



VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

SERVING ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOR OVER 50 YEARS

The Village View - Spring 2026

Volume LVIII Number 2

Director's Note:

As the days grow longer and the signs of spring begin to emerge, we are reminded that this season is all about change and new possibilities. Here at the Village of Progress, that spirit of renewal is reflected in the exciting evolution of our Special Olympics Program.



What began as an opportunity to participate in just three sports has blossomed into a dynamic program now offering nine athletic opportunities. This growth is about more than numbers. It represents expanded access to new experiences and greater opportunities for individuals to discover their strengths and build confidence.

Change often brings both excitement and challenge. It asks us to adapt and embrace the unknown, but it also creates opportunity. The opportunity to step outside of our comfort zones and create meaningful moments of achievement and pride. Our athletes continue to show us what is possible when determination meets support.

This spring, we celebrate not only the expansion of our program, but also the people who make it possible. We would not be able to offer our Special Olympics Program without the unwavering support and dedication of our staff. For most of my time here at VOP, we have been fortunate to have two dedicated staff guiding this program: Dawn Todd, a coach of 25 years, and Denny Mumford, a coach of 22 years.



Denny recalls when the team - at its peak, with more than 30 athletes - traveled downstate together on a charter bus, giving athletes the chance to experience a wide range of events, including those we were not able to offer, like gymnastics.

Dawn reflects, "During my 25 years of coaching with the Village, I have been able to work alongside some great people. I'll always smile when I think of the non-air-conditioned dorms, dancing on

the football field with hundreds of people, the hunt for ice cream tacos, learning and singing loudly to the entire *Mamma Mia* soundtrack, and of course, nothing bonds you like a good sunburn or thunderstorm - sometimes both in the same weekend."



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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Director's Note continued:

After an extraordinary coaching career, Dawn hung up her coaching hat in fall 2025, and the program transitioned to new leadership under Mark Probasco. Mark began expanding the program in 2024 with the introduction of unified cornhole, soon followed by bocce, golf, and tennis. By fall 2025, our



athletes were participating in nine different sports: Track & Field, Bocce, Golf, Tennis, Bowling, Snowshoeing, Basketball, Floor Hockey, and Unified Cornhole.



Mark shares, "Expanding the program isn't just about adding activities, it's about improving health, reducing isolation, and creating real opportunities for people who are often left out."



With the expansion of our program comes the need to refresh our uniforms and gear. Many of our current uniforms are worn and faded and no longer meet the standards for our multisport offerings. Our new sports also require equipment to support practices - welcomed challenges that reflect just how much our program has grown.

This is a meaningful opportunity to demonstrate the strength and generosity of our community. We invite you to consider a donation of any amount to help our athletes prepare for their expanded Special Olympics opportunities.

Thank you for being part of this journey of growth and transformation.

Sincerely,

Angie Martin-Bakener



Handmade Cards

Creativity is blooming at Village of Progress! Our consumers have been busy designing and crafting a variety of fun, heartfelt greeting cards, and they're excited to share them with the community. Each card is uniquely made with care and personality; perfect for brightening someone's day.

Card packs are available for purchase at the Village Bakery (101 N 3rd Street, Oregon, IL) and Merlin's (300 Mix Street, Oregon, IL) for just \$5 per pack (5 cards). Every purchase supports the VOP Activity & Craft Fund that helps provide enriching experiences for our consumers.

Stop by, pick up a pack, and share a smile while supporting a meaningful mission!



The Village of Progress made some fun cards,
and we would like to share!

All money goes towards our craft fund.



5 cards for \$5.00



IMPORTANT DATES

AT THE VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

THE JOHN HERRMANN GOLF PLAY DAY

JULY 13, 2026

PRAIRIE VIEW GOLF COURSE

BYRON, IL

TOSOC TOUR OF SCENIC OGLE COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 26,
2026

CYCLING EVENT AT THE VILLAGE

ANNUAL BANQUET

OCTOBER 21, 2026

AT 5:30

ST MARY'S PARISH CENTER OREGON

New Faces at the Village



Ben Wengelewski

Ben lives in Rochelle, IL with his brother, Liam, who also attends Village of Progress. He joined us through our Thrive Program last summer. He likes swimming, Wii bowling, trains, music, and bowling. Staff enjoy his kindhearted, energetic personality. Welcome, Ben!



Shane DeVries

Shane lives in Byron, IL and joined Village of Progress in April 2026. He enjoys using his phone and other technologies. Staff really enjoy his laid back, pleasant personality. He has met new friends at VOP. He loves to go swimming and be part of activities such as Bingo, and Art & Crafts. Welcome Shane!



Liam Wengelewski

Liam lives in Rochelle, IL and joined us in April 2026 at the Village of Progress. He joined us through our Thrive Program last summer. His brother, Ben, also attends VOP. He likes Wii bowling, trains, music, and bowling. Staff really enjoy his easy-going, friendly personality. Welcome, Liam!

Celebrating the Retirement of Lisa Boehle



After 26 years of dedicated service, Lisa Boehle retired from the Village of Progress in April 2026. Her tenure spans nearly half the organization's history, during which she witnessed - and helped shape - its remarkable evolution, from paper-based systems to electronic processes, and from a sheltered workshop industrial model to a more community-inclusive approach.

Throughout her time at the Village of Progress, Lisa navigated countless changes, including complex state mandates and evolving billing requirements, always with resilience and commitment.

We are deeply grateful for Lisa's many years of service. It's hard to imagine the VOP office without her, and she will be sincerely missed!

Donations to the Village of Progress & Foundation

Village of Progress & Foundation: Nareman Abdallah • Rehana Abdallah • Grant Afflerbaugh • Rex & Mary Ashworth • Homer & Rebecca Bailey • Angie Martin – Bakener • Marian Baker • Ed & Kelly Beeter • Galen & Denise Bennett • Blackhawk Region Antique Auto Club • Jim & Eileen Bone • Kevin Brehm • Sharon Bowers • Noel & Sally Bruns • Byron Knights of Columbus • Byron Women's Club • Craig & Luanne Cann • Janice Christ • Jean Colbacchini • Constellation Energy • Constellation Matching Cyber Grants • Crest Foods Walking Club • Bobbi & Bob Cupp • Jon & Pam Dahm • Sarah Dempsey • Larry & Deb Drew • Bruce & Doris Dvorak • Larry & Aneda Ebert • Randall & Sandra Ebert • Kristen Eckardt • Kevin Erickson • First Choice Rentals • Dennis Flanagan • Kevin Frost • Dave & Cindy Gesin • Robert Groenhagen • Brian & Cathie Grover • Dorothy Grover • Jason Hammer • Kathy Harms • Roger & Linda Hellinga • Brett Herrmann • Erin Herrmann • Phyllis Herrmann • Patricia Holm • T & A Iacoli • Angela Insko • Steve & Yong Cha James • Jeff & De Janke • Bruce & Teresa Johnson • Cynthia Kennay • Rick & Doris Kennay • L.E. & Darlene King • Knights of Columbus #7624 • Thomas Koebler • Ronald & Cynthia Koehler • Michael & Sharon Kohlstedt • Bernard & Sara Kopp • Geroge Kubat • Ardis Kump • Ellen Laurent • Leaf River American Legion • Leaf River Lions Club • Tim & Kathy Leary • Rebecca Little • Marilyn J. Ludwig Trust • Gregg & Kathleen Marinelli • Larry & Janice Martin • Roger Martin • Julie Mann • Donna Mattison • Sandra McCammond • Tom & Shirley McPhillips • Dirk & Jennifer Meminger • Karen Miller • John & Clarice Moehle • Lori Myers • Ogle County Beef Association • Diane Pavlus • Pay Pal Giving Fund • Patricia Piwonka • Jan Prose • William & Melissa Reeher • Donald Rego • Mary & Kim Rick • James & Vada Rosenbalm • Steve & Suzanne Rypkema • Terry Schuster • William & Karen Sikorski • Susie Smith • Richard Stegeman • Sheryl Stern • Frank & Dianne



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In Memory: Wanda Cacciatore • Ralph & Edith Davis • Leona Groenhagen • Jessica Grover • David Miller • Robert & Elenor Moehle • Lorretta Sigler

In Honor: Rebecca King

In Kind: Oregon United Methodist Church – Food

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

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

Voting May 4th—May 16th



The Village of Progress has three artist entering small canvas pieces in the Tiny Art Contest at the Oregon Public Library. Please stop by the Oregon Library in person between May 4th and May 16th to check out all the tiny art and vote. Matthew, Sandy & Mike submitted pieces from the Village of Progress

Remembering Our Village Family



Teresa Vaughn, of Oregon, IL, born August 13, 1961, passed away peacefully in early February 2026 while in hospice care. She will be remembered for her warm, social spirit and the joy she brought to those around her.

Teresa was a beloved sister to Eddie, Michael (Breanna), and Tammy. In 2012, she became a part of the Village of Progress.

She had a creative side and enjoyed making dog toys. Teresa also loved shopping, savoring McDonald's cheeseburgers, walking trails and riding bikes in the VOP hiking and biking clubs. Teresa joined the VOP 4-H group as one of the initial members. Her kindness, personality, and simple joys in life will be fondly remembered by all who knew her.

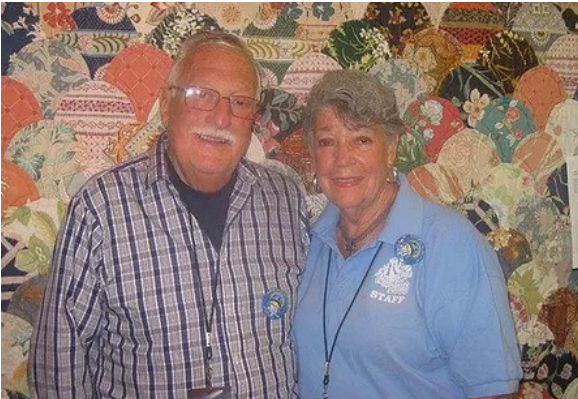


Jessica Peryl Grover, age 48, died Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2026, at her home near Ashton surrounded by her loving family.

She was born June 9, 1977, in Rochelle, Illinois the daughter of Neil M. and Dorothy M. (Noffsinger) Grover. Jessica graduated from Dixon High School in 1996.

She worked at Village of Progress in Oregon, IL for 23 years. She loved to do artwork on her posterboards and would share them as gifts to her friends and family. She also loved music and watching her favorite TV shows. Jessica was a proud member of the First Baptist Church in Rochelle where she looked forward to every Sunday so she could sing the hymns.

Remembering Our Village Family



Wanda Cacciatore passed away peacefully at the age of 92 in her Byron home, surrounded by her children. Wanda had a long history of support for the Village of Progress and its mission of serving individuals with developmental disabilities.

Wanda's life was defined by an unwavering commitment to her faith, her family, and her community. Born in Wichita, Kansas, to Beulah Marie and Joel Murphy, she was raised in a home filled with love—a warmth she later replicated when she met and married the love of her life, Pete Cacciatore. Their 62-year "love affair" began a journey that saw the birth of four children, a family rich in traditions and deep affection.

Wanda was a tireless advocate and volunteer, lending her leadership to numerous organizations. Highlighting her service to the Village of Progress, where she spent 10 years on the Village of Progress Board and 33 years on the Village of Progress Foundation Board.

The connection between the Cacciatore family and the Village was both philanthropic and practical. For many years, the Village Cleaning Service maintained the floors at the Cacciatore Food Mart, a partnership that thrived until the business was sold in 2006.

Wanda's spirit of giving was also a family affair. Her grandsons are regulars at the annual Village of Progress Golf Playday, where "her boys" frequently took first place, only to donate their winnings back to the Village of Progress.

Following Pete's passing, she further honored his memory by establishing a Scholarship at the Village, awarding \$1,000 annually to a local high school graduate who either had a disability or sought to pursue a degree in Special Education.



One of her favorite contributions was her leadership with Angel Ball, a major fundraising effort that benefited the Village of Progress, Serenity Hospice & Home, and the Oregon Rotary. In the 30 years of existence, Angel Ball raised over \$500,000.

Wanda was preceded in death by her husband and best friend, Peter, and her beloved Cairn Terriers. She leaves behind a legacy of service that continues to inspire the community she loved so dearly.

COFFEE MUG



BUY A 20 OZ.
INSULATED
MUG
FOR \$20
THEN BRING IT
IN FOR \$1
COFFEE FILLS

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THEVILLAGEBAKERY.ORG



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THE VILLAGE
BAKERY IS OPEN
7AM — 2PM
7 DAYS A WEEK

MONTHLY SANDWICH & DRINK SPECIALS

May

Southwest Chicken Sandwich
Rose Latte Hot or Cold

June

Cuban Sandwich
Raspberry Cotton Candy Frappe

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34TH ANNUAL JOHN HERRMANN MEMORIAL GOLF PLAY DAY

Village of Progress
Foundation, Inc.

Larry Young
& Friends Charities

Monday, July 13, 2026

At Prairie View Golf Course in Byron, IL
12:00 p.m. shotgun start.

REGISTRATION FORM

Organization: _____
Contact: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ email: _____

☐ ***I want to sponsor a hole or tee***

Numbers of holes and tees: _____

Name of Business: _____

Our check for \$ _____ (\$200 per hole/tee) is enclosed.
_____ Please bill us.

Please mail this form to:
Village of Progress Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 418
Oregon IL 61061
Or fax to 815-732-3228
Checks payable to
Village of Progress Foundation

Join us for a great day of golf,
food, and prizes. And help the
Village of Progress continue to serve
Ogle County adults with
developmental disabilities.

18 holes of golf, cart, goodie bag,
drink tickets, steak dinner,
raffle and silent auction.

☐ ***I want to sign up a Foursome***

Golfer #1: _____

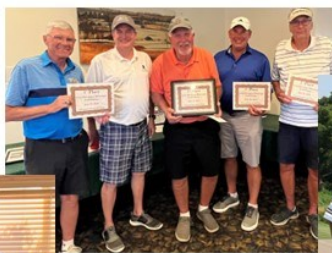
Golfer #2: _____

Golfer #3: _____

Golfer #4: _____

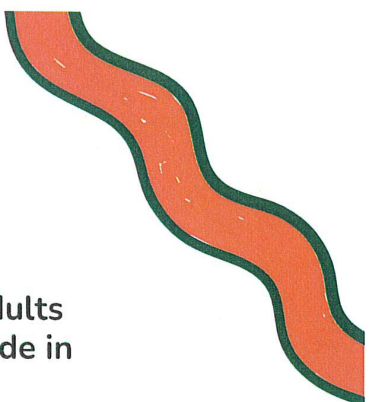
____ Our check for \$500 is enclosed.

____ We'll pay at the event.





SUMMER THRIVE



This engaging summer initiative is designed for adults aged 18+ with developmental disabilities who reside in Ogle County.

Whether you're on summer break from school or simply curious about what VOP has to offer, this program is the perfect opportunity to connect, learn, and have fun!

June 1-5 9a-2:30p

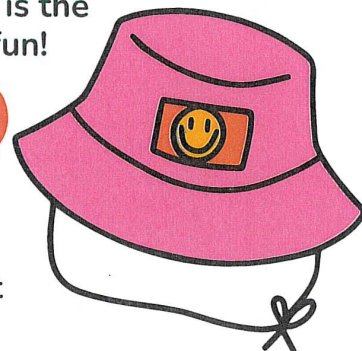
Monday: White Pines Hike & Cookout

Tuesday: Bowling

Wednesday: Kelch Aviation Museum

Thursday: Sports with the Oregon Park District

Friday: Cins Ceramic Painting



July 6-10 9a-2:30p

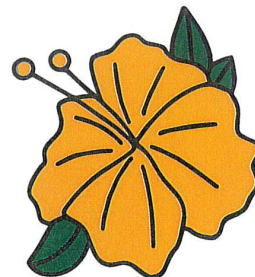
Monday: Fishing & Cookout

Tuesday: Disc Golf & Park Day

Wednesday: Rockford Airport Tour

Thursday: Sports with the Oregon Park District

Friday: Movie & Lunch Out



August 3-7 9a-2:30p

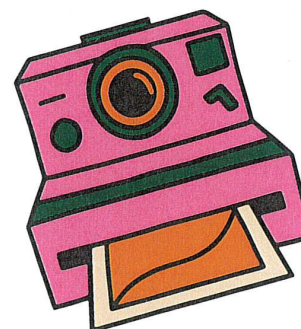
Monday: Lake Day & Cookout

Tuesday: Volunteer Day

Wednesday: Kickball Tournament and Cookout

Thursday: Train Museum

Friday: Fun Day at VOP - Cookout, games, music

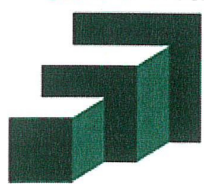


RESERVE YOUR SPOT!

Ready to sign up or learn more?

Contact Mark Probasco at 815-732-2126.

Let's make this summer unforgettable!



VILLAGE OF PROGRESS

