



Stone Belt

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touchstone

A quarterly publication providing the latest news & information for individuals with disabilities, families, friends and our community.

Guardians: Valuable part of the team

Seventy-two-year-old Dixie Chaney loves music and loves to dance. She regularly goes to church, and her friends notice if she misses a service. She once worked in Stone Belt's Manufacturing Program, and she's lived in Southern House group home since 1994 when she moved from the institutional setting of Muscatatuck State Developmental Center. During the day, she enjoys seeing her friends and participating in the Lifelong Learning program.

Because Dixie has not had family support to protect her interests, she has a volunteer guardian with a familiar face — Maureen Gahan, founder and former director of Milestones Clinic, who has known Dixie since she moved to Bloomington — through Volunteer Advocates for Seniors and Incapacitated Adults (VASIA).

"The need is great and volunteers are needed," says program manager Lisa Chaplin. "All incapacitated adults deserve the quality of care and support needed to allow them to live in a safe, dignified and least restrictive setting as possible."



Volunteer guardian Maureen Gahan, left, spends a few hours a month advocating for Dixie Chaney through Volunteer Advocates for Seniors and Incapacitated Adults.

The Monroe and Owen County Adult Guardianship Program recruits, trains, supports and supervises volunteers who wish to advocate for and befriend incapacitated adults. Some adults, as a result of aging, mental illness and developmental disability, lack the capacity to make financial and health care decisions in their best interests.

Volunteers partner with the individual, the program manager, family members and health care representatives in assessing the individual's life situation, securing income and assets, planning for appropriate residential placement and facilitating health care and social services needed to support the individual. Chaplin notes that the partnership helps overcome harmful barriers in the care of these adults.

"When people are fortunate to be connected to Stone Belt, the guardianship program becomes another part of the team," says Gahan, explaining how staff contacts her for appointments and to keep her informed of Dixie's world. While it isn't required of volunteers, Gahan often attends events and medical appointments with Dixie, if necessary. "Medical providers are reluctant to do procedures without the guardian there, so going along helps."

For information, visit www.area10agency.org/volunteer or contact Chaplin at (812) 318-2040 or lchaplin@area10agency.org.

MORE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Do you have a special talent, interest or spare time to spend with a new friend? Stone Belt has several volunteer opportunities just for you. If interested, visit www.bloomingtonvolunteernet-work.org or email Sarah McKenney, volunteer coordinator, at smckenney@stonebelt.org.

Spiritual Companion: You will be matched up with an individual who attends or wants to attend the same congregation. The goal is to provide access and create meaningful relationships — thus moving past inclusion and toward BELONGING.

Gym Jam Volunteer: We are looking for volunteers to run our Gym Jam program. The goal is to play games, listen to fun music, and get some physical activity as well. This program is volunteer run so we do expect our volunteers to work together to plan out the activities. We have many equipment and resources to use and be creative.

Art Club Volunteer: We are looking for volunteers to lead our Art Club group. This club meets to create, be social, and have fun. This is led by volunteers, so it requires a willingness to

work with other volunteers to plan art projects. We have the supplies! We just need your leadership, presence, and planning.

Activity Buddy: Do you want to make a new friend? Do you like going to IU sports events? Do you like going to movies? Do you like going to concerts? How about hanging out with good company? We are looking for volunteers who would like to make a new friend and take a buddy to these such events and activities. The goal is not WHAT you do, but in building relationships and friendships.

Celebrating our 60th and more in 2019

BY LESLIE GREEN

It's 2019 — another year has begun! But this is no ordinary new year for Stone Belt. This is our 60th anniversary — Our Diamond Year!

We became a legal entity on March 10, 1959, after nine children had enrolled in a new school called Stone Belt, which was opened through the efforts of families and community members. Throughout the 60 years that followed, many more people received support at Stone Belt and many more services were developed to ensure people with developmental disabilities had access to a higher quality of life. The Stone Belt movement started with dedicated efforts of a few and grew through the support of the entire community. The founders could not have envisioned the size, scope and impact the organization has achieved all these years later.

To read a full telling of our Stone Belt story, we encourage you to visit the 12 Chapters Project website at <http://12chapters.stonebelt.org>. You can also get to that site by visiting the "About" tab on our website. Chapters Two and Three tell the history of services and supports from the late 1950s to present. While you are there, read the other 10 chapters that describe our Principles of Service, highlight some wonderful people that make up Stone Belt, and ponder the future of supports and services for the people we serve.

Special events and celebrations will mark our anniversary year. Watch for more information in the April Touchstone, in the Stone Belt News (our bimonthly digital newsletter — email lmargison@stonebelt.org to receive it), and follow our Facebook page and other social media

channels for details about these events. We want you to join in the fun and help us celebrate in style.

Your Voice Is Vital

The 2019 Indiana General Assembly also starts this month. Lawmakers will approve a budget for the next biennium and pass other legislation that will impact people with disabilities. Increased funding for Medicaid services — so we can better pay our staff — is our biggest budget priority.

You may recall that we were successful in 2017 in receiving some increased funding from our Indiana lawmakers. At that time, everyone agreed the increases did not fully address the workforce crisis we are experiencing. So, along with our colleagues at The Arc of Indiana and INARF, our trade association, we are requesting an appropriation of the state budget to fund increases for direct support professional salaries.

Once again, we need your help with sharing stories and educating our local lawmakers on the importance of this funding. Watch our social media outlets and look for email alerts that call for action from you. Your voice is needed to create the greatest impact. If you would like to be part of the rapid-response advocacy team, or simply want to stay up-to-date on advocacy issues, email lmargison@stonebelt.org.

1102 Task Force

Also in 2019, recommendations of the 1102 Task Force will move forward. This group, led by Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, met throughout 2018 and created a report with recom-



mendations to help guide services for people with developmental disabilities in the coming 10 years. In addition to budget requests to increase staff salaries, other changes include:

- A push for increased funding in Vocational Rehabilitation to help more people with disabilities go to work;
- The re-creation of a crisis response system that provides specialized supports for families and providers of individuals with severe behavioral challenges;
- Further development of the shared living model as a robust program, whereby individuals with disabilities can share a home with a caregiver who doesn't have a disability;
- An increase in Medicaid waiver slots for non-emergency priority placement.

If enacted, all of these developments represent new opportunities for Stone Belt and the people we support.

Moving forward

We don't expect to slow down as we move into the next chapters of Stone Belt. The vital role we play in the support system for people with developmental disabilities is ever more important. Your support has helped us do this for more than 60 years and is crucial as we move forward.

We wish all of you the happiest and most prosperous of times in 2019 and beyond. We'll look forward to seeing you as we celebrate Stone Belt's 60th Diamond Anniversary.

Three long-term Stone Belt participants pass away in recent weeks

Rocky Freeman passed away on Christmas Day. He had been ill and had some health issues related to his disability. Rocky was a kind and gentle person, who had a nice personality and sense of humor. He had been a student at Stone Belt when it was a school and was among the first students to be mainstreamed into the schools in the 1980s. He worked for Owen State Bank and also was in the Manufacturing Program for a number of years.

Marcella Eller passed away January 6 at the age of 94. She had a number of health issues in her later years, but Stone Belt had been able to help her age in her home. Marcella was a determined, but sweet person, who loved to work. At one time, she had three jobs in the community. She loved babies and children, and kept a doll collection that showed this love.

Gary Taylor passed away January 14. He had been supported by Stone Belt since 1979 and

had participated in almost every program we offer. He worked at Bloomington Transit for a number of years and made great friends of the staff and riders. He would often ride around on the buses to maintain his connections. Gary was a friend to everyone he met and often gave people a special nickname.

These individuals will be greatly missed. We are privileged to have supported them for so many years.

New recreation therapy program

In a move that fits within Stone Belt's overall mission for people with disabilities to have fuller lives in the community, Milestones is adding recreation therapy services.

Recreation therapy is a systematic approach to improving a person's physical, cognitive and social functioning. This type of therapy uses recreation and other activity-based interventions to address assessed needs. This helps a person experience greater participation in life in the community.



KIM SHEPARD

Milestones' Recreation Therapy Program includes treatment supports and recreation activities using a variety of methods, including arts and crafts, sports, games, dances and ventures into the community.

While Stone Belt has not had the opportunity to provide these supports in the past, that is changing due to the efforts of Kim Shepard, who worked as a Milestones skills clinician a few years ago.

When Shepard completed her master's degree and obtained the credentials to become a recreation therapist, Stone Belt didn't have a position in her field, so she gained experience at another agency.

Last year, Shepard approached Skills Development Coordinator Jennifer Hammond and Milestones Director Jim Wiltz to pitch the idea of starting a program through which to offer recreation therapy services. The program launched in mid-January.

"Sometimes good ideas are hard to find, but this one seemed like an opportunity we could not pass up, so we hired Kim to rejoin the Milestones team as our first recreation therapist," says Wiltz.

In anticipation of this new program, Stone Belt applied for and was granted a Medicaid Waiver expansion to include this service for participants.

"Word is getting out – our new RT program already has a few waiver referrals," Wiltz adds.

"In the meantime, Kim has been helping fill some gaps in our Skills program, but eventually she will be working full-time as a recreation therapist."



MILESTONES

CLINICAL & HEALTH RESOURCES

a division of Stone Belt | milestonesclinic.org

Innovative trauma therapy utilized at Milestones Clinic

(The following story is shared with permission, but key details have been changed to protect the individual's identity.)

Recently, a man was dealing with two traumatic events from his past. One was significant abuse from his uncle who now is incarcerated because of those actions. The second issue was a health scare that included hospitalization and possibility of a life-threatening liver transplant.

The client and his therapist discussed the possibility of working on both traumatic events and decided to work on the health scare first. Through multiple sessions, they have made significant progress, and the man's feelings of panic and frequent sleep loss has lessened significantly.

When the man and his therapist feel sufficient progress has been made, they will start work on the more significant and multifaceted abuse trauma. That will occur only after skills have been built and when the client feels working through the issues in therapy is safe and has potential for success.

This is an example of the innovative technique for addressing client trauma called progressive counting. This type of therapy was developed by the Trauma Institute in Massachusetts and is being utilized in a collaborative partnership with Indiana University's Dr. John Keesler, an assistant professor in the Department of Social Work. Milestones has received a grant to train therapy in progressive counting.

Since the partnership was announced last year, a number of people supported by Stone Belt have benefited by working to overcome troubling trauma history. Milestones therapists also have had the opportunity to receive ongoing consultation from the Trauma Institute and Dr. Keesler in how to appropriately modify the

progressive counting therapy to better suit the unique needs of clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Recently, Milestones therapists had the opportunity to share their experiences at the National Association on Dual Diagnosis (NADD) Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington. Keesler and Milestones Director Jim Wiltz and therapist Pamela McCoy collaborated to present "Trauma Treatment for Individuals with IDD."

"We were able to share information on how PC has benefits over other types of trauma therapy because it more easily is adapted," Wiltz explains. "Having a therapist describe how PC actually works in practice was where the rubber met the road in this presentation."

Clinicians from across the U.S. and Canada asked questions and learned new ways to tailor treatment to the individual needs of each client. "That was one of the important take-home messages, too," Wiltz adds. "There is no one-size-fits-all strategy."

In some cases, a therapy session needs to incorporate shorter time-spans on the progressive counting technique because an individual experiences challenges with attention span. For others, that adjustment may not need to be made.

"Pamela did an excellent job of describing these differences and when adjustments seemed to make more sense," Wiltz adds. "She also described an innovative way for clients to communicate their subjective distress in session, as well as some adjustments to the counting technique. Being able to tailor treatments to people with a wide range of skills and competencies is one reason Milestones is so unique. It, quite simply, is what we do every day."

New policy targets zero-plastics status

With more than 1,300 clients served annually and more than 550 employees in 16 facilities, Stone Belt's plastic waste has a big negative impact – and responsible practices can have an equally huge positive result.

In January, Stone Belt launched an initiative to eliminate – as much as possible -- the amount of disposable plastic used throughout the agency, and also redouble efforts to recycle plastic waste and other recyclables.

"The straw, disposable water bottle or disposable fork that you've probably used in the last few days will exist on the earth for hundreds of years to come," says CEO Leslie Green, who is spearheading the effort. "Although the best solution for plastics is NOT to use them at all, we also will make efforts to improve our recycling program as well."

Green adds that her goal is to achieve a "zero-plastics" status at Stone Belt. The plan to get to that point includes:

No longer buying plastic cups, plates or cutlery, including Styrofoam. Metal forks and spoons will be used in group homes, classroom areas and for in-house events. Staff and clients will be encouraged to bring their own cutlery to use at work.

Asking drink vendors to replace plastic bottles with aluminum.

Replacing plastic cups for medication dispensing with paper products except where liquid medications are dispensed.

Asking group homes to replace packaging in clients' lunches with reusable containers and tubs wherever possible, and asking clients in

the Supported Living program to do the same.

Encouraging group home staff and Supported Living clients to use reusable grocery bags for shopping trips.

Recycling will include plastics, metals, cardboard and paper.

Clients that have a legitimate need for using plastics, such as straws, should continue to use them. Clients and staff choosing to buy and use disposable plastics are encouraged to recycle them.

"We encourage everyone to take this opportunity to evaluate your own plastics and disposable consumption to see what changes you can make," Green says. "Collectively, we can make a big difference by refusing, reducing and recycling."

Program extends help to families, caregivers

Family Supports has developed a respite program to provide support to families and caregivers. Services can be funded by the Family Supports Waiver, Community Habilitation Waiver or Caregiver Supports funding from Indiana's Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services.

"Respite care provides short-term breaks for families and caregivers that can relieve their stress, renew their energy and help them stay connected to others," says Stone Belt CEO Leslie Green. "We understand how caring daily for another person can impact someone's life. We want to do all we can to support and provide respite for families and caregivers so they, too, may have full lives in the community."

Supports can be provided in the individual's home or community and can include general supervision, personal care, meal preparation and other household activities, medication administration, recreation, and leisure and community activities. Respite care is provided by a trained direct support professional and tailored to meet the needs of the individual and their family based on the needs of the family.

For information, contact Director of Family Supports Janessa Gerber at jgerber@stonebelt.org.

Cook Medical visits Manufacturing Program

Cook Medical brought simulators, information stations and historical documents to the workshop for Cook Day, to celebrate the partnership that has extended more than 40 years. At right, individuals learn history of Cook; below, Betsy Higgins uses a simulator to experience Cook's factory; and, bottom right, staff Michael McClure checks out an informational display.



THANK YOU DONORS

Stone Belt appreciates our generous donors (January 1, 2018, to January 1, 2019) and their continued support. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy of this listing. If there is an omission, please accept our apology and contact Adam Hamel at (812) 332-2168 ext. 269 or ahamel@stonebelt.org.

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Benefits of being a corporate sponsor

Becoming a corporate partner is a premiere way to show support for people with disabilities and vital in helping Stone Belt staff and clients reach farther than resources allow.

A corporate gift during Stone Belt's 60th Anniversary year will benefit a company with even more unique and substantive marketing opportunities. Stone Belt's communications and events cover Monroe, Bartholomew and Lawrence counties.

- Events draw community leaders, policy-makers, families, clients, employees, and business owners.
- Our website was redesigned in 2018 to be more accessible for a larger audience.
- Total reach on social media posts in 2018 was more than 500,000 impressions.
- The Touchstone newsletter is mailed to more than 3,000 people four times a year.
- Our Art Calendar and Annual Report are widely distributed to donors.

For information, contact Development Manager Adam Hamel at (812) 332-2168, ext. 269, or ahamel@stonebelt.org.



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By making a bequest to Stone Belt in your will, you help ensure individuals with disabilities receive our supports for years to come. Contact your financial advisor or Adam Hamel at 812-332-2168 ext. 269.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ADVOCACY LUNCH SERIES

JANUARY 24, 11:45 a.m.

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

With The Arc Executive Director Kim Dodson

RSVP: lmargison@stonebelt.org

VALENTINE'S DAY STATE HOUSE VISIT FEBRUARY 14

Indiana State House

Self-advocates will deliver Valentines to state legislators and thank them for their support throughout the legislative session and year.

DISABILITY AWARENESS FILM SERIES

MARCH 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Monroe County Public Library

"Including Samuel": Before his son Samuel was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, photojournalist Dan Habib rarely thought about the inclusion of people

with disabilities. Now he thinks about inclusion every day. Shot and produced over four years, Habib's award-winning documentary film chronicles the Habib family's efforts to include Samuel in every facet of their lives.

STONE BELT'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY MARCH 10

Watch our social media channels for the latest updates on our anniversary year. Subscribe to our bimonthly email newsletter on our website at www.stonebelt.org.

DISABILITY AWARENESS FILM SERIES

MARCH 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Monroe County Public Library

"Life, Animated": From Academy Award-winning director Roger Ross Williams, this film is the story of Owen Suskind, a young man who was unable to

speak as a child until he and his family discovered a unique way to communicate by immersing themselves in the world of classic Disney animated films.

DISABILITY AWARENESS FILM SERIES

MARCH 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Monroe County Public Library

"Billy the Kid": Directed by Jennifer Venditti, this documentary is a portrayal of adolescence, which takes an intimate look at a truly unique character, who was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome after the making of the film.

ADVOCACY LUNCH SERIES

MARCH 29, 11:45 a.m.

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

With State Representative Bob Heaton

RSVP: lmargison@stonebelt.org



If you would like to receive our publications, please contact Linda Margison at lmargison@stonebelt.org.

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