



VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

SERVING ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOR OVER 50 YEARS

The Village View - Winter 2023

Volume LIV Number I



Director's Note:

It's hard to believe that this Spring will mark the 6th Anniversary of the Village Bakery. Now seems like a good time to take stock in what we envisioned, what we've accomplished, and what we'd still like to do.

The idea of the bakery began in 2015 during a conversation with a special education job coach from the area. We talked about the lack of real-world job opportunities for people with disabilities. By 'real world' I mean jobs that give those with disabilities meaningful interactions with people in the community while earning a competitive wage.

We swapped stories of people with disabilities who landed real-world jobs, only to see their employment end days, and sometimes just hours, after they'd begun. You can only imagine how experiences like that can sap what little self-confidence and hope they might have had when they started.

From that simple conversation, the Village began searching for ways to provide real-world jobs, but with a much greater emphasis on encouragement and skill-cultivation. After months of brainstorming, the idea of launching a local bakery emerged. This seemed a perfect fit for the community, as Oregon's only bakery had closed a couple years earlier.

We had two goals for the Village Bakery. First, to give people with disabilities the tools to gain confidence and competence in their work. And second, to give the town a place where they can interact with staff who have disabilities; giving the public the opportunity to experience those with disabilities as the unique, funny, sometimes quirky, individuals that they are. In other words, to see them just like they might see anyone else they know.

Based on the many stories I've heard since we opened, I have to say that these goals are regularly being met. One woman told me she teared up when a bakery employee with cerebral palsy served her; it gave her greater hope that her own child with cerebral palsy might have a productive future. Another parent told me how they didn't know their daughter could ever learn to count money until after she started working at the Bakery and saw her serving customers and making change.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

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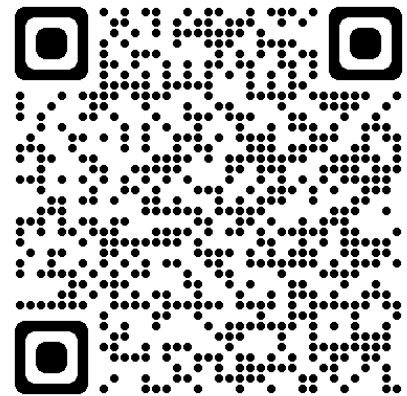
Director's Note Continued:

Last year, the Village Bakery received an Illinois Made Award from the Illinois Tourism Board. In addition to the recognition, the Tourism Board created a two-minute promotional video of the Bakery. You can link to it through the QR code at the end of this article.

In the future, we hope to support fundraisers for clubs and other groups through the sale of cookie dough. While that's been on hold due to Covid the past few years, we hope to put that project back on track soon.

Personally, I feel that creating the Village Bakery is one of the Village's most significant achievements in its 50+ year history. The Bakery is a great illustration of the Village's mission – challenging our men and women to reach their potential at work and in the community. With your support, the Bakery can continue living up to its motto: *baking a difference*.

Brion



QR code for two-minute
promotional video of
The Village Bakery

WELCOME BACK LEVI & AUSTIN!



We welcome **Levi Schier** back to the Village of Progress. Levi had transferred to Kreider in 2014 and in October 2022 decided to return to VOP. He currently attends one day a week. Levi lives with his parents in Polo. He loves to socialize, listen to country music and Christian music, paint birdhouses and flower pots and help mom in the garden.



Austin Henry rejoined VOP in February 2023 after moving out of Ogle County in 2020. Austin has been spending his time playing his Play Station and has found a new passion for DJing. We're happy to have Austin back at VOP and he's excited to show us his DJ skills!

Welcome to the Village



Savannah Rosenbaum joined the VOP staff in January as the Rochelle Route Driver and In-House DSP (Direct Support Person). She has had many years of experience providing in home care in the Sterling area. She was born and raised in the Rochelle area but now lives in Dixon with her family. Savannah

has 2 boys and one girl. She really enjoys swimming, baking, cooking, shopping or anything with the family.



Melinda Sarver joined the Village Cleaning Service in January. Melinda is a DSP (Direct Support Person.) Melinda lives in Mt. Morris with her daughter Camry. Together they enjoy going to concerts & going to see the Ice Hogs and Blackhawks play. They are looking forward to working together on some of our cleaning contracts.

IMPORTANT DATES

AT
**THE VILLAGE OF
PROGRESS**

**JOHN HERRMANN ANNUAL
GOLF PLAY DAY**

7/10/23

TOSOC

**TOUR OF SCENIC
OGLE COUNTY**

**A CYCLING EVENT
AT THE VILLAGE**

**SEPTEMBER
9/23/2023**

**ANNUAL
BANQUET**

**OCTOBER
10/18/2023**

AT 6:30

**ST MARY'S LEARNING
CENTER IN OREGON**

**ANGEL
BALL**

DECEMBER 12/02/2023

AT 5:30

**RIVERS EDGE EXPERIENCE
IN OREGON**

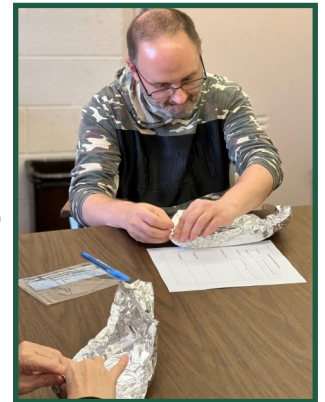
VOP University



We started VOP University in the summer of 2022. Our initial class had six participants studying the world of **Animal Science**. The class explored different topics from habitats; to what they eat; to predators vs prey. The class included field trips to the Ogle County Fair, the zoo, and the Byron Forest Preserve. Each member of the class chose an animal to study throughout the ten weeks and gave a verbal presentation on that animal. Throughout the class we played games, did crafts and even watched how caterpillars transformed into butterflies.



The second class for VOP University focused on **Experimental Science**. This class was more flexible allowing eight students to participate in a different experiment each week. We built towers, sink foil boats, lava lamps, and tested different objects racing down a ramp and more! Students learned about the experimental process and recorded results of their experiments on their own papers.

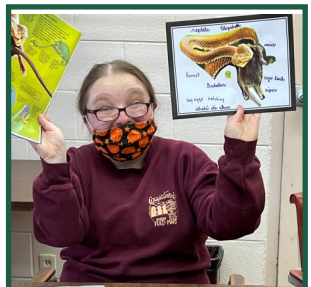


The excitement for different areas of science grows at VOP University. Recently, a student from VOP University expressed an interest in the solar system and requested to learn and explore space. What a great idea! We are looking forward to learning about the planets, asteroids, NASA and more in the upcoming weeks.



Who knows what we will explore next!

The VOP University has proved to be a great way to build knowledge, explore interests and learn more about the world where we live.



Exploring Our Community



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Special Thanks to everyone that contributed to the cookie sale organized by Sandra Snyder and Payton Wohlford. They raised \$6,000 for the Village of Progress. Payton works occasionally as a model worker with our group that travels to Crest Foods.



In Memory of: Cletus & Darlene Bauer • Jake Burke • Gary & Bev Christiansen • Ralph & Edith Davis • William Fearer II • Dottie Flessner • Matt Glaser • Kenneth Green • Leona Groenhagen • Carly Heller • Mason & Edith Hopkins • James Kereven • Dianne Klancir • Kirby Knutson • Doug Leiving • Ruth Loomis • Craig McGuire • Robert & Eleanor Moehle • Evelyn Netz • George & Pauline O'Brien • Carol Rauch • Kathy Sowinski • Bob Stahl • Leonard & Vada Wood • Clarence & Josephine Wright • Donald & Della Young •



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



THE VILLAGE BAKERY IS OPEN

**7 DAYS A WEEK
7AM-2PM**

The Village is funded in part by the Ogle County Community Mental Health (708) Board & United Way.



CHECK OUT OUR SEASONAL HANDMADE CRAFT SOLD AT THE VILLAGE BAKERY




TOSOC
tour of scenic ogle county
September 23, 2023

**HISTORIC SITES
BEAUTIFUL SCENERY
WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS**

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