Go for the Gold
by Jeffrey Johnson

I interviewed Mark Vroman on Monday January 12, 2009 at his house at 4:00pm. Mark said he started speed skating in 2002. He really likes speed skating and competition. Mark is a person with a disability. He is in many sports events with Special Olympics. Mark’s sister took him to some ice rinks when he was younger. Due to his sister’s training and interest Mark started speed skating. Mark enjoys competition so began competing with Special Olympics speed skating.

Mark goes to the West YMCA for training with both of his coaches Steven and Kathleen. When Mark competes he has to wear a helmet and knee pads. He has black skating boots; they are longer then regular skates. He practices at the Camp Randall Memorial, also known as the Shell, by the football stadium. He has to use weights for his legs and abs and also his arms that is part of his training.

Mark had to practice and train for speed skating. He trained at Copper Mountain near Denver, Colorado in December. The Winter Games in 2009 will be in Boise Idaho. Mark will be on the USA team. He wants to do good in all of his events. He will be trying for the gold in the 500 meters and the 600 meters races. We all wish Mark the best of luck in his races.

Infoshare
by Catherine E. Clodius

I had the chance to attend the Infoshare that was held at the Alliant Expo Center on Tuesday February 24, 2009. This Infoshare featured the theme of travel.

The day started off with a presentation by Janet Estervig of trips that she took and the pictures she took of her many travels. Janet talked of the fun she had while in Australia and New Zealand and being in Machu Picchu.

Next we heard some piano and singing from Christine of Encore that took requests and made up songs and played lively on the piano. That was a lot of fun with much laughter.

For lunch we had a Taco bar with chicken, beef, and refried beans along with chips and salsa. Every one really enjoyed the Taco bar. They also served ice water and lemonade.

There were three workshops in the morning and after lunch and at lunch we heard some lively Marimba music.

There were also a lot of nice raffle prizes.

There was also a wide variety of exhibits ranging from wonderful jewelry, doggy treats, travel companies such as Able Trek, and Badger Camp was well represented.

It was just such a fun day had by all who attended.
Some once said “Smile, things could be worse. So I smiled, and sure enough, things got worse”. I’m writing this the day after the Governor announced that the State is in deeper do-do than he thought and our County Executive announced that because of what the Governor said and because of the bad economy, the County is in the same do-do pool.

So, what does that mean. You all can guess, cause we’ve been doing more with less for quite a while now. And it looks like we gonna have even more less (that really bad English) and we’re gonna have less of it real soon… like before the end of the year. And next year’s not gonna be any prettier. We don’t have details yet, but we’re gonna start now looking at more savings we can get from our programs. And we are asking anybody with ideas to let us know. No idea is silly. So, let me or your broker or provider know what you are thinking.

Another thing that has been talked about is Family Care. That’s the State’s program that would change how and who would be supporting people with disabilities and our frail elders. We thought that we would be changing our system in about 2014. Well, the Governor decided he would like Dane County to start earlier… in 2011, but our County Executive has asked the State to give us more time to make the change. We are not sure yet when the change will happen.

And finally, I must say that the CHOICES’ reporters have put together some fine articles. Everything from our last Infoshare to book reports; from personal interviews to announcements of upcoming fun events; from pets to alligators. Quite a collection. So enjoy yourself and we’ll be in touch.

People First of Dane County

Summer Picnic & Mallard’s Game

Where: Warner Park Shelter
When: July 24, 5pm-9pm
What: Potluck picnic and Mallard’s Game
Bring: A dish to share and $7.00 for Mallard’s ticket

RSVP to Stefanie by July 1st at 263-5557 or primm@waisman.wisc.edu
Why are Bengal Tigers Endangered?

by Emily Datta
02-18-09

There are more than 10,000 species of animals in the world that are endangered of becoming extinct! The five types of tigers are Siberian, South China, Indo-Chinese, Royal Bengal and Sumatran.

First, over one hundred years ago there used to be about 60,000 tigers living in the wild! The Royal Bengal tigers are the largest mammals in the cat family. The word mammal means to breed calves and give milk to their young.

Second, where do the tigers live? All tigers live in long, tall grassy areas, and they also live in thick forests too! All tigers hide during the daytime, but at night they come out to hunt.

Next, why are Bengal tigers becoming extinct? Tigers become extinct for a number of reasons, because the humans are killing them. The first reason is to make money by selling their skin and bones into valuables, and make medicine remedies. The second reason is that the tiger’s habitat is being destroyed and the third reason is farming and irrigation.

Since the hunters and poachers don’t listen and don’t back off then the law enforcers stepped in to help the tigers by protecting them with services of conservation groups, such as World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to stop the tiger hunting.

In Conclusion: In the beginning the tigers were fine until the humans arrived into their lives.

Working for a Co-Op
by Jeffrey Johnson

I interviewed Erin Hodge and her job coach Paul today outside of the Willy Street Co-op and this is what I learned about Erin’s job at the co-op. We talked a little about her job.

The Willy Street Co-op is a business run by its members. Everyone who is a member is also part-owner of the Willy Street Co-op. I wanted to become a member of the Willy Street Co-op because I know the people here very well. I wanted to be a part owner of the Co-op.

Erin likes restocking the bags and boxes of candy. Erin says, “I like this job because I can do different things at the co-op. I also restock the cereal boxes and put them back in order. I am very good at my job. I work on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Willy Street Co-op.” Erin and Paul are not really sure how long she has worked at the Willy Street Co-op. She likes all of the staff there. They are very nice to her and don’t pick on her. If Erin does a very good job her reward is that she can have a treat for free.

Erin has two other jobs. She also works at the Madison Children’s Museum on Fridays and at St. Mary’s Hospital. Erin used to work at DWD. She did paper work until they had money problems. She also worked at Lum’s washing dishes.

My Florida Vacations
by Alison Martens

My family is really cool! My mom and dad take me to a lot of exciting places. One of my favorite places to go with them is Florida! Every year, at least once, my parents take me to Naples, Florida where we have a vacation home. We have driven and flown there. I prefer to fly because we get there a lot faster. My parents are fun people. When we are in Florida we go to the community pool, the beach, the mall, and we go out to eat at different restaurants. One time when we were in Florida we went to Disney World with my friend Mary. I have also held an alligator on one of our trips.

An Alligator
The Life of Ferrets
By Dora Norland and Diane Christoph

Ferrets are mustelids, members of the family called Mustelidae. Other members of this family include the skunk, the otter and the badger. Ferrets are also related to the black-footed ferret, an endangered wild animal that lives in the western United States. Ferrets come in many different colors and patterns including chocolate, silver, cinnamon, and the most common color, sable.

Young ferrets are called kits; a male ferret is called a hob and a female ferret is called a jill. The average male ferret weighs 3-4 pounds and the female ferret weighs 1-2 pounds. Ferrets are born with a scent gland, like a skunk. When they are spayed or neutered, the scent gland is also removed.

Because ferrets are curious creatures, there are many dangers for ferrets in the home. These include appliances like refrigerators, stoves, dishwashers, dryers and washing machines because they like to climb in small places. Kitchen and bathroom cabinets can also be a danger to them. Or any small place they can climb into and go to sleep. Ferrets must be watched when out of their cage.

A ferret diet is like the diet of a cat or dog. Their main food is dry ferret food called kibble. It’s made just for ferrets. They can also eat fruits, vegetables, peanut butter, ferret bites and meat flavored cat treats. Do not feed ferrets dairy products, chocolate, candy, salty foods, onions, garlic or bread.

Dakota has a wire cage with a hammock, cat bed, and old sheets. Sometimes she stays in her cage when she can’t be watched carefully. Dakota likes to play with paper tubes, chew toy, plastic bags, boxes, old socks and material, and squeaky toys.

At home Dakota needs her nails clipped like a cat or dog and sometimes they have to give Dakota a bath. If she gets sick Dakota has to go to a pet clinic. She doesn’t need to see a special ferret veterinarian, just a regular vet.

If you are interested in learning more about ferrets, there are some good books in the library. Ask your librarian. You can also find ferrets at the Dane County Humane Society [DCHS]. Their website http://www.giveshelter.org/ or call (608) 838-0413. At DCHS ferrets cost $75 for oneferret or $115 for a pair of ferrets. You can also buy ferrets at PetWorld store in Madison for $149 for one ferret. Both of us can say we really learned a lot about ferrets and had fun meeting one too!!

The Arc-Wisconsin Day-Trips

The Brewers trips on June 25 and August 13 are selling fast! Transportation will be provided in comfortable 15 passenger vans equipped with individualized A/C controls. One van is already filled, help us fill a second!!! $50 covers all costs including a pregame tailgate grill. Peanuts and crackerjacks are extra.

Circus World will be the destination on July 13. $30 covers admission to the museum, all shows and lunch.

Our season finale will be luncheon and a show at the Fireside Theatre on November 11. Come see the holiday classic, Miracle on 34th Street. Treat yourself to a holiday experience you won’t forget.....at $125, this is even a better deal than Able Trek!

Easy payment plans as low as $10/month can be arranged. For more info and registration forms, go to:

http://www.arc-wisconsin.org/arcwisconsin/day+tripper+tours/default.asp
or contact Duncan McNelly at 608-222-8907 x 3
I met Polly Lee at the Sun Prairie Library. She works 40 hours a week, full-time, at the Walgreen’s Distribution Center second shift in Windsor, Wisconsin. Polly takes products and puts them in totes, which look like laundry baskets, onto a long conveyor belt. There is a computer that tells Polly how many products she needs to put in each tote. Each product and each tote is coded so that when they are full they ship directly to the store that needs them.

Polly started at Walgreen’s by volunteering through the school vocational program. She began volunteering there in the fall of 2007 when there were only five students working at the distribution center. After that Polly was hired in the summer of 2008 for seasonal work. Jay and John are Polly’s supervisors and she likes working with them. Most of her coworkers are nice to her and will ask her to sit with them during their breaks. She says that the hardest part is keeping up with the pace of filling totes since she always has a certain number to fill.

Polly takes Van Galder bus through Waunakee and sometimes it can be difficult at night when there is overtime and she has to stay later than her 10:30 pick up. The bus company can get upset when she calls in last minute to reschedule her ride and it delays her pick up time.

In addition to Walgreen’s, Polly is enrolled in the Cardinal graduate program for 18 to 21 year olds. This program helps Special Education student’s transition from high school by teaching them life skills. She attends school only on Tuesdays, and works the remaining weekdays. Polly is graduating from high school this spring.

I met Scott at his 20 year anniversary party at Sequoya Library on Madison’s near west side. Scott started there as a volunteer in 1988. He continued to help out as a student worker while attending Lafollette High School. After graduating he stayed with Sequoya Library as a paid employee.

Scott’s work schedule is Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. He works for an hour and a half each day at the Sequoya Library. Scott has a very good support system that includes his support team and his co-workers. He knows when he gets to work it is time to get focused.

Getting the job done is rewarding for Scott. Scott’s coworkers come and visit him while he is working. Sometimes Scott’s coworkers change duties with him but his main responsibility is taking the forms and stamping them. Everyone at the library likes him a lot and they say he is one of their best employees. They appreciate his hard work. Congratulations, Scott!
Spring Dance
by Dan Remick

The Arc of Dane County had a spring dance at the Concourse Hotel on Sunday March 22nd, 2009. We had lots of good food and good music. We had about 260 people there. Our spring dance was from 2pm to 5pm. It was a very nice day.

Arc of Dane County and Arc of Wisconsin had an annual Banquet on April 29th, 2009 and that was also at the Concourse Hotel, from 5pm to about 9pm.

Meet Emma Czarapata
Options Community Builder
by Dan Remick

Emma started working for Options in Community Living in April of 1989. She was teaching in Poland from 1985 to 1988. She said there were not many opportunities for disabled people in Poland. She started working at the UW in September of ’88. Emma worked in an office for one of the residential halls.

Options truly believes in the rights of the people they support. They put a lot of emphasis on having clients exercise their rights. There is a lot of creative thinking at Options and staff gives terrific support. Options incorporates community building into their agency.

Emma enjoys her works and thinks highly of the people she supports. She has learned a lot from people who are thought to not have much. She has made many in-depth friendships. Supports are always changing due to the budget. The community is now more welcoming to those folks who are differently able. There is more awareness and acceptance among the community. There are more places that are accessible and more opportunities to travel for people with disabilities. Also, institutions are closing. Options helps individuals connect with others. They do a lot with the Dane County Time Bank, United Way, and VolunteerYourTime.org. Options also facilitates friendship circles. Emma wants to stay here and loves her job.

Book Report
by Christa Decker

This book was about a trip that the author took to Egypt. She learns a lot of cool and interesting things on her trip. The author learned about the history of Egypt and even how to say some of the ancient Egyptian names for people and places. The author of this book was very excited to learn about the many different Egyptian gods and goddesses. Every time she encountered something new, she wrote it in her journal, including the time that she went to visit a pyramid. There, she got to hear stories about how the country of Egypt was formed and about the most famous Egyptian god, Amun-Ra.

What made this book interesting was that it really opened up my eyes and my mind to a different world that was far away. What I liked most about this book was that it was fun and exciting to learn about another country and its culture.

My dislike about the book was finding out that there was a lot of fighting and wars involved in the building of the country, Egypt.

I would highly recommend this book to people who are looking for an adventure because this was a really good book.

Spring Rich
by Dale Buttke

I often wonder what it’s like being rich
I would like to be in riches
But don’t want to lose my britches.

I once heard of them,
Sounds like it’s a sin,
I also heard they aren’t happy,
To me, it sounded sappy.

I know it don’t buy joy.
I like buying some electronic toys.
And it won’t buy love
On a wing of a snow-white dove.

One day very soon,
Will I live on a moon?
Or will I be flying through space
Fly like in a race.

But I will be content,
With what heaven has sent,
Wondering what it’s like, Being Rich.

William Gates,
#1 richest man in the world
Putting Choices Together
by Catherine E. Clodius

I had the chance just recently to sit down and ask Nan Cline some questions about her job and how she puts the Choices Newsletter together.

Nan works as the secretary/receptionist for the Adult Community Services at Dane County Human Services. When there is an emergency with an adult Nan will need to track down a social worker. She does the layout for the Choices and other booklets as well.

I asked Nan how long it takes to put together the Choices and she replied that it takes approximately 4 hours spread over time to lay out the articles. Nan learned to do graphic design at MATC over a 5 year period of time while working full time and going to school part time.

Nan spends some time each week on the articles but it takes another 2 hours to put Choices together and have it approved by Stefanie. It then goes to the printers and then to the university where the names are put on and sent out.

The Choices newsletter began in 2000 and I asked Nan what her favorite issue is and she replied every new issue becomes her favorite.

I would just like to thank Nan for taking time out her busy schedule to sit down and talk to me.

Nan and her grandson, Elliott

Right Touch Massage
by Jeffrey Johnson

Kersten gets massages from Right Touch Massage at her own house from Gail Merkel. Gail does all different kind of massages. Gail will come out to a client’s house to give massages or the clients can come out to Gail’s house.

Kersten was in a car accident so she gets therapeutic massage to help her muscles and joints. Kersten likes the massages because they make her feel good, ease the pain, and reduces stress. Kersten’s massages take about an hour. Kersten’s massages cost $60.00; the cost for others may vary. Kersten pays out of pocket for her massages. Kersten started getting massages about a year ago. She gets massages two times a month. Kersten really looks forward to having Gail come to her house.

My School Life
by Allison Martens

I started school when I was 5 years old. The first school I attended was Yahara Elementary School. I went to Yahara for kindergarten. Then we moved to Sacramento, California where I attended elementary school from 1st through 3rd grade. After 3rd grade, we moved back to Stoughton, Wisconsin and I once again attended Yahara Elementary.

In 5th and 6th grade I attended Sandhill Middle School. After that I went to River Bluff Junior High School for 7th and 8th grade. For my high school years I attended Stoughton High School.

My favorite thing about school has been my friends. I have known some of my friends since I was in kindergarten. Another favorite thing about school has been my educational assistant. They have helped me throughout the years with every thing from schoolwork, to social issues, to personal care.
I met with Tom Veek and Dan Blomgren on Wednesday at Roasters Coffee Shop in Stoughton. Dan is the lead person of his advocacy group called People First of Stoughton. Tom helps Dan get people involved with People First of Stoughton. They have only been working on this for one year. They started out with about 4 or 5 members and now they have between 15 and 20 members. Tom and Dan have gotten different people like friends and family involved working with the schools. They meet on the first Thursday of each month from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

The group’s very first project was to make Valentine’s cards and Christmas cards and send them out. They are also working very hard to advocate for more community inclusion in Stoughton. Currently they are seeking new members, donations, and planning different events to attend or sponsor. Dan and I are both planning a 10 year Anniversary party for People First Wisconsin in December.

Maureen Arcand:  
80 Years of Activism and Advocacy 
by Dan Remick

This article is about Maureen Arcand. Maureen celebrated her 80th birthday party on April 30th at the Goodman Community Center. There were a lot of people there. Some of those people included: Kathleen Falk, Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, the Director of Movin’ Out Mr. Howard Mandeville, and Stefanie Primm.

Maureen was a person with disability that did a lot for people with disabilities in Dane County. In fact, she is my hero and someone I look up to. I am pursuing the same work she has done in her life.

Many people received Arcand Achievement awards at Maureen’s birthday. Maureen won the Arcand Lifetime Achievement award. Sadler Bell won the Arcand Young Disability Advocate Award. Tim Radelet won the Arcand Housing Advocacy Award. Marcie Brost won the Arcand Unstoppable Spirit Award. LOV-Dane (Living Our Visions) won the Arcand Outstanding Family Advocacy Award. It was a very wonderful day. Knowing Maureen the way I do, I really feel she will continue to work for all people with disabilities in Dane County.

UPCOMING MEETINGS 
for People First of Stoughton:

- June 4th from 4-6 pm @ Stoughton Senior Center Annex
- July 2nd from 4-6 pm @ Stoughton Senior Center Annex
- August 6th from 4-6 pm @ Stoughton Senior Center Annex
I went to the Concourse Hotel on Wednesday, April 29th, 2009 for the Arc of Dane County Award Banquet. It started at about 6:00. I introduced Kitty and Paul King to Paul Yochum, the director of the Arc of Dane County.

I asked Kitty King to join the board of the Arc of Dane County. I think Kitty will make a very good board member because Kitty used to work for Access to Independence. She is very good working with people with developmental disabilities. She has been working as a special Ed Teacher at East High School for the past seven years. She really likes and enjoys working with people with disabilities.

When I got to the Arc Banquet I was wheeling around in my wheelchair looking at all of the different things they were going to auction off that evening. I was the only one that bid on Ricardo’s cds and I won two of them for only $15. They were selling his cd’s for 1 @$15 or two for $25. I think they closed the Silent action at 7:00 pm.

Here are the 2009 Award recipients. The Community Support award goes to Mary Beth Wilk. The Corporate Support award went to Stafford Rosenbaum LLP. The Award for Volunteer program goes to RSVP of Dane County Inc. and Oscar Mayer R.E.A.D.I. Volunteer Program. The winner of the Educator –Teacher Award was Dr. Joseph Schmiedicke. The Employer award went to Jeff and Jon from Just Coffee. Some of the awards were given out by Tracy, Joe, Paul Yochum and Mark Leader.

The Media award went to Mathew DeFour from the Wisconsin State Journal. After Mathew DeFour, they introduced a board member and a very good self – advocate, Petra Zwettler. She got the self-advocate award. The next award was the Direct Care Giver award. The award goes to Lorie Bussian and to Flo Slowiak and John Grabowski. The Elected Official award goes to Supervisor Barbara Vedder and Supervisor Bret Hulsey. The Special Recognition Award goes to Jeremy Shafton for helping us build a new Arc of Dane County web site. The President’s award goes to Susan and James Dvorsky. Last but not least is the Lifetime Achievement Award which went to a very nice woman who is 97 years young and her name is Hermine Dicke.

I would just like to say congratulations to all of the 2009 Award recipients. I would like to say thank you to Joel DeSpain for hosting the 59th Annual Arc of Dane County Awards. We will be having our 60th Anniversary next year. The Arc of Dane County has been around for 60 years supporting people with disabilities and their families.

Arc Dane County 59th Award Banquet
by Jeffrey Johnson

CHOICES TEAM: Dale Buttke, Emily Data, Dora Norland, Jeffrey Johnson, and Diane Christoph

Fashion Show for All Abilities

Wednesday, 5-20-09
6:30 to 8:00 PM
Inn on the Park


Partnership: Wisconsin Fashion Week

Photography: Douglas Otto, Michelle Allen Photography, KelsyAnne Schoenhaar

Donations, In-Kind and Other:
Target, Orpheum Theater, Kohls Department Stores, Jennifer Addis, Jennifer Bendoritis, Richele Reiske - Lia Sophia Consultant, , Kim Kenney- Lia Sophia Consultant, Jeanne Malkowski, Diane Whitehouse, Ryan and Courtney Addis, Denise Marisch, Julie Wachholz, Michele Sayer, Kathy Addis, Melanie Fullmer, Angel Lawonn

Steering Committee: Rachel Weingarten, Rachel Friedman, Jessica Haven, Mindy Connors, Stephanie IIIiff, Chantel Brown, Jacquie Piraino, Nancy Murphy

And all the countless Volunteers:

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Please send your stories, comments and suggestions. Contributions, comments and suggestions are encouraged and may be directed to Stefanie Primm, Editor (see contact information in the box to the right).

CHOICES by e-mail
Prefer to reduce paper coming in the mail? Choices newsletter is now available electronically via e-mail. If you would prefer to receive a pdf or link, please e-mail Stefanie Primm: primm@waisman.wisc.edu

The next issue of CHOICES will be out in September. Contact the editor with ideas for articles before July 10. Articles due by August 7 or until the issue is full.

CHOICES Newsletter is published quarterly to provide information to consumers, families, guardians, and service providers about Self-Determination Services in Dane County. Contributions, comments and suggestions regarding CHOICES are encouraged and may be directed to:

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CHOICES is available on-line:
http://cow.waismanwisc.edu
Web versions do not include Connections ads or Transitions information.

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Did you know that Choices newsletter has a fun color version that you can view online? http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/publications.html

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