

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Winter's Gold

Donor Spotlight

Student Volunteers

Meet the Board

Travelogue Updates

Champions of Change

Options

Member News!

Welcome to the Dispatch!

In 2013, we made it our goal to offer up something above and beyond your typical newsletter. Something more interactive. Something more engaging. We wanted big, beautiful pictures of our members and employees doing what they do best. We wanted reflections and stories written by the people who were there. We wanted to bring the reader closer to experiencing the wonderful things we're lucky enough to experience first-hand, around here, every day. For those of you who receive the newsletter online or via email, go crazy - click and touch away. Many of the pictures and highlighted words are linked to additional information, for those of you who want to learn more about anything we've written here. We hope you enjoy the Dispatch. See you next quarter!

Whenever you see this icon, touch or click for additional pictures!



Whenever you see the "Play" arrow, touch or click for video!



The Dispatch is a quarterly publication of Discovery Living, Inc., © 2013. If you are interested in receiving a copy of our newsletter by email or traditional post, please contact **Leon Bohn** at leon.bohn@discoveryliving.org.

THE Dispatch

A PUBLICATION OF DISCOVERY LIVING, INC. 

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

Bob Mowry

VICE PRESIDENT

Denis Duppong

TREASURER

Ralph Savoy

SECRETARY

Leigh Murdoch

Tom Auterman

Kelly Baier

Craig Clark

Anne Cunningham

Bart Gibney

Jeff Gibney

Elmer Haverly

Tom King

William Knapp

Dr. John McGrane

Terry Moran

John Negro

James Nelson

Scott Olson

Loren Schmitz

Larry Sharp

Mike Stallman

Lynne Strabala

Frank Varvaris

Karen Volz



Winter Games 2014

Winter's Gold Iowa 2014

Of course when we play, we're out to have a great time and enjoy a little friendly competition with our fellow athletes. ...But admittedly, there's nothing like the thrill of hard work paying off in gold. In January, after weeks of training hard and smart, members Kerianne Hennessey and Ryan Sharp brought it all home. Both competed in the games in Dubuque, from January 13th to the 14th. Keri's medals were for Slalom and Giant Slalom, Ryan's were both captured in the Alpine Skiing (downhill) discipline. Congratulations to our champions!

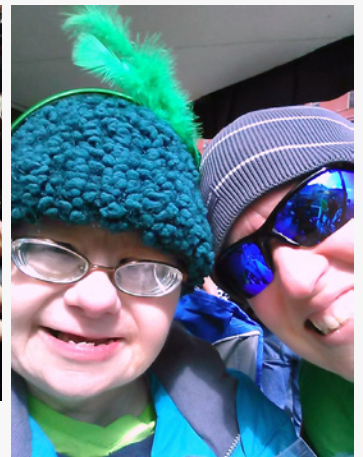


From far left: Keri with Laurie Church, Ryan, and Ryan receiving his medal.

“Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. A man can't ride you unless your back is bent.”

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

AHH... FRESH AIR! ...worth 1,000 words Gallery Edition



ELVIS LIVES!

ST. PAT'S

PIZZA RANCH





DONOR SPOTLIGHT John and Nicki Raaz

It was more than ten years ago when John and Nicki Raaz started to actively look for service alternatives for their son, John Jr. The Raazes were dissatisfied with service offerings and, with the direction services in Illinois seemed to be heading. John and Nicki are both from Iowa, and son John was born when they lived in Cedar Rapids in 1967, so it seemed logical to look at services in Iowa. After talking with friends, family, and professionals in Linn County, they reached out to Carol Saddoris, Director of Residential Services, and John Morris, Discovery Living's former Executive Director, and the rest - as they say - is history.

After many months of advocacy, John Jr. was able to move to Cedar Rapids in 2005. John and Nicki purchased a home and lived with John Jr. as he settled into his new home and community. Today, the beautiful property they purchased is home to four people served by Discovery Living, including their son John Jr.

John and Nicki have relentlessly advocated for their son and generously supported Discovery Living, making a gift to our recent **Endowment Challenge Campaign**, as well as supporting our Capital Campaign and Annual Appeal. Additionally, they have donated their time, energy, supplies, and furnishings to help members in need. The Raazes continue to play an active role in the lives of John Jr. and his housemates. All of us at Discovery Living are grateful for their steadfast support and commitment to the future of our organization.

“When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves.” ~ Viktor E. Frankl



Spring is in the air, and it is time to launch our annual Birdies for Charity Campaign. This year's **John Deere Classic** is scheduled for July 7-13 at **TPC Deere Run** in Silvis, IL, and John Deere is again partnering with local

non-profits, including Discovery Living, Inc. Each dollar in pledges will yield a 5 -10% bonus contribution from John Deere. Every dollar pledged, plus the John Deere contribution, goes to Discovery Living. Discovery Living pays no expenses to participate in this program.

How it works: Simply make a one-time flat donation or pledge one cent or more per birdie. After the tournament, you'll be mailed a notice of your pledge amount due. Tournament rules and pledge forms are available at: www.birdiesforcharity.com.

Everyone who pledges can guess the number of birdies that will be shot during the Classic and will have a chance to win a new car or one of more than 100 consolation prizes.

For more information or to receive a pledge form you can contact the Discovery Living office at (319) 378-7470. All forms are due in our office no later than June 14th.

Thank you for supporting the work we do at Discovery Living.

SEND IN... THE BEE TEAM



On January 9th, five St. Ambrose University Graduate Students volunteered their time and energy to help out Discovery Living. A full day of volunteer activity is a requirement of their week long Master of Organizational Leadership Team Building course, and these students chose to help us out. We put the volunteers to work filing and storing records, and cleaning the interior of several company vehicles. Thanks to these folks for thinking of us, and we wish them the best of luck in their future studies.



Pictured Left to Right: John Michaletti, April Ramsey, Anthony Jensen, Carol Beach, and Vanessa Jimenez



President - Bob Mowry



Vice President - Denis Duppong



Treasurer - Ralph Savoy



Secretary - Leigh Murdoch

MEET THE BOARD



Tom Auterman



Kelly Baier



Craig Clark

Each member of the Discovery Living board of directors donates their time, resources, and expertise to help further our mission. We are very fortunate to have such a diverse and knowledgeable group of people acting as our governing body.



Anne Cunningham



Bart Gibney



Jeff Gibney



Elmer Haverly



Tom King



William Knapp



Dr. John McGrane



Terry Moran



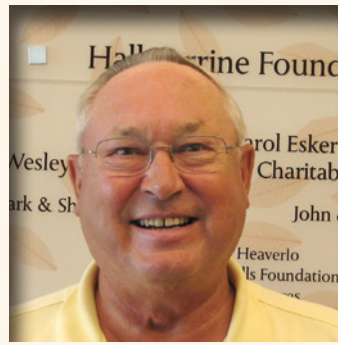
John Negro



James Nelson



Scott Olson



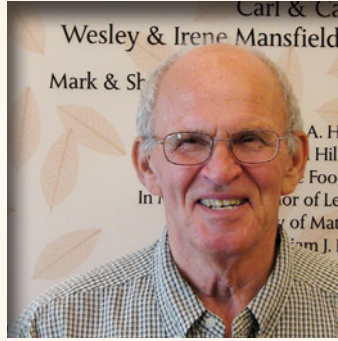
Loren Schmitz



Larry Sharp



Mike Stallman



Lynne Strabala



Frank Varvaris



Karen Volz



TRAVEL & ADVENTURE

FILM SERIES

2014

We are pleased to announce Discovery Living's 2014 Travel and Adventure Series Lineup:

Sunday, September 21 – Lure & Lore of Deserts - [Sandy Mortimer](#)

Sunday, September 28 – Majestic Montana - [Steve Gonser](#)

Sunday, November 16 – Amazon - A Discovery Voyage Along the Great River Sea - [Marlin Darrah](#)

Sunday, December 7 – Pacific Coast - Top to Bottom - [Bob De Loss](#)

*All shows begin at 2:00 pm

Our shows will be held at the [Marriott Convention Center](#) at [1200 Collins Road NE](#) in Cedar Rapids. The convention center is fully accessible, seats over 200, has plenty of parking, and is centrally located.

Those of you who have pre-ordered tickets will soon receive your tickets and a show brochure in the mail. People interested in purchasing tickets may do so by calling our main office or just stop by during regular business hours. Our single season ticket price is \$20, and a family season pass is \$44, if you purchase your tickets prior to July 1. Single and family season passes are \$24 and \$48, respectively, if purchased after July 1. Single admission tickets on the day of the show are \$7.00. We will have snacks and beverages available for purchase during intermission. All proceeds from ticket and snack sales go to support the work we do here at Discovery Living.

You can find additional information at www.discoveryliving.org, or by calling our office at 319-378-7470.





Seeds of Change

We'd like to take a moment to recognize and applaud the special efforts of one of our employees, **Sonia Kendrick**. Sonia is a full-time Community Living Assistant who not only makes a marked difference in the lives of our members, but also in the lives of Iowans near and far. **Below is an excerpt from an article dated March 24, 2014, in U.S. Veterans Magazine:**



"On Tuesday, March 25, the White House honored 10 local leaders who are "Women Veteran Leader Champions of Change." The event honored women veteran industry leaders, highlighting their incredible contributions to our

nation's business, public, and community service sectors. The **Champions of Change** program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities.

Sonia Jo Kendrick, Founder of Feed Iowa First

Sonia Kendrick was sent to war in Afghanistan in 2003. There she experienced firsthand what food insecurity looks like. She was surprised to come home to America and find that her state of Iowa had 400,000 food insecure people and that we import over 90% of our food. Sonia earned a degree in Agronomy and is currently working on a master's degree in sustainable food systems. She sits on her county's food systems council, is a Sister of the Planet for Oxfam, helped found Iowa's Women's Veteran Farmer Coalition, and founded **Feed Iowa First** - through which she has grown thousands of pounds of vegetables that she has donated to food banks and Meals on Wheels. Most importantly, she is the single mother of two girls. Her purpose is to bring health, vitality, and food security to the people, and to be a farmer of farmers. As a sufferer of PTSD, farming keeps her grounded. Her mission is to grow vegetables for food banks and assist landless, beginning farmers to start farming, and to transform her food system from a transportation-based food system to a locally-based food system. Sonia firmly believes that food security is national security and that plows are always greater than swords!"

We are proud of Sonia and congratulate her on this wonderful, national recognition. To learn more about Sonia and the work of Feed Iowa First, you can read her personal account at the link below, or check out their website at feediowalst.org.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/03/31/clone-power-education-create-next-generation-conservation-leaders>



"The best way to predict your future is to create it." ~Peter F. Drucker

Thanks to all of you who supported the Discovery Living Endowment Challenge. Fifty friends of Discovery Living pledged over \$90,000 to help grow our **endowment fund** with the **Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation (GRCRF)**. Because of your support, Discovery Living has received over \$15,000 in matching funds from the GRCRF, and we expect to leverage the remaining match dollars in the year ahead.

ENDOWMENT CHALLENGE

There is still time to help. If you want to learn more about a wonderful opportunity to help ensure Discovery Living's long-term stability, please call the office at (319) 378-7470 and ask to speak with Bob Hebl. To learn more about the lives being touched by Discovery Living go to our website at www.discoveryliving.org and click on the **About Us** tab on the top of the screen, and then the **Our Stories** tab on the right side of the screen.

Work Options for People with Disabilities

By Bob Hebl, Executive Director

Many of you have been following recent media coverage regarding [Options of Linn County](#). Options currently provides vocational support to over 200 people with disabilities, many of whom reside in Discovery Living residential programs. State and federal initiatives resulted in the Linn County supervisors forming a task force, which includes parents of the people with disabilities, human service providers, county officials, and other stakeholders, in order to assess critical issues. I have been appointed to the task force and am happy to answer any questions people may have as this process moves forward.

The purpose of the task force is to explore funding and operational alternatives to minimize service disruptions for the people served at Options of Linn County, and to assess the viability of preserving a modified version of the current Options program. Key financial issues in play are:

Options and other sheltered workshops face a push by the Department of Justice to serve people with disabilities in more integrated, community-based settings, rather than in a sheltered workshop. This federal initiative has resulted in the downsizing and/or closure of a number of



sheltered workshops throughout the country. There are many sheltered workshops operated by private providers in Iowa, but only Linn County operates a sheltered workshop.

People served in workshops are typically paid in accordance with what they produce, which for most is sub-minimum-wage. This practice has been criticized by some and will also be addressed by the task force.

The state has capped the level of reimbursement they will provide to programs like Options - and that cap will likely result in a significant funding shortfall for the program in the future.

The task force has already met several times and is assessing funding, service delivery, and federal and state mandates in order to develop a service delivery plan that meets the needs of people impacted, while still complying with state and federal requirements.

Rest assured that there are no imminent plans to close the Options program, but changes are certainly on the horizon. I commend the Linn County Board of Supervisors for forming a task force to get out in front of potential changes and develop a strategy that will meet mandates and preserve service integrity.

Legislative Update

The 2014 Iowa legislative session is nearing an end and this session was marked by a great deal of bi-partisan action. The overall 2015 state budget is just under 7 billion dollars, which represents over a 7% increase from last year's spending levels. The 1.85 billion dollar Health and Human Services (HHS) appropriation is again the largest single budget item. The HHS budget was allocated over 100 million more funds than in 2014, including 86 million in additional state funding for the state's Medicaid obligations that are not covered by the federal government. A big thank you goes to State Representatives [Daniel Lundby](#), [Tyler Olson](#), [Art Staed](#), and [Kirsten Running-Marquardt](#), as well as [Senator Liz Mathis](#), for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet and discuss issues impacting people with disabilities. Your support and advocacy are greatly appreciated!

For more information, regarding session activities, go to: <http://www.infonetiowa.org/news/>, which is an excellent resource regarding legislative updates and other disability related issues.



Bob Hebl, Executive Director, with (clockwise from top left): Representative Kirsten Running-Marquardt, Linn County Supervisor, Ben Rogers, Representatives Tyler Olson, Daniel Lundby, Art Staed, and Senator Liz Mathis.



1 0 1 5 Old Marion Road, NE
Cedar Rapids, I o w a 52402

Place
Stamp
Here

www.discoveryliving.org
(319) 378-7470

*Helping adults with
intellectual disabilities
live successful,
satisfying lives in the
mainstream of the
community.*