



**BOD:** Darcy Arnold, Dr. Lou Dwyer, Trevor Harrison, Julie Hilmes, David Kienholz, David Lane, Carolyn Rettig, Mike Schottelkotte, Mary Turner, Mary West.

## **BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

**The December 2019 Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, the 10th, at 6:00 PM at the Allinson Admin Building, 336 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Montrose.**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Absences
- III. Minutes
- IV. Public Comment
  - A. Board Emails
- V. Audit Exit Conference
- VI. Executive Director's Report
- VII. Committee Reports
  - A. Finance/Audit Committee
  - B. PR/Fund-Raising Committee
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
- X. Announcements
- XI. Adjournment

### **FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE:**

**The Finance/Audit Committee will NOT meet prior to the regular Board meeting, but the regular meeting will start at 6:00 with the Audit Exit Conference.**

## **BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

### **December 10, 2019**

**Present:**

Darcy Arnold  
Mary Turner  
Mary West  
Carolyn Rettig  
David Lane  
Dr. Lou Dwyer  
Trevor Harrison

**Absences:**

Mike Schottelkotte  
Julie Hilmes  
David Kienholz

**Staff Present:**

Tom Turner  
Steve Dahlman  
Aimee Pruitt  
Chris McDonald  
Kevin Sowder

- I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:04 pm by President Darcy Arnold.
- II. Absences: See above.
- III. Minutes Review. Motion made by David Lane and seconded by Trevor Harrison to approve the minutes from November with the following changes; “Trevor presents an ask” related to his request to the Montrose County Commissioners. All in favor, motion carried.
- IV. Public Comment: Steve introduced Assistant Director of Finance, Kevin Sowder to the Board.
  - A. Board Emails: Darcy reminded everyone to check your COI emails. Darcy is getting a bunch of compliance emails.
- V. Audit Exit Conference: Postponed until the January Board Meeting as the audit is still not ready to finalize yet. The audit needs to be finished by the end of the week anyway, but it would be better to present once finalized.
- VI. Executive Director’s Report:
  - A. Tom opened by wishing the Board Happy Holidays, thanking Darcy for providing dinner for the Board meeting, and Aimee for the logistics. The COI quarterly newsletter and Tom’s article from the Daily Press were handed out. Today is Colorado Gives Day we received several donations, around \$1,100 as of the meeting. Tom will keep an eye on it.
  - B. Update on the relinquishment of the HCA license, we’re not getting as much consternation as Tom was expecting. Families are coming to us for help figuring it all out though. The process is going relatively well. The changes in service affects 45 clients and about that many staff as well. Our projections are that the relinquishment reduces our yearly income by about \$250k but the expenses go down about \$350k.

Touch of Care HCA might be the only company that is picking up all services we are dropping, perhaps even respite. A plus for any HCA is that the services comes with staff. Pasco only has program approval for CES not SLS, Tom is looking into that because it's just weird. Why they would do one and not the other, especially children since they typically serve adults. We're doing all we can to keep from having a break in service for these clients and their families, as well as our staff.

C. We are making the shift to new insurance. There were three open enrollment meetings today and one tomorrow. The first underwriter we were looking into came in with much higher rates than expected so we started over with a new underwriter. The second bid isn't as good as the original but it's still \$100-\$125k a year savings from our current plan.

D. Update on recent meetings:

- November 14<sup>th</sup> there was a follow-up meeting with Montrose County HHS, suggested by Sue Hanson. Darcy, Tom, and Steve met with HHS staff and County Manager Ken Norris. Sue Hanson was unable to attend. Basically, the ideas they came up with were talking to HCPF, state legislators, and to ask if we had considered running a mill levy. No word yet on the \$500k ask from Montrose County or on our normal annual ask.
- November 15<sup>th</sup> was a phone call with Wells Fargo. Tom also met with Senator Coram. The meeting was positive, and Senator Coram told Tom whatever he needs to champion our agency and system he will do. Tom extended an invitation for the Senator to come out and see what we do, maybe visit Park Place, Thursdays work best for everyone, they haven't been able to connect yet.
- Steve and Tom had another follow-up phone call with HCPF. After looking over everything there is no help they can provide other than perhaps through the budget process. Bonnie Silva stated that somehow the 9 other rural CCBs have better adjusted to the changes than we have, and they are doing fine. That may be HCPF's perspective but that is not what we hear from the other rural boards.
- Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup> Tom will be attending a JBC/HCPF briefing. Afterwards Tom and his counterpart from Steamboat Springs have a meeting with Senator Rankin to update him and see if he has any input.
- Darcy announced that we have a Dec 17<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Delta County Commissioners.

E. Mountain Film fundraiser ended up with \$8,000 in net proceeds so \$4,000 for both entities. It went well.

## VII. Committee Reports

A. Finance/Audit Committee:

- a. October finances, Revenue continues to hold to budgeted amounts. Budgeted expense is a bit under budget but should be with \$15,000/month increase in the monthly salary due to 1/1/20 increase in minimum wage. Cash is holding out fairly well. Bottom line for October, while we lost \$33k in October, the good news is for the first four months of the year we are breaking even. Also, in January the GRSS Medicaid rates will be going up (projected increase of \$18.5k/month) so that will help mitigate some of the new costs. Working capital is hanging in there. It has taken a big hit this year because of the two notes payable moving into current liabilities. When those notes are renewed the working capital will look better. October facility items: new windows at Canyonview and their roof needed to be reattached; Garnet needed some re-

plumbing help in the crawl space\basement area; Bradford had a water main break on our side of the tap that needed repair and in November their furnace quit functioning and a new one is being installed; Currently, Vista View had a sewer smell so Maintenance looked in the crawl space and there was a sewage problem. Access is extremely limited so we may have to tear up the floor to access. Still getting a game plan together. David Lane moved to approve October expenses, seconded by Carolyn Rettig, all in favor. Motion carried.

- b. Conversation about the staff bonus: Tom proposed a \$25.00 Christmas bonus for staff as we did last year. David Lane moves to vote on a potential employee bonus, seconded by Dr. Dwyer. Discussion ensued. Although the \$6,800 is relatively minor, there is concern about the bonus because it sends a mixed message about the agency's dire financial straits. No bonus sends a powerful statement to outsiders by letting them know we've had to cut even the smaller benefits. A counter-view is that because the employees have worked so hard to help out with holding expenses down, they should be rewarded. Several members expressed that while it really is a horrible thing to have to do, a bonus really can't be approved. Tom thought that staff will understand. Vote was for no Christmas bonus this year. Tom encouraged Board members to attend the Park Place and Aspen Crest parties to thank staff personally.
- c. As another small way to save some money, Board material like minutes and agendas will now be sent out electronically rather than paper.
- B. PR/Fund-Raising Committee: Darcy wants to give some good news about the "No Event Fundraiser" for the local match of the new CDOT vans. Highly successful, with an excess of \$22k over the \$40k needed for the match. The "No Event Van Fundraiser" is ongoing through January 2020. End of year fund raising letters going out, so they need to be back to us by Monday for mailing. A mailing list was passed around so the Board can make a note of who they're approaching. Trevor must recuse himself from the individual fundraising letters per his employment stipulations.

VIII. Old Business: None

IX. New Business: Darcy brought up that the Board will be finding a new Executive Director in the next 2-3 years as that is a Board function and to start thinking about that. Also, as a part of succession planning, Chris McDonald has tackled revising lots of policies and procedures in need of updating. The Board needs a few more members on the Policy & Procedures Committee along with Mary Turner and Mike Schottelkotte.

X. Announcements: None.

XI. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn put forth by Trevor Harrison. Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Aimee Pruitt

# Thanks and giving

As I have shared many times over the past several years, these are extremely difficult times financially for Community Options. The increases in the minimum wage, state-imposed reductions in the number of people we can serve, and sky-high health insurance costs, without any corresponding rate increases from the state, have created a perfect storm for our agency. It is easy to get discouraged and cynical, but at times like this I remind myself of all the amazing people at our agency who are still doing important and wonderful things, and here are some of this year's highlights:

- We are thankful for the people we support and their families who inspire us, encourage us, and challenge us to do our best. On a daily basis we experience the power of love and the indomitable human spirit; we learn about perseverance and overcoming adversity; and we revel in the joy of successes large and small.
- We are thankful for our caring and dedicated staff who choose to do the important daily work of empowering people's abilities and enhancing their lives, despite the fact that our Medicaid rates for our services do not allow us to pay employees anywhere near what they are worth.
- We are thankful for our first-ever grant through CDOT and the fact that it will allow us to replace part of our aging fleet of vehicle with three brand new vans.



## Community Options Ink

By Tom Turner

- We are also thankful for the success of our fund-raising campaign that sell logo space on our vehicles to local businesses and we are thankful for the generosity of those who have already participated, and for those who will in the future.

During the holidays, many of us are reflecting on the blessings in our lives, and looking for worthy causes in order to give back and share with others. If you would like to be a part of the important work done by our agency, Tuesday, December 10th is Colorado Gives Day, and this is the fifth year we have been approved as a participant. Colorado Gives Day encourages people to "Give Where You Live", and is an annual statewide effort to celebrate and increase philanthropy in Colorado through online giving. You can do so by going to [ColoradoGives.org](http://ColoradoGives.org) and viewing our extensive profile, or by going to our website [www.communityoptionsinc.org](http://www.communityoptionsinc.org) and finding the donate button. Also, for anyone aged 70% or older, you can avoid paying taxes on require minimum distributions (RMDs) from IRAs by making a charitable rollover to our agency.

Thank you all for your interest and support, and in the coming year may we all find cause for thanks and giving. Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays everyone!

*Tom Turner is executive director of Community Options Inc. in Montrose.*



### Executive Director's Corner

By Tom Turner

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Hello everyone. I hope you've been enjoying this beautiful fall weather we've been having after that quick blast of winter we had the end of October. I love this time of year but also hope for another very snowy winter (other than when I have to drive to Denver) to keep working on our persistent drought. Keep your fingers crossed.

As usual, there has been a lot going on around our agency, and I wanted to provide some updates. First of all, I want to thank all of you who were able to attend our Annual Meeting on October 9<sup>th</sup>, and I hope you enjoyed meeting and hearing from Christiano Sosa from the Arc of Colorado. The performance by Joyful Sounds was great fun as always, and it's been a very long time since I've done the Hokey Pokey! I encourage you to read a copy of our Annual Report that was distributed at that meeting. I think you will find it interesting and informative. I also want to thank all of you who took part in the process to select the 2019-2020 Community Options Employee of the Year. We had 12 employees nominated this year, all of whom are very worthy of this honor, and I'd like to congratulate each of them. The nominees were: **Kandi Connell, Brandi Goddard, Janice Jones Elliott, Gaylan Largent, Shelley McKenzie, Laura McLagan, Jean Mullins-Seth, Midge Pruitt, Randi Purdue, Shay Sickles, and our two co-winners, Marilyn Fick and Jessica Hoover!** Please join me in congratulating Marilyn and Jessica, and all those people who were nominated. You are truly representative of our many, many terrific employees.

I also wanted to let you know that on November 9th we held another very successful Mountainfilm on Tour event. We packed the Pavilion to overflowing, and I wanted to thank those of you who were able to attend. Thanks to **Bruce, Mary, and Paul** for handing out programs. Special thanks also to **Jim Womeldorf** for all of his work on this event that raises funds for our agency and also brings lots of positive attention and public awareness.

On a systems level, work continues on a bazillion things, many of which involve efforts to stabilize our financial situation in the face of years of enrollment attrition, increases in the minimum wage, and exorbitant health insurance costs, with only minimal increases in our Medicaid rates to offset those increased

expenses. On the "increasing revenue" side of this equation, we have begun a campaign of selling logos on our vehicles and other fund-raising activities, and we are involved in a whole series of meetings with officials at the Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing, as well as local County Commissioners and City Councils seeking additional financial support. On the "decreasing expense" side of this predicament, we have two major efforts in the works. First of all, as you are all aware, we are in the process of negotiations to change our health insurance to a self-funded, reference-based payment approach that will maintain our current (or perhaps even better) coverage at what we hope will be a considerable savings to employees and the agency. This is proposed to go into effect 1/1/20, so stay tuned for information on open enrollment meetings.

The other major undertaking is that of relinquishing our Class B Home Care Agency License effective 12/31, and the cessation of providing Personal Care, Homemaker, and Respite services through both our SLS and CES Medicaid Waivers. This decision has not come easily and relates to many complicating factors that are outside our control. We understand these services are very important to families and the people receiving those services, so we are in the process of contacting community Home Care Agencies to transfer those services. So far, the response from those other agencies has been very encouraging, so we are hopeful to minimize the impact and disruption on families and providers.

Oh, and for the second year in a row, we're also submitting another Colorado Dept. of Transportation (CDOT) grant to try and get two new vehicles. The three vehicles that we were successful in obtaining through last year's grant should be arriving sometime in December or January, so get ready for some beautiful new rides!

Apart from all of this, however, the Holiday season is upon us yet again, and Community Options is a very special place in which to celebrate. It's time to take a breath and remember that we have many reasons to be grateful again this year, and all of the events around our agency offer many opportunities to get in the holiday spirit. The Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations at our facilities, and the dances and holiday meals are all great chances to celebrate with our co-workers and the people we support. So whether you celebrate the birth of Christ, or Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa, the Winter Solstice, or simply the completion of one year and the coming of another, here's wishing each of us a joyful, grateful, and peaceful Holiday season. Thanks for another year of hard work and caring on behalf of the people we serve, and may we all have a productive and successful 2020. Until next time, be safe, work hard, have some fun, and Happy Holidays!



## *Montrose Adult Services*

*Jim Womeldorf, Adult Services Director*

*"I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual." (Henry David Thoreau)*

With the warm and dry autumn we have had this year, the holiday season seems to be coming sooner than normal. But it is upon us, and I am beginning to prepare for it. The first thing is to think of Thanksgiving, my favorite holiday. There is no stress over gift-giving, just a giving of thanks and, if one is lucky, a day to be with family and friends. If nothing else, Thanksgiving should be a time we all reflect on what we are thankful for. For the risk of being too redundant, I am reprinting something I put in my November 2002 Newsletter, one of the first articles I wrote at Community Options. It is an anonymous Thanksgiving poem written from the viewpoint of our clients who might not be able to express their thanks for all the care they receive from our staff.

- When I cannot speak, *thank you* for being patient, watching and listening to what I have to say;
- When I cannot walk, *thank you* for helping me to get where I have to go;
- When I cannot feed myself, *thank you* for making sure that I am nourished;
- When I cannot bathe myself, *thank you* for making sure that I am clean;
- When I cry, *thank you* for giving me a tissue and a shoulder to lean on;
- When I am angry, *thank you* for not condemning me;
- When I laugh, *thank you* for laughing with me and giving me things to laugh about;
- When I want to contribute to the town I live in, *thank you* for presenting to me with some opportunities to do so;
- When I want to go to work, *thank you* for believing in my abilities.

And a very sincere thanks goes out from me for all the wonderful staff of ours who makes this such a great agency and who give such great support for our clients!

Keeping with the holiday theme, Park Place is holding a Christmas lunch and dance on December 12. Joyful Sounds will perform, food will be provided, and dancing will follow.

On a sad note, Mary P. of Glencoe passed away in her sleep recently at the ripe old age of 92. Mary defied her age for years, as her hair refused to gray. She gave everyone a lot of joy. May she rest in peace.

Mountainfilm on Tour was another great success. The Pavilion overflowed and extra seats were set up. I welcome the opportunity each year to pay tribute to our amazing staff and the amazing "indomitable spirit" of our clients. Mary, Paul, and Bruce had a good time handing out programs. A number of people approached me following the show to tell me how much they appreciate what Community Options does. We should never take what we do for granted!

Wishing you all a happy and meaningful holiday season and a safe, warm winter. May you all be warmed with family and friends, and may the mountains be blessed with a blanket of snow.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

**Dec. 25th, Christmas Day COI closed**

**Jan. 1st, New Years Day COI closed**

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES FOR MARCH 2020  
ISSUE ARE DUE BY  
February 10th, 2020**

**Send it to Brittany at Park Place. Please include a  
by-line and phone number. Thanks....☺**

# - Extra Mile -

THIRD QUARTER 2019

## Extra Mile Award Nominees

Eleven deserving employees were nominated for this reporting period July-Sept 2019. Thanks to all who took the time to nominate someone and of course, a special thanks to all nominees who went the "XTRA MILE" to serve our clients!

The 3rd quarter winner is:

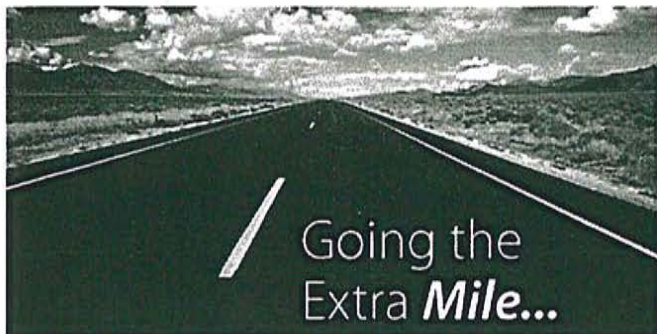
*Alicia Richards*

Alicia was nominated by Nichele Giron and Sara Petranek. They said Alicia shows up on time, works hard and has a great attitude. She is accountable and consistent with her work productivity. She is willing to change or adjust according to the needs of the staff and clients.

### OTHERS NOMINATED WERE:

*All of the Park Place Day Program Staff,  
Ann Evans, Kassandra Hull,  
Laura McLagen, Lori Redden,  
Mickey Sherley, Patricia Ruiz,  
Randy Hughes, Shelley McKenzie,  
Stephanie Silva*

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!!



## QUARTERLY SERVICE AWARDS Third Quarter July-Sept 2019

Submitted by: Midge Pruitt

### One Year

Saraha Weller  
Andrea Cervantes  
Sara Petranek  
Alicia Richards  
Zachary Beck

### Five Years

Georgeann Jacobs  
Judith Morford  
Donna Harrison

### Ten Years

Sarah Crawford

CONGRADULATIONS TO EVERYONE!





## ***In Remembrance***

*As we have for many years now, we again wanted to take the opportunity in our December newsletter to remember friends and loved ones we have lost during the past year. May we fondly remember each of these people.*

### **People Served by Community Options:**

*Dana Barberi-8/7/19; Cascade Group Home Resident  
Marie Silva- 8/26/19; Glencoe Group Home Resident  
Mary Patterson-11/6/19; Glencoe Group Home Resident  
(and 92 years old!)*

### **Employees/Providers or Former Employees/Providers of Community Options:**

*Jackie Mihelich-1/3/19; Former member of Board of Directors  
Zach Pace-7/31/19; Park Place Direct Support Professional*

*Although these loved ones are no longer with us, they will not be forgotten. We have done our best to keep track of this information, but if we have missed anyone that should have been on this list, please accept our apologies for the oversight.*



## ***Case Management News***

*By Elaine Wood*

### **Case Management Restructuring**

In the last newsletter, the Case Management and Children's Services Department shared general information about Intake, Eligibility and various programs available to individuals and families.

This article is to give an update on recent changes in the Case Management Dept and in Early Intervention.

With Conflict Free Case Management and the need to separate out Medicaid waiver services, the following is taking place:

Michelle Rice has moved into the position of Assistant Case Management Director, overseeing State Services and Intake. Michelle will maintain a small caseload of individuals. Genevieve Ingersoll is transitioning to be the State services Case Manager. Debra will continue to manage the Family Support program. Randi and Sarah will continue to work with those individuals receiving waiver services (DD, SLS, CES, CHRP). As these changes take place and evolve, information will be shared.

Because of the ongoing changes with Early Intervention, children's services are going through adjustments. Making sure there are enough providers; making sure we can get children enrolled; meeting timelines, and developing effective IFSPs are the focus.

Margaret, Debbie, Dee, and JoAnn keep the children's program moving effectively. We hope to hire a developmental interventionist to add to the team.

Change, change, change – this is our world!

## *Hello Everyone:*

By Georgiana

Wow...! Another year is rapidly coming to a close. As always, Summertime has been - once again, busy for everyone: Brian, Ron, William, Robert, Amy, Barbara, & Valerie thoroughly enjoyed attending a dress rehearsal of the Magic Circle Players. This was only one of many community outings which they all enjoyed and shall enjoy throughout the rest of the year. 2019 is not yet at its end. Of course, John likes to do his own thing for the most part.

I wish to thank Barbara and her staff for keeping the Hillview program on track and running smoothly throughout the year; and all of this in the midst of recent staffing shortages. A warm thanks also to Dan, Kandi, and Linda C. for covering various shifts as needed. Each of these staff members often fills in, even on short notice.

Many thanks to Barbara & Marilyn for efficiently running their respective departments... as well as my own. Our DSP's also accomplished their jobs proficiently.

In the weeks going forward, I wish you each and all a very Happy Holiday Season.

## *PCA Delta*

By Gail

The Delta PCAs have been very busy the past fall. They participated in Special Olympics bowling, which ended with the Regional Tournament in Grand Junction on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Now they are busy with Special Olympics basketball practice on Monday evenings. Other physical activities include going to the Bill Heddles Rec Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays to swim or work out in the cardio and weight room. Saturdays they have water fitness in the mornings at the Rec Center. They also had fun going to Grand Junction and walking part of the River Trail.

On Labor Day they had a picnic at Confluence Park and celebrated one of their peer's birthday. They went to Ridgway State Park for a picnic after bowling one day. They took a drive over Kebler Pass to look at the fall colors, then spent some time in Crested Butte before returning home, via the North Rim of the Black Canyon. They went to a rodeo in Montrose, then had dinner at Freddy's. They also went to the Fall Festival in Fruita at the end of September. They attended the annual COI Director's meeting, where two of them were recognized for their cleaning and volunteer activities in COI. One day they carved pumpkins and made Halloween cookies as a group. They went to Cedaredge for Applefest. They went to Grand Junction to see The Addams Family movie and then out to eat at IHOP. They have been twice this fall to the Magic Circle Theatre to watch the dress rehearsals for their plays. One of the men decided to do a garden this year, and his roommate grew some flowers. Zucchini was plentiful!

Most of them go to People First once a month, and they attended a barbeque at Cleland Park in September, for their September meeting. Two of their peers went to a convention for People First in Denver. They also had a Halloween get-together with their People First peers.

There have been many visits home to their various family members, and a few trips, as well. Now we are getting ready for the Christmas season, and shopping trips and wrapping parties.

*Aspen Crest News for October****Supported Employment***

Kandi has stepped down to relief. We have hired a new job coach. Welcome aboard Marki !! Andrew and Keith were hired at the Grand Mesa Art and Entertainment Center to put in the outdoor landscaping and viewing garden. They have been doing a wonderful job and the Art Center is very pleased with their hard work. All currently employed clients are maintaining positions at various jobs in the community. Summer volunteer jobs have ended for the season at Pioneer Town. They will resume next May. Clients volunteering in the community at the Food Bank, Horizons, community thrift stores, the animal shelter and Meals on Wheels are doing well.

***The middle group with Jean, Joseph, and Autumn***

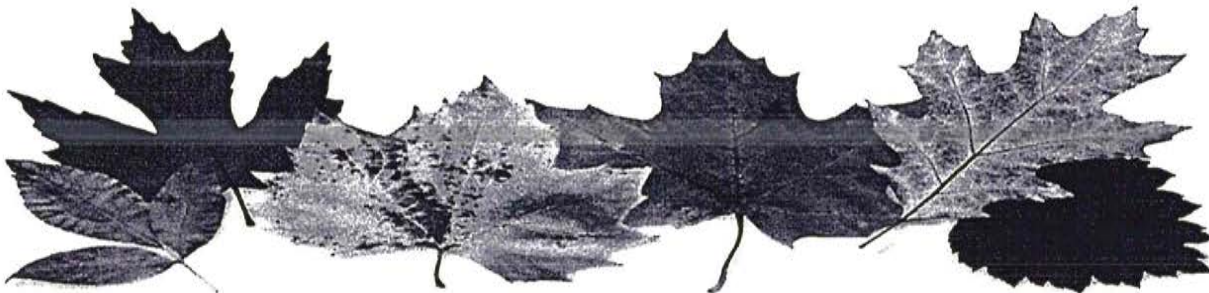
This has been a busy month. We talked about the influence of farmers and harvest in our community. We spent some time discussing what we would like to accomplish or finish this year ( the end of the year is fast approaching ). We made sensory bottles with the upstairs group. We learned paper mache and made monsters. The World Series was almost as popular to discuss as Halloween. We explored the history of wearing costumes. We discovered some fun facts about the Day of the Dead. Our fun places this month were The Grand Mesa for fall colors, exploring Halloween shops and Amazing Glaze. A big shout out to Black Ridge Winery for making it our favorite outing of the year so far. They told us about harvesting and produce while we were taking a hay less hayride. We were invited to enjoy the play area and hay slide. Rounding off a wonderful month we busted zombie dance moves at our Halloween party. We also said good-bye to DSP Autumn as she starts a new adventure. She will be missed. Good luck Autumn!

***The upstairs group with Susan, Joyce, and Amanda***

We had a very fun October. We made sensory bottles with the middle group. We went on many fun outings including the Paonia Library for scary stories and treats. We also went to the Red Shed Pumpkin Patch and the National Guard Base. We are making great progress in sign language. We have enjoyed book club, singing and of course Meals on Wheels. We enjoyed many Halloween themed crafts and educational documentaries. For our Halloween party, we made seasonal windsocks, watched a movie and enjoyed each other's company. We had a great October and hope everyone else did as well.

***The downstairs group with Jodine, Brandi, and Marissa***

We started a new, revamped client chosen schedule! Here are the highlights: we did a staff appreciation spaghetti dinner; we learned how to separate laundry, fold and organize; we made personalized "morning rituals"; we learned how to professionally answer the phones and practiced; we cleaned up leaves and dead stuff outside as part of a new Building Beautification project; and we went to Eureka Science Museum and ran into Park Place!



## *Supported Living Services*

*by Romiea Blair*

SLS has discovered very empowering ways to use Mentorship services. Mentoring clients to bring them to the next level to support their independence. One of our clients has been doing so well at keeping their home clean, their laundry washed and folded and put away and their dishes done up, the client was excited to know they will be participating to maintain their independence. By SLS offering Mentorship the SLS staff will come alongside to instruct, model, advise clients to support and help clients to advocate for themselves to meet criteria for home inspections by their landlords, and making decisions for their wellbeing, as well as providing understanding care instructions and promoting the client to advocate for themselves while seeing their care provider.

Did you know families can provide Supported Community Connections for their family members in services with SLS? The change of services like respite (giving the primary caregiver a break) to SCC (meeting members in the community) shows in some cases this service would better accommodate the families and clients to access those functions outside of the home while out in the community.

## *Host Home Department*

We are coming up on the Holidays which is a busy time of year. With the warm weather, it is hard to think it is November. It was a busy summer for a lot of families. There were trips taken with Host Home Providers: Peter and Heather went to Missouri to a family reunion and Branson, Kevin, Janis, and Forrest went to Branson and Six Flags, Chris went to Texas, hunting and camping, Brooke went to Nevada, Linda and Christi went to Estes Park to the Renaissance Festival and Mount Rushmore, Joanne and Jamie went to Blue Mesa camping, Charles went to Denver Six Flags and is waiting to go to a Bronco game in December. Others have enjoyed time with family, staying weekends, weddings, reunions and much more. Everyone enjoyed their summer and had lots of stories to share.

Several people participated in Special Olympic bowling and came in with ribbons and lots of stories to tell. They are now getting ready for basketball.

Two people have moved into a host home this year.

We want to thank all the Host Home Providers for a great job they have done for the people we serve.

## *Park Place*

*By Brittany Cassidy*

Park Place has had an amazing last few months. Our Halloween party had everyone in the festive spirit. We had clients dressed as The Adams Family, food and various other costumes. Our staff is currently working on our float for the Parade of Lights.

David had an amazing food drive and raised **178 pounds** of food!! Please show your appreciation to David when you see him.

## *So Long, Farewell, Auf Weidersehen, Goodbye...*

*By Mickey Sherley*

So sings the Von Trapp family in 'The Sound of Music'. And so say I as I retire from my 'temporary' job of 21 years, 8 months and 23 days. That's 260 months and 260 payroll closings (yikes!). The first person I added to the payroll system was number 152; we just added number 390. And with the passing of Mary P. I've seen 68 of our fair folks pass on – that's hard on a person. Many others have moved on to other service providers out of our area and they too, are missed.

I've also had the pleasure to work with many great staff over the years... 152 to be exact, at SME and Park Place! This includes 2 day program directors, 5 day program managers and countless job coaches, supervisors and team leaders/DSP's. And this number doesn't even include the woodshop, Aspen Crest or Administration. I've made many friends and will miss each and every one of you. Please keep up the great work of caring for those who need it the most...our clients! Also remember to take care of each other, after all, we are a TEAM and teams work best when everyone is on the same page.

Days at Park Place are never the same and never boring. Always something new going on, it keeps you on your toes. I'm leaving you in very capable hands; Brittany has caught on like a house on fire! She 'gets it' and is doing a great job. Please don't hesitate to ask her any questions.

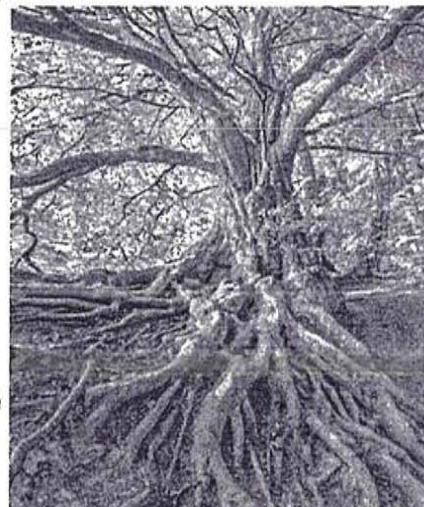
So, what have I learned from my time at COI? I've learned that there is no such thing as 'normal'; we're all different and all have different abilities. I've learned that these clients have great courage as they face the many challenges presented to them throughout their lives. I've learned to appreciate the little things in life – even the smallest thing that makes you smile or laugh is important. I've learned that hugs have great healing power (yes, Jennifer, I do realize that is an oxymoron in my case). I also learned that our clients are very smart, each in their own way. I've watched many romances bloom and fade, while others carry on for years. I've learned some dreams can be so simple, yet so important to those who dream them. Who doesn't wish to visit Disneyland or visit a distant relative we haven't seen in years? Who doesn't want a nice house to share with the one you love and have somebody to wait on your every need?

So, as I leave, I challenge you to dare, to have fun, to hope and to dream. Take joy in the little things in life, like popping a balloon just because it makes someone laugh hysterically. And take...

### Advice from a Tree:

- ◆ Stand Tall and Proud
- ◆ Go out on a Limb
- ◆ Remember Your Roots
- ◆ Drink Plenty of Water
- ◆ Be Content with Your Natural Beauty
- ◆ Enjoy the View

*taken from the Internet*



Thanks to COI for the wonderful opportunities I've had along the way. I'll treasure my time here always.

And as Mr. Spock would say, "Live long and prosper".