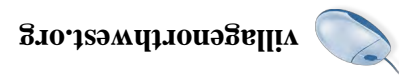
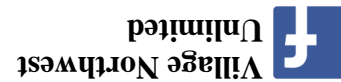




The VNU Independence Day Celebration offers something fun for all ages. Join us early for food booths and entertainment. Stay until the end for the spectacular fireworks show at dusk.

- Food Booths Open at 5:00 pm
 - Entertainment Begins at 6:00 pm
 - Amazing Race*, ice cream parlor, carnival games, balloon artist*, fire truck rides*, petting zoo*, pony rides*, horse drawn wagon rides*, kiddie train, kiddie ferris wheel, inflatables, laser tag, 9-square*, and more...
 - Kelsey K on the Outdoor Stage* at 7:00 and 8:45 pm
 - Fireworks* at Dark
- *indicates free activity*

All activities are located on the Village campus at 330 Village Circle, Sheldon. Visit bit.ly/VNU-2016IndDay for more information.



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330 Village Circle
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PEERS Training for Autism Launched

By: Ryan Groeneweg

Everyone has had experiences in life that are difficult to face. They are especially difficult if you must face them alone. Research by Dr. Laugeson, Founder and Director of the UCLA Program for Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) Clinic and Curriculum, revealed that those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are 9 times more likely to be bullied over any other disability group. Individuals with ASD frequently struggle to develop friendships or a social network due to social deficits. The result is that many with a diagnosis of ASD are prone to being targeted by bullies or are victims of peer rejection. This cycle of peer rejection and potential for bullying, in turn, increases social isolation and decreases the potential for making friends.

The solution to this negative cycle is to help those with ASD develop the skills necessary to make friends and improve their social network and support.

The Program for Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS), is a parent-assisted intervention extensively tested with those with ASD, focusing on teens and young adults who are having difficulty making and keeping friends. PEERS sessions include separate parent and teen/young adult classes that meet weekly for 90 minutes over a 14-week period. The groups focus on skills like having conversations; entering and exiting conversations; using electronic forms of communication; choosing appropriate friends; handling teasing, bullying, and other forms of social rejection; handling arguments and disagreements with friends; sportsmanship; and having appropriate get-togethers with friends, including how to be a good host.



Ryan Groeneweg, Director of Autism Services, and Karma Funk, Cognitive Skills Instructor, attended the UCLA PEERS training in Los Angeles, CA in February 2016 to obtain certification as PEERS instructors. The training and opportunity to participate in PEERS sessions with clients and parents was a tremendous benefit and provided valuable knowledge about how the program operates.

Upon return to Village Northwest, Ryan and Karma have organized and launched the first certified PEERS program in the state of Iowa. The program began in April 2016 and will continue weekly through July. There are 5 young adults participating in the program.

Managed Care Arrives...VNU Mission Remains Unchanged

By: Barry Whitsell

On April 1, 2016 Iowa Medicaid members became enrolled in one of three managed care organizations (MCOs) that have contracted with the State of Iowa: Amerigroup Iowa, Inc.; AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa, Inc.; and United Healthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc. Each MCO will contract with a network of providers (including Village Northwest Unlimited), to provide and pay for the health care services for each Medicaid member. The MCOs are charged with assuring all services are person-centered, with a focus on outcomes. This new approach for the Medicaid program is known as IA Health Link and will cover over 550,000 individuals. The State of Iowa has converted all Village residents to this new system.

The Village team has been working to prepare for this conversion through system and process changes. While change always brings a certain amount of anxiety and uncertainty, there is one thing that will remain the same for the individuals

served by the Village. Our staff will continue to serve the residents of the Village with a commitment to providing Purpose, Privacy and Dignity. We will continue to work with our residents and their family members to ensure their loved one receives the care they need. We will be an advocate for our residents because it is part of our mission and our passion to provide the highest quality care to our residents.

Our commitment to providing Purpose, Privacy and Dignity will not change due to MCO changes. We trust that it is the peace of mind that people need when change is swirling around them.



Scholarship Awarded



Village Northwest Unlimited and the family of Linda De Groot are pleased to announce that Macy Jacobsma, daughter of Kory and Krissa Jacobsma, is the 2016 recipient of the Linda De Groot/Village Northwest Unlimited Spirit of Caring Scholarship. Macy plans to attend Dordt College in Sioux Center, IA to pursue an education major with emphasis in special education.

Linda De Groot was the Director of Public Relations and Business Development at the Village and was a valuable employee for over 20 years. Linda lost her battle with cancer on October 15, 2006 and this scholarship honors her legacy of caring. The \$1000 scholarship is awarded to a graduating senior of Sheldon Community High School who will be entering into a career field that focuses on working with individuals who have disabilities.



Advisory Council Visits Legislators

Four officers of the Village Northwest Unlimited Advisory Council, along with staff members, traveled to Des Moines, IA April 6-7, 2016 to meet with the four legislators from our area: Senators Feenstra and Johnson and Representatives Kooiker and Huseman.

The group was able to spend quality time with the legislators sharing concerns about Federal and State mandates being imposed which are having major impact on vocational, residential and social programs. They also discussed the impact of transferring to Managed Care Organizations.

After discussion, Senator Feenstra gave a tour of the Governor's office, the Law Library, and both the Senate and House Chambers.

Ben Bush Creates Jewelry

Ben Bush has been creating jewelry since he was 12 years old. Today, he's operating his own online business called Simple Indigo. He creates unique jewelry designs that are inspired from working with beads. "Different ideas come to me when I see the different beads," says Bush. "I usually do not make more than two items the same. They're unique."

When he began making jewelry, his creations included necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Today, he's found his niche in earrings and that's what he spends most of his time creating. Ben uses mostly glass beads, low grade sterling silver hypo-allergenic hardware and surgical steel materials for his earrings.



Prices for earrings from Simple Indigo range from \$2.50 to \$24.00 per pair. "The price depends upon the type of beads used and the time it takes to create them," says Bush. His inventory includes earrings made from paper beads that originated in Uganda through Fair Trade stores. He's also found ways to re-purpose old jewelry to salvage the beads.

What started as a hobby, is now an online business. "I'd really like to see it grow to a larger business," says Ben. "I create the jewelry, list it on my website and do all packaging and shipping from home."

You can see Ben's work at www.simpleindigo.org.

GO! Game Club

Alec Schultz has launched a Go Game Club at the Village. Go is a 2-person game of strategy where the goal is to surround more territory than your opponent. It's played on a board (usually 19" x 19") with a grid of black lines. Game pieces, called stones, are played on the intersections of the lines. Alec launched the game club to share his enjoyment of the game. Alec's goals for the club include for it to grow in numbers and for attendance and participation to include people from the Sheldon community.

Alec's interest in the game started at about the age of 15. He watched a television show called "Hikaru No Go" about a boy named Hikaru who discovers a Go board while exploring in his grandfather's shed. Hikaru becomes intrigued by the game and learns to play. Alec's interest in the game grew after seeing the television series and he eventually found additional information online that helped him gain an understanding of the game.

Go is an ancient game with origins in China, Korea and Japan. Theories suggest that the game was derived from Chinese generals who used pieces of stone to map out attacking positions in their battle strategy. Go is slowly spreading from East Asia to the rest of the world.

Alec describes Go as being similar to checkers in that it is simple to learn, but he explains that it is also similar to chess in that it's difficult to master. "For me, I like the game because I am able to test my wits," says Alec. "Chess is specific and the moves are constrictive. Go has so many possibilities because you can play anywhere on the board."

Special Olympics Iowa Summer Games



50 Meter dash

Nicole A - 3rd place | Bob S - 3rd place

25 Meter Manual Wheelchair Race

Todd E - 1st place

400 Meter Walk Race

Les VE - 3rd Place | Janet G - 6th Place

Standing Long Jump

Nicole A - 6th place | John L - 2nd place

Running Long jump

Scott W - 1st place

Shot Put

Chad W - 7th place | Matt K - 4th place

Mini Turbo Javelin Throw

Jessica W - 1st place | Bob S - 1st place

Bocce Ball Team

Bob S, Mike K, Charles W, Scott W - 1st place

Soccer Skills

Nicole A & Chad W - 1st place

Brad F & Jessica W - 2nd Place

Matt S, Justin G & Darcy E - 3rd place

Austin B - 6th place

