

January 2014



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others, or strikes out against injustice,
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Ripple of Hope, and
those ripples build a current which
can sweep down the mightiest
walls of oppression and
resistance."*

*Senator Robert F. Kennedy,
June 6 1966*



**Lisa
Pakkebieer**
Executive
Director

In Honor

It bears repeating.

"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

*-Robert F. Kennedy, Capetown,
South Africa, 1966*

Robert Kennedy's words, delivered in a 1966 speech to students struggling against the tyranny of Apartheid in South Africa – speak to an abiding faith in the power of the individual... the power of one act to transform a life, or countless lives... the power of an ideal to change how people look at their world.

We at [The MENTOR Network](#) share that faith. It is the cornerstone of our mission. The Network's [Ripple of Hope Award](#) was created in 2005 to recognize the talented women and men who put faith into action. The hero of our efforts is the individual caregiver. As we know, faith alone doesn't move mountains. People do. Our company is built on the skill and compassion of our workforce. They work tirelessly, because they are committed to improving a life. Whether they know it or not, they create a ripple effect for those they serve... for their colleagues... and for their communities. And it is in the sum total of these actions that we find the true meaning of The MENTOR Network.

Each year, employees that make a meaningful difference in the lives of others, throughout The MENTOR Network, can be nominated for the Ripple of Hope. A committee reviews the nominations and selects the recipients. Award winners are invited to a special ceremony as honored guests of The MENTOR Network. The eight deserving individuals selected whose accomplishments, whether small meaningful acts or dynamic systems innovations, create ripples of hope extending beyond themselves to touch the lives of others. They are our everyday heroes, they inspire greatness within our organization, and they initiate a legacy for others to follow. The ceremony is truly an inspiring experience that renews the spirit.

I would like to honor all past and current REM Iowa Ripple of Hope recipients:

- [Kim Larimer](#), Registered Nurse (2005)
- [Beth Thompson](#), Direct Support Professional (2007)
- [Shirley Lane](#), Direct Support Professional (2009)
- [Lucas Lawrence](#), Licensed Practical Nurse (2011)
- [Barb Driscoll](#), Direct Support Professional (2013)

We are proud of our workforce within REM Iowa and I would like to personally express my gratitude for the important work that they do each day. The talent and dedication they bring to their work enables us to pursue our mission of enhancing quality of life today and inspire hope for tomorrow by teaching independent living skills to people through a continuum of quality services. To the REM Iowa workforce: Thank you for making a difference...

35 REM IOWA

Life to the Fullest. Every Day for 35 Years

2014 marks the 35th anniversary for [REM Iowa](#). This is a momentous time in our company's history, as we celebrate the many individuals that made this possible. We are truly blessed to support over 700 people within our residential and vocational services.

Over the past 35 years, tremendous strides have been taken in providing innovative services, a [spectrum of service options](#), and empowering people to live "life to the fullest". Within REM Iowa, we take pride in our constant efforts to improve through quality, innovation, and growth. We are better today; however, we recognize quality is a lifelong journey and a continuous opportunity (There is no end, ever).

None of this would be possible without the support of the countless stakeholders and the incredibly dedicated and compassionate people that [work for](#) and support REM Iowa. As we celebrate our 35th anniversary, we acknowledge and extend a heartfelt thank you to the many people who have contributed to those we have been blessed and privileged to support.

A RIPPLE OF HOPE

We are pleased to introduce Barb Driscoll, one of the proud recipients of the 2013 Ripple of Hope award.

The MENTOR Network's Ripple of Hope Awards were created in 2005 to recognize employees, Mentors, and other independent contractors whose compassion, energy, and skill create ripples of hope in the lives of others. Award winners are nominated by their peers and selected by The MENTOR Network, in recognition of their unwavering commitment to make a positive difference in the lives of others, whether in an office, program, or community setting. This year's award ceremony was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Barb has made a tremendous difference in the lives of the consumers she works with in Cedar Rapids, Frankie and Jon. Barb has worked with both consumers to further their communication skills through iPad apps. Frankie had a written vocabulary of approximately 12 words, with even fewer spoken. Frankie is now able to construct full sentences through his app to communicate wants and needs, along with an improved vocabulary.

*Barb with Redwood Operating Group President,
Dave Petersen*



From left to right: Redwood North Vice President of Operations, David Dotb, Barb and Jim Driscoll, and Executive Director, REM Iowa, Lisa Pakkebie

Jon's communication was limited to him pointing to items or using limited sign language. Through the work of Barb and staff at Jon's home, he has developed a truly effective method of communication. A few of Jon's favorites on his iPad are the University of Iowa Hospital button when he isn't feeling well, the JCPenney button when he wants to watch escalators, and 'I want to go home' for when he is finished with an activity.

Barb, along with her fellow staff members, played an integral role in throwing Jon a high school graduation party. The house was decorated, there was lots of good food, and teachers, friends, peers, and staff were all present to help Jon celebrate.

She also helped reunite Frankie with his family - specifically his grandpa - who didn't think he would ever see Frankie again. They now visit him in the hospital twice a month, and see his brother and sister once a week.

As you can see, Barb has made a significant difference in the lives of these two young men. Her caring demeanor, positive outlook, and can-do attitude show why Barb was deserving of this award. If you are fortunate enough to meet her, please congratulate her on receiving this excellent award.



"Without You, We'd Go 'Nuts'!"
DSP Appreciation Week - 2013

Monday - Staff Breakfast Tuesday - "We'd go NUTS without you" Peanut M&Ms Wednesday - Early Close!
Thursday - Personal Thank-You Messages Friday - Appreciation 2013 T-Shirts

Everybody Loves the

When it comes to "Bling", REM's Adam Johannes is considered an expert. Adam caters to Bling lovers within the community through the many beautiful earrings that he creates. Adam's earrings range from a variety of sparkly dangles to pink ribbons in support of breast cancer. Adam also uses his creative earring making talent to support his community. He recently rented tables to sell his earrings at Lewis Central High School and TJ High School Craft Fairs in Council Bluffs to help support their band and music programs.

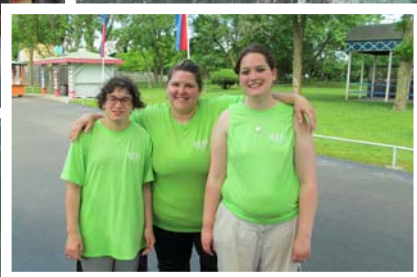
Bling



Downtown Council Bluffs was recently overrun with zombies! The scariest zombie of them all was REM's one and only Derike Kenzie. He spent the day camped out with his fellow zombies listening to frightening music, feasting on brains and turkey legs, selling miniature zombie buddies and other crafts, playing with exotic spiders, and of course, infecting anyone who came near. Then in an attempt to infect as many innocent citizens as possible, Derike and his zombie friends drug themselves to Bayliss park where they were finally defeated by zombie hunters in the Zombie Apocalypse. The terrifying episode will be remembered by Derike and many others for a long time to come.



ADVENTURELAND RULES!





Every year the
**Council
Bluffs**
office get
together for
fried chicken,
baked goods
and
“Pie-ing”
STAFF!



2013 Annual Council Bluffs Picnic

2013 Council Bluffs Community Bash

Submitted by Tracy Herweg,
RICS Program Director

First Congregational Church and the United Church of Christ held their 3rd annual Community Bash August 10th. This is where Community Agencies come together and set up booths to highlight the services they provide for Council Bluffs. REM Iowa Community Services once again participated in the event for the third year. It was great to be able to explain our services to other providers and participants who didn't know what we did or see familiar faces from the previous year. It was also a great opportunity for us to network with other services that our individuals could benefit from. Free children's activities, clothing give away, free food, carnival, and wonderful music was provided for the community. A good time was had by all.



THE SPORTS PAGE

27 YEARS OF TRACK AND FIELD



The 27th annual REM Iowa Track and Field Day was held on August 24, 2013 on the campus grounds at REM Iowa's location in Shelby, IA. Track and Field Day has been a long-time favorite for individuals receiving services and staff, alike. Track and Field Day started in circa 1986, due to the combined effort of staff and supervisors that were working at the time.

The day's events included a 50 and 100 yard walk/run, softball throw, soccer kick, ring toss, water balloon toss, Norwegian golf, free-throw competition, and football throw. Event participants came from surrounding communities such as Council Bluffs, Harlan, Atlantic, Adel, Johnston, and Urbandale. Each location wore different colored shirts representing their areas; to name a few; Shelby & Council Bluffs ICF programs and Avoca HCBS programs wore red shirts, Council Bluffs HCBS programs wore orange and Atlantic HCBS programs wore rainbow tie dye shirts. The events started at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 1:00 p.m. when everyone enjoyed taking a break for lunch and an award ceremony. All the track stars received a gold medallion for their participation. Colored ribbons were provided to 1st through 6th place event winners. The audience cheered as each participant was called to receive their awards.

Pictured upper left: Maddie Lang, Individual receiving services, takes a break between events with Haley Jacobsen, Direct Support Professional.

Pictured upper right: Christopher Neri, Individual receiving services, preparing to hug Kathie Pitt, Lead Direct Support Professional.

Pictured bottom: Front row: Kyle Liddick, Brandi Donnelly, Brandon Johnson, Mark Dingman, Rick Wilson, LaShandra McBride, Eric Hansen, Amanda Novak. Back row: Lindsay Putnam, Hillary Lottes, Jim Pederson, Duane Walters, Rick Shultz, Laura Martin, Kyle Davis, Dustin Belt, Brent Johannes, Renae Dingman, Jon Brannan, Vicki Lewis, Tracy Herweg, Donnie Logan-Blount, Joe Heithoff, Robyn Wabling, Dione Glenn.

Summer Special Olympics 2013

The Summer Special Olympics were held in Ames, IA again this year and REM Iowa Services' Mount Pleasant Office was there to BRING HOME THE GOLD! Tim Jensen returning after his success in the spring games was excited to bring his housemates with him for the qualification rounds for the summer event. Tim, Brandon Downing and Zachary Davis all qualified to compete at the year-end event in Ames. Tim qualified in the Javelin Toss and the 100M Dash (ages 30-50), Brandon in the Softball Throw and the 100MDash (ages 30-50) and Zac in the Softball Throw and 50M Dash (ages 18-29).



The gentlemen enjoyed traveling by tour bus for their overnight stay in a local motel. That evening, they attended the opening ceremonies, walking in the parade of athletes and watching, as the Olympic torch made its way around the arena and up to its final lighting. Then it was back to the motel for a good night's sleep before their competitions began.

Early the next morning the athletes traveled to the competition grounds where they had a great time competing in their assigned events throughout the day. We came home champions with two gold medals a silver and a bronze as well as 4th place and 6th place ribbons. The results were as follows:

- Zachary Davis – Gold Medal Softball Throw, Bronze medal 50M Dash
- Tim Jensen – Silver Medal Javelin Toss, 6th place 100M Dash
- Brandon Downing – Gold Medal Softball Throw, 4th place 100M Dash

These three have extended an invitation to all the Mt. Pleasant area REM waiver homes and hope to make a sweep of several categories when we hopefully return next year.



Henry County Fair Fun

Two from the REM Iowa Community Services – Mt. Pleasant area were looking for some fun this week and found it at the Henry County Fair. Brandon Downing and Tim Jensen competed in the DUCK CHUCK where they threw a duck shaped dog toy as far as they could. They competed with other local citizens and Brandon pulled down the 1st place win with a throw of 119 feet.

Later that same evening, Brandon, Tim and Darren Goodwin volunteered to compete in the Toilet Bowl Races. For this competition, a toilet bowl painted neon green, was set on a wheeled cart made of pallets and then pushed through a course. The rider was required to hold a stool plunger with two rolls of toilet paper on its handle. When they reached the turning point of the course, the toilet paper had to be pitched into a bucket and then the pushers ran their fastest trying to beat the other teams back to the finish line without tipping over their toilet bowl in the process.

Brandon pushed a young volunteer on the Party Pooper while Darren rode as Tim pushed the Royal Flush. None of our teams won but they sure had a blast trying.



Brain Matters



It has been an exciting few months since our last newsletter for **REM Iowa Brain Injury Services**.

The governor's office released a list of appointments to the **Advisory Council for Brain Injuries** and our very own **Pat Costigan** (Regional Director for REM Iowa Community Services in Eastern Iowa) was named as a member of this influential group. In September **Brenda Isenberger**, Development Director, was nominated as Vice President of the State **Brain Injury Alliance** Board. It is wonderful to see members of our team take part in these groups for the betterment of brain injury services in Iowa. Congratulation to you both on these prestigious appointments!

In other news, starting this past September a group of REM employees (including Program Directors and

Program Coordinators) took part in the challenging examination preparations for the **Academy of Certified Brain Injury Specialists**.

This is a nationally recognized credential for individuals working in brain injury services. REM Iowa currently has 25 employees that are ACBIS certified and we look forward to adding more to our list.

Lastly, as the winter season approaches, I would like to remind everyone that accidental falls and motor vehicle crashes are the number 1 and 2 causes of traumatic brain injuries in the United States. With the colder weather and people starting to think about putting away their holiday decorations hung high on the rooftops, please take a moment to remember safety first. Be sure to salt your sidewalks, drive a little slower on those snowy days and have a friend hold the ladder. Stay safe out there!



Annie Streng,
Brain Injury Specialist

LIONS AND TIGERS AND SCARES!

(OH MY!)

Each year, the Western and Central Iowa RICS teams have a friendly costume competition for Halloween. This year, it was Oz vs. AHHHHHs. Can you guess which team took home the "ruby slippers"?



Additionally, Loren Noelle, PC in Council Bluffs, won the individual competition as a Zombie Witch. She is pictured with co-workers Mark Dingman, Tracy Herweg, and Doreen Dea.



On September 21st and October 19th, REM services in Shelby and Mt. Vernon, respectively, did their part to benefit the Political Action Committee (PAC) in costumed Run/Walk/Roll events. Both enjoyed beautiful and brisk 2-mile journeys.

In Mt. Vernon, more than fifty people participated and raised over \$550. It was a busy trail full of policemen, witches, cowboys, princesses and more!

The Shelby event also brought many costumes, including a penguin, squid, lollipop, fairy, principal, Batman, and a ninja turtle - just to name a few. Prizes were given for 1st - 3rd place, with winners each receiving a gift card to Outback Steakhouse, Wal-Mart, and

Subway respectively. A best costume award was also given to Miriah Davis, from the children's program. She was dressed as Pocahontas.

A good time was had by all, and all agreed this was bound to become an annually anticipated tradition!

RUN/WALK/ROLL!!



REM *Angels*

REMEMBERING

had.

SHARRON MORGAN

On her last night Sharron was tucked into bed by her Program Coordinator, and she asked her to give her a bite (Sharron's word for kisses). Usually Sharron was asleep by the time overnight staff came in, but on this night she waited for overnight staff to come in and say goodnight. It was almost as if she knew something we didn't. We will not be able to see big rings and bling without thinking of her.

While she may not have been born with much family, she was blessed to be surrounded by people who loved her like she was. She will always be in our memories, and our hearts!



IN RECOGNITION...

REM Iowa has an employee recognition program to express our gratitude to the dedication of our long-term employees. This is an opportunity for us to recognize our employees for his or her years of service and loyalty. REM Iowa has been providing services since 1979 and this is made possible by the on-going dedication and commitment of our employees. Continuity of services and care is critical to our quality and the stability of the individuals we serve. We would like to congratulate and express a heartfelt "thank you" to each employee being recognized.

For **15 years** of service – Monica Ravn

For **10 years** of service – Cheryl Hall, Lisa Mills

For **5 years** of service – Connie Coverdell, Elrashid Elsid, Julie Flaconer, Jessica Frederickson, Keli Gauvin, Iqbal Hasib, Amanda Hennick, Brittney Hughes, Nafisa Lutfi, Jean-Paul Mugemuzi, Jessica Price, Sarah Ray, Lisa Rouse, Rebecca Samuelson, Betty Simmons, John Taylor, Stephen Traywick, Liz Van Dyk, Kristin Woodland

Happy New Year!!

*At the close of another year,
we gratefully pause to say*

~ Thank You ~

*We hope you and your loved ones
enjoyed peace this holiday season, and
we wish you a new year of happiness,
health and prosperity.*

2014

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