurred to me that I receive far more credit than is due me. You see, I often feel that I didn't choose this position; it chose me. If my wife and I had not had a child with developmental disabilities, I never would have discovered the Village of Progress or probably given much thought to those with disabilities at all. If you had asked me 30 years ago what I'd be doing with my life, never would I have imagined that it would involve working alongside those with disabilities.

But coming into the orbit of a child (or any family member) who is disabled changes you, if you let it.

This week I'm mindful anew that, while I may provide leadership over this agency, the Village of Progress was not my brainchild... not my doing. The mission of the Village was planted by a group of parents back in the 50s and 60s who dreamt of a better future for their sons and daughters. They worked tirelessly to make it happen. The Village's, first director, Bob Glaser, gave their dream its reality. Subsequent directors and staff have each had a role in further shaping that dream. But that is all. We all stand on the shoulders of those parents.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

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Director's Note continued:

Each of us who work or volunteer or support the Village do so as caretakers, trustees, of a dream that preceded us and, by God's grace, will continue to bear fruit after we are no more.

This week I feel reminded to approach this work with renewed humility and thankfulness. And so, I am incredibly thankful to God for leading me along this path, which was not – in many ways – of my own choosing.

And I am incredibly thankful for each of you. In your own way you are carrying on this dream – through your work here, your volunteer service, your contributions of time and money, or simply your prayers. Each of you who are reading this have been chosen to play a role in the life and the future of this small agency, and the men and women it serves. .

May you each rejoice with a sense of thankfulness that you, too, have been entrusted with this dream. A dream that we are invited into but was seeded by those who have gone on before us.

Brion Brooks



The Village of Progress gathers in September for our annual photo.

WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE



Rebecca King is the latest person to join us at The Village of Progress. She started attending through the Village Attendance Grant in May of 2021. Rebecca had been

living in a residential facility in Rockford and was getting work experience at Malcom Eaton. She now lives with her mom outside of Byron and attends the Village full time. She takes great pride in the work she does and has started working a day at Crest Foods with the Village's work crew as well as doing a morning a month with our Janitorial Cleaning Service. Rebecca likes arts and crafts, music, card games and going to church. She also enjoys volunteering in the community.



Bailey Mifflin joined the Village of Progress on the first day of March this past year of 2021. She recently finished her schooling at Camelot in Genoa. Bailey lives in the Rochelle area with her family. Bailey attends the Village three days a week and enjoys puzzles, music,

group games, helping in kitchen, going bowling, and dancing with staff. She is a great observer of her surroundings. Bailey is willing to try any new activities such as going to the Byron Library for story time and a related craft or trying a new job such as Snap-on Tools, bubble wrap or cleaning tables. As you can almost see in the photo, Bailey has a beautiful smile and her face lights up when she participates in her favorite activity - The Village of Progress Biking Club.



Cassie Chapman
Cassie was hired in September as a Village of Progress route driver and in house Direct Support Person (DSP). She has a wealth of experience in

the field of developmental disabilities. She also has an added bonus of knowing a number of our consumers. Cassie is married to Chris and has two children—Taylor 11 and Evalynn 5. Cassie lives locally on a farm in Oregon and raises chickens, ducks, turkeys, and pot belly pigs - along with some dogs and cats.



Jamie Speckmann
Jamie moved to Mt. Morris from the suburbs. She lives with her fiancée along with their cats Smokey and Oakley. She enjoys crafting and camping. Jamie has been a model

worker at the Village of Progress since March 21, 2021 and joined the Village as a full time staff person at the end of August. She has been a good addition to the team. Jamie would like to go into Nursing someday. Welcome aboard Jamie!

Exploring Our Community!

In an effort to increase our exposure in the community, the Village of Progress created a variety of small group outings this summer. Our goal was to promote and improve self-advocacy, informed decision making, budgeting/money skills and greater life experiences. Everyone was able to choose the activities they want to participate in each time.

So far, we have explored local restaurants, museums and parks as well as learned how to play billiards, geocache, cook, and play disc golf. The small groups really allow their case manager or “Q” to customize activities to challenge individual skills. In the fall, we hope to expand by adding an in house store and a morning coffee club.



Bears Training Camp



Exploring Nashua Grasslands



Frisbee Golf



Lunch in the Gazebo



Cooking



Volunteering at Animal Shelter



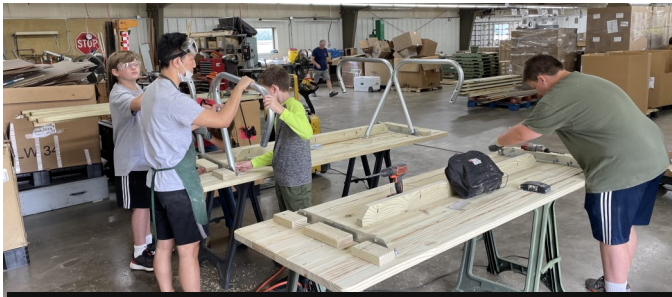
Hiking at Castle Rock

Eagle Scout Project

A recent Eagle Scout project resulted in the Village of Progress receiving three 8-foot picnic tables. Isaac Brooks, a senior at Oregon High School and Boy Scout with area troop 52, was looking for a project that would let him earn the highest rank in Scouting. Eagle Scout projects must serve the community and help the candidate develop leadership skills.



Isaac Brooks and Steve Wells making design decisions.



Isaac Brooks leading the other scouts on assembling the picnic tables.

Since the Village was looking to put handicap-accessible picnic tables at the Village Bakery, and Isaac enjoys woodworking, the two got together and quickly settled on the project. Isaac suggested a design and the Village supplied the lumber and hardware.

Over the summer Isaac worked with Village of Progress volunteer Steve Wells (a retired shop teacher) who provided advice and help. Isaac also worked with several men who attend the Village – cutting, sanding, gluing, and routing the boards. When the wood was prepared, he set up a Saturday morning to lead other scouts in bolting on the hardware



Moving the picnic tables to The Village Bakery.



Assembling the decorative fence for the outside eating area at The Village Bakery.

and assembling the tables.

Two of the tables are located at the Village Bakery to provide an outdoor eating area. The third has been placed on a grassy area at the Village for its men and women to use.

“The project was a lot of fun,” said Isaac. “I learned a lot about woodworking and leading others in doing projects.”

Isaac handed in his final Eagle Scout paperwork in August and passed

the Scout’s Board of Review exam in September.



Isaac Brooks (third from right) and Steve Wells (back row) along with scouts from Troop 52 after finishing their project.

Our Amazing Workforce

We are excited to welcome Snap-on Tools to the Village of Progress family. We are assembling and packaging various tool sets for them. We are frequently complimented by our customers on our excellent consistent work product! Please help us spread the word about our amazing workforce! And please support Snap-on Tools!



Teresa is polishing each Snap-on Tool prior to putting it in tray.



Jessica is making sure that the Snap-on Tool logo is showing on each tool.



John is putting Snap-on Tool kits into the shrink wrap machine. These sets are ready for shipping.



WANT TO WIN \$100

The Village of Progress Foundation has weekly \$100 drawings for all eligible Village of Progress employees. To be eligible you must be a VOP employee and you must be vaccinated against Covid 19. The following folks have had their names selected and won \$100.



Karen Kerven



Christine Dwyer



Dave Bakener



Byran Watson



Alan Acosta

Village of Progress & Foundation Donations: Rehanna

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IN MEMORY OF: Jake Burke • Nancy Kubat • Michael Edward Lewis •

IN KIND: Gina Fulton



THANK YOU.... Our ability to maintain meaningful and effective programs for Ogle County adults with disabilities depends on your donations & volunteer efforts!

The Village Bike Club

This summer we were able to restart our Village Bike Club after skipping an entire year because of the pandemic. Over two dozen volunteers ride specially designed side-by-side tandems with individuals from the Village. It is immensely popular and a great way for the community and the Village to regularly engage in a shared activity. This year we rode from late June to mid October and logged over 2550 minutes of riding

Thank you to all the volunteers that make this program possible each year. Our folks are sad every year when the weather makes us stop - we are already looking forward to next year! We are also always looking for additional volunteers to ride. The commitment can be flexible as we need subs and folks that just ride for part of the season. Call 815-732-2126 and talk to Sherri for more information about cycling.



The 6th Annual TOSOC - 2021

The 6th annual TOSOC – the Tour of Scenic Ogle County was on Saturday, September 25th. Riders started pulling into the Village’s parking lot to unload their bikes and pump up their tires about 6:15 a.m. – registration opened at 7:00 a.m. By the time registration closed, about 300 cyclists had signed up and were out on the road. TOSOC was developed with the help of Oregon resident and cycling enthusiast Scott Stephens. Stephens was instrumental in developing a number of biking routes around Ogle County, including the TOSOC routes.



TOSOC has three cycling routes to choose from. The first is a **10 mile family ride** through Oregon. Developed with the help of the Oregon Park District, this ride tours a number of the city’s parks. **A 32 mile route** takes cyclists through Grand Detour (stopping at the John Deere Historical Museum) and the Nachusa Grasslands for Bison viewing; **a 62 mile loop** adds in some of the scenic areas north of Mount Morris and west of Daysville.

By the end of the day, TOSOC netted approximately **\$12,000** for the Village’s Attendance Grant Program. Attendance Grants were developed by the Village in 2014 because so many people with disabilities, people who are entitled to services, cannot receive them because Illinois lacks the funding. TOSOC proceeds will provide over 170 days of attendance. Attendance Grants are awarded to men and women in Ogle County, enabling them to attend the Village on a part time basis. Search TOSOC on Facebook for pictures and for more information email TOSOC@villageofprogress.



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VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

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**THE
VILLAGE
BAKERY
IS OPEN**

**7 DAYS A
WEEK
7AM-3PM**



The Village is funded in part by the Ogle County Community Mental Health (708 Board), United Way, Etnyre Foundation & Rochelle Area Community Foundation

John Miller works at The Village Bakery every Tuesday. He is restocking sugar cookies that he help make earlier.



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