



# VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

SERVING ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOR OVER 50 YEARS

The Village View - Fall 2023

Volume LIV Number 4



## Director's Note:

Over the past few years, the Village has put a much greater emphasis on encouraging our individuals to explore the community around them in a more integrated way. Learning to navigate the community with greater independence helps people with disabilities to gain confidence and competence. But an important side benefit is that it introduces the community to our men and women.

Consider a simple example. When a person with a disability sits down at a restaurant, opens a menu, and talks to a waitress, the individual expands their horizons by learning about restaurants, etiquette, and how to place an order. But did you also consider that the community benefits as well? It might be the first time that the waitress has ever encountered someone with a developmental disability in a one-on-one conversation. Both of their horizons expand. Both have the opportunity to learn about mutual respect and mutual empathy.



Just a few years ago it's probably safe to say that the majority of the people who attended the Village of Progress would have spent 90% of their week inside our building. Now, it is no understatement to say that virtually 100% of those who attend the Village have the option of spending most days a week engaged in activities outside the building and in the community.

## THE VILLAGE VIEW

A quarterly publication of  
the Village of Progress, Inc.  
PO Box 418, 710 S. 13th St.,  
Oregon IL 61061

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Brion Brooks

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## Director's Note continued:

Our work activities have shifted from in-house to community based. For example, over the past year, our men and women have made a combined 1,314 trips to Crest Foods to work on the packaging lines. We have also provided over 450 opportunities for our individuals to work at Nash Recreation Center and Stronghold.



In addition, we accompany individuals to clean at local churches, township offices, and the Oregon Coliseum. We've also recently started taking groups to Rockford periodically to help sort and stock the souvenir shop for the Ice Hogs Hockey Team.

Our social activities have also become more diverse and more interactive with the community. Just in the past year alone, we've offered: 2,500 opportunities to take part in small-group recreational activities; 400 bike rides with volunteers; over 1,200 opportunities to go on short, focused outings such as: lunch at local restaurants, hiking in local state parks, baseball games, picnics, volunteering at animal shelters, visits to the zoo, and even an occasional matinee at an area movie theater.



In every case, there are two guiding lights that direct our path. First, does it encourage our men and women to explore the community? And second, does it offer the community a chance to interact with our men and women?

Everyone benefits when everyone is included.

*Brion Brooks*



# Christmas Card Contest

We held our 50th annual Christmas Card Contest, open to entries from all the men and women that attend the Village. For the last 29 years Hub - Remsen Print Group, from Rochelle, has awarded certificates of participation and a small cash prize to all entrants. They also print each year's winning card for use as both the Hub - Remsen Print Group and the Village of Progress Christmas cards.

This year's judges included Dawn Todd of the Village, Chris Haas and Tim Remsen of Hub - Remsen Print Group. They looked over thirty entries before selecting a design by Jessica Ackerman as the 2023 winning entry. Sandra Braddock took 2nd place and Deanna Gregory received 3rd place.



Jessica (who received 1st place) has been part of the Village for over 5 years. Jessica enjoys almost all the activities offered and is always willing to work. Her artistic ability is shown off throughout the Village. She is a great friend to peers and her laugh lights up a room.



**IMPORTANT  
DATES  
AT  
THE VILLAGE OF  
PROGRESS**

**THE JOHN  
HERRMANN GOLF  
PLAY DAY**

**JULY 15, 2024**

**PRAIRIE VIEW  
GOLF COURSE**

**BYRON, IL**

**TOSOC  
TOUR OF SCENIC  
OGLE COUNTY**

**SEPTEMBER 28,  
2024**

**CYCLING EVENT  
AT THE VILLAGE**

**ANNUAL BANQUET**

**OCTOBER 23, 2024**

**AT 6:30**

**ST MARY'S  
LEARNING CENTER  
OREGON**



# Exploring Our Community!

In an effort to increase our exposure in the community, the Village of Progress continues to create a variety of small group outings. Our goal is 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.



Oregon Girls  
Basketball Game



Pickle Ball



Dog Therapy



Harry Potter



Pumpkin Patch



Ax Throwing



Art Class



Hiking Club



Ice Hogs Game

**And so many  
more activities!**



# The Village Bike Club

This summer we logged over 650 hours in our Village Bike Club. Over two dozen volunteers rode specially designed side-by-side tandems with individuals from the Village. Our bike club is immensely popular and a great way for the community and the Village to regularly engage in a shared activity. Our fleet includes four 21 gear tandem bikes, two 3 gear tandem bikes, one trailer and one tandem electric.

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 and are already looking forward to next year! Additional volunteers are always needed, the commitment can be flexible. We always need subs and folks that just ride for part of the season as we have a large number of teachers that ride from June—August. Call 815-732-2126 and talk to Sherri for more information about cycling.





# The 8th Annual TOSOC - 2023

The 8th annual TOSOC – the Tour of Scenic Ogle County was on Saturday, September 23rd. 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, over 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 **\$14,000** 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](mailto:TOSOC@villageofprogress).



**Thank you to the BEST SPONSORS and VOLUNTEERS!**





# Special Olympic Update

We recently received a generous donation from School Health, a company that supplies schools in Illinois with safety and exercise equipment. They graciously gave \$2,500 to each Special Olympic Team in Illinois. We were able to purchase items for general activities as well as look forward to needs for the future.

Last year we replaced Basketball with Bocce due to numbers and interest shown. Bocce was a big hit. We had five athletes participate, three placed and many more have shown interest in this next year.

In 2024 we will participate in Track and Field, Bocce, Golf, Tennis, and finishing the year with Bowling. As the year progresses, we may have a need for gently used equipment, please keep in mind as you clean out your basement or garage. Thank you again for the continued support of our team and agency.



## 4-H Is for Everyone

Did you know we have a 4-H Club? As the group was formed, we voted on a name "Village Friends 4-H". We decided to meet twice a month. Our first project fair was held at the Illinois Extension Building on October 16<sup>th</sup>. The four projects being judged consisted of the Art Journals, Embryology, Ceramic Pens, and All About Me Citizenship books. Some of these projects had many hours of work put into them. The group is very proud of what they have accomplished and excited to try new things in the future. Our 4-H club gives individuals from the Village a chance to experience the amazing unity of a group that teaches about the world around them as well as introspection on themselves. We are honored to be a part of 4-H .







**THE  
VILLAGE  
BAKERY  
IS OPEN**

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



The Village of Progress had to say a very difficult good bye to some very special people. Tim, Donna and Steve Wells - thank you for everything you have done for the Village over the years. Steve and Donna were avid volunteers and Tim was a part of our VOP family. Best of Luck in Wisconsin! You will be missed!

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



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## Village of Progress & Foundation Donations:

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# Village of Progress & Foundation Donations:



Special thank you to Martin & Company for selecting The Village of Progress as the beneficiary of the 50/50 drawing at Martinfest AND John Ebens who won the 50/50 and donated his proceeds back to The Village of Progress.



**In Memory of:** Rod Daniels - Linda Scholl - Christine Scott - Helen Wales - Shelby & Lenora Walker

**In Kind:** Carol Daniels – File Folders & Toilet Paper - Bill and Kay Tallyn – TV - St. Paul Lutheran Church of Oregon - Food - Dave Gesin – Trimming shrubs, Don & Nancy Etnyre – Pork Chop Dinner Tickets for Consumers - Oregon United Methodist Church – Food - Oregon Park District – Holiday Celebration Meal & Activities - De Munhollon - handmade cards throughout the year.



**TOSOC:** - Brad & Donna Bauer - Brett Beachler - Byron Bank - Byron Financial - Constellation - Crest Foods - Gary &

Susan Davis - Dixon Auto Body - F.N. Smith, Corp. - Mike & Renee Fager - Felker Foods

- Fischer's Inc. - Green River Cyclery - Hagemann Enterprises - KSB Hospital - Kohls - Law Offices of Smith, Birkholz & Morrow - Oregon Lions Club - Performance Food - Rooney's - Snyder's - Staff Management - Scott Stephens State Farm - Sterling Federal Bank - Stillman Bank - Frank & Dianne Swingel - Law Offices of Tess, Crull, & Arnquist



LLC - The Village Bakery - Larry Young Family

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