

# PossAbilities of Southern Minnesota

The Psst! PossAbilities Newsletter is published quarterly for friends of PossAbilities of Southern MN, a nonprofit organization supporting individuals with disabilities.

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Submit items for future newsletters to  
rberg@possabilities.org

## Can we contact you by email? Pretty please?

We are trying to reduce our direct mail costs. When we have PossAbilities news to report – such as who won the Classic Car Raffle or would like to make a request for volunteers – can we contact you by email? We promise not to inundate you with unnecessary messages! We will strive to send targeted email messages so that you're inclined to read what we've sent. You can help us by selecting which type of information you prefer to receive updates about:

- ☐ Programs
- ☐ Volunteerism
- ☐ Event Sponsorship
- ☐ Donor Opportunities

And your email address is? Please share! \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: PossAbilities • 1808 3rd Avenue SE • Rochester, MN 55904

If you'd like to be added or removed from our mailing list or want to update any of your contact information within our records, please contact Marketing & Development Director Renee Berg at 281-6116 ext. 207.

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# Psst!

PossAbilities Quarterly Newsletter • Fall 2011

## In This Issue

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### NAME DROP: A SLICE OF WHO IS DOING WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN

We are up to four workers at Greenway! **Brandon, Melanie, Jay and Jenna** are our PossAbilities workers who have tons of important jobs at area convenience stores. Their jobs include working the cash register, preparing coffee and keeping the stores clean. Job Coach **Kris Henning** has been instrumental in their success. Way to go gang!



The fire hydrant crew!

**Scott, Larry and Richard** spent part of the summer painting fire hydrants. The job was for Rochester Public Utilities and the guys managed to paint about 75 hydrants. **Joel Pralle** reports that the crew enjoyed the chance to do some "man's man" work in the community. Way to go gang!

Youth Rec is close to 20 kids participating in the Saturday program held twice each month. Program Coordinator **Robyn Befort** says parents love the Saturday option. "Going places has been popular," she says. "People really like it." Once a month the gang stays on-site at the Rochester Area Family Y to swim or do gym activities. The other Saturday they go off site on a trip. Lark Toys was one destination, a pumpkin patch another. House of Bounce and Chuck E. Cheese were on the November calendar too! Way to go Youth Rec. We appreciate your weekend hours making life better for kids with disabilities and their families.



Some awesome Greenway workers



Our beloved Hitachi volunteers returned to do great things in September. The day before the volunteer crews arrived **Jacob, Isaac and Ryan** pressure washed the Admin building to get it ready for a fresh coat. Hitachi folks worked in shifts on Sept. 16 and logged 12 hours to improve our curb appeal with paint and plants. The main Admin building got a fresh coat and landscaping around the neighboring Employment building was added and reduced from – no more monster shrubs! A smaller Hitachi team returned a week later to polish off trim and detail work. **Michelle Lee** and **Joel Pralle** served as our staff point people to help us pull off these days of service. Kudos team!

Nice job everyone. We couldn't live without ya.

In October brave workers **Jacob and Ben** wore their coats and washed windows at Admin along with Job Coach **Bruce Lee**. They worked outside and inside to give our windows a nice shine. We are thankful for their hard work on a cold day!

Our all staff training day on Oct. 28 was held at Autumn Ridge Church. Our entire operation was closed for the day as our team gathered to learn how we can serve folks even better than we do now. Board member **Roxanne Hellickson** provided the morning welcome and the afternoon farewell. We found out Roxanne has a brother with disabilities named Kermit who lives in Iowa. She shared her eye moistening Kermit story with us. The rest of the day was spent learning, talking and brainstorming. Thanks to our Foundation Board for approving funds for this important day of education! Thanks also to our organizers **Jill Davison, Polly Owens and Cristi Lyke**.



Scrapbooking is popular

Scrapbooking is wildly popular for some of our people. **Ali, Alli, Megan, Jenna** and staff member **Amy Sonnek** went to Rochester Scrapbooking Co. in September to work on their projects. See above photo!

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# Our Very Own Field of Experts (2)

27 years  
Rose Cummings

24 years  
Kathleen Hageman

23 years  
Bruce Lee

22 years  
Polly Owens

21 years  
Kelly Walker

20 years  
Kenda Freerksen  
V.J. Thiesse

17 years  
John Flanders

16 years  
Chandra Filoteo

15 years  
Cristi Lyke  
Joel Pralle  
Joanna Coon  
Jill Davison  
Nathan Bell

Our staff’s years of service are impressive.  
Thanks for your hard work.

14 years  
Sandra Riess  
Linda Driessen  
Dan Harlan  
Serena Jordan

13 years  
Thomas Booth  
Kristin Henning  
Paul Henning  
Paul Pedersen

12 years  
Marcia Bjork

11 years  
Lisa Hyke  
Robyn Befort

10 years  
Jacqueline  
LeTourneau

9 years  
Cyrilla Trende  
Steven Nelson

6 years  
Nicole Carlson  
Randy Hilleshiem  
Melissa Treichel  
Madino Hassan  
Michelle Lee  
Jake Kostel  
Katherine Mahaffey  
Michelle Myers

5 years  
Wendy Sursely  
Kimberlee Kraus  
Jamie Heyn  
Amy Sonnek

4 years  
Jaime Stolp  
Heidi Erickson  
Tiffany Kidd  
T.J. Nienaber  
Nicole Bowers

3 years  
Mary Ann Purl  
Katie Shea  
Jeffrey Devlin  
Kaitlin Terleski  
Tyler Crawford  
Mary Webster

2 years  
Corey Erickson  
Sarah Bahler  
Kate Mannenbach  
Jeffrey Eveslage  
Brianna Lyke  
Jennifer Churchill  
Kyle Olevson

1 year  
Brandi Mourning  
Taylor Hutchins  
Khalid Mohamed  
Brian Ward  
Allison Wasz  
Amber Vagt  
Farhiyo Abdullahi  
Matthew Jennings  
Barbara Meltz

## Spotlight on....Job Coach Tiffany Kidd

Renee Berg: How long have you worked for PossAbilities?  
Tiffany Kidd: Four years.

RB: What do you like best about your job?  
TK: I love the clients.

RB: Tell us about your family.  
TK: I have three kids. Tavontae is 13, Takijah is 8 and Ty’Juan is 5. They are the love of my life. I have been in a relationship with my boyfriend for almost eight years. One day we will elope.

RB: Are you a Rochester native?  
TK: I was born and raised in Chicago. I moved to Rochester in 2000.

RB: What’s always in your fridge?  
TK: Milk. If I could keep a cow in there I would because my kids drink milk constantly.

RB: Which celebrity do you think you look like?  
TK: I don’t think I look like any celebrity. I am one of a kind – haven’t you noticed?

RB: What’s your favorite movie and book?  
TK: I have a couple of favorite movies – “Ghost” and “Colors.” I am hooked on reading crime books right now.

RB: Who is one of your favorite coworkers?  
TK: I enjoy my coworker Katie S. She’s my girl.

RB: Is there anything else you want to include?  
TK: PossAbilities will never find another one like me!

Spotlight features a randomly selected PossAbilities staff person to help us learn more about the folks we see and talk to everyday.

# Past Events (7)

## Employer Awards Luncheon

“They get it” is how the nominator described this year’s winner of the exclusive annual PossAbilities **John Ellingson Summit Award**. Local business Greenway employs people with disabilities in Rochester and Pine Island and was honored as the 2011 Summit Award recipient on Tuesday, Oct. 11, during PossAbilities 17th annual Employer Recognition Luncheon. The event celebrates the employment of people with disabilities and was held at the South Broadway DoubleTree.

“This is a phenomenal celebration for us held in accordance with National Disability Employment Awareness Month,” said **John Flanders**, PossAbilities Executive Director. “As we come closer to the looming workforce shortage, PossAbilities is strategically placed to be a reliable supplier of excellent workers for local businesses.”

Honored during the event in addition to Greenway was a coworker of a person with a disability who has demonstrated acceptance for their PossAbilities colleague. **Spencer Burton** of the Pine Island Greenway received the coveted **Joseph Fitzpatrick Guide Award** for his inclusion of **Jay**, a PossAbilities client who enjoys his job in large part because of Burton’s belief in his abilities. Burton said it was the best award he’d ever gotten. It’s a rare occurrence for a business to be honored twice in the same year during the PossAbilities Employer Recognition event. Greenway’s General Manager **Tim Clemens** accepted the Summit Award on behalf of the locally owned co-op and spoke to the importance of PossAbilities clients such as Jay being among the Greenway family.

Lastly, the PossAbilities **Explorer Award** honors a person with a disability who has demonstrated an incredible work ethic during the past year. The Explorer Award is the most anticipated among PossAbilities clients. North Rochester Walmart employee **Alex** was announced as the 2011 Explorer recipient. His father **Lawrence** received the honor on his son’s behalf

and brought many in the audience to tears with his remarks.

After our event, a fourth PossAbilities worker named Melanie was hired at yet another Rochester Greenway. This brings our Greenway tally to four PossAbilities employees working at four separate locations. Go Greenway and go us!



Tables at the DoubleTree



Far left: Jay and Spencer celebrate; the Greenway team gathers together



## A Recent Honor

**Donna Garratt** took home the Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser Award on Nov. 8 during the Association of Fundraising Professional’s local celebration. Donna was honored during a luncheon at the Marriott for her efforts in helping raise money for PossAbilities and several other Rochester non-profit agencies. In accepting the award Donna said she was motivated to give back to the community after finding a strong support network when her son was diagnosed with autism 20+ years ago. **Val Koster** was among those who nominated Donna for the honor. Val, who is Donna’s BFF and Wine & Roses co-chair, described Donna as “a person who definitely sees beyond her own needs.” That’s for sure! Thanks Donna for all that you do!



# Past Events (6)

## 2011 Classic Car Raffle

Lifelong area resident **Neil Stolp** won the 9th Annual Classic Car Raffle held on Aug. 19 at Striker’s Corner in Stewartville. Neil had been at the Raffle early in the night with his wife Peggy but left before the winner’s name was called. He was a bit incredulous when

on a day-to-day basis she’ll be behind the wheel.

The PossAbilities Classic Car Raffle has been an annual fundraiser for the organization since 2003. For the 2011 event we raised \$25,000 and sold roughly 2,100 tickets. During the event on Aug. 19, former Car Raffle winners came out to help support us by displaying their cars.

Neil said he’d never before won anything significant. He is a semi-retired fourth generation farmer and lives in Oronoco with Peggy. The couple has two children; Bruce, who lives in Rochester; and David, who resides in Oronoco on the family’s farm with his wife and three daughters.

The Stolp family’s connection to PossAbilities dates back to the 1970s, when Bruce was served as a 17-month-old through the organization, which was then called the Developmental Achievement Center (DAC). Peggy served on DAC’s board during the 1980s and Neil said he considers himself a lifelong supporter of PossAbilities and its mission.

This year’s Classic Car Raffle was like every other year for the Stolps in that they bought tickets. Unlike previous years, this time around they won.



Neil Stolp with granddaughter Grace.

friends called to tell him he’d won the PossAbilities Mustang, thinking they were playing a trick on him. He believed the news when PossAbilities staff called to verify that he’d won.

Neil claimed the car on Aug. 26 at the PossAbilities main office with Peggy and son Bruce, who was once served through PossAbilities programs. Neil and Bruce left in the red 2011 convertible Mustang with Peggy saying she’d been promised that

## CAR RAFFLE SPONSORS

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- The Fan AM1270-KWEB
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- Clear Channel Radio
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- House of Bounce
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  - Post-Bulletin Co.
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- Heartland Tire & Services
- Luther Outdoor Services
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- Splish Splash Carwash
- C.O. Brown Benefits, LLC

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Zebaugh, Carole and Lawrence

We appreciate every contribution!  
Please contact us for information on donating to PossAbilities.

## Boards (4)

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Terry Sorenson

## Ways To Help

**Be an ambassador!** Hey, not all of us have tons of dough to spend or time to volunteer. You can still help PossAbilities by spreading the news about us. Perhaps you could connect Business Developer Paul Pedersen with a business that might employ a person with a disability. Maybe you could tell a relative whose son has a disability that we provide excellent programs and services. Telling positive stories about PossAbilities makes you an ambassador. We appreciate it and we'd love to feature your experience in a future newsletter. Contact us with your tale about spreading the positive PossAbilities word!

## Like us on Facebook!

Did you know we have a PossAbilities Facebook page? We do. Facebook is a great FREE way to spread news about PossAbilities but we don't have as many page viewers as we'd like.

## C'mon people, we can do better!

Please like the PossAbilities Facebook page and urge your friends, relatives, coworkers, acquaintances and pets to do the same. The better Facebook traffic we have, the better Google ranking we get, the easier we are as an agency for people to find ... we could go on about the merits of social media but we'll stop there. Except to say this:

**Like us. Like us. Please like us.** 

## Ways to Help (5)

# contribute

Everyone is on a tight budget these days and we at PossAbilities are no different. We welcome any assistance you can provide this holiday season. All donations are tax deductible and are of immense value to us as a local non-profit organization supporting people with disabilities. Here are some gifts we'd love to receive.

- Kleenex, Clorox wipes, hand sanitized wipes in individual packages, vinyl gloves
- Paper plates and paper towels
- Recliners in excellent condition
- Flowers, garden seeds and bird seed for nurturing client bonds with nature
- Sturdy outdoor patio set for client use
- Art supplies: paint, brushes, canvases
- Exercise videos suitable for seniors
- Booster seats for youth transport
- GPS for staff use during client transport
- Swim diapers in largest available sizes
- Plastic shelving units with cloth bins for organizing youth games and toys
- Healthy snacks: granola bars, crackers, pretzels, fruit snacks, microwave popcorn
- Swim suits: boys ages 6-12, girls ages 7-8
- New puzzles of 500 pieces or more
- \$40 to send a 5th grader to seven weeks of Y swimming lessons
- \$65 to send a child to a Quarry Hill Nature Center summer camp
- \$75 toward wall stencils
- \$100 to send a 6-year-old to 10 weeks of Music Therapy classes
- \$250 to put toward Rodann Entrance Alert set such as those used at retail stores
- Boardmaker Studio CD for Windows or \$400 for purchase
- Eye Box Tools including Eye Pics, Weekly Schedule Board and Visual Prompting Ring
- Gas gift cards to put toward transportation costs
- Jobs for people with disabilities
- Rubbermaid storage bins
- Post-Bulletin newspaper subscription
- Two new upright vacuum cleaners for teaching living skills
- Hand-held credit card processor
- Money toward purchase of \$7,000 to \$8,000 billing software to meet state mandated requirement

For donation inquiries, please contact  
PossAbilities Marketing & Development Associate

Annie Skogen at 281-6116 ext. 201 or [askogen@possabilities.org](mailto:askogen@possabilities.org).

For large items please call in advance so we can make the drop-off as efficient for you as possible.