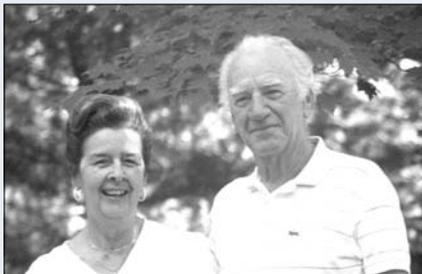


Yesterday and Today... for Tomorrow

The Arc of Indiana was formed in 1956 by families committed to making a difference in the lives of their loved ones with a developmental disability. Families continue to make a difference by committing their time, talent, and energy at the local, state and national level of The Arc.

In honor of their 50th Anniversary, The Arc of Indiana is profiling families whose commitment to The Arc has made a difference; as well as families who have been impacted by the programs and services their loved one has received from a local chapter of The Arc. The following families are ones who have participated in Stone Belt's service areas. Please join us in honoring them and wishing The Arc of Indiana a Happy 50th Birthday.



MARY AND BILL MCGRAYEL
Brown County

Mary and her late husband Bill started The Arc of Brown County in 1974. They are the parents of Elizabeth, born in 1958, who participated in Stone Belt educational programs as a child and who now lives in her own apartment in Bloomington.

Through her work as a Special Education teacher, Mary realized the need for the Arc in Brown County. In the early days she helped organize bicycle tours, bake sales and other fund-raisers.

With monies designated by the Brown County Council, The Brown County Arc has helped to support local services delivered by Developmental Services Incorporated (DSI) in Columbus. This support has included helping to establish the DSI group home for women with disabilities on Hoover Road in Brown County.

Mary is proud of the work The Brown County Arc has done over the years. Many individuals with disabilities and their families have been helped by The Brown County Arc, and the McGrayel family has been a driving force that has been instrumental in these positive changes.



ED, PATSY AND CHUCK MOORE
Lawrence County

Chuck has attended the Lawrence County Arc (LARC) for 14 years. He enjoys having his own group of friends, riding Rural Transit to work and he also takes great pride in his work at LARC and his community job. He's up and ready to go each day and feels that LARC gives him a reason to get moving.

While sitting at the dinner table, discussing each days events, Chuck takes great joy in being able to tell his parents, Ed and Patsy, what he has done during his day at LARC and what his friends are doing. The money he makes through LARC and his community jobs is his to spend as he sees fit. This gives him a chance to make his own choices and decide on his own priorities, helping prepare him for a more independent future.

Chuck looks forward to attending LARC. Other adults have jobs and relationships with people at work and so does he. He enjoys telling others about what he is doing there and how he gets more pay checks (three) than any other member of his family.



DOROTHY, JACK AND GINA GOODWIN
Jackson County

The Goodwin family began their journey with The Arc in Ohio when their daughter Gina was a child. They moved to Seymour in 1994 and soon became active members of The Jackson County Arc. Eventually Dorothy served a term as president of the group.

During Dorothy's tenure as chapter president, she was instrumental in reclaiming the "Sunshine School," which was built with Arc funds on school property. The building was used as a school for children with disabilities and through a collaborative effort between the Jackson County School System and The Arc; it is now a base for adults with disabilities to access their community through a life skills training program.

The Goodwin's will talk to you about their daughter Gina's success with pride. She moved into her own home in 2003, has a job she enjoys, and is actively involved in her community.

The Goodwin's commitment to Gina and to The Arc have made a huge difference.



VENUS AND CAROLYN ABBITT
Monroe County

Venus Abbitt, with her late husband John, was one of the founding families of Stone Belt. They are the parents of Carolyn, born in 1946, and they did not accept the state's recommendation at that time, which was to put Carolyn in an institution.

During a dental visit, Venus learned that her dentist and his wife had a child with a developmental disability, as well. Word spread and soon several local parents of children with disabilities decided to begin meeting in the First Baptist Church basement. These church meetings became the birth of Stone Belt. The parents decided their children had the same right as other children: to grow into productive members of their community.

Over the years Stone Belt has blossomed into providing many services. Carolyn Abbitt has been a participant in practically every program Stone Belt has ever conceived. She will celebrate her 60th birthday this year. Thanks to the drive of her parents and other parents like the Abbitts, she has certainly had many opportunities to reach her greatest potential.



Donnie McGinnis is the current client representative on the Stone Belt Board of Directors.

A complete Alaska adventure

Hi! My name is Donnie McGinnis. I'm the client representative on the Stone Belt Board of Directors and also a member of the Self-Advocates Club of Monroe County.

I'm going to tell you about a trip I took to Alaska a few years ago. My memories of this trip started with the eight hour flight myself and some of my friends took to Anchorage for a National Self-Advocacy Conference.

On the first half of the trip we flew from Indianapolis to Atlanta, Georgia where we had five minutes to transfer to a very nice plane complete with on-board movies.

Alaska is two seasons ahead of Indiana. While we were enjoying Spring at the time it was already into Fall there.

When we arrived I checked into my hotel room that I shared with George Kirles and Mark Norris. We watched a movie before going to bed, so we could get up early in the morning.

The conference was good. We met other Self-Advocates from other states and even other countries.

One morning at breakfast Mark Norris let the restaurant servers give me a whole pot of hot chocolate that I had all to myself. It was a real treat since at the time in 1995 I was living at Bridgwaters House having to share everything with four other guys.

We had time for a little sight-seeing where we saw polar bears on snow capped mountains. We also took a very cold, but enjoyable boat ride where we saw seals and penguins.

The day we left for home we knew it was time to leave because it was also the beginning of a snow storm. On the way to the airport it was very dark and the snow was starting to come down hard and not many people knew that our plane was the very last plane out that morning before they closed the airport due to the arrival of the storm.

It was a trip that no one who went would soon forget.

☑ *Donnie McGinnis has been a Stone Belt client since 1993. He has participated in a number of programs including Supervised Group Living, Employment and Manufacturing. This is his first article for Touchstone.*

from the CEO

Life is what we make of it

"Life is what we make it, always has been, always will be." — Grandma Moses, American painter (1860–1961)

Simple truths are often the best and Grandma Moses speaks them very well. While this simple truth has not always been possible for people with disabilities because of the restrictions and barriers they have faced, I am heartened daily by the self-determination and accomplishments of the individuals with disabilities that we support. They are making a life worth living and they have the full support of Stone Belt behind them. We cheer when we hear about Miriam's productivity in manufacturing belts. We are elated to see the smile on Susan's face when she talks about her new apartment. We are overjoyed when we learn that Angee is venturing out into the community and out of her self-imposed seclusion.

I was honored to attend the Self-Advocates of Indiana State Conference this week. This accomplished group of individuals has learned the essence of self-determination — speaking up for themselves. During a lively town hall meeting I heard people with disabilities from all over Indiana (including several who receive Stone Belt services) talk about the lives they have created for themselves — the ways they have succeeded in their jobs, relationships, and home life and the contributions they are making to their communities. It was exhilarating. They talked about the supports they have had in turning their dreams into realities: things like friends, community, someone to listen and to believe in them. All these simple things make a life.

Despite all the obstacles our organization faces with rules, regulations, funding and more, the opportunity to see people make their lives and to be a part of that journey keeps our motivation to succeed very high.

Leslie Green

Leslie Green, Chief Executive Officer



upcoming events

September 28
Lawrence County Arc and Stone Belt of Lawrence County Annual Meeting
 6:30 p.m.
 Lawrence County Fairgrounds
 Enjoy a catered dinner and awards presentations.
 ■ For more information contact Kim Hodges at 812-332-2168, ext. 290 or email khodges@stonebelt.org.

October 3
Self-Advocates Meeting
 6 to 7:30 p.m.
 Stone Belt 10th Street Main Conference Room
 ■ Self-Advocates Indiana, Inc., is a statewide organization. It is comprised of individuals with disabilities active in raising awareness regarding the positive contributions of persons with disabilities in the workplace and community.
 ■ For more information contact Nancy Smith at 812-332-9959 or email nsmith@stonebelt.org.

October 6
VSA arts of Indiana Art Entry Deadline
 VSA arts of Indiana is now accepting entries for an exhibit which will be held at the IN*SOURCE annual conference in November.
 ■ Any artist from the state of Indiana with a disability is eligible to enter. Only original work is eligible for submission. This exhibit will feature 2-D work (painting, drawing, print, collage, etc.) and literary work (poetry, short story, etc.) Submissions should speak about or represent the theme of "Finding the Keys to Learning" through the arts.
 ■ For further information about submission and contest details, contact Cheryl Paul at 812-332-2168, ext. 261 or email cpaul@stonebelt.org.

October 10
Aktion Club Meeting
 4 to 5 p.m.
 Mt. Gilead Church, 10th Street & Russell Road
 ■ Aktion Club is a client-based group where members give back to the community. The group is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club.
 ■ For more information contact Ann Dininger at 812-332-2168, ext. 247 or email adininger@stonebelt.org.

October 12
Functional Behavior Assessments Seminar
 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 Bloomington Convention Center
 For complete information see brief on Page 3.
 ■ For more information call Cheryl Paul at 812-332-2168, ext. 261 or email cpaul@stonebelt.org.

October 19
Job Club Meeting
 4 to 5 p.m.
 Stone Belt 10th Street Main Conference Room
 ■ What Not to Wear to Work. Come see the best and worst looks on our fashion runway.
 ■ For more information contact Joyce Resler at 812-335-3507, ext. 229 or email jresler@stonebelt.org.

November 4
Sweet Owen Industries Arc and Stone Belt of Owen County Annual Meeting
 6 to 9 p.m.
 IGA Building in Spencer
 Enjoy a catered dinner and awards presentations.
 ■ For more information contact Kim Hodges at 812-332-2168, ext. 290 or email khodges@stonebelt.org.

November 5
Self-Advocates Meeting
 6 to 7:30 p.m.
 Stone Belt 10th Street Main Conference Room

November 14
Aktion Club Meeting
 4 to 5 p.m.
 Mt. Gilead Church, 10th Street & Russell Road

November 16
Job Club Meeting
 4 to 5 p.m.
 Stone Belt 10th Street Main Conference Room
 ■ Food for Thought. Join us for an end of the year pizza party and game. Please bring \$5 to cover the cost of food.

November 23 and 24
Thanksgiving Holiday
 Stone Belt's day program facilities and offices will be closed.

December 25 and 26
Winter Holiday
 Stone Belt's day program facilities and offices will be closed.

January 1
New Years Day Holiday
 Stone Belt's day program facilities and offices will be closed.

of note



Kim Hodges, a 17-year veteran of Stone Belt, has been named new Senior Director of Programs.

HODGES NAMED SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS
 Kim Hodges has been named Stone Belt's new Senior Director of Programs. On June 19, Hodges began in this position, overseeing all day services, group homes and supported living programs.

Hodges was chosen after an application and interview process that was open to internal candidates. The nature of the new job requires an intimate knowledge of Stone Belt's many facets.

While Hodges' previous position as Director of Day Services for Owen and Lawrence Counties will not be filled by a new individual, she will develop a

structure for how those responsibilities will be covered. Directors of other individual programs will continue in their current positions at this time.

This important new position was created to continue in the development of Stone Belt's vision for "whole" agency strategic planning. This will allow Stone Belt the greatest opportunity to continue providing the highest quality and most efficient programs.

Hodges began working for Stone Belt in July of 1989 when she was hired as a Work Services Substitute. Over the years she has held a number of positions such as Work Services Supervisor (SOI) and Director of Stone Belt of Owen County.



Arc of Indiana Board Members Amy Johnson and Betsy Higgins (also a Stone Belt client) get ready to cut the 50th Anniversary celebration cake with The Arc of Indiana's Executive Director John Dickerson.

ARC OF INDIANA PICNIC

By Jenny Austin, LSE Coordinator

Three packed vans and one car were needed to take Stone Belt attendees to The Arc of Indiana 50th Anniversary celebration and Self-Advocates of Indiana Annual picnic in Indianapolis on July 21. Stone Belt wasn't alone. At least 300 people from all over the state came to celebrate at historic Garfield Park.

Not to be a name-dropper, but the picnic was definitely the place to rub elbows with important people. Betty Williams, President of the Self-Advocates of Indiana as well as the Arc of Indiana Coordinator of Client Education and Training, led things off. Mitch Roob, Secretary of the Family and Social Services Administration, spoke and read a proclamation from Governor Mitch Daniels honoring the Arc of Indiana for its 50 years of advocating to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Stone Belt's Betsy Higgins, a member of The Arc of Indiana Board, cut the 50th Anniversary cake along with fellow Board member Amy Johnson and Arc of Indiana Director, John Dickerson (picture above).

Circulating through the crowd we also had the chance to chat with Dave Gootee, former CFO of Stone Belt and current Deputy Director of the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and Peter Bisbecos, Director of the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services.

Although there were many speeches and important guests, this was a picnic and the focus of the day was definitely on fun. A variety of games were available, including Stone Belt's own Hacky Sack team: Billy Setser, Joe Tamewitz and Brian Fiscus. Bingo drew an enthusiastic crowd and a DJ provided music.

If someone had a story to tell, the Museum of the Person had a tent set up for just that purpose. For those who believe a picture is worth a thousand words, photos were available courtesy of John Dickerson. The afternoon was capped off with great door prizes.

Finally – hot, sweaty, tired – we piled back in the vans for the trip south to Bloomington. I can't vouch for all the vans, but in ours, the main topic of conversation was simple, we had fun and were so glad we participated in this special event!

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENTS SEMINAR

The Arc of Indiana, along with local sponsor Stone Belt, will host a Functional Behavior Assessments Seminar on Thursday, October 12 at the Bloomington Convention Center (302 S. College Ave.) in the Great Room.

Many rely on behavioral clinicians or other professionals to assess the causes of certain behaviors. This seminar will explain the Functional Behavioral Assessment process and offer practical tools for better

understanding what behaviors are, why they happen, and how the functional assessment process can lead to proactive solutions.

By gaining a better understanding of how to use interview, observation and basic assessment strategies, participants will learn to better support people toward achieving goals, increased independence and an improved quality of life.

Going beyond the general concepts of positive behavior supports, this training will take participants deeper

into the first step of understanding behaviors.

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. and presentations will run until 3 p.m. with an hour lunch break from 12 to 1 p.m. Registration fees are as follows: Parents and People with Disabilities, \$30; Staff and Volunteers with local Arc Chapters, \$40; Staff with Non-Arc Provider Agencies, \$60.

To find out more or to request a registration form, call Cheryl Paul at 812-332-2168, ext. 261 or email cpaul@stonebelt.org.

SUPPORT THE ANNUAL UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

Stone Belt encourages you to donate to the United Way of Monroe County Fund-Raising Campaign, "Celebrating 50 Years of Improving People's Lives." United Way's goal is to raise \$1.5 million to help Stone Belt and other member agencies create lasting progress for the people we serve.

United Way invests your gift to the Community Care Fund so that it has the maximum possible impact. Community Care funds are distributed to member agencies, including Stone Belt, that have been certified as meeting high standards of accountability and efficiency.

Making a pledge to the United Way Campaign is easy! Call or email their office for a pledge card, or download one from their website. Once you've filled it out, simply mail or fax it back to their office:

United Way of Monroe County
 441 South College Avenue
 Bloomington, IN 47403
 812-334-8370 (phone)
 812-334-8387 (fax)
 uw@monroeuitedway.org
 www.unitedway.monroe.in.us



SUMMER PICNICS

Stone Belt of Lawrence County held its annual Summer Picnic on August 25 at Spring Mill State Park, and Stone Belt of Owen County celebrated on September 1 at Flatwoods Park.

There were a number of activities to keep attendees busy at these all-day celebrations including barbecue lunches, hiking and volleyball. The finale of both gatherings were the annual group "water fights."

"Clients and staff look forward to these picnics every year. We all take a day off from work and spend time with each other in a laid-back atmosphere," said Senior Director of Programs, Kim Hodges.



FORMAL DANCE

Stone Belt East held a formal dance for clients and staff on July 17.

Approximately 30 people, including Stone Belt East clients Zach Reichmann and Jessica Gault (pictured above), dressed in their finest for the event. Upon arrival, guests received silk corsages and posed under a floral archway to have commemorative photos taken.

Decorations and food were donated by parents Brenda Luken and Vickie Smith, while live music was provided by Corey Brasher and Dave Tingley. It was an elegant evening of fun!

STONE BELT OF OWEN COUNTY ADDRESS CHANGE

Due to an ongoing challenge with the rural mail delivery, Stone Belt of Owen County's mail will now be delivered to a Post Office Box. The new address will be:

Stone Belt of Owen County
 PO Box 684
 Spencer, IN 47460

All phone numbers will remain the same.

touchstone

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 Dottie Stewart: Director of Supported Living
 Tonya Vandivier: Director of Supervised Group Living

The complete guide to working at Stone Belt

Why I love my job

By Billie Woods

Supported Living Coordinator

I cannot believe I am about to start my 13th year at Stone Belt. This was the last place I thought I would make my career.

Before I started at Stone Belt, I did not know anyone who had a developmental disability. Growing up on the west side of Bloomington, the things I heard about persons with developmental disabilities from my peers as a kid were stereotypical and very ignorant. I am ashamed to even document them here. So I won't, but needless to say, I wanted nothing to do with it.

Even in college when I majored in Social Work, working with persons with developmental disabilities never entered my mind as a career option. Then, during my junior and senior years I had to complete various internships. Some of the places that I thought I would love, I quickly learned were not for me. One of my friends had an internship at Stone Belt and started telling me about the clients she worked with and I was absolutely amazed. The experiences she described did not match up with many of my preconceived notions. Working with persons with developmental disabilities sounded like fun. I decided I wanted to look for a job like this so when I saw an ad in the paper for Stone Belt, I decided to apply.

Nine months before graduating, I was hired as Weekend Residential Relief for Blackstone House. (This position is now called an Instructional Associate). I worked 20 hours a week and I remember it took me a long time to figure out exactly what my job was.

As Residential Relief, I had no specific responsibilities related to my job title other than to provide direct care support to clients. It was so hard to believe that by performing my duties I was actually working. It didn't feel like a job. I was spending time with people I liked; we went shopping, saw movies and had picnics. I was amazed that I was actually getting paid to do fun things with fun people.

Eventually, I learned that my job was to try to work myself out of a job. I was supposed to teach clients to take care of as much as they could independently so they did not need to depend on staff. Every so often I experienced a few days that definitely felt like work, but for the most part I loved everything I did. In time I began to see progress. The clients I was with every week started achieving things they couldn't when I first met them. Knowing I might have been a part of that progress was the best feeling. I was hooked.

I tried a few different positions over the next few years, and eventually became Group Home Manager at Kirkwood House where I met the group of clients I primarily work with to this day.

When I first met them, one of the women did not like me at all and asked that I be transferred because I was blonde. Her boyfriend, who also lived there, liked blondes and she thought I was going to steal him away.

Another did not speak to me a lot because she had a hard time communicating and it made her mad when I didn't understand what she was trying to tell me immediately. I would have never thought six years later, that I would move with these two women to be their staff as they entered Stone Belt's Supported Living program and rented their first apartment.

Through my career at Stone Belt I have held several different residential positions in the Supported Living and Supervised Group Living programs. Now I work as a Supported Living Coordinator. I am thrilled that I still get to be involved with the clients I have grown to care so much about over the years. I love spending time with them. They are some of the wittiest people I know.

I am proud to be part of their celebrations and honored to be someone they trust to help when things are not going the way they had hoped. Although this is not the career path I ever intended to take, I cannot imagine doing anything else.



Supported Living Coordinator Billie Woods (center) is shown with two of her clients Carolyn Abbitt (left) and Angie Deel. Woods has worked at Stone Belt for 12 years

by the numbers

A strictly by-the-numbers perspective of Stone Belt. Totals are up-to-date as of press time.

Total Employees **530**

Full-Time **392**

Part-Time **138**

Bartholomew County **14**

Jackson County **4**

Jennings County **88**

Lawrence County **84**

Monroe County **322**

Owen County **14**

Female **373**

Male **157**

Married **219**

Single **311**

15 years + of service **18**

10-15 years of service **23**

5-10 years of service **60**

3-5 years of service **75**

sample jobs at stone belt



Stone Belt offers job opportunities in many different areas. To explore the possibilities of joining our team, visit our Website at www.stonebelt.org and click on Jobs.

SLP CASEWORKER — Provides daily support of his/her assigned clients at their homes in the community.

EMPLOYMENT CONSULTANT — Works to ensure the successful implementation of clients looking for and maintaining jobs in the community.

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSOCIATE — Provides direct daily instruction and support to clients to assist them in achieving their personal goals.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT — Provides general clerical and administrative support to various departments.

NURSE — Provides direct medical services to various Stone Belt clients.

BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST — Provides behavioral and therapeutic supports for clients, families and/or staff to reach their maximum potential.

FOOD MANAGEMENT PREPARATION SPECIALIST — Is responsible for assisting in food purchasing, meal planning and preparation and implementation of Individual House Policies for Stone Belt group home residents.

HOUSE MANAGER — Is responsible for the day-to-day operation of an individual Group Home facility. Manages other members of his/her Supported Group Living Team.

how to apply

BY INTERNET

Stone Belt does not currently accept applications via the Internet; however, applications can be downloaded from www.stonebelt.org.

BY EMAIL

Email your resume to hireme@stonebelt.org as an attachment in one of the following formats: MS Word (.doc), Plain Text (.txt), Rich Text (.rtf), or Acrobat (.pdf).

BY MAIL

Mail your application or resume to Human Resources: Stone Belt Human Resources 2815 East 10th Street Bloomington, IN 47408.

BY FAX

Fax your resume or application: 812-323-4610, Attn: Human Resources.

IN PERSON

Applications can be picked up and submitted at the following locations:

- Bloomington: 2815 East Tenth Street
- Bedford: 712 Stars Boulevard
- Spencer: 36 Concord Road
- Columbus: 1503 B Cottage Avenue

executive team

Stone Belt has recently formed a new Executive Team which has become the central leadership entity for the organization. The new team model will allow Stone Belt to react more quickly to opportunities and challenges and be more nimble in making critical decisions. It will also allow the CEO more time for strategic activities.



LESLIE GREEN,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

Provides leadership, direction and oversight for the total operation and activities of the organization in order to assure quality programs and services.



WARD BROWN,
CHIEF FINANCIAL
OFFICER

Provides leadership, management and vision to ensure that the financial and manufacturing areas of the agency have strength and operating efficiency.



KIM HODGES,
DIRECTOR OF
PROGRAMS

Plans, develops, manages and expands Group Living, Supported Living and Day Services programs through supporting those we serve.



MAUREEN GAHAN,
DIRECTOR OF
MILESTONES

Plans, develops, manages and expands the Milestones program. Also supervises the daily operations of the outpatient clinic and all staff members.



BRAD GALIN,
DIRECTOR OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

Coordinates agency safety, corporate compliance, employee relations, recruitment, benefits management, affirmation action and orientation.



AMY JACKSON,
DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT

Conducts a successful and sustained fund development program with emphasis on promoting individual and group contributions.

The life you change may be your own

By Brad Galin

Senior Director of Human Resources and Corporate Compliance

The freedom of working at Stone Belt is matched by a great level of responsibility. Although terms like freedom and responsibility do not always go together, for the vast majority of our jobs, it is a perfect match.

There are few jobs in this world that offer the opportunity to get paid while allowing other people to experience such joys as swimming, starting their first job, or moving into their own apartment. While working, there are also great responsibilities that can include the preparation of food, assistance with personal care, and setting boundaries to keep someone safe. These are the daily experiences of the direct support professionals of Stone Belt.

I am often asked what makes an employee a "good" employee. The answers to that are as diverse as the number of "good" employees that we have, which is now about 530. However, I believe a couple of traits come to the forefront when someone makes the jump from just doing their job to truly fulfilling their own passion through our mission to prepare, empower, and support those we serve everyday.

First: a genuine heart and a true sense of care for people. This certainly applies to most any social service type of position, but it is more pronounced here than many other places. It is the human heart that allows all of us to see the possibilities of our fellow citizens. Of course, this is something that is impossible to measure, accurately predict, or have a magic formula to create.

A second trait, the ability to "think on one's feet," is essential. Despite the best scripted ideas, detailed lesson plans, or a set schedule, something inevitably will change. Great and meaningful things can occur in these unanticipated moments. A chance encounter at the park leads to an on-going interest in animals for a client; a change in client assignment leads to an eventual transfer to work with someone full-time; or a stop in a restaurant for a bite to eat leads to a new job. These are events to be cherished, not feared. It is the variety that so many of our employees value within their days.

What do our employees receive for this hard work and dedication that they continuously demonstrate? Wages that are as competitive as possible within the marketplace. Despite reduced state funding and ongoing constraints on overall budget increases, one of the objectives this year is to increase the entry level rates for our direct support professionals. We are hopeful that this will be able to occur soon.

One area in which the agency is able to excel is with our benefit offerings. Any employee regularly scheduled to work more than 30 hours a week is eligible for coverage for health, prescription, dental, vision, life, long-term disability, short-term disability, and critical illness insurance plans. Stone Belt contributes heavily toward the health insurance with employees able to elect free coverage for themselves. Stone Belt also offers a 401(k) toward which the agency contributes three percent of earnings, regardless of the contribution made by the employee.

Other benefits include: flexible scheduling options, an Employee Assistance Program that offers free and confidential counseling and support, annual flu vaccinations, paid time off, home mortgage assistance, and a referral awards program that pays money for referring new employees to the agency. However, the biggest benefit that is cited by our employees is the satisfaction that comes with making a difference in the lives of those we serve. One of our employees wrote a message about his experiences at Stone Belt. Some of his words capture well the feelings of many of our employees:

"Before long it's been three months/a year/three years, and the person you were helping down the hallway when you first started is now helping other clients walk down the same hallway. What happens occasionally in other workplaces is a common event here: we grow beautiful things called independence, will, and hope."



Stone Belt of Lawrence County staff member Carrie Elkin dances with retirement program client Jerry Killion in Bedford.

Journey of Hope makes a stop at Stone Belt

By Cheryl Paul
Publications Supervisor

Everyday while working at Stone Belt, I see amazing people accomplishing amazing things, and I am always touched by the daily enrichment of lives. But every once in a while an event comes along that is moving on an even deeper level. For me, one of these was Fun Day 2006, featuring the Pi Kappa Phi, Push America, cycling team.

Push America is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1977 by members of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity. Today it remains the exclusive national learning project of the fraternity, with a stated mission to "Build leaders of tomorrow by serving people with disabilities today."

"We are riding to spread a message of acceptance and understanding for people with disabilities," said Jonathan Leffler, Community Relations Director for the Trans team.

Each summer Push America sponsors the Journey of Hope, a 12,000-mile combined cycling event. 81 undergraduate and alumni members of Pi Kappa Phi from across the United States participate in the ride, during which they cycle 4,000 miles from San Francisco, CA and Florence, Oregon to Washington, D.C. There are three different routes: North, South, and Trans. The Trans route is the most grueling of the trips, traveling over largely mountainous terrain.

Throughout its ride the team holds "friendship visits" with organizations around the country that support persons with disabilities. Stone Belt was one stop on this year's Trans route. This is the second year in a row that the group has visited Stone Belt.

Stone Belt was notified in May that its 10th Street headquarters would once again be a stop on the riders' journey. Word spread throughout the organization that the cyclists would be back. Clients and staff were so excited; everyone was talking about it for weeks. Finally the day arrived. On July 26 the cyclists arrived at 12:30 p.m. All 10th Street clients waited excitedly in front of the building, and at the first sign of them a huge cheer erupted. The cyclists smiled and waved as the clients welcomed them to Stone Belt.

"This was the best welcome we had our whole trip," said cyclist Steve Sollner, a rider from Boulder, Colorado. "How can I complain about anything after seeing these smiles? This is what the ride is all about."

After their arrival, the cyclists were ushered into the cafeteria to enjoy a hot dog and baked bean lunch, prepared and served by the ladies of Kappa Kappa Sigma, a local philanthropic group. The bikers each chose a different group of clients to share lunch with. For the rest of the afternoon the cyclists and clients participated in Fun Day activities including various carnival games, and music and dancing in the gymnasium.

I must admit that the Pi Kappa Phi men surprised me. My stereotype of a fraternity resembles a scene out of the film *Animal House*, in which everyone is running around in a toga and drinking beer; where all anyone cares about

and thinks about is partying. The students I met through Push America, however, changed many of my pre-conceived notions.

The thing that struck me the most was the incredible rapport the riders had with the clients. They took time to talk and get to know everyone individually. A few bikers and clients even found that they shared a mutual love of the game "hacky sack," which they then played together throughout the afternoon.

Most of the riders did not have a personal connection to any individuals with developmental disabilities before the ride, other than through their fraternity connection. But many of the cyclists say the trip has been a life-changing experience.

"The ride forces you out of your comfort zone and pushes your personal boundaries," said cyclist Michael Wilbourne from Ft. Collins, Colorado. "I have an entirely different outlook on life and am excited about being able to impact the lives of others."

Cyclist Nick Hart from Kansas City, Missouri described the life-changing experience perfectly when he said, "We start out as boys on the West coast and end up as men on the East coast."

Many riders continue supporting persons with developmental disabilities after the ride. This is the second year Wilbourne has completed the journey. Last year, after his first trip, he continued raising money back at his school. One of his personal causes was to increase accessibility in his community. Much of his fund-raising efforts went toward installing wheelchair ramps throughout the town.

For the ride itself each cyclist is required to raise money. The Trans team consisted of 15 riders and five crew members who each raised approximately \$5,000. This money is then donated to the organizations where the cyclists stop throughout their journey. Stone Belt received a check for \$750 from the team to increase athletic opportunities for clients. The organization plans to use the funds to enable clients to participate in PALS, a group that offers equine-assisted activities for people with special needs.

The day concluded around 3 p.m., with Stone Belt clients waving the cyclists off to their next stop on the IU campus where they were scheduled to rest for the night. Even as the day came to an end, I couldn't stop thinking about the wonderful interactions between the cyclists and clients. I had a smile on my face the entire day. Even a few weeks later I can't stop telling my friends about the event.

I know I speak not only for myself but also for many others in our Stone Belt community when I say we hope to have the honor of hosting the Push America cyclists next year.

✉ To find out more about Push America and the Journey of Hope log on to www.pushamerica.org.

journal entry

Journey of Hope cyclists kept an online diary of their 4,000 mile, 74-day trip. Here is an excerpt from one rider's journal of his visit to Stone Belt.



Stone Belt
July 26, Day 57

Physical exhaustion hit me like a brick today. I am finally starting to feel the toll my body is enduring from this extremely long and arduous bike ride. The ride today was relatively easy, but seemed difficult to pretty much the entire team due to exhaustion. I would say about 95% of the team is feeling the same way I am. The scenery, however, was tremendous. I felt like I was in Oregon again. It was very green and lush; some of the roads were surrounded by enormous trees. Knave rode along with us today. He did really well; he rode with the sweeps the entire day. We then staged up at a golf course for a few minutes and headed to our arrival at Stone Belt. This was an awesome arrival. We rode up to the building to a ton of people cheering for us. I have never seen so many people so excited to see us. We then went inside and ate some food. Afterwards, we all played some games, danced, and hung out with a ton of people with disabilities. I had a great time.

We spent a few hours there, then departed back for lodging. They even cheered for us when we left, which was really cool. Nick and I then decided to take a tour of the campus (Indiana Univ.). It is a gorgeous campus, and huge as well. Their Greek row is fantastic. All the houses look 100 years old and are gigantic. The Pi Kappa house, which we are staying in, is awesome; it sleeps about 130 people. The actual campus is awesome. There are a ton of trees and a huge park/jungle in the center of campus. I could definitely see myself going to school here. We then tried to get into Assembly Hall where the Hoosiers play, but could only get into the hallways. The actual gym part was locked due to basketball practice. For dinner, Dr. Phil Summers, a past national archon, provided us with a great dinner at the Pi Kappa house. He also told us about the university and its Greek life, which was quite interesting. After that, I read for a while and then headed to bed.

By Jonathan Hughes, cyclist
University of Colorado — Boulder — Eta Gamma

program spotlight

Saluting Healthy Families' contributions

By Vicky Sorensen

Program Manager, Healthy Families, Monroe County

For the past six years I have worked at Stone Belt as Program Manager of Healthy Families Monroe County. In May of this year, Stone Belt made the strategic decision to phase out its Infant and Child Developmental Services, of which Healthy Families has been a part. Beginning September 1, Monroe County's Healthy Families program transitioned to The Villages of Indiana, a not-for-profit organization committed to the strengthening of families.

The Villages is the largest Healthy Families provider in the State of Indiana. Approximately 1,000 children and families from across seven counties are served within their program. It is with mixed emotion that we make the transition away from Stone Belt, but it is with elation that we will continue and thrive as a part of The Villages. We have been the "square peg" trying to fit into the "round hole" of Stone Belt. Because The Villages have other Healthy Families sites throughout the State, we will now fit into the "square hole."

With Healthy Families' move from Stone Belt, I would like to reflect upon my last six years working within the program.

The Healthy Families Monroe County program began with Stone Belt in 1997. Healthy Families is a nation-wide prevention program designed to work toward eliminating abuse and neglect of children and to support and encourage parents by building on parents' strengths. Family Support Specialists work with families to reduce the stress and maximize the joys of parenting and to provide a healthy start for parents and their new babies. Families are visited in their homes on a regularly scheduled basis. After training and certification, Family Support Specialists carry a caseload of between 15-25 families.

We often hear people say, "What a nice job to just



Stone Belt held a farewell event on June 30 to recognize its Infant and Child Developmental Services Department. First Steps, Parent Aid and Healthy Families staff were honored for their commitment and dedication.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Villages is the largest child and family services not-for-profit agency in Indiana. The new Healthy Families office will be located at:

4625 East Morningside Dr.
Bloomington, IN 47408
812-961-2500 (phone)
812-961-2504 (fax)

play with babies all the time." This is most certainly part of the job, but more times than not Family Support Specialists work with families that are experiencing extremely stressful events in their lives such as: A family being evicted from their home with no money or a place to move to; Domestic violence happening in the home while the mother lacks the self-confidence to leave the abuser; Child Protection Services becoming involved in

the family and the mother being afraid her children will be removed; A family needing food, their electric bill paid, a job, a day care provider.

Family Support Specialists work with these families to find the resources to provide the answer to the many possible stresses in the family's life. Healthy Families also serves families who are not facing crisis situations but need our support to gain the confidence, as new parents, that they are doing a good job in providing for their children. We often provide services to International families who are in graduate school at Indiana University. Many of these families have little or no support from immediate family members, so we become the supporting "grandparent," providing information on child growth and development, or directing them to needed services for their family.

We have had two significant accomplishments during these past six years. In 2003 we went through the process of credentialing with Healthy Families America, and were eventually awarded our certification by the Governor of Indiana. Our second accomplishment has been with Bloomington Hospital. We worked extremely hard to establish Healthy Families in the hospital. As a result of our efforts, a Family Resource Specialist visits the Bloomington Hospital twice per week to present the aspects of our program to new mothers. Hospital social workers often refer families to us, as do pediatricians in the community.

As I reflect upon these past six years, I am pleased with the positive aspects of all the hard work staff members have done and are doing in providing services to families. I thank them all for their support, and I look forward to continuing our work together as we make the transition from Stone Belt to The Villages. I am grateful that Stone Belt recognizes the importance of the Healthy Families program, and that the leadership of Stone Belt worked to find the best possible home for our services.

staff spotlight

Meet Amy Jackson, Development Director

By Cheryl Paul
Publications Supervisor

Being a sideline observer of Stone Belt's work in the community wasn't enough for Amy Jackson.

For the past two years, Jackson has lived next door to Blackstone, one of the organization's group homes.

When Stone Belt posted its redesigned Development Director position in the newspaper, Jackson was immediately excited about the possibility of joining the organization to which she had a unique connection.

"The women are wonderful neighbors – they are always friendly and courteous," Jackson said. "They made us feel great when we moved in, saying hello and welcoming us into the neighborhood. Our favorite thing about their home is that they always decorate it for the holidays. It's so fun to see their excitement for each celebration."

Before being hired at Stone Belt, Jackson previously telecommuted for a College in Israel, coordinating development and programming for them in the United States. Although she enjoyed the work she was doing, she felt it was time to connect to a local agency where she could participate in and support the community where she lives.

In addition to her connection to Blackstone House, Jackson also has another close connection to persons with developmental disabilities. Her mother, Julie, was a Special Education teacher and served as an advocate through her service as a board member of her local Arc.



Stone Belt Development Director Amy Jackson is flanked by her neighbors, the ladies of Blackstone House. Top L/R: Krista Heard, Tasia Tanier-Gesner, Jackson, Nancy Murray. Bottom L/R: Leslee Payton, Mary Perri, Susie White and Patsy Smitz

"My mother instilled in me a passion for lifting up all members of society," said Jackson. "My earliest childhood memories include substantive and beautiful experiences with exceptional people who overcame their developmental challenges to create for themselves rich lives of meaning and purpose."

In Jackson's position as Development Director she will be responsible for the creation and implementation of a comprehensive fund-raising plan. She will also oversee whole-agency communications and public relations strategies. Her daily duties are very diverse and include opportunities to: meet with

potential donors in the community, research grant possibilities and write grants, speak publicly about the work of Stone Belt, and organize events that give people an opportunity to celebrate the organization.

In her early days at Stone Belt, Jackson has traveled to all of the facilities and has been meeting with clients and staff from various departments. She feels this is the best way to gain a full picture of Stone Belt's programs and people.

"I have been warmly welcomed into the Stone Belt community," she said. "I have been struck by the incredible talent and dedication of the staff that I've met. It's inspiring to be a part of this collaborative environment."

In her spare time Amy loves spending time with her family: her husband, Jason, a Professor of Folklore and Ethnomusicology at IU, and her 4-year-old daughter, Joelle. She is also part of a local a cappella world music group called Kaia.

Jackson believes fund-raising and development are about educating others. "My hope is to energize people to understand that the entire community is stronger when all its members have the opportunity to thrive and succeed, and to understand that each of us is responsible for making this a reality," she said.

✉ To find out more about fund-raising and development at Stone Belt contact Amy Jackson at 332-2168, ext. 314 or email ajackson@stonebelt.org.

We want to reward **YOU** for your generous support of Stone Belt!

Contribute to Stone Belt through a purchase of NAP credits And receive 50% of your gift back as a credit on your next Indiana tax return.



Credits available until June 1, 2007 or until all are sold, so don't delay!

Contact Amy Jackson, Development Director, for more information! 332-2168, ext. 314 ajackson@stonebelt.org

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Stone Belt presents news and information for persons with disabilities, families and friends



Fun Day 2006

Cyclists on the Pi Kappa Phi Push America Journey of Hope ride attended Stone Belt's Fun Day on July 26. For more on the visit, see Page 6.

It's NAP TIME

Information about how to donate to Stone Belt and receive a great tax credit. **page 6**

IN HIS OWN WORDS

Stone Belt client Donnie McGinnis writes about a special trip to Alaska. **page 1**

CHANGING LIVES

A complete guide to working at Stone Belt. **pages 4-5**

LOOKING BACK

Remembering Healthy Families as it transitions to a new provider. **page 7**

OUR MISSION

We believe in the uniqueness, worth and right to self-determination of every individual. Therefore, it is our mission, in partnership with the community, to prepare, empower and support persons with developmental disabilities and their families to participate fully in the life of the community.



Stone Belt East client Missy Bishop hugs a Push America, Pi Kappa Phi cyclist during Fun Day activities on July 26. Read more about the event on Page 6.