



# The Connector

OCTOBER 2010

IOWA

**SERVING  
PERSONS WITH  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES  
SINCE 1998**

## IN THIS ISSUE:

**Community  
Matchmakers** 1

**Fore!** 2

**Economic Challenges** 2

**Employee Spotlight** 2

**The Steamship  
Bertrand** 3

**ASI Continuing  
Education** 3

## Community Matchmakers

In our efforts to provide support to people, it is sometimes possible to forget that our primary role is to assist people to become connected to the larger community. We can get lost in the day to day routines of support, and unintentionally continue to isolate people. Because we are "nice people", and the individuals we support seem happier in their new lives, we can be lulled into thinking we are enough for each other. Deep inside, we know we can't really be all things to all people.



After all, people grow from interactions with others and need more than what we can reasonably hope to provide.

Ask yourself the following: are we helping to expand social networks? If we know that someone doesn't have many friends, are we structuring our activities to include others? Are we, ourselves, building meaningful and equitable relationships with the people we support?

Be a bridge builder. Find ways to connect people to other people who aren't in the role of paid support. Build bridges out of the "program" and into the community. Start small, but start now. Think of yourself as a "matchmaker". It's the most important work you will ever do.

*Tom Hoff,  
Director of Marketing &  
Business Development*

## What We Do

### Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)

Habilitation,  
Respite,  
Attendant Care,  
In-home Supports

### Day Treatment

Adult and Child Day Treatment,  
After School and Summer Programs

### Residential Support

Supported Community Living,  
Specialized Living Arrangements



## Fore!

When Cameron announced at his annual Interdisciplinary Team Meeting that he wanted to learn to play golf, the members of his team were listening and set out to help Cameron meet this goal. Private lessons at one of the golf courses operated by the Council Bluffs Parks and Recreation Department proved to be a out of Cameron's price range, but fortunately one of the Client Service

Representatives in Cameron's home is a golfer and was more than willing to pitch in and teach Cameron the basics of the game. With the help of staff, Cameron has visited a driving range on several occasions, and practices his putting in the hallway of his home by aiming for a plastic pitcher in addition to the occasional round of "mini-putt". Soon Cameron will be visiting a local nine-hole, par 3 course to play

his first full game of golf.

At AmeriServe the four principles of life, *choice, respect, presence* and *participation* are part of the foundation that makes AmeriServe "The People Company". Helping Cameron achieve this goal upholds these four principles: we respect his desire to learn a new skill, his choice of sports, and his input into his annual treatment plan. In addition, through

participating in golf, Cameron will be present and have the opportunity to participate in the community. Perhaps in this case, we should call them the "FORE!" Principles of Life.

*Tim O'Hara*  
Program Coordinator,  
QMRP

## Economic Challenges

Social workers and case managers face difficult challenges. They have pressures from clients, families, providers, funding agencies, advocacy groups, and others. So how are compromises made and outcomes achieved? When the question is asked, "What is best for the person in need of service?" then the scope of manageable variables is narrowed.

As we all know, recent

economic conditions have placed stress, and unfortunately, have imposed hardships, on many people. But everyone is affected: families, employees, businesses, school systems, and so on. And, of course, the people we serve who have fixed, limited incomes. Most everyone is impacted in some way. In Iowa, rates paid to providers were cut 2.5% in January 2010 to assist the state in meeting its own budget.

These economic challenges stretch the capacity of the "system" to serve people who are in need, which is an additional factor creating challenges to social workers and case managers. I don't know the answer to how best use our resources to meet the wide-ranging needs of people in our society. I do know, for the professionals (case managers and social workers) who devote their livelihood to coordinating

assistance with the resources available, I laud their efforts and appreciate the commitment to improving the lives of others.

*Alan Blakestad,*  
Director

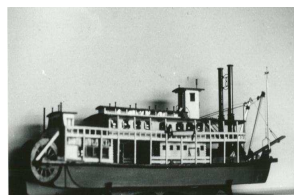
## Employee Spotlight

**"Making life better tomorrow because of what is done today."**

- Welcome to Kristen Staiert who recently assumed the position of CSC Community Liaison for AmeriServe International.
- Welcome back, Anne Hoffmeier! Anne has accepted the position of CSC Operations Specialist for AmeriServe International.
- Welcome Atrayu Lyric Michael, born September 29<sup>th</sup> to Beth Miller, Client Services Representative!

## The Steamship *Bertrand* and Our Great Adventure

Learning about new things and doing research about the topic at the library is something

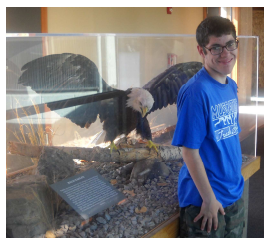


people who attend ASI day habilitation enjoy doing. When the topic of shipwrecks was recently chosen, we were surprised to learn about a shipwreck which happened close to Council Bluffs! The steamboat *Bertrand* sank in a portion of the Missouri river now known as the DeSoto Bend National Wildlife Refuge, 32 miles north of Council Bluffs. This discovery meant a field trip was in order.

Upon arriving at DeSoto Bend everyone was

amazed to learn that the refuge is actually a 7827 acre National Park. The Museum accommodates the artifacts from the *Bertrand* in an environmentally controlled collection storage area which protects the cargo of the boat. Visitors can view this area through a 38 foot glass wall.

Those attending watched a short film explaining the story of the *Bertrand*, and



learned that it sank April 1, 1865 loaded with cargo headed for the goldfields of Montana. The steamboat hit a snag and struggled to make it to

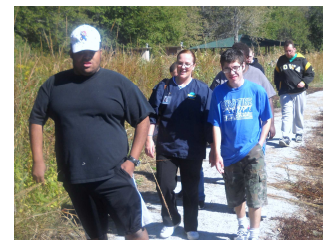
shallow waters where it sank north of Omaha.



The *Bertrand* was excavated in 1968. In summary of the day, James N. remarked that he liked seeing all of the "cool" 20<sup>th</sup> century things like cannon balls, chains, shackles, clothing and tools. There was even a bottle of ketchup, which caused James to wonder if it was still any good! James also mentioned observing wildlife such as bald eagles, wild turkeys and geese as a favorite part of the trip.

This activity was driven by choices made by the people who participate in

the ASI day habilitation program. What began as a trip to the library to look up information turned into a great day of exploration and discovery for those involved! The opportunity



to learn about and connect to their community – this is what makes us the People Company!

*Mike Caricofe,  
The Planning Center*

## AmeriServe International Continuing Education—November 2010

### Basic Principles of Behavior

Thursday, November 11th, 2010 from 12:00-2:00pm or  
Friday, November 19th, 2010 from 3:30-5:30pm

Part of habilitation is assisting our clients to replace a behavior which has a negative result with a substitute behavior. There are several strategies to employ to increase the likelihood that the replacement behavior will last. Join this continuing education session to develop understanding of why a person may act the way they do and alternatives to help them adopt options which have a positive result.

### Objectives:

- Define and give examples of behavior
- Identify potential functions of behavior
- Identify factors which affect behavior
- Describe the behavior change cycle
- Apply information learned to better support client success



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## How to Contact Us



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## Exciting News from AmeriServe International

After a lot of hard work and planning from the team at AmeriServe International we have a newly refurbished website that makes it easy to subscribe to our newsletter, meet the team, obtain contact information and enjoy pictures of the AmeriServe family!

Please feel free to take a look and enjoy at:

**<http://www.ameriserveintl.com>**

## Support Options

1. **In-Home Support**—Training to increase self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills within the home and community.
2. **Day Treatment**—Specialized sensory-motor, cognitive, communication, social interaction, and behavioral support.
3. **Residential**—Designed to maximize consumer successes through the use of habilitative therapies, special developmental skills, participative enhancement, and sensory-motor development in the group home or specialized living setting.



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