

# Progress Notes



Providing residential and support services to persons with disabilities since 1971.

July, 2004

• FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR •

## Legislative Summary

Each year at this time, I write an article summarizing the outcomes and potential impact of the new laws passed during the recent legislative session. I do this because virtually every aspect of the services DRCC provides, from the regulations we operate under to the amount of money we receive, is governed and controlled by the legislature.

This year, I'll still give a brief summary of what did or didn't happen during the 2004 legislative session, but I want to focus our attention more on next year and future legislative sessions.

At best, the 2004 legislative session could be described as disappointing. Even if we set aside the issues we care about personally, it's hard to say much positive about what our legislators did from early February through May 17th. We heard a lot of rhetoric and posturing, but in the end they were not able or willing to work together to come up with solutions – even on issues where they agreed.

One of the issues where there seemed to be substantial agreement across party lines concerned co-pays that individuals and families were required



*Michael Mills*  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*A group of DRCC clients and staff visited with Representative Tom Huntley during the recent legislative session.*

*Continued on page 2...*

## Annual Meeting – 2004

DRCC elected new board officers at its annual meeting on June 3rd.

**Tony Mancuso**, president; **Mickey Ferguson**, vice-president; and **Dennis Ramberg** secretary/treasurer. **Tina Swartwoudt** became a new board member. Outgoing board member and president John DeCaro was acknowledged for his service to DRCC.

Tina Swartwoudt was elected to the DRCC board of directors at the annual meeting held on June 3, 2004. Tina is a trainer for Project Exceptional of Minnesota. She provides training for day care providers to assure that inclusive childcare is available to all children including those with disabilities. Tina and her husband Gregg live in Esko. They have four children: Lindsey, Bailey, Lexie and Gracie. Their daughter Lindsey shares the newly developed Bishop Woods home with two other girls. We would like to welcome Tina to our board!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Tribute.....	2
Employee Milestones.....	3
Golf With the Stars.....	4
ACT.....	5
Bishop Woods.....	5
Jitney Relocation.....	5

## ...Summary *continued from page 1*

to pay. Both parties generally agreed that the co-pays should be lowered and the limit on dental services should be raised but they weren't able to act on it. Perhaps if there is a special session, they'll make this change.

Not surprisingly, the rates DRCC receives for services were frozen for the upcoming year (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005). This freeze comes on top of receiving a 1% rate cut last year. This was not really a surprise given Minnesota's ongoing budget difficulties. However, as we look to next year and beyond, this will become a critical issue for DRCC and other organizations

who provide services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

In the early 1990's we went through a period of years where rates were frozen or well below inflation. We do not want this to happen again – over time it erodes the quality of services. My greatest concern is the impact the freeze and cuts have on staff. We need to be able to retain our staff, and one part of that is to fairly compensate them with modest salary increases to enable them to meet their needs. DRCC has a very low turnover rate and we want to maintain this.

In the upcoming months, there will be a need to let legislators know how important an issue this is. Already, we are hearing forecasts of more large budget deficits for the State's next biennium (2005 – 2007). In an environment like that, it is going to take all of us working together to make sure our issues and needs are clearly understood. As we head into next year's legislative session I expect that we will call on you to contact your legislators and advocate for the funding necessary to maintain the high quality of services being provided.

## TRIBUTES

### **Henrietta (Etta) Potswald**

of *DRCC-Triplex* died on March 18, 2004.

Born on September 2, 1915, she had lived at Triplex for two and one half years and was 88 years old. Etta believed she was 27 years old – her philosophy was “what are we doing next, where are we going today?” She went from activity to activity looking forward to the next thing and loved being with people.

Etta retired at age 87, but there was never a struggle to fill the hours of her days. She was an inspiration to all who knew her.



### **Karen Berdahl**

of *DRCC-Rockridge* died on April 25, 2004

at St. Mary's Hospice. She was 65 years old. Karen moved to Rockridge in October 2003 and though her time there was brief, she will be remembered for her happy and sweet manner and her courage in the face of many medical problems. Karen enjoyed drawing, attending church, going out for ice cream, and spending time with the other women who live at Rockridge. She will be greatly missed by her friends at Rockridge and UDAC.



## Employee Milestones



*The work of DRCC is carried out by its many dedicated staff. We are again recognizing who have reached a milestone anniversary over the first six months of the year. Without exception, the following employees have shown a commitment to the people they work with - staff and clients, loyalty to DRCC, and a desire to make lives better.*

### 25 YEARS

On May 9th **Sandy DeZeler** celebrated her 25th anniversary with DRCC. Sandy began working for DRCC in 1979 as secretary/receptionist. Throughout her years with DRCC, Sandy has grown with the organization taking new positions and responsibilities. She currently serves as Business Manager, with responsibility for all of DRCC's accounting functions and property management. Sandy enjoys spending time at her cabin (trying out her kayak), quilting, and her family.

### 20 YEARS

**Rob Townsend** was initially hired as a houseparent at Baldwin in 1984. In 1986 he left Baldwin to direct a SILS program and to open DRCC's first waived services program. The program later became the Lakeside program. Rob has worked as Program Director ever since, seeing the program through a move to a new home in 1996, when it was re-named Rockridge. Rob and his wife Chris have two children, Heather and Sam. His interests include bowling, Vikings football, spending time with family and friends, and fishing.

**Ann Flannagan** celebrated her 20th anniversary with DRCC in January of this year. Ann began working for DRCC in 1984 as the Program Director for Hillside. In 1990 Ann began working as a Program Manager, with responsibilities for managing and overseeing the quality of a number of DRCC programs. Throughout her career with DRCC, Ann has been a strong advocate for the individuals who receive our services. Ann enjoys gardening, fishing, and spending time with her family.

### 15 YEARS

**Joanne Stager** began her employment at DRCC in 1989 in the West program where she initially worked as a job coach. Six months later she moved to the Oneota program, where over the past fourteen years she has worked first as a Program Implementor, and later as Program Coordinator. Joanne lives in the country with her husband Bob. They stay busy with hiking, biking, playing tennis and traveling.

### 10 YEARS

We have a number of employees who reached their 10 year anniversary.

**Bill Flannagan**  
Program Director at Mankato

**Ellen Antalik**  
Program Assistant at Valley

**Diane Childs**  
Program Assistant at IHFS-Range

**Lori Ryan**  
Program Director at Woodland

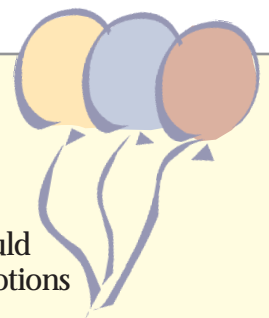
**Darin Schuman**  
Program Assistant at Hillside

**Linda Hilger-Plunkett**  
Program Coordinator at Rockridge

**Mary Ann Hansen**  
Nurse on the Range

**Scott Hauswirth**  
Program Assistant at Mankato

## Employee Promotions



DRCC is very appreciative of our staff and would like to recognize the following employee promotions over the first half of 2004.

*The following employees have been promoted to Program Director:*

**Carrie Nelson** - Bishop Woods

**Deven LeSage** - Melrose

**Lori Jo Schiebe** - Fairview

*The following employees have been promoted to Program Coordinator:*

**Angela Wegner** - Riverside

**Lynne Pickart** - Glendale

**Gina Barnes** - Oneota

**Jane Chandler** - Fairview

**Steve Moilan** - IHFS-Range

• DRCC'S FIFTH ANNUAL EVENT •  
**“Golf with the Stars”**  
**this Summer!**

The Fifth Annual “Golf with the Stars” event will be held on Friday, August 27th at Big Lake Golf Course in Cloquet. Last year’s event raised \$8,100.

Through the annual golf event, DRCC is able to meet many of the unmet needs our clients have due to their limited financial

resources. We want to thank everyone who has contributed to this event and invite you to consider participating this year. For more information on corporate sponsorship and team registration, call Mike Mills at **(218) 722-8180 ext. 100.**

✓ Remember to mark your calendars for August 27th!

M E M O R I A L S :

*In memory of Henrietta (Etta) Potswald*

- Diana Rindal
- Nevelyn Rindal
- Gerald and Judith Bakken
- Nancy Hansen
- Stephanie Evans
- Ann Haugen & family

*In memory of Karen Berdahl*

- James and Jeanne Berdahl
- Claryce Swensen
- Christine and Allan Dudar
- Thomas and Janet Aasgaard
- Steven and Julie Aasgaard
- Roy and Lorraine Olson
- Vera Swanson
- Connie and Jay Thompson
- Ruth Bakke and Carol Haglin

*Thank You!*

*A special thanks to the following individuals and businesses who have contributed to DRCC during the past six months.*

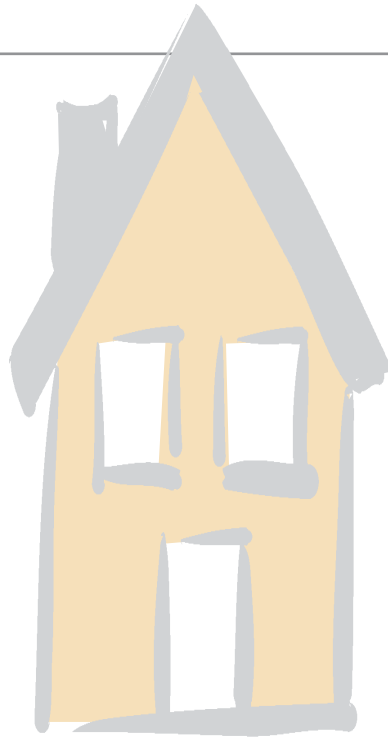
- Bruce Anderson
- Barbara Gimpel
- Marsha and William Driscoll
- Sharon Forse
- Marybeth Davidson
- Tony Mancuso
- Charles and Judyth Babst
- Deborah Good
- George and Dadee Reilly
- Warren and Marjorie Spannaus
- Michael and Marilyn Sullivan
- Judith Bakken
- John and Janice Osbakken
- Nick and Joan Ostapenko
- David and Donna DeToffol
- Ray and Martha Moeller
- Russell and Patricia Peterson
- Laura Weir
- Jim and Joan Hayes
- Mary Peterson
- Dennis and Kari Ramberg
- Frances and Howard Maki
- Henry and Judith Langhorst
- David and Theresa Corbin - Coldwell Banker East/West Realty
- Greg Kamp - Coldwell Banker East/West Realty

## Bishop Woods

---

In the beginning of March 2004, DRCC officially opened the Bishop Woods program located in Hermantown. Currently, three girls share this home that was built to be completely accessible in order to meet their needs. The home is very nice and spacious. The girls have made a wonderful transition to their new home and are very busy with summer activities.

Much of the summer will be spent with outside projects including the completion of sidewalks, patio, landscaping and the driveway. We are blessed with an active group of parents who are very involved with their children and frequently visit the girls' home.



## Jitney Relocation

In early August the men who live at DRCC-Jitney will be moving into a new home at 601 Everett Street in the Hunters Park area of Duluth. The new house will provide larger bedrooms, a great deal more living space than their current home, and will allow for the addition of a live-in staff person. Other improvements include a large back yard and state trails nearby. The Jitney home originally opened in 1988 in a house near UMD. The men currently living at Jitney have shared their home for the past 10 years.

## Advocating Change Together (ACT)

---

ACT is a grassroots disability rights organization run by and for people with developmental and other disabilities. Their mission is to help people across disability groups see themselves as part of a larger disability rights movement and make connections to other civil and human rights struggles.

Through our membership in the Association of Residential Resources in Minnesota (ARRM), DRCC has become involved with ACT.

We are hoping to have ACT come to Duluth to provide workshops.

Common Vision is one such workshop sponsored by ACT and People First of Minnesota. This workshop brings together people with disabilities, service providers, administrative funders, and other system change workers to learn how to share power and work together for social change.

This is a wonderful opportunity for people with disabilities to learn how to best advocate for themselves and others. Six individuals from our Soft Hands program recently attended a two-day ACT conference in Mankato, Minnesota. They are excited about what they learned and look forward to sharing the ACT advocacy message with others.

**If you would like to find out more about ACT you can access their Web site at [www.selfadvocacy.org](http://www.selfadvocacy.org)**



728 Garfield Avenue  
Duluth, MN 55802-2634  
(218) 722-8180

## MISSION STATEMENT

*DRCC provides direct and supporting residential services to persons with disabilities. These services assure that each person exerts the greatest possible control over their life, and provides an environment in which each person has an opportunity to develop relationships with others.*



## DRCC Board of Directors

Tony Mancuso, President  
Mickey Ferguson, Vice President  
Dennis Ramberg, Secretary/Treasurer  
Jeff Johnson  
Nancy Lane  
Debra Oliver  
Laura Schacht  
Tim Grundtner  
Tina Swartwoudt

*The Duluth Regional Care Center is a private, non-profit organization. Services are paid with a combination of funds from St. Louis, Carlton, and Lake County Social Services, the State of Minnesota and the Federal Medicaid Program.*