THE Dispatch

A PUBLICATION OF DISCOVERY LIVING, INC.



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Providing ***individualized,*** *life-long* ***support*** *to adults with developmental disabilities in the setting* ***of their choice*** *by promoting personal* ***growth, success, and satisfaction*** *through life experiences.*

There Comes a Time...

Story on pg. 5

"I wouldn't have traded it for anything"
- Bob

In Memory



Aaron Schantz passed away in his home on Sunday, September 13th, 2026 surrounded by his family, caregivers, and other loved ones at his side. Aaron was a 1993 Washington High School graduate and went on to be a dedicated and meticulous employee at various jobs, his favorite being Aegon. An active member of the Marion and Cedar Rapids community throughout his adult life. He loved shopping, camping, traveling, and going to music concerts and festivals. He lived to spread joy and connect with everyone around him through big smiles, hugs, and handshakes. Aaron loved all genres of film and music but was most inspired by the wonder of science fiction films and the energy of 80s big hair music. Aaron's roommates were family. Their time spanned three decades, and they lived an active and happy lifestyle together. Such fullness was supported by caregivers, many who were long-term figures and loved ones. He is now pain free, rocking out, and dancing. We will miss you Aaron.







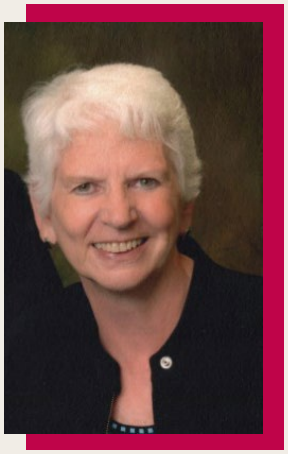




Though the house feels emptier now, the warm memories remain. Rest easy, sweet friend.



A LIFE WELL LIVED



On August 11, 2026, Carol Esker passed away. Carol and her husband Carl entrusted the care of their son Steve to Discovery Living in 1990, and we are honored to still serve Steve some 36 years later. Carol and Carl, along with Steve's siblings, quickly became cornerstones of our Discovery Living family. The Eskers generously gave of their time, energy and resources so that our organization could further it's mission.

Carol's obituary said it best – She leaves behind a lifetime of love, laughter, and beautiful memories. May you rest in peace knowing that you touched many lives along your earthly journey.







DECADES TOGETHER

This year, Discovery Living proudly celebrates Karen, Charlie, Mark, Vicki, Ray, Paul, Mike, Jim, Al, and Nancy for being part of our family for more than 40 years.Their milestones were honored at Hiawatha City Hall or during a Center Board Meeting. It has been a privilege to be part of their lives for so many years, and we look forward to many more.





"People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care" --Margaret Tyson









PLAY BALL



The guys at Barrington were the lucky recipients of some tickets to a Kernel's Game from West Side Mutual. Thank you West Side! Go Kernels!



Discovery Living

SOFTBALL SEASON 2026 and Picnic!











As always, a huge thank you to our amazing photographer friend, Jim Messina, for another incredible season of photos!!

You can reach out to Jim at prairiewings@hotmail.com. And, if you'd like to see more of the pics, click here or visit https://www.flickr.com/photos/91986075@N07/albums

The Case of the Compliance Confusion

Greetings, my dear compliance compatriots! This quarter, I thought it would be fun to put our ever-growing collective knowledge of compliance to the test. This quarter, the game is ~~a paw!~~ afoot! Join me as we gather clues from the scenario below and identify the missed compliance opportunities! Shall we, then?

– Your humble HIPAA hero hound, aka "Sure, Lock Homes"

COMPLIANCE CORNER

Monica Ravn, Director of Compliance

Can You Spot the 5 Compliance Concerns?

Case Report:

It's a busy afternoon at home. Staff Ben and Joan are discussing a recent health appointment and med change. A visiting guardian is sitting nearby with their loved one. Ben is called away and leaves the person's paperwork open on the desk. The person's name, medical information, and other personal details are included.



Later, everyone is having a great time during an activity downtown. Joan takes a picture of an individual with her phone and posts it on social media, captioned, "Another fun day at work!" She doesn't remember if they have a photo consent, but the picture is so cute! Suddenly, a housemate becomes upset and has a minor fall. Because things are busy, and the individual says he is okay - no visible injury - the employee decides documentation is not needed.

At the end of their shift, Joe, who stayed back with a housemate who wasn't interested in going downtown mentions that he noticed something earlier that concerned him about the individual's safety. He wasn't sure, though, so said he was just going to take off and he'd wait and see if it happens again on a future shift.

All in all, the staff agreed that it seemed to have been a pretty uneventful, low-stress day! And bonus: There had hardly been any documentation to complete that day!!

Your Assignment:

- 5 compliance concerns appear in this report. Did you find all of them? Think about: privacy, social media, documentation, safety, and reporting concerns...

(Snoop over to pg. 6 to check your answers!)



From the Desk of Bob Hebl...

I wanted to take a few moments to inform those of you who may not be aware that I intend to retire on or around June 30, 2027. I've worked in various capacities supporting people with disabilities since 1986 and have enjoyed a wonderful career. I feel blessed that our board of directors and my predecessor, John Morris, chose me as the executive director 17 years ago, and have enjoyed the best years of my career right here. Thanks to each of you for your compassion and support along the way. It has been a life changing experience to be part of the Discovery Living family all these years. Enabling the people we support to enjoy meaningful lives in the community of their choice is something we can all be proud of. Working with our dedicated employees as they rose to meet challenges, whether it be Covid, a devastating Derecho, or assisting a person served in the end stages of life, are just a few of the many memories I will always carry with me. Our organization is blessed by a deeply committed board of directors, hundreds of community supporters and, of course, our founding fathers - the Knights of Columbus. Together, we managed to remain a high-quality service provider, launched our day centers, upgraded and expanded our residential supports and vehicle fleet, all while grappling with chronic underfunding of our services.

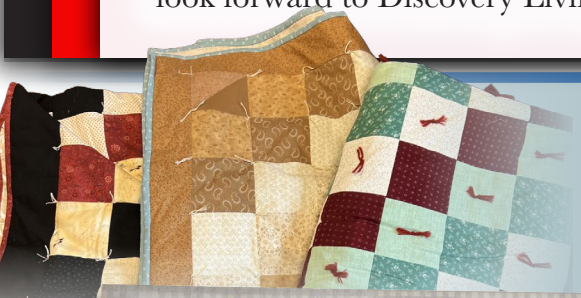






Our board of directors will conduct a comprehensive search to find a high-quality successor, who I plan to spend at least several months working with before departing. Please accept my sincere thanks for allowing me to be a part of this wonderful journey. I wouldn't have traded it for anything and look forward to Discovery Living's future with optimism.







Pictured from L to R: Deb Sorensen, with Nimble Fingers, Mark Kelly, Ray Griffin, Ranesha Beets, Somah Saryoung, Sensory Center DSP, and Judy Shepherd, with Nimble Fingers.

Nimble Fingers of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Share Warmth Through Handmade Quilts

This quarter, 12 individuals supported by Discovery Living received a special gift of warmth and comfort, thanks to the generous members of Nimble Fingers at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church.

The group donated handmade, one-of-a-kind quilts, each thoughtfully created with care. These beautiful quilts will not only help keep individuals warm throughout the winter season, but also serve as a meaningful reminder of the kindness and support of our community.

We are grateful to Nimble Fingers for sharing their time, talent, and compassion with Discovery Living and the individuals we serve.

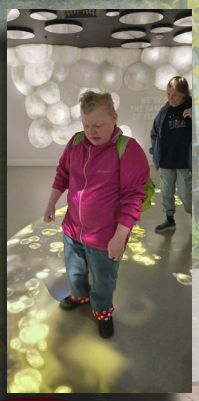












SHELLY TAKES IRELAND

Shelly and Melinda took a trip this fall to Ireland. A few highlights include sleeping in a castle and trying her first ever pint of Guinness. It truly was a trip worth remembering!

COMPLIANCE CORNER

(continued from page 4)

CASE FILE: ANSWERS

1. Discussing private information where others can hear. Conversations involving an individual's private information should occur where unauthorized people cannot overhear.

2. Leaving confidential information visible. Paperwork containing personal or health information should be secured and not left where unauthorized people could see it.

3. Posting a photo without confirming authorization. Employees should follow organizational policies before taking or sharing photos of individuals served.

4. Not documenting the fall. Even when an individual appears okay, employees should follow the organization's requirements for documenting and reporting incidents.

5. Waiting to report a safety concern. Employees don't have to investigate or prove that something happened before raising a concern. Concerns should be reported according to organizational policy so the appropriate people can determine what action is needed.



How did you do?

5 found: Way to go! You're a true **Compliance Detective!!**

3–4 found: Not bad, **Super Sleuth!**

1–2 found: Keep those compliance eyes open; you can do it!

See it. Protect it. Document it. Report it.

Compliance isn't just following rules—it's protecting privacy, promoting safety, respecting individual rights, and speaking up when something doesn't seem right.

Farewell, Anne Cunningham



A big Discovery Living 'thank you' goes out to Anne Cunningham, who recently retired from our board of directors after 20 years of dedicated support. Anne served as Chair of our Fundraising, Endowment and Community Relations Committee, providing valuable insight and perspective. She routinely shared her extensive leadership and fundraising experience with the Discovery staff and board of directors, resulting in improved marketing and fundraising outcomes. Anne also freely gave her time, energy, and personal resources in support of our mission. Anne was always willing to help out when and where needed and, while we will miss her, she and her husband John will always be part of the Discovery Living family.

"If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together."
– African proverb

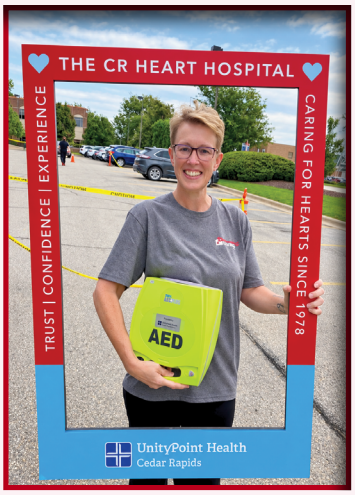
ANNUAL APPEAL 26 27



Ten. Remarkably meaningful. What do they have in common? "Ten" will be coming soon to a mailbox or inbox near you. It's a story of stability and change. A reflection on how then became now. Foundations and cornerstones.

Our Annual Appeal is one of our most important campaigns of the year, and this year, your support will mean more than ever before. Please give some thought as to how you may be of help to those that are really going to need it this year.

The Gift of Life



Administrative Professional/Ray of Sunshine, Cathy Mahan accepts the AED on behalf of Discovery Living

Through the generosity of St.Luke's Health Care Foundation via the St.Luke's Heartsaver Grant Program, Discovery Living was awarded an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The AED is portable, so while primarily located at our main office, the device can also be available at activities in the community. We also have an AED at our community center and recreation center. The use of an AED can mean the difference between life and death.

https://tinyurl.com/w6tv3ere to learn more.

We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.

– Dolly Parton

LIBRARIES! Yep!



The Valleyview ladies got an inside look at the new Busse Branch of the library on opening day. They received a "behind the scenes" tour of the library and learned about the inner workings of the new branch.

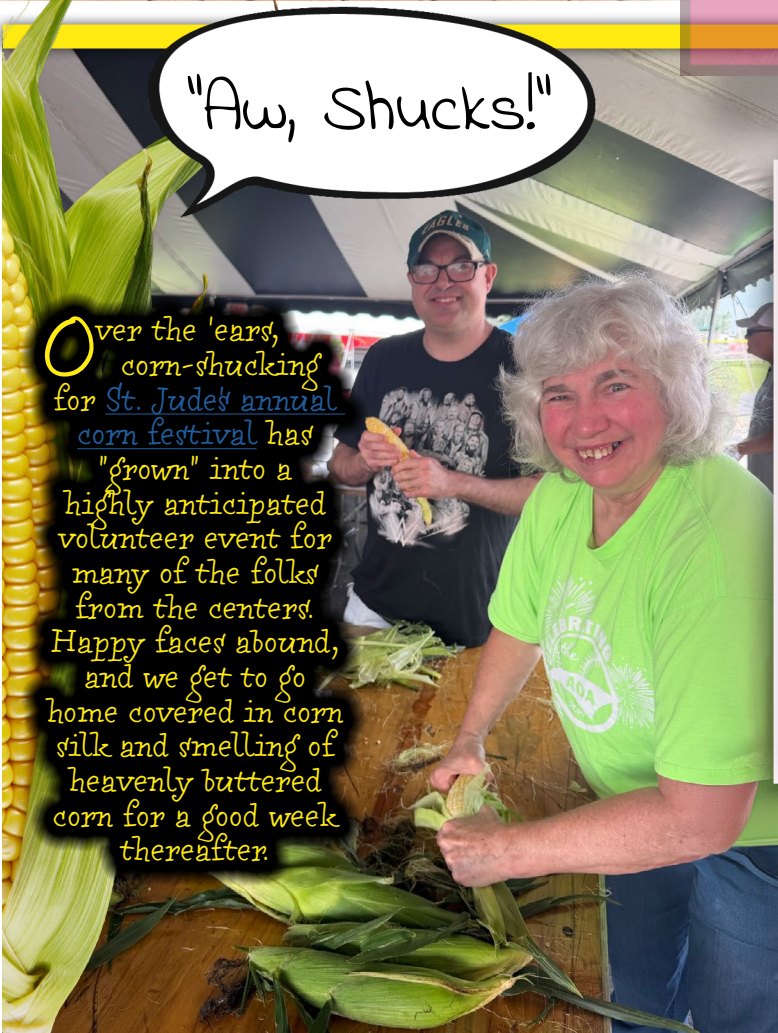
And then, as one does, went to Petsmart and got up close and personal with some reptiles at a "meet and greet" event.

<editor shivers>

SNAKES! ... Nope!







Over the 'ears, corn-shucking for St. Jude's annual corn festival has "grown" into a highly anticipated volunteer event for many of the folks from the centers. Happy faces abound, and we get to go home covered in corn silk and smelling of heavenly buttered corn for a good week thereafter.

Donate Today!

The Dispatch is a quarterly publication of Discovery Living, Inc., © 2026. If you are interested in receiving a copy of our newsletter by email or traditional post, please contact **our team** at newsletterteam@discoveryliving.org.

Discovery LIVING INC.

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Discovery Living was established by the area Knights of Columbus in 1977

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