

Centerpieces

a publication of

**Southwestern Center for
Independent Living (SWCIL)**

Serving People with Disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota

SWCIL Board Member Spotlight – Janice Ross



Janice Ross

My name is Janice Ross, and I normally go by Jan. Currently I am retired but do some part time work as a para professional for Marshall Public Schools. I was employed at SMSU for twenty-six and a half years, which I really enjoyed.

I have four wonderful kids (three daughters & one son) and ten awesome grandkids! Scrapbooking is my favorite hobby, but I also enjoy dancing, golfing, and of course attending my grandkids' sporting events.

I learned about the SWCIL board when Dan Snobl approached me and asked me if I'd be interested in serving on it. Dan briefly filled me in as to what SWCIL was all about and felt I had the qualities to serve as a board member. I have served for about a year.

As board members we govern the activities of the organization. We reach out to the surrounding area to make individuals aware of what SWCIL is and has to offer to those needing its assistance. We also have to reach out and follow up on the needs of those using our services. The present staff and officers do an outstanding job, which helps make our job easier! I enjoy getting involved helping others by spreading the word as to what SWCIL has to offer and referring them to the Director.

Continued on page 2 ...

Winter Issue 2019

Also in this issue . . .

Consumer Success Story

Disability Awareness Day

Temporary Ramp Rental, and more

Board Member Spotlight – Janice Ross ... Cont'd

Being a fairly new member, I am still in the 'learning' stage and really can't comment on changes the organization has had to undergo over the years. I was surprised at the number of counties that our local office covers, a huge task accomplished by some very good employees of SWCIL.

If anyone would be interested in becoming a board member, I would highly encourage them to apply and get involved with all that SWCIL does and has to offer. It's been a learning experience for me thus far but I enjoy being a part of working with the fine people that serve on the board.

To apply for board membership, contact SWCIL for an application.

Current Board of Directors Include:

Michelle Pflaum, Chair -Marshall

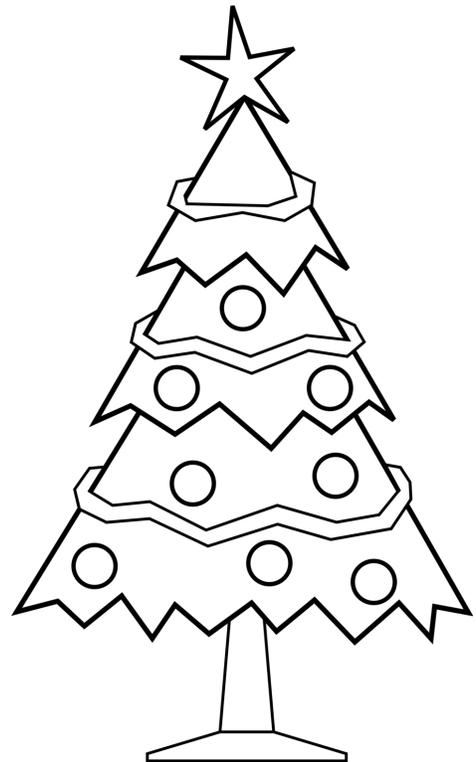
Pamela Russell, Vice Chair -
Marshall

Tashauna Swanson, Treasurer
Marshall

Maria Trejo, Secretary
Tracy

Daniel Snobl, Member
Tracy

Janice Ross, Member, Marshall



Decorated tree

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.

Temporary Ramp Rental Program by Adam Chandler



Roll-A-Ramp

Roll-A-Ramps can be rolled up like a sleeping bag and are customizable to your needs. They are ideal for multiple steps and can be set up from 4 feet to over 40 feet.

Suitcase ramps fold in half and are also portable, so they can be set up quickly. Both ramps can be rented for up to three months through rental agreements, at \$50 per month, with a one-time set up-and-take-down fee of \$150. The feedback for the new program has been overwhelmingly positive.

Currently we are servicing a 35-mile area surrounding Marshall. As this program grows we will look at expanding our service area.



Suitcase foldable ramp

SWCIL to host Ed Roberts Day Open House



Ed Roberts

Often called the father of the Independent Living movement, Ed Roberts is a well-known name among people with disabilities and advocates the world over. And again this year SWCIL is planning to host its annual open house in his memory and honor, on **January 23, 2020**.

So plan on stopping by the SWCIL office between 11:30 A.M. and 1:30 P.M. for hot dogs and cider and to learn more about the Independent Living movement and the services and programs SWCIL offers.

Consumer Success Story – by Dan Wahl



Nick Green

Small successes are worth celebrating because they add up to big ones. It's like growing a bonsai tree. Each watering, fertilizing, pruning and wiring is a small successful moment in the life of the tree.

Nick Green's success is learning how to maintain a personal calendar. This sounds as small as a bonsai, but when you connect it with the rest of his life it starts to take on more importance. For example, while learning this organizational skill he also got his first job. And a job requires you to pay attention to its schedule.

"That was a struggle at first," Nick said. "There was no reliable solution to the problem. I had to rely on others because I believed it was my only option."

Before learning this skill, Nick struggled to stay on top of his appointments. His past efforts were

scattered and inconsistent. He tried calendars, daily planners, and random notes. He also tended to rely on other people to tell him where he needed to go and when.

One small success was to figure out a calendar app on his electronic device. This took practice, with check-ins from SWCIL staff to ensure that his training was on track. "I had to get myself into the habit of using the app," Nick said. "It took a while but I got better at it over time."

Another small success was learning how to download and use an app from his employer that would tell him his work schedule. Before then, Nick had either relied on others or had been taping his work schedule to his device. But even that was a small success, because he was finding a way to transition from having no schedule to making notes to getting the notes into his phone. He was taking small steps towards independence.

Continued on page 6 ...

Upcoming SWCIL Events

RSVP: 507.532.2221 OR 800.422.1485 (for MN Relay, dial 711)
swcil@swcil.com OR message us on Facebook

All events are smoke and fragrance free

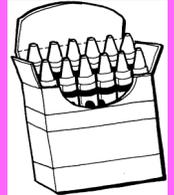
Reasonable Accommodations upon request

Adults-Only Coloring Club

When: Dec. 16, Jan. 27, Feb. 24, Mar. 30, April 20, May 18

Where: Marshall SWCIL Office

Time: 4:30-6:00 P.M. **Cost:** Free **Please RSVP!**



Crayons

Craft Night

When: Feb. 10, April 6, and June 15

Where: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church **Please RSVP!**

Time: 4:30-5:30 P.M. **Cost:** \$2.00 (receipts available)

Marshall Area Social Rec

When: Dec. 13 (Christmas Dance), Feb. 21, May 1, June 26

Where: St. Stephen's Church

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

Cost: Costs vary—call for details

Help Is Here! - Community Education Class

When: Dec. 17

Where: Redwood Falls Public Library

Time: 6:00-8:00 P.M.

Cost: Costs vary—call for details

Learn about all the programs, services, and other resources available to help meet your basic needs and enable you to live more independently – including SSI/SSDI, VRS, food shelf, PIC, UCAP, SWCIL, and waiver services, etc.

**To receive flyers by email, call or email swcil@swcil.com
Friends & family are welcome and encouraged to attend!**

Consumer Success Story ... Cont'd

Another small success was to troubleshoot a problem with maintaining his personal calendar. Eventually he pinpointed the source of the problem, which turned out to simply be that his aged electronic device, which he had named Charlotte, couldn't keep a charge. Charlotte had become unreliable. "The device kept getting slower and more frustrating to use," he said.

Nick's next small success was to procure a smartphone. He spent several weeks researching to find something affordable that would fit his wants and needs. And when he became the proud new owner of the smartphone he soon began teaching himself how to use the calendar app that will help him stay organized.

Nick's own personal calendar will continue to grow in usefulness as he tends to it, keeping it up to date and tweaking it to suit his needs. It's not exactly something he can show off, but, in a small way, it's a big accomplishment.



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



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.

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 and *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.

For All You Pedestrians by Ted Stamp

Each summer SWCIL does an accessibility assessment on the sidewalks, curb cuts, intersections, around Marshall and submits detailed summaries of its findings to the city engineer's office as well as route bus stops submitted to Community Transit. For years the City has done a tremendous job hearing our concerns and repairing or replacing problematic areas as soon as their construction schedule permits. (The new sidewalks on both sides of Main Street and along the south side of Saratoga Street are recent examples of huge improvements for pedestrians.)

But when using some of these intersections on foot or bicycle (or even just driving by), you may have noticed that many of the signs on the Accessible Pedestrian Signal poles around town are severely faded or otherwise damaged. You may have also noticed that the volume of some of these crossing announcements/warnings is too quiet to hear over the sound of traffic or strong wind. And while problems like these might seem minor to some people, they make an enormous difference to those whose ability to see, hear, or get around is either partially or entirely impaired.

But there is good news in this regard. After submitting the results of the most recent assessments to the City and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), SWCIL received confirmation that, wherever needed, these signs will soon be replaced with new ones and the volume levels and workability of the crossing buttons will be adjusted or fixed as necessary. So keep your eyes and ears peeled for these changes.



Accessible Pedestrian Signal Sign



Candy Cane

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 Street, Suite 700, Marshall, MN 56258 or call the office at 507.532.2221 ext 101.

Southwestern Center for Independent Living
109 South 5th Street, Suite 700
Marshall, MN 56258-1268
Phone: 507-532-2221 or 800-422-1485 (For MN Relay, dial 711)

Website: <http://www.swcil.com>
E-mail: swcil@swcil.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SWCILMarshallMN

PRST STD
US Postage
PAID
Marshall, MN
Permit 20

Return service requested

Funding for Independent Living Services is provided by MN DEED-VRS from the State's General Fund and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Holly



Bells

Season's Greetings



Back: Adam Chandler, Program Manager; Ruth Hubbling, IL Specialist; Jen Thovson, Program Manager; Shelby Horner, CC Program Coordinator; Teri Woelfel, IL Specialist; Harry Remley, Peer Mentor; Dan Wahl, IL Specialist; Marie Grengs, IL Specialist; Front: Deb Gratz, Administrative Assistant; Kathy Monahan, IL Support Assistant; Annette Swanson, Grants & Finance Manager; Shanda Walker, IL Specialist; Ted Stamp, IL Advocate; Melissa Doherty, Executive Director; Not Pictured: Linda Halbur, Program Manager