



Connections

The Newsletter of Bridge Disability Ministries

Fall, 2012

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Summer Fun & Fellowship

by Linda Martin, Spiritual Care Programs & Volunteer Administrator



"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

Philippians 4:4

Every summer we enjoy taking the Bridge experience outside for the people we serve. Our events in July and August allow people who live with disabilities of all kinds to enjoy the type of summer activities most of us take for granted – things like picnics, barbecues, fun field day activities or simply riding a bike.

On July 29th we enjoyed a wonderful outdoor picnic hosted by Sunshine Ministries at beautiful Game Farm Park in Auburn. The Knights of Columbus barbecued hamburgers for us, and we

relished them along with the other traditional picnic goodies we all love - like potato salad! We enjoyed conversation with friends while we had dinner, and then we were treated to singing, guitar playing and a puppet performance. We also carried out that time honored Bridge tradition of singing Happy Birthday to everyone with a July birthday while they took turns wearing the Birthday Hat!

Then on August 12th people of all ages and abilities joined together at our Wacky Wheelays Celebration for Fun with Wheels! This year we saw everything from wheelchairs to adaptive bikes to skateboards! This event, hosted by Northshore Baptist Church of Bothell, is a community outreach to provide a quality outdoor event for people with disabilities and increase awareness and understanding of what it means to live with a disability. At Bothell High School Track and Field we gathered for a tasty barbecue lunch. After lunch people joined their assigned teams for a variety of events such as the relay races and the power chair race. It was a beautiful sunny day, and everywhere there were smiles and people laughing as they joined in the fun. The church makes every effort to involve any members of the community who are interested. Many organizations that serve our folks were there to talk about what they have to offer. Outdoors for All brought a trailer full of adaptive bikes which enabled scores of people who normally don't get the opportunity to enjoy riding a bike in the fine weather. People even got a chance to get their picture taken with a replica of Tow Mader, the tow truck character from the popular Disney movie Cars, thanks to the generosity of The Rusty Wrecker Foundation.



It is such a joy for Bridge staff, and for the volunteers who assist us, to give folks living with disabilities access to such simple pleasures of summer on a glorious sunny day.

"Changing How I Look at Things" by Rachel Byrum

Twenty years old. I was 20 years old the summer of '96, when I accepted an internship with a church in Auburn. That summer would change my life forever. Caravanning back from the Oregon coast to Auburn, following a college Christian retreat with some church staff and interns, the pastor was driving the minivan I was in, along with his wife and 2 other interns. I fell asleep in the back seat after a long, fun weekend.....

....and woke up out of a coma a week later. Mild traumatic brain injury, collapsed lung, amnesia, short term memory loss, whip lash, broken scapula, lacerated liver.

I almost died.

Two friends of mine did.

can't remember things. There were lots of medications and doctor appointments: I couldn't drive, couldn't go back to PLU. My body was all scarred up. I couldn't remember the alphabet, couldn't write checks, couldn't find the words for things, couldn't remember many things in my life. What would my recovery look like? What would the long term implications of this tragedy be?

It is so frustrating and deeply painful when things don't turn out in our lives as we had dreamed/hoped/planned for.

Life took an unexpected turn for me that summer, now nearly 16 years ago. Who can plan for these things? Who would WANT to plan for these sorts of things? I have been presented with not only the experiences from that summer but additional struggles throughout my life as well. My brother once said to me that I've had more adventures and misadventures than anyone he's ever known. God can redeem the painful parts of our lives. God has redeemed mine! With each struggle I find a greater appreciation, resilience, and a brighter outlook on life. All this could not have been accomplished without the Lord's guidance through it all. When you feel stripped of everything and completely vulnerable, God is right there with you.

A wife. A mother. A follower of Christ.

This story, my story, has led me to be a part of working with parents and the youth/young adults through the Family Transition events at Bridge for four years now. It's been a lot of fun and an honor to get to know so many great folks and create some very special memories.



Rachel (3rd from right) leading our Family Retreat participants in a game.

We are blessed with life and all of its joys and tribulations. I see joy in everyone that I work with through Bridge at these events and in the many participants with their own unique stories, similar and vastly different from mine. At the most recent Transition Event we were making colorful paper flowers and crowns. When I tried to put the one I had made on my head, it was too small. I laughed and said I wasn't surprised because I have kind of a big head! One of the participants looked at me with a serious face and said, "No you don't, you are perfect just the way you are!"

As Lead Family Resources Coordinator at Boyer Children's Clinic in Seattle Rachel works with parents of children birth to three years with developmental delays. She lives in Kent with her husband Josh and 2 year old son Sawyer.

I have heard for quite some time that it is good to be holistic in life. I have heard all sorts of definitions and explanations about what it means to be holistic. Frequently words get bantered around in this context like: balance, complexity, chaos, or interconnectivity - which are all words used to delineate some aspect of holism.

A simple expression of holism would be to say that we are all spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social beings. The implication is that one can't look at any one particular part of our lives and perceive or understand who we are.



In my world there is a need to look at a particular element in our lives above all the rest. No one would be surprised I am sure, when I say we need to be - first, last, and always - spiritual beings. When one looks at the God connection we find it is easier to see all the other aspects of life in proper relationship.

When we see the God connection in our personal life, each day is better experienced. When we see the God connection our differences of physical ability, intellectual ability or social ability are negated. We are one whole - one body, one mind, one being - which is filled and connected with God's Spirit.

Our Auction Supporters

Bridge is blessed by the support of many businesses and individuals who donate auction items, products, and services to make the 25th Anniversary Dinner Auction a success. We encourage you to reward their generosity by supporting their endeavors throughout the year.

ACT - A Contemporary Theatre
Alaska Airlines
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Best Western PLUS Friday Harbor Suites
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Velda Schei
Jacobi's Restaurant - Walla Walla
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Lynn's Bistro of Kirkland
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Meritage Meadows Inn
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Seattle Art Museum
Seattle Mariners
Seattle Seahawks
Seattle Sounders FC
Seattle Symphony
Silverwood Theme Park
Sizzleworks Cooking School
Sport Restaurant & Bar

Sweet Cakes - Kirkland
Taproot Theatre Company
Teatro Zinzanni
The Cheesecake Factory
The Harbor Club of Bellevue
The Heathman Hotel - Kirkland
The Marcus Whitman Hotel
The Spanish Table
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Trader Joe's - Issaquah
University of Washington
Washington Trails Association
Wine World & Spirits
Woodland Park Zoo



Bridge Disability Ministries

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

Honoring People Living with Disabilities



What We Do:

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

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)

Unless Otherwise Noted

- October 28th Hosted by Newport Presbyterian Church
4010 120th Ave SE, Bellevue 98006
- Nov. 18th Hosted by Crossroads Bible Church
15815 SE 37th St., Bellevue, 98006
- Dec. 8th Christmas Celebration
Hosted by St. John Vianney Catholic Church
12600 84th Ave NE, Kirkland, 98034
NOTE: Saturday, 12pm - 2:30pm

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

2012 Benefit Dinner & Auction



**October 13th, 2012
at The Harbor Club,
Bellevue**

**25 Years of Safe Harbor...
Charting a Course for the Future**

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.