



Connections

The Newsletter of Bridge Disability Ministries

Spring, 2012

"Invite... and you will be blessed."

by Jack Staudt, Executive Director

This promise is one that calls us, guides us, and encourages us. Christ challenged us in this passage from Luke 14, to overcome our fears of those who appear different from us and those who may have nothing to offer us. Christ also compelled us, to look for "the poor, the disabled, the maimed and the blind." To really see them as we see ourselves, as brothers and sisters, as children of one God. To our surprise the result is the true blessing of relationship based solely on caring, with no reciprocity, no expected gain or increase in power or prestige. The donors in this annual report have invited, they have looked for ways to serve, they have seen truth, and they have been blessed. Through their gifts of funding, volunteered skills, and in-kind offerings, we fulfilled the call to invite and the blessings continue.

It has again been a challenging financial year. While four of our six primary income areas have increased, Church and Foundation income has decreased. We see more offerings in the Meyer Mobility Center, from those who have little to give, but are willing to "pay it forward" for others.

Our initiative to Grow Guardianship by offering Private Pay Case Management to families has begun to increase the "bottom line" and reduce the cost of "Uncompensated Care" (\$140,000) for our indigent clients.

For the fifth year in a row, we spent less, and served more. Our Chaplain & Spiritual Care program team fulfilled the call to "invite" and hosted 28 events, more than two every month. Our Chaplain came alongside over 367 people in need of relationship and chaplaincy care. The Meyer Mobility Center increased distribution of high cost items to our local community. Overall distribution including international partners exceeded \$1.1 million. Guardianship received four new clients in the first expansion of our program in 9 years. As always we trust in God's providence and we will continue to do all we can. I ask you to keep our work, and those we are blessed to serve, in your prayers, and Look for someone to **Invite**.

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God"

Psalms 20:7 NIV



For our full 2011 Annual Report please see our website: <http://www.bridgemin.org/about/newsletters.html>

Financial Care for the Vulnerable

by Lynn Shomber, Guardianship Financial Coordinator

Our guardianship clients are vulnerable in many ways. They are dependent on others for meeting so many needs, including managing their finances.

My role at Bridge, as Rep Payee, is to manage the finances of our guardianship clients. It's not a position of managing financial portfolios, with assets and investments. No, the resources of our clients are very limited. They have a small income and the usual expenses of rent, utilities, and groceries. I maintain 36 checking accounts for 36 guardianship clients, and they all have unique financial situations, making this job anything but routine. The clients' income is deposited to their own accounts. I make sure all of their bills are paid, and keep their accounts from being overdrawn.

A big part of my job is to make sure our clients, who have no ability to advocate for themselves, are getting the income and benefits they are entitled to. Social Security benefits vary depending on whether the client has a retired or deceased parent that qualifies them for benefits. Identifying these parental connections has been a challenge due to the limited information we have for some of our clients. I've applied for benefits for a number of our clients, and established a good rapport for Bridge with the local Social Security office.

Applying for and keeping benefits involves lots of paperwork - numerous forms and reports. As the Rep Payee, we are required to fill out annual reports for Social Security. Most clients qualify for food benefits and medical care from the state. To keep these benefits, an annual lengthy Eligibility Review report must be completed. Our clients qualify for low-income housing, and that frequently requires annual paperwork to maintain. I am not keen on bureaucracy, but I feel very good about being able to get our clients the benefits they deserve. Our work at Bridge matters. It makes a difference for our guardianship clients. Without an income, food benefits, and subsidized rent, our clients would not be getting their basic needs met, and could possibly be homeless and hungry.



Welcome Marcia Barker!

Marcia has joined Bridge's staff as our new Development Officer. She previously served as Development Director in Shanghai, China for Project HOPE, a medical nonprofit based in Millwood, Virginia. Prior to that, she was NORTEL Networks' Director, Corporate Affairs where she oversaw the company's global philanthropy program. We are very excited to have Marcia join our team as steward of major prospects and donors.



Would you like to DOUBLE your DONATION??

Bridge has received a matching grant from the

LUCKY SEVEN FOUNDATION

Contact Marcia at (425) 885-1006, ext 107 or at marciab@bridgemin.org and ask her how you can double the impact of your gift.

May 2nd is give
BIG
Day!

Be part of this
unique, one-day,
online charitable
giving event!

12am - 12 Midnight

Mark your calendars today!



The Seattle
Foundation

Peoplized

by David Emery, Spiritual Care Director

When a person enters through the door of a church they bring everything they are with them. When we enter the gates of the Lord we come as we are; who we are; and where we are.

I recently had the privilege of speaking for some time with a person that is extremely bright, amazingly intelligent, and very enthusiastic and passionate about his vision of life. He has a clear focus for what he sees needing to be done right now for the betterment of the world. It was great to see how clearly he thought life was meant to be lived. The amazing thing to him was that no one seemed to take him very seriously. Everyone around him seemed to dismiss his ideas, perceptions, and recommendations, if they would listen to him at all.

I think this is at the heart of the spiritual work: We are called to listen to one another no matter what we bring to the table. Our ideas and expressions may be farfetched for some or right on for others. Still we need to be at the table and be heard. This is the incredible thing about those with disabilities. They have so much to offer and they are rarely seen or heard.

I am very gratefully pleased to see many churches changing this reality. In the last year we had a church rally around one of our folks who has to take Metro Access to and from worship. For those unfamiliar with this experience that means someone needs to be prepared to welcome this person an hour and a half before and stay an hour and half after worship so that they can come. There are a number of folks in the church willing to do this. They do this because they are so blessed by her participation and involvement in their community. She is blessed because she is actually welcomed and included there. This is a fantastic example of our spiritual life shared in community.

Someone once said that the most important thing is to just show up. What a great thing when we are invited to show up, welcomed, included, seen, heard, and sent with God's blessing on our way!



"Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you."

Psalms 9:10 NIV

Board Members

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Frank Wallace

Board Vice-Chair

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Jack Staudt

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Linda Martin

Spiritual Care Programs & Volunteer Administrator

Marcia Barker

Development Officer

Mallory MacDonald

Development Associate

Patty Croteau, CPG

Lead Guardianship Specialist

Gordon Ellison-Oslin, CPG

Guardianship Specialist

Lynn Shomber

Guardianship Administrator

Caroline Horrigan

Guardianship Intern

Gerry Barney

Mobility Manager

Alison Erickson

Accountant

Doug Dennie

Bookkeeper

Volunteers are always needed. Call to learn more! (425) 885-1006, x 118



Family Spiritual Retreat

Save the Date: June 23rd, 10am - 2pm

at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Kirkland

For more information, please see our flyer on our website:
<http://bridgemin.org/spiritualcare/transitions.html>
or call (425) 885-1006, ext. 113

A Day of
Spiritual Care,
Sharing and
Learning
for Families of Youth in Transition.

What We Do:

- Spiritual Care
- Guardianship
- Mobility Equipment
- Community Connections
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Friendship Circles



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

Phone (425) 885-1006, Mobility Ministry: (425) 885-1008 (hours Tues-Thurs, Noon - 4:30pm)

www.bridgemin.org

bridge@bridgemin.org

Mark Your Calendars...

Sunday Evening Celebrations (4-6pm)

April 29th	Highland Covenant Church 15022 Bel-Red Rd, Bellevue, 98007
May 20th	First Baptist Church 701 First St., Kirkland, 98033
June 3rd	Emmanuel Episcopal Church 4400 86th Ave SE, Mercer Island, 98040
July 29th	Sunshine Ministries Picnic Game Farm Park 3030 R St., Auburn, 98002

2012 Benefit Dinner & Auction

SAFE HARBORS

Celebrating 25 Years!

Save the Date.....

October 13th, 2012

at the Harbor Club - Bellevue

For more information, or for advance table reservations, contact us at: events@bridgemin.org

(425) 885-1006, ext. 107

WE CAN HELP

Parents & Guardians of people with Developmental Disabilities:
Our Guardianship Ministry now offers private pay case management.

For more information call: (425) 885-1006 x102

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.

Want to receive our next newsletter via e-mail or be removed from our mailing list? E-mail your request to bridge@bridgemin.org