My name is Amanda Bell and I am thrilled to be coordinating a new program called Assets, designed to help adults with developmental disabilities and their teams develop meaningful lives which rely less on systemic supports and more on the community as a whole. As you all know, waiting lists for County-funded services are increasing as funding dollars are decreasing, making life very challenging for many individuals with disabilities, their friends, families and allies. Many people are searching to find creative ways to solve these problems. I believe that as individuals with disabilities, their families and friends work together with the greater Dane County community, we can create meaningful lives even in the face of dwindling system resources.

For me this is a dream job which allows me to combine my passion with my professional and personal experiences. For the past ten years, I have been a special education teacher and case manager for students with disabilities from grade six through age twenty-one. In addition, I have provided training for other professionals on how to create inclusive schools and communities. I also have the firsthand experience of helping my brother, who is on the waiting list, create a rich life without County-funded residential supports.

In my first three months as the coordinator of Assets, I have had the opportunity to meet with approximately thirty adults and families that are on waiting lists in Dane County, countless service providers and community members. While each person and family has their own dreams and challenges, similar themes emerge. Individuals with disabilities and their families are searching for meaningful connections to other individuals and families in their community. People with disabilities want to have friends they can invite to do activities with them whether independently or with support. Families want their loved ones to have social connections and want to have non-paid people they can call on in case of emergency or when they simply need a night out. Also, many adults with disabilities want to move out from their family homes in the near future and are worried about how to do this without County funding.

The primary role of Assets is to support adults with developmental disabilities, their families and teams to develop and implement plans to make significant changes in their lives. For example, several families I am working with are creating a network in their neighborhood so that they have people to trade respite and social opportunities with. A group of young adults with disabilities and support brokers are working together to figure out how to extend social connections from structured social groups to friends to call on Friday night. Other families (See New Program, p 9)
Dan Sez...

Well, the most important thing this year has been decided… Jordin Sparks won American Idol.

I know you think there are other important things yet to be decided, like “When is Dane County going to switch over to Family Care?” (not sure, but it’ll be a couple of years) or “What does the 2008 budget look like?” (not sure, but it ain’t gonna be good). But, really. I think we can all sleep better, knowing who is the newest Idol.

So it’s important to celebrate the things as they happen (even if you wanted Sanjaya Malakar and his hair to win).

And one way to celebrate with a friend is to get connected to someone who has run an ad in the paper. Lots of opportunities. And if they are part of our system, they are way cooler than either Jordin or Sanjaya.

If you are looking for a place to go, how about the People First PICNIC and Mallards game on August 5th. Check it out, and think about becoming a regular member of People First. They have monthly meetings, usually the third Tuesday of the month over at the Options to Community offices.

If you like to bowl, check out the article by Jeffery Johnson; or check out Lina’s Women’s club.

Be sure to read the article by Amanda Bell about her efforts in trying to get folks connected to the community, and the CCLS Clubhouse article too. This community “Assets” idea is going to become part of our future.

And finally, check out Babcock Ice Cream…never know who you might run into.
Terri Johnson Moves On from Family Support and Resource Center

Having served as the Executive Director of Family Support and Resource Center for the past 20-plus years, Terri Johnson has decided to move on to something new. Terri’s contributions to families raising children with significant disabilities at home have been major. FSRC and other organizations supporting children and adults with disabilities in Dane County were founded in the 1980’s with the belief that bringing services to people with disabilities and their families in the community is the most effective way to support them, that people with disabilities are members of our community, valuable for who they are as well as the contributions they offer.

Terri initiated Movin’ Out, Inc. and the concept of home ownership for people with disabilities. FSRC’s Families Can’t Wait fund-raising campaign began under her leadership. Over $525,000 has been raised so far to provide financial assistance to meet the most urgent needs of families waiting for services. Under her leadership, LINK, a network of the providers of services to children with disabilities was formed. Terri wrote the “State of the System”, an annual report sent to state and local legislators advocating for children with disabilities.

Cautions Terri, “Most people today are not aware of how relatively quickly the services available today developed and changed, reversing a 100-year-old pattern of segregation and exclusion. We would do well, however, to remember the lessons from that history and to appreciate how easily it would be possible to retreat backwards to the way things were before.”

We will all miss Terri’s commitment and energy. She really cares!

INFOSHARE
SAVE the DATE!

On Friday, September 21st
INFOSHARE will present

A Diversity Festival

This is sure to be an exciting event!

*The days festivities will take place at the Jenny & Kyle Preserve next to MARC South/RES on Post Rd.

* There will be music by The Figureheads, various cultural learning opportunities, food and more!

If you have a talent, craft or cultural experience to share, please contact Rachel at (608) 890-0777 or weingarten@waisman.wisc.edu to become part of our Diversity Festival!

Call James at 265-9440 x 440 to register
Dashing with You

Dashing through my mind
Flash in the black sky
Like lightning bolts
Striking my bed post
Shaking my body

Images of you
Flash and fade
As the night air
Warms and cools
My body jerks and jeers
As you lurk in my dreams
Finding ways to move my muscle
To the rhythm of some far away ocean
The waves rise and fall
I can’t control them
They are like lobster legs
Swarming around my bed
Waiting to invade
Planning their attack

Of course I want to reach
Your vapors
Your peaks
Explore your green spaces
And hidden places
Full of fog and haze
Venture deep in your rain forest
Crack open your coconuts
Drink the sweet milk
Dance in your darkness.

I’ll sing with the larks
That fly overhead
Run nude between the trees
Crawl in your mud
Laugh loudly at the spiders
That join me in jubilee
Talk to the cockatoo
Hide in your undergrowth
Lay in your lush clovers
Rolling over and over
Until the rain is over

Until clouds break
Until the sky is Mirror lake or.
Until death or life or
Until rainbows are forever
Until death, life explodes.

-- Mick J

Panel Members
Chantel Brown
Catherine Clodius
Randy Will
Jacquie Piraino
Annette Skinner from Maurices
Patti Jasinski from Pendleton
Moderated by Nancy Murphy

Models
1. Sandra Austin
2. Mary Fisher
3. Connie Morgan
4. Chris Black
5. Lori Hendrikse
6. Azalea Heinz
7. Lisa Deneen
8. Rachel Christy
9. Drew Gough
10. Nelson Carlson
11. Carie Fae Kasten
12. Cheryl Pope
13. Mary Rogers
14. Chantel Brown
15. Lexi McSwain
16. Erin Light
17. Sheryn Healy
18. Katie Kohlman
19. Randy Sands
20. Linda Kapral

Participating Retailers
* Maurices * Pendleton * Cache * Atelier - Art to Wear * Wild Child *
* S&K Famous Brands Menswear * Suzen Sez * Jan Byrne Design *
* Katy’s American Indian Arts * Fat Cat Beads * Indigo Moon *
* Target (gave money) *

If you didn’t make it to the Concourse Hotel on the evening of May 17th, you missed an exquisite event! Thanks to a fabulous idea by Chantel Brown and a lot of hard work by Nancy Murphy and Rachel Weingarten, the first Madison Fashion show for and by people with disabilities was a huge success! There was an informative panel first and then a fashion show complete with Jonathon Sutton from Triple M as the MC, fantastic and trendy outfits and incredible models – all of whom had a disability. Thanks to everyone who made this event happen!
Spillin’ the Beans

Café Zoma

by Garry Herald and Ginger Ganser

It’s not the cup of coffee that brings a lot of us to the Madison coffee shops. It’s the atmosphere, the friendly staff, the people-watching. It’s a time to get out of your home after a long winter. Garry was especially tired of the snow and cold this winter. So at the end of March, Garry went back to Café Zoma, 2326 Atwood Avenue. It has what Garry’s mood needed: warm summer colors, good coffee with free refills, and a little variety. The menu is much like other coffee shops - a menu of bakery items, smoothies and coffee drinks, and sandwiches- and plenty of comfortable seating to enjoy your purchase. What makes Café Zoma enjoyable is the vibe. It has a lot of life. It’s a place where Garry will be this summer when the backyard garden is blooming and the chairs overlook the bikers and walkers on the Capital City bike trail. On this March day, Gary drank his second cup of coffee and spent time planning what his summer may look like: a short drive to Ho-Chunk, a road trip to San Francisco (in a Cadillac with the top down ideally), a lunch date with an old support broker. He then remembered some of the things he was enjoying that week, like a cooking class where he learned a great chicken and rice recipe. Fun. Friends. Sunshine. Our time at Café Zoma lifted our spirits and only part of that was from the coffee.###

After having a cup of coffee at Café Zoma, Garry walked right next door to Absolutely Art, a gift shop and art gallery at 2322 Atwood Avenue. He found that it is a great place to spend an afternoon. The staff is very friendly and makes you feel like you could come back again and again. The store sells something for every budget: cards, pottery, lamps, and paintings. The art comes from people who live and work in Madison; in fact, if you are an artist and are looking to sell your art, call for an appointment. They may buy some of your art right then and there. Their number is 249-9100. Profits from the store are donated to the Goodman/Atwood Community Center and Atwood food pantry. They have art showings the first Friday of the month and welcome everyone to come and enjoy their store. Call Absolutely Art for store hours and information about their events.###

Beating the HEAT

The Heat, I will not bare it,
On the News I will hear it,
That there will be excessive heat,
The Road tar will burn your feet

No one can compete
On this day of heat
That they can not beat.

Dog Days are upon us,
We all be in disgust,
Because we all cannot adjust,
Due to this day being the hottest.

We will be trying to stay cool,
But I am not the fool,
In my apartment I will stay,
On this very hot day,
Trying to beat the Heat.

— Dale Buttke
RATS?

Dora’s Pet Corner: By Dora Norland and Nancy Molfenter

Ok, before any of you judge too quickly, I have to say that we discovered that rats – yes those furry, long-tailed rodents – really can make great pets! We had a chance to visit two homes where rats are a pet of choice. John and Yara share their east side apartment with two rats and a cat. They are quick to point out that they do not let them all play together for fear that Chester (the cat) might harm the rats, Spotty (white with a spot) and Fido (black). John and Yara have had their rats for a couple of months and they are still quite young. John had a pet rat in the past and described some amazing rat features to us.

It turns out that rats are very intelligent. They can learn their names and come when called. They also learn other behaviors fairly easily. John astounded us with the story of how his former pet rat learned to collect coins and use them to “pay” him for cashews. Although John never intended it, it seemed that this rat would venture out and bring back coins from other apartments when there were none left to be found around his own house. It seems that the tale of the rat in Charlotte’s Web may not have been terribly far-fetched! In addition, rats are pretty easy to litter train – and they use a lot less litter than cats! John and Yara plan to work with Spotty and Fido to become more socialized to humans.

The second person we met with a pet rat was Sara Lawson. She currently shares her eastside apartment with Maggie, a gray rat. This is also Sara’s second rat. Her first rat, Vanilla, was very social and came when she called. During our visit, Sara was holding Maggie and Maggie was quite interactive and curious. Who knew!

Rats generally live for 2-3 years and tend to like to have a rat friend around in addition to humans. Pet stores sell rat food, but they will also eat just about anything that humans eat (again – Charlotte’s Web had it right). Rats need to have the right material to gnaw on to keep their teeth from getting too long, so pine blocks work well. They also like a clean home – so their bedding or litter must be changed often. And – if you decide rats are right for you – don’t get a male and female – or you will wind up with lots of babies!

Family Care and Self Directed Services

by: Nancy Molfenter, VOICES staff

Self Determination Wisconsin, a project of the Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities, sponsored a series of meetings about Self-Directed Supports within the Family Care model. The Madison date was May 10th and the conference was held at the Bishop O’Connor Catholic Pastoral Center. The day included a presentation by Dennis Harkins, a presentation by Sadler Bell, Self-Advocate, and information from state and county personnel about the status of Family Care as the model for services in the developmental disability system. Several representatives from People First were able to attend and assist with announcements for the day. A big thanks to: Jeff Bailey, Carolyn Bailey, Lenore Rosenberg, Dan Remick, Sara Lawson and Jeffrey Johnson for helping out and also to Fil Clissa from the Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities for inviting us.
I have been involved with a mixed bowling league that was called Keller’s Monday Night Mixers. This league started it in September. We started this so we could go have some fun with our friends and to do something fun in the community. This bowling league got started because my friend Jerry called everyone up and asked them if they wanted to be on the league. Everyone met at Schwoegler’s for a bowling meeting that started at 6:30 and ended 8:00pm. Then after that everyone that wanted to could bowl for a while.

When the next Monday came, we met at Schwoegler’s at 6:00 p.m. Before we got started we had to make up our teams. Jerry went around and wrote all of the names of the bowling teams down. He then asked who wanted to bowl and who would like to be a substitute bowler. At the beginning of the league, it cost every bowler $22 dollars for two weeks because we had to pay for the week we are playing and a week in advance. We also had the option of either bowling on Monday nights or Wednesday nights. The league lasted for 8 weeks.

Some of the team’s names were Becky’s All Stars, Red Lighting and Blue Lighting. My friend Todd was our bowling team captain. The league had an end of season banquet. I talked to Pat and he said the banquet went very well. Some the bowlers got there early so they could have some dinner with each other.

When we were bowling, we would play different teams each week. It was fun if the Badgers played the Bucky’s. My friend Pat is one of the officers for our bowling league. We will be starting up our bowling league again in August or September. This league is not the same. It has Special Olympics even though some of the same people that bowl for the Special Olympics bowl here. Call me at 263-5556 if you think you might be interested in joining us this Fall.

My broker Lindsay and I wrote a grant and won $286 to throw a golf party at Vitense Mini Golfland for my Woman’s Group! We had lots of pizza and soda, and played mini-golf. Once I get the next meeting info together I pass it on to Lindsay and she sends it to everyone in Dane County. They only hard thing is that everyone has to arrange their own transportation, or take the bus. Some people carpool and I help coordinate that. It has been good so far... I thought this was a great idea to do this group because I’m always having trouble going up to people. We always welcome new ladies to join, so call Lindsay if you would like to join my group, and she will give you my phone number.
Community Activists Honored

The ARC Dane County Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet
by: Jeffrey Johnson, VOICES staff

I attended the ARC Dane County 57th Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet on April 25th at the Concourse Hotel with my new live-in Heather. When I got to the Concourse Hotel the President, Marc Krasnick, opened up the Silent Auction at 6:00 pm. Ricardo Vasquez played the marimba during the Cocktail hour and dinner was at 6:45 pm. I sat with my mom, dad, Len Green, and Heather. When we were done eating the Master of Ceremonies, Joel DeSpain, came up to speak.

When he was done, Marc gave some welcoming remarks and started the Annual Meeting. We elected new board members: Jeffrey A. Johnson, Petra Zwettler, Lorna Konicki, and Gregory Konicki. The Golf Tourney was announced. It will be at The Meadows of Six Mile Creek on July 27th 2007 in Waunakee. The Awards Banquet Committee is Marc Krasnick, Dan Remick, Tracy Woehrle, John Leemkuil, Bob Ross, Sue Helgesen, Laura Skelton Verhoff, Bill Arthur, Bob and Judy Story, Ron Braem. Ken Hobbs retiring Director of the Arc of Dane County and Sue Helgesen is also retiring.

The Award Ceremony was at 8:00 pm. Recipients are:
  - Community Support - Terri Hutchison
  - Corporate Support - WISC-TV
  - Volunteer - Mary Sykes
  - Educator/Teacher - Adrienne Emerson, Middleton High School
  - Employer/Private - World of Variety - Cross Plains
  - Adult Family Home Provider - Ken Joe
  - Media - Susan Lampert Smith
  - 2007 Self-Advocate - Dan Remick
  - Direct Caregiver Award - Rosalie Stankovich. She has done a very good job caring for two young ladies that have disabilities in their own home
  - Government Official Award - to our friend Lynn Green
  - Special Award presented to the Director of Encore Studio for the Performing Arts, Kelly Schoenhauer
  - Lifetime Achievement Award - Frances Bicknell

Marc’s closing remarks covered our Mission: The Arc-Dane County will ensure that, by example, education, advocacy, support and legislation, all children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families are offered the same opportunities, choices, rights and respect due all people in our community.

Our Vision at the Arc of Dane County will be to continue to create acceptance and respect of children and adults with developmental disabilities by facilitating advocacy participation of membership gaining support of communities and collaborating with appropriate local state and national groups. “If you treat an individual as he is he will stay as he is, but if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be he will become what he ought to be and could be.”

Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities 2007 Award Luncheon
by: Dan Remick and Nancy Molfenter, VOICES staff

The Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities (WCDD) hosted their annual awards luncheon at the Concourse Hotel in Madison on May 24th. This luncheon provides an opportunity to recognize hard work around the state that supports the mission of promoting independence and equality for persons with disabilities.

Many notable people were recognized at the luncheon. Among them were several persons with disabilities who have accomplished great things and the authors of their stories in the media. One was a man, Bruce Borden, who advocated for the revamping of the benefits system to allow and promote people’s desire to gain financial independence without fearing the loss of health care. Another, Alex Shariff, has learned, with help, to deal with Tourette syndrome. A third was a young man with autism who creates amazing drawings and has co-authored a book called, “Sundays with Matthew.” Two additional writers were honored for stories about a girl who died in restraints and the need for funding for people with disabilities once they graduate from high school. Phil Porter’s art work was displayed at the luncheon and featured on each award certificate.

The Self Advocate of the Year award was given to Thomas Gierke (above), who was born with Distal Muscular Dystrophy. Despite this disability (or as Tome prefers, his “gift”), he has a spirit of self-determination that drives him to succeed. With a degree in Mechanical Engineering, he has worked to remove barriers for people with disabilities. Recently, Tom became the Executive Director of Hearthstone of Wisconsin. Congratulations, Tom!
CCLS Clubhouse Fosters Connections

by: Nancy Molfenter, VOICES staff

Burdette Court located in the central part of Madison is known to Creative Community Living Services (CCLS) consumers as the Club House. Over the past couple of years, I have heard folks make mention of the Club House, but I didn’t really know what or where it was – or how it worked. I recently had an opportunity to go visit the Club House, meet and talk with the manager there and talk with a woman who accesses the supports there.

The Club House was started about three years ago when agencies needed to begin reducing individual support budgets. A regional manager at CCLS came up with the idea of setting up a daytime drop-in site as a place for people to go, do activities, work on projects and set up community activities. At the present time, about 30 consumers per week and up to thirteen on any given day spend time at the Club House and/or doing activities with Club House staff.

There is a full-time manager named Hailey and then two addition staff during most other hours of operation, which are typically 9-5 Monday through Friday. During those hours, consumers access the activities and supports as needed. CCLS managers work with the Club House manager to meet consumer needs. There are regular outings to places like coffee shops, the library and swimming at the Lapham pool. There is a lot of choice about what to do. Some people bring their own projects like scrapbooks and art supplies. There is currently a music group at the Club house on Tuesdays from 4:30 – 7:30 and Hailey is hoping to expand the evening options with an art group in the near future.

The location of the Club House also gives people the opportunity to be outdoors because the backyard is adjacent to a park. People can get out and play sports if they want to. In addition, consumers at the Club House can enjoy gardening activities. Each year, the Club House plants both flowers and vegetables in the backyard.

One woman who attends regularly, Barbara Berger, goes to Higher Fire on Regent St. to produce pottery items such as bowls, plates and magnets that she sells at craft fairs. During her time on site at the Club House, Barbara makes the cards that she uses as tags and promotional material for her pottery. When I met her, Barbara was planning to sell her pottery at the Gallery Night on May 4th at Warner Park.

The Club House provides flexible hours and activities as well as opportunities for community outings. Right now, only CCLS consumers can use the Club House, but the agency is considering plans to open an eastside and Westside site that could potentially be open to consumers from other agencies.

New Program, continued from p. 1

have independent living on their minds and are working to figure out how to create optimal situations with little to no County resources. My role is to facilitate and support these individuals and teams and also to help connect people who are working toward similar goals.

In addition to working directly with families, Assets will work to connect community organizations to the disabilities community around issues motivational to both groups. The Dane County Time Bank, a network of individuals who trade services such as cooking or yard work is a prime example. The organizer has a great interest and has already begun to reach out to individuals with disabilities. The organization is motivated both by philosophical desire to be inclusive, but also by a supply and demand problem. Many time bankers want to contribute by providing companionship services and they need to locate members, such as individuals with disabilities, who might need those services.

Another organization creating partnerships with the disabilities community is Edgewood College. Edgewood wants to create a more inclusive campus by having students with significant disabilities as students and full members of the college community. Rather than a “program” for all students with disabilities, each student would have an individualized experience which could include typical college classes, recreations/social experiences, jobs and dorm living. Like the time bank, Edgewood is motivated by a philosophical desire to be inclusive but also by a practical need to provide high quality learning experiences for undergraduate and masters’ students in Special Education and related fields. These students would have opportunities to learn how to interact with and support individuals with disabilities and the individuals with disabilities would gain the needed supports to have the college experience many dream of and also have a springboard for independent living.

If you are interested in learning more about what Assets could do for you, have a story you feel should be heard or are interested in the participating in any of the groups and projects you read about, I would love to hear from you! My office phone is 890-0776 and my email address is bell@waisman.wisc.edu

###

Barbara Berger at The Club House
The question for this issue was...

“What’s your favorite Babcock ice cream flavor?”

Cookie dough  Anna Jo M.

Chocolate, chocolate chip!  Heather M.

Chocolate  Rae Marie V.

Just chocolate  Mike C.

Vanilla with hot fudge  Vic F.
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Nancy F. Molfenter, Editor
The Waisman Center
122 E Olin Ave, Ste 100, Madison WI 53713
Telephone: (608) 263-5557
Fax: (608) 263-4681
Email: molfenter@wisc.edu

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Contributors..... Amanda Bell, Nancy Molfenter, Dan Rossiter, Rachel Weingarten, James Mulder-Philyaw, Mike J, Garry Herald, Ginger Ganser, Dale Buttke, Dora Norland, Sara Lawson, John and Yara, Maggie and Spotty, Jeffrey Johnson, Lina Murray, Dave Daly, Dan Remick, Barbara Berger, Anna Jo M, Heather M, Rae Marie V, Mike C, Vic F

\textbf{The University of Wisconsin-Madison}
Waisman Center
Room 154
1500 Highland Ave
Madison WI 53705

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