

Notes of Hope

BARBARA OLSON

Center of Hope



A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE IN THE FIELD OF DISABILITIES SINCE 1948. WWW.B-OLSONCENTEROFHOPE.ORG

"Inspired to Paint" features "Useable Art"

NEW DATE
October
23rd



Ingrid Dohm and Mark T.

The 2009 *Inspired to Paint* Art Show is **scheduled for Friday Oct. 23rd** from 5-9pm at Cliffbreakers Conference Center in Rockford. This year's wonderful show features economy-driven "useable art objects"—(things you can use in the home, not just hang on the wall) inspired by the original paintings and handicraft of our guest artists.

The *Inspired to Paint* Art show is a program at the Center of Hope which encourages and enables many of our participants to express themselves in new and creative ways, under the guidance of professional artists. Ideas, shapes and colors appear in the most imaginative ways! At the Art Show, you'll always find originality and one-of-a kind professional art.

The evening's Italian theme includes a buffet dinner, art show and silent auction of the professional artists' original creations, sales of participants' art projects, silent auction gift baskets and other treasures, and the return of the very popular (optional) wine-tasting package. Here are some comments from last year's attendees: "Wow, this is incredible; I never expected this kind of skill from your participants!" "Beautiful show, I'll be back next year."

Tickets are \$35 per person and are available at the Center of Hope and at Alpine Bank locations. Reservations are due by Oct. 21st. Please call 815-964-9275 for further information or to order tickets. We thank our primary sponsors: Rockford Health System-Dept. of Anesthesiology; Humana; Bergstrom, Inc.; Rockford Register Star; Rev. and Mrs. René Escalante, Brad and Debbie Johnson; and AlphaGraphics. ♡



Jeanne Coe and Patricia K.

North Towne Participants Are Moving

The Center of Hope's Cabinet, with the Board's approval, concluded that consolidation of our North Towne site into our main Central Avenue site is necessary to help our organization remain fiscally responsible. The participants from the "Volunteer Center" are excited about this change as they will remain as autonomous and independent as they had been at their storefront location. The move will also result in adding new, individualized curriculums for these participants. To accommodate this change, numerous adjustments are being initiated at the Center of Hope regarding room, program and staff changes. These modifications will make the Center of Hope an even better and more coveted day training facility for adult participants with developmental disabilities.

The **GourMutts** handmade dog biscuit baking operation will also move and continue at the Center of Hope's main site, along with the **Gift Shoppe** which will be in our main lobby as of Oct. 1, 2009. ♡

Another Successful Summer Bash

The Parent Auxiliary held its annual Summer Bash outdoors on the grounds of the Center of Hope on August 14th. The participants, their families, and other residential members enjoyed the Hitmen who were back to play lots of dance tunes for everyone. The Parent Group provided food and refreshments. This fun evening was made better by the volunteer services of ComCast staff, including Joan Sage-host of the ComCast Connects show. The ComCast company has been fulfilling its community service pledge by grilling hot dogs for this event for several years. (400 dogs this year!) The weather held up and a great evening was enjoyed by all. ♡

BARBARA OLSON CENTER OF HOPE • FALL 2009

OUR MISSION: Help individuals with developmental disabilities reach personal goals through individualized skill development, vocational opportunities and community service.

DIRECTOR'S

CORNER

This has been a difficult year for all non profits in the state of Illinois. We were dealt one of the most difficult circumstances in recent memory. Our own legislators presented us all with unprecedented challenges to which we joined together to stop from being *thrown under the bus* and being used as scapegoats by our new governor's tax increase agenda.

I want to thank all the staff, Board and families who came out to the social services rally at Davis Park! It was a great Rally and many nice things about the Center and our services were mentioned. However, a rally is not enough to get our message out to our legislators and governor. They must start to not only listen but to act. Please continue to make phone calls and send letters. We cannot maintain our current budget with delayed payments; the state owes us over \$600,000.00. We as an organization cannot continue to function with these delays and the continued threat of more cuts to come this December when the Governor's six-month budget ends. It is imperative that we continue to tell our Governor and leg-

islators that they need to pay us what is owed and to do so timely. We also had an unexpected drop in services from a residential provider who contracted with the Center. All the above caused us to make cuts in needed programs and services. Yes, this was a very difficult time for us. Having to downsize our organization, close our satellite site



and let many staff members go was very painful and left us feeling very vulnerable. However, the Center of Hope has faced these issues before. You do not stay active in the community and provide critical services for over 60 years without facing periodic hardships. What hurt us the most was the vulnerability we felt by being used as pawns by our Governor in an attempt to have his tax increase agenda move forward. Do I think we need to increase taxes? That depends. Will that increase in money be used to fund needed community programs that are currently under-funded, such as the Center and the many community partners we work with; or will that money go back into poorly staffed institutions where a person with disabilities is merely warehoused, and which costs the tax payers more money than the more efficient community resources currently in place in our community?

Despite these challenges, the Center believes that with every door that closes, one opens; and we believe that the programmatic changes being made will strengthen our organization and provide more individualized services including occupational therapy, positive behavior management and sensory therapy, to name a few, for our participants. Our staff is taking on extra responsibilities to create these quality services. I so appreciate the quality and leadership of our management team members. Their dedication, commitment and passion for the Center's mission are always evidenced by their "can do" attitudes and willingness to go above and beyond their day to day duties.

We take so much for granted when we are concerned about the things that go wrong; hopefully you have seen by reading our newsletter articles all the things that have gone right!

I really want to compliment all our staff and Board for all they do for the Center. I also want to thank our families and Auxiliary for all their hard work and support as well.

Carm Herman
Executive Director

Local Grants Enable Sensory Dept. Growth

During the fiscal year 2008-09, the Center of Hope was granted \$11,248 for use in the new Sensory Therapy Department. Funds from the *Dr. Louis and Violet Rubin Fund*, the *TAC LLC Fund*, and the *Community Needs Fund* (distributed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois) are being used to supply and support several very important projects.

The Regional Resource Center, which is open to the public and is free of charge, is the area's only adults-with-autism resource. It contains a lending library and numerous examples of specialized adaptive sensory equipment which can be lent for trial periods before a parent determines if purchase is worthwhile. This funding, along with funds from the Coleman Foundation of Chicago, is also supporting the new Center for Sensory Therapy space. Last fall's Sensory Open House brought many curious and impressed visitors. We again extend our gratitude and immense appreciation to these organizations for their continued support of our sensory program, which is enabling our participants with autism, sensory integration, and other developmental disabilities make steps towards a better life. Please feel free to call and come to the Center to use the Resource Room. ♥



Barbara Olson Center of Hope

by Michael Whiteaker,
participant for over 8 years

Barbara Olson Center of Hope is a nice and wonderful place to work at. I have met wonderful people like Sonja Brace, Patty Spencer, Kelly Peterson, and of course Carm Herman just to name a few. There are good friends and great staff, and of course all the nurses too.

While attending Barbara Olson Center of Hope I, Michael Whiteaker, got to meet Mr. Mustache in person and he signed my autograph book. I liked the racing cars from the Rockford Speedway and also I got Tim Sargent's autograph too. Because that was one of the most exciting day at Barbara Olson Center of Hope, thank you for having all of us at Barbara Olson Center of Hope. Friends are forever. ♥

Sincerely yours,
Michael Whiteaker— former
Frances House participant

Bit By Bit, We'll Buy a Van

Did you know that the Center of Hope's fleet of buses, passenger vans and trucks are driven for a combined **130,000 miles per year**? And that many of our vehicles have over 100,000 miles on their odometers? We know, because we keep track of maintenance and service records, and pay for all the service, repairs and fuel bills. To try to keep our fleet-associated costs down, we are hoping to purchase a more cost-efficient 15-passenger van to use in place of one of our buses. We also know how difficult this cost or donation would be for one person, or one organization; so for this project we have been asking many organizations to give a portion of the \$18,000 (plus fees) needed for a new van.

We have been extremely fortunate to have wonderful responses from the organizations listed below. To date, we have received \$11,800! However, it's obvious we still need more. If you are a member of an organization that may be able to help us, please get in touch so that we may send our paperwork to your group. We would be very grateful for any donations from groups or individuals, towards this purchase. (We could also use a reliable car for transporting one or two people at a time, or for necessary short trips.)

The following organizations (in alphabetical order) have already donated. THANK YOU!

CWB Blazer Foundation
CLARCOR Foundation
Greenlee, a Textron Company
Navy Club of Rockford

Rockton Lions Club
Roscoe Lions Club
South Beloit Lions Club
St. Rita Knights of Columbus



Our Volunteer Group from COH Staff

*Carm Herman said it recently at an all staff meeting:
"I couldn't ask for a better staff!"*

The Staff at Barbara Olson is exceptional in that it not only looks for ways to benefit the Center, (program-wise and financially), they take time to help others. Last winter many of the staff and their family/friends took part in the *Polar Plunge* to benefit *Special Olympics*. Staff members take part in quarterly clean-up of Central Avenue in the *Adopt-A-Road* program. They organize and donate blood at our annual *Blood Drive* for the community's benefit (22 donors this year, with **7 new donors**)! They collected stuffed animals for distribution at the *Carrie Lynn Children's Center*, and new toys for the *Salvation Army's Toy Drive*. Others helped with the Loves Park Police Association's 40th Annual *Grudge Race*, and staff and participants worked hard at a car wash fundraiser at the *Charity Car Wash* off State St. They volunteer their

Saturday to represent the Center at other agencies' fundraisers or expos. They hosted guests and decorated the Center for our *Sensory Open House*. They paint office walls and halls! Most recently, they organized and ran the 1st annual *Community Sales Event* which was a huge success: a Rummage Sale/-

Bake Sale/Private Vendor Sale/and a *Super Shredders Shred Fest and Lunch* had dozens and dozens of customers from the community. And more volunteers: several of our Board members were on hand to help, along with the Firemen next door who grilled hot dogs for a light lunch. Many hands make any job easier and these tasks were no different.

It just shows that our employees don't think of this as just a job, it's a calling to do for others. ♥



Sue Rohl gets ready to donate blood and Board Member Nancy D'Angelo provided baked goods for Community Sales event.



Carm and Center of Hope participants accept a check from L.P. Police Association members (r. to l.) Carl Beck, Steve Peterson and Dave Jacobson.

Need HELP with your Teens?

HELP stands for Hope's Extended Life-skills Program. This is a new day program at the Center of Hope, offered for teens from 14 -18 years of age, for the days they do not have school in session. This program offers parents and guardians of teens with autism and related disabilities a place to bring their teens (from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) when school is out. HELP is an opportunity to continue learning domestic and vocational training, communication, and socialization training in a fun and safe environment.

There are 71 days in the year when the Rockford School Dist. #205 is not in session and we are open. Teens can be registered for as many or as few days as needed, but advance registration is requested as there are a limited number of spaces. The fee for attendance is on a sliding scale, based on a family's total gross income. For more information and an application form, call Vickey Alexander at the Center, ext. 233.

The Wm. Howard Trust granted us funding towards making this program possible. The William Howard Charitable Trust was established in 1982 as the charitable component of the companies of William Charles, Ltd. Those companies include William Charles Construction, William Charles Real Estate and The William Charles Waste Companies. Together they comprise one of the largest, locally owned companies in the region. ♥

Speedway Grudge Races Not Washed Out!

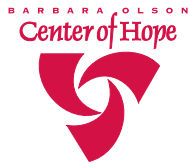
The rains this summer washed out many outdoor activities, but not the 40th Annual Loves Park Police Association's Grudge Races at Rockford Speedway. The organizers did have to reschedule to one week later, but it was worth the wait!

Everyone in attendance had a great night of fun while celebrating the 40th Anniversary. Gratefully, the Barbara Olson Center of Hope was again chosen as the races' beneficiary! One of our Board members, Kevin Rudy, showed his driving skills by winning the Public Officials' Race! The Center of Hope helped the organizers

by selling tickets in advance and helping in numerous capacities on the night of the races. Recently, Carm accepted a donation check of \$6,100 from the Loves Park Police Association at the Center of Hope. Thanks to everyone who came out for a night of racing and made this a successful event! We appreciate your support. ♥

Calendar of Events 2009/10

October 3rd	9-Pin Bowling Tournament at 1:30 p.m.
October 10	Parent Breakfast Meeting, 8:30a.m.
October 12	Columbus Day, Center CLOSED
October 21	Parent Quarterly Meeting, 7pm
October 23	In-Service for Staff, No Participants
October 23	Inspired To Paint 5-9pm at Cliffbreakers
October 30th	Board Meeting
November 11	Veteran's Day, Center CLOSED
November 14	Parent Breakfast Meeting 8:30 a.m.
November 17	Parent Monthly Meeting 6:30 p.m.
November 20	Wine Tasting Benefit @ Artalé 5:30 p.m.
November 26-27	Thanksgiving Holiday, Center CLOSED
December 3	Board Mini-Retreat at Center at Noon
December 9	Participant Christmas Party @Harlem HS 5:30 -8pm
December 12	Parent Breakfast Meeting 8:30 a.m.
Dec. 24 - Jan. 3, '10	Christmas Holiday, Center CLOSED
January 9	Parent Breakfast Meeting, 8:30 a.m.
January 18	Martin Luther King, Center CLOSED
January 21	Parent Quarterly Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
January 29	Board Meeting
February 13	Parent Breakfast Meeting, 8:30 a.m.
February 15	President's Day, Center CLOSED
February 23	Parent Monthly Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
February 26	Board Meeting



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Come Taste The Wines

AND BENEFIT THE BARBARA OLSON CENTER OF HOPE!

Artalé Wine Co., located at 6876 E. Spring Creek Rd, (near Perryville) is hosting a Wine Tasting to benefit the Center of Hope on Friday, Nov. 20th from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. This fundraiser costs just \$15 per person at the door and gives you and your friends the opportunity to sample 48 delicious and various wines from around the world. Also, imaginative and delicious gourmet hors d'oeuvres from Josef's restaurant are presented for your palate's pleasure. We will also have some unique, hand made Christmas ornaments for sale and surprise give-aways for your favorite furry friends.

A Tasting at Artalé's is a casual and fun event. Our gracious hosts, Anthony & Tony Artalé, offer a discount for purchases made at the tasting. Please gather some friends and join us for this occasion. We'll have a wonderful and interesting Friday evening! Do it for the Center—OR—Do it for the Wine—**But DO IT!**

Call the Center of Hope for more information.



Barbara Olson Center of Hope

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www.b-olsoncenterofhope.org

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Our Sincere Thanks to All of You.

Donors 1-01-09 thru 6-30-09

Our apologies if we have inadvertently failed to list your name.
This in no way reflects on our appreciation.

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