

Centerpieces

a publication of

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL)

Serving People with Disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota

SWCIL Board Member Spotlight

Our Board President, Shelly Pflaum, graduated from SMSU with a creative writing degree. She has been working at United Community Action Partnership for the past 10 years, as part of their Community Transit Program. Shelly lives in Marshall with her husband, Jason, and two boys ages 4 and 6. Because her boys are 4 and 6, she'll tell you she doesn't remember what she likes to do with her free time anymore.



Shelly has played an active role with SWCIL for many years. Prior to starting at United, she worked at SWCIL as an Independent Living Specialist for four years. Her work focused mostly on advocacy and accessibility. It's through that role that she learned about SWCIL's board.

So, after leaving SWCIL, Shelly applied for the board. She has been a board member for almost nine years. She said she wanted to join the board because "I really believe in the work that SWCIL does, and I wanted to do my part to make sure the agency stays strong."

The SWCIL Board of Directors exists to provide guidance to the agency and ensure that the agency continues meeting its goals while staying in line with policies, procedures and budget. For Shelly, serving on the Board is a rewarding way to use her experience as a person with a disability to impact others.

"As a person with a disability," she said, "I understand the enormous positive impact that knowing yourself, admitting when you need help, and getting the right help can have. SWCIL is the only agency that allows for this process to be completely individual and completely consumer controlled. I'm happy to be a part of it."

Summer Issue 2018

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Consumer Success Story
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Consumer Success Story

by Linda Halbur

Carolynn Baustian from Rock County was an in home daycare provider, and is a mother and grandmother. She knew she had to have her colon removed due to a genetic disorder. Carolynn scheduled her surgery and planned to take off the necessary time to recover and return to her "life". She was told to expect six to eight weeks for recovery and then "back to work". She underwent her colon surgery.



During her recovery she developed a serious infection; two months later she then suffered a stroke. Carolynn's recovery took a life changing course. She was now facing heart surgery too. Carolynn followed her doctor's instructions and continued to hope she would regain the skills she had lost due to her stroke. Unfortunately, this was not to be.

SWCIL staff met her at a meeting for her adult son with disabilities for whom she and her husband are guardians. She shared about her situation and SWCIL staff encouraged her to apply for Social Security Disability. She expressed she was reluctant to apply for Social Security Disability as she had gone through that once for her son. She felt a little overwhelmed at the prospect. SWCIL staff shared with Carolynn that applying for Social Security Disability was something that SWCIL could assist her with. Carolynn, her husband Jim, and SWCIL staff worked together to complete and submit Carolynn's application for Social Security Disability. Carolynn was awarded Social Security Disability within five months of submitting the application. She stated it was "bitter sweet" to get the call. She cried because she does not want to see herself as disabled, but the payments will take a financial load off of her husband.

Carolynn thanked SWCIL for the help and encouragement. She said without that encouragement she knows she would have never applied.



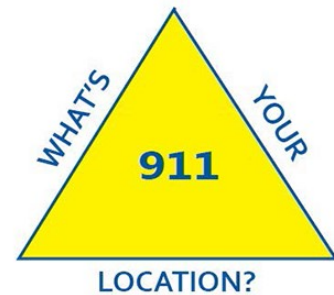
Find us and Like our page to keep up with all the latest SWCIL news and events.

Centerpieces is looking for your input ...

If you have poems, personal successes, letters to the editor, or questions for our readers, **send your submissions to:** Deb at SWCIL 109 S. 5th St. Suite 700 Marshall, MN 56258 Or Fax to: 507-532-2222, attention: Deb, or email to deb@swcil.com Submissions will be printed as space allows and as determined by the Editor. Please include name, address, and phone number with submitted material.

Minnesota's Text to 911 Option

Minnesota recently began offering a new option to contact 911 in case of emergency. As of December 2017, individuals can text 911 when an emergency arises with needs for police, fire, or medical help. This option is geared for the deaf and hard of hearing community but is available to anyone in an urgent situation. The 911 dispatchers still prefer voice calls to be able to catch on to any background noises and other cues that may be of importance when determining the severity of the situation. When making use of this option there are some things to remember to tell the dispatcher right away. Some of these include; adding your exact address and type of emergency, using simple words, following instructions and answering questions quickly. When sending the message make sure to avoid emojis, abbreviations, pictures, and texts longer than 180 characters. These may affect the text sent to the dispatcher or the entire text may not send and important information will be missing. By following these guidelines you are assisting the dispatcher in handling the situation effectively for your safety. Even though you can always hope that you'll never be in an emergency, it is important that you know what is available to you and how to utilize the resource. Please do not send a test text message as all form of contact made with the police will be treated as a real, urgent situation. Information gathered from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety



911 CALL IF YOU CAN
TEXT IF YOU CAN'T

This newsletter is available in alternative formats upon request.

~~~ New ~~~ Book Club Starting! ~~~

June 7, 2018

5:00 - 6:00 P.M.

SWCIL Office

To RSVP call 507.532.2221 or 800.422.1485 (For MN Relay, dial 711)

Minnesota State Capitol by attendees from the trip

SWCIL makes an annual trip to the Minnesota State Capitol to visit with Senators and Representatives as an advocacy and learning opportunity. Each year, SWCIL staff invites consumers to go on the trip so they can share with legislators first-hand about their life experiences. This is a very effective and important part of the trip. Below are some comments made by staff and consumers who attended the trip this year....

My name is Quinn Leddy. I am a senior at Pipestone Area High School. It was an interesting trip. All the representatives were kind people. The architecture was interesting to look at. They mixed modern and older styles well. I told the representatives my name, what school I'm from and what SWCIL helps me work on. They asked what my future plans are and I told them to be a comedy club owner and also a YouTuber. Representative Rod Hamilton was one of the most positive people I met. During the trip I learned a bit about the legislative process. I would recommend going to anyone who may be interested.

This year was my first year being able to attend the SWCIL capitol trip and I am beyond thankful I was able to take advantage of this opportunity. As a group we were able to meet our area representatives and senators and put a face to their name. We were able to get a glimpse into their everyday life and now even more than before I am thankful for these people who are willing to advocate for our communities and our needs. The buildings and offices were nonstop moving and I have no doubt they see hundreds of people per day who come hoping to speak about something important to them. The fact that our representatives and senators take the time to meet with all of us and listen to our needs, even if for a short period of time, is something I will always be thankful for. It was so nice to see how much they care for our communities but also us as an individual. Shelby Horner, Independent Living Specialist



Pictured above from left to right: Shelby Horner, Jasmine Ocana, Alexis Elliot, Adrian Driscoll, Marie Grengs, Representative Joe Schomacker, Quinn Leddy, Makayla Nemitz, Melissa Doherty. Front Row: Cody Seehafer, KaSia Xiong

Our Mission Statement: SWCIL is dedicated to working with and responding to the ever changing needs of persons with disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota to promote societal acceptance, inclusion, and equal access for all persons with disabilities.

I had the privilege of being part of a concerned & dedicated group of people, including two of my consumers, that went to the State Capitol to advocate for those who have disabilities. It was a great opportunity to let our voices be heard, especially for those of us out here in rural Minnesota, with issues & barriers that are not always of the majority. The time spent advocating at the Capitol was a new and positive experience for me, and one that I am grateful to have been a part of. Marie Grengs, Independent Living Specialist

On March 13th and 14th I went to the MN state capitol. I was pretty apprehensive to go on this trip because I have never coordinated my PCA care for an overnight trip before but with a little planning everything went well. I am so humbled that I was given this opportunity by SWCIL! Going on the trip was a great opportunity for me to learn a little bit more about SWCIL. This was also a great way for me to hear about other consumers and their achievements. I was able to share what I did so I can better serve my consumers. Cody Seehafer, Peer Mentor

My day at the capitol gave me some learning experience about how funding works, and how laws and bills are made. It was nice to meet the senators and representatives that support SWCIL services and who support those who have disabilities . Also, I found it interesting to meet other SWCIL consumers and to hear their stories. Alexis Elliott

My day at the Capitol was a fun learning experience. I was able to share my story and thank the senators and representatives for their support. I was able to learn more about how our government works. I really enjoyed my time at the capitol. Jasmine Ocana

What I liked about the Capitol trip is that I've learned a lot about their history. The one part I liked was about the paintings on the walls and ceilings and the stories about the paintings, and asking about the Capitol. I also liked making new friends and I enjoyed being with them. KaSia Xiong

Adults-Only Coloring Club

When: June 25, July 30, August 27, September 24, October 29, 2018

Where: Marshall SWCIL Office **Time:** 4:30-6:00 P.M. **Cost:** Free

RSVP: 507.532.2221 OR 800.422.1485 (for MN Relay, dial 711)

New SWCIL Staff



Hello, my name is Colby Yost and I'm the Community Activities Specialist at SWCIL. I'm a recent graduate of Minnesota State University Mankato with a bachelor's degree in Parks and Recreation. I have worked with programs and community events throughout my time in college and I'm confident I can bring those same skills and knowledge to Marshall and the surrounding communities. In my free time I love to kayak, camp, play baseball, and go on hikes with my dogs. I look forward to meeting you!



Hi, my name is Steve Blaue, and I was recently hired as an IL Advocate here at SWCIL. I graduated from the U of SD with an A. A. in nursing, and a bachelors degree (B. S.) in psychology. I then earned my B.S in Anesthesia. After practicing for five years in Keokuk, IA, my wife and I, three kids and a Cocker Spaniel moved to Pipestone, where we established the business we named Anesthesia Services of Pipestone. I then practiced the next 19 years in SW MN, NW Iowa, and Eastern SD.

In 1991 I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (M.S.). The disease took its toll on me and I had to retire from anesthesia in 2005. Not being too skilled at sitting around, I returned to college, earned my Masters in counseling and completed post-graduate studies in drug and alcohol addictions. I did counseling at New Life Treatment Center in Woodstock, MN and worked at Atlas For Life in Pipestone, MN. Once again, my healthcare issues led to my dismissal from those jobs. I have since occupied my time with personal counseling, and weekly jail ministry in the Pipestone County Jail. I also serve as chaplain for Pipestone County Hospice.

Marshall Area Social Rec Hawaiian Luau

When: June 22, 2018

Where: Independence Park

Time: 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

Ice Cream treats & bottled water

Cost: \$5.00 per person attending (Checks can be made out to SWCIL - Receipts will be available) PLEASE RSVP by June 15, 2018

507.532.2221 or 800.422.1485 (for MN Relay, dial 711)

Reasonable Accommodation requests including dietary needs must be received by June 8, 2018

**Smoke &
fragrance-free
event**

**Friends &
Family
Welcome!**

Assistive Technology by Al Gratz

When using a computer, if you need things to be made larger on the screen, simply google “screen magnification for windows” and follow instructions which will allow you to increase text to a very large size. There is also fully-functional magnification software available. A program called “Zoom Text” allows you to magnify the screen, zoom in and out quickly, and you can also add a special keyboard to help with streamlining this feature and the various other commands to use the software. For computer users who are blind there is a program called “JAWS”. If one wishes to try either of these two programs, please call the office or check with MN Services for the Blind for more information.

For individuals who are unable to use a keyboard, there is a program called “Dragon Naturally Speaking”, which allows the user to dictate to the computer and the text will appear on the screen. Some mobility may be required to command/run the computer, but the typing part is taken care of by the software. Many writers now use this software to avoid getting carpal tunnel and the program can be voice – trained to about 99% accuracy.

For individuals with limited mobility, there is a device that can allow you to run the computer with your eyes by using eye tracking technology and “gazing” for a personally-set duration at the icons, screen keypads, and commands on the screen. This technology is also being used for those who are non-verbal, giving them a voice to be able to communicate with.

Please see the following YouTube video links for more info on these devices:

Steve's Story - Tobii Dynavox I-Series+

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04Rhnt4J2b4>

Her Voice Has Power – Ava’s Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJ35Zp8ZrJw>

Dynavox eye gaze - how it works - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7_f-pR8SBY

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL) is a community-based, non-profit organization serving people with all disability types in the ten counties of southwestern Minnesota through:

*Individual and Systems Advocacy *Cross-disability Peer Counseling
*Information and Referral *Independent Living Skills Training *Public Education

All of SWCIL’s programs and services are consumer controlled with an emphasis on improving the quality of life for all people with disabilities. SWCIL’s aim is to provide education and awareness to promote inclusion, acceptance and equal access in society for all people with disabilities.

For more information about SWCIL programs and services, please contact us at:
109 South 5th Street, Suite 700—Marshall, MN 56258 Phone: (507) 532-2221 or
(800) 422-1485 (For MN Relay, dial 711) or fax (507) 532-2222.

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