



Connections

The Newsletter of Bridge Disability Ministries

Winter, 2014

A Message from Executive Director Brenne Schario

Dear Friends and Champions of Bridge,

It is always the right time to count your blessings. But especially for Bridge, after such a fruitful year, I am grateful and humbled by the many and varied expressions of God's grace.

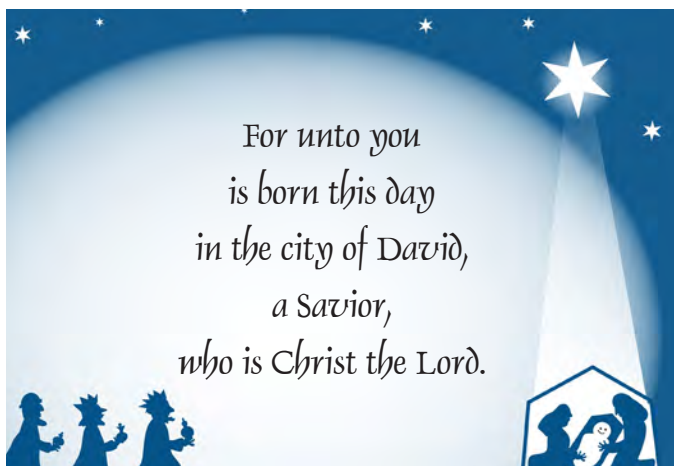
Thank you to those who have reached out and welcomed me into the Bridge community. It is so good to put faces to names and to hear the many stories about the beginnings and development of our ministries. Pastor Henk Waspra, Bridge's founder, is an inspiration and I appreciate immensely his and Rosa Lee's friendship, support and prayers.



I am awed by our donors – those who gave of their financial resources, their time, their expertise. Bridge could not have done it without you – seems so trite and clichéd, but oh so true! Your generosity gives us encouragement; your confidence and investment in our mission certainly lifts us up.

Our wonderful board of directors, small in number as it may be, has offered me guidance and wisdom in this first year. The combined fruits of their labor have resulted in a unique and effective organization rooted firmly in service to the most vulnerable among us.

Bridge is fortunate to have staff who wear their passion on their sleeve, and translate this passion into dedicated and inspired service. No longer the newest one on the block, a little over a month ago, I have hired Denise Aanenson as Bridge's Spiritual Care Coordinator. We are beyond excited that she will join us in this ministry of presence and belonging. Bridge has also contracted a new bookkeeper – Jen Spritzer. Even with the seemingly mundane task of hiring, we have seen God's hand at work. He has sent excellent folks our way. Indeed, it isn't our work. But God's work. And how joyful that we all get to participate in it, in all ways!



Next year will surely bring more change. That is at once as exciting as it is daunting. Because we know the need is great, and the task is significant. But we also know our God is BIG!

Have a very blessed Christmas! I wish you and yours, all the joy that love brings.

With deep appreciation and gratitude,

Brenne



Guarding Gideon

by Gordon Ellison - Oslin, CPG, Guardianship Specialist

For the first time in as long as anyone can remember, Gideon missed attending a Sunday Evening Celebration. We were all asking, "Where is Gideon?" It just wasn't a Celebration without him there. He was always there. When we checked up on him we discovered he wasn't feeling well. While health problems are not unusual for people

in their elder years, in Gideon's case it is especially difficult due to his developmental disability. He is in a living situation that is unable to provide staff to accompany him to his medical appointments, and he has had a lot of them during the past year. As his guardian representing Bridge Disability Ministries, it is my responsibility to be with him during these appointments. As is often the case with our clients, he has language but it is often hard for some people to understand him. And he often has difficulty answering questions asked by medical professionals. I can often help him communicate with them by asking the question in a way he understands and getting an answer from him to pass on to them.

Gideon's problems started last year when it was discovered that his appendix was causing problems which resulted in surgery to remove it. During the surgery it was discovered that he had other health problems that needed immediate attention. Many long months of doctor's appointments, medical procedures and surgeries ensued. During this arduous health journey, Bridge Disability Ministries was able to facilitate communication between Gideon and his healthcare providers, and make sure he made it to all of his appointments, and give approval for needed medical procedures. We were also able to let the healthcare workers know that there were people who cared for Gideon and wanted him to have the best healthcare possible, so we were providing advocacy as well. Today, his health is stable and he is enjoying his life in his home where people know and care for him. And we are happy to see him back at Bridge's Sunday Evening Celebrations where he has been a fixture for many years, enjoying fellowship with his friends and neighbors.

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute.*

Proverbs 31:8

Board Members

- Daniel Coppin**
Board Chair/Treasurer
- Erica Cohen Moore**
Board Vice-Chair
- Patrick Hicks**
Secretary
- Frank Wallace**
Member at Large
- Rev. J. C. Mitchell**
Member at Large
- Sigrid Laegreid**
Member at Large

Staff

- Brenne Schario**
Executive Director
- Linda Martin**
Support Services Supervisor
- Denise Aanenson, MDiv**
Spiritual Care Coordinator
- Patty Croteau, CPG**
Guardianship
Agency Supervisor
- Gordon Ellison-Oslin, CPG**
Guardianship Specialist
- Lynn Shomber**
Guardianship Administrator
- Susan Dougherty-Guild**
Guardianship Associate
- Nadia Andrienas**
Guardianship Assistant
- Gerry Barney**
Mobility Manager
- Kim Zable**
Mobility Customer Service
- Michi Williams**
Office Assistant

A Mobility Moment, by Gerry Barney, Mobility Manager

Recently a young man about thirty years of age came to our center looking for help with a power wheelchair. He lived in a rural area and, in spite of having cerebral palsy, had found a job - if he could come up with a way to get there and back. The trouble was that bus service only came within three and a half miles of the place of work and he was physically unable to walk that distance each way. So he was looking for a wheelchair that could get him there and back three days a week so he could work a four-hour shift. We were able to provide him with a wheelchair with room for the larger batteries needed to cover that much distance each day. It was inspiring for us to donate a chair to someone who wanted a job so much he was willing to travel seven miles a day in a wheelchair, three days a week, so he could have twelve hours work. This is what Bridge is about – helping people with disabilities get out of isolation to take part in their communities and build meaningful relationships.

A New Beginning by Denise Aanenson, MDiv, Spiritual Care Coordinator



As I begin a new chapter of my professional life here at Bridge Disability Ministries the wisdom of Proverbs has been mulling around in my head. Proverbs 27:17 reminds us that, "Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens the wits of another." This truth written centuries ago proved to be relevant these past few weeks in my life. When I accepted the position as Spiritual Care Coordinator I knew in my heart that my life would be richer, not in an earthly materialistic way, but spiritually. Each day brings a new treasure as I meet and get to know the staff, volunteers, and the friends of Bridge. As we get to know each other, we help shape each other through the

relationships we build. "Iron sharpens iron." My prayer for all of us as we journey together is, that we remain open to the workings of the Holy Spirit as we continue to build connecting bridges and break down the cultural barriers for those living with disabilities, and remember that we are His beloved sons and daughters.

And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.

John 1:6

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Bridge's programs, which would not exist without their efforts. If you are interested in our volunteer opportunities, and would like to learn more, please contact Linda: lindam@bridgemin.org or (425) 885-1006, ext. 118.

Thank you!



Bridge Disability Ministries

12356 Northup Way, Ste. 103
Bellevue, WA 98005-1956

Honoring People Living with Disabilities



What We Do:

- Spiritual Care Programs
- Guardianship & Case Management
- Mobility Medical Equipment
- Community Connections
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Disability Advocacy

www.bridgemin.org

Mobility Medical Equipment (Tu, Wed, Th: 11am - 5pm)
(425) 885-1008, equipment@bridgemin.org

Spiritual Care, Guardianship & Administration
(425) 885-1006, bridge@bridgemin.org

Mark Your Calendars...

Sunday Evening Celebrations (4-6pm)

- December 6th St. John Vianney Catholic Church
12600 84th Ave NE, Kirkland, 98034
PLEASE NOTE: Saturday, 12:30 - 2:30pm
- January 11th Crossroads Bible Church
15815 SE 37th St., Bellevue, 98006
- February 22nd Highland Covenant Church
15022 Bel-Red Rd., Bellevue, 98007

Our Mission

Because Bridge Disability Ministries honors the God-given dignity of people living with disabilities, we build relationships to alleviate isolation and enrich our churches and communities.

Save the Date!

for our

2015 Annual Benefit Dinner & Auction

Saturday, October 24th
Building Bridges

WE CAN HELP

Parents & Guardians of people with Developmental Disabilities:
Our Guardianship Agency now offers private pay case management.
For more information call: (425) 885-1006 x102