



News From...

HOME LIFE

Choices for all. Barriers for none.

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A tip of the hat from Dan

This year's much anticipated Sprout Film Festival was held March 11th at the Majestic Theater. This annual event, hosted by Home Life, showcases artistic and memorable films from around the world starring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

Unfortunately, March 11 was also the day that the World Health Organization identified COVID-19 as a global pandemic. We would have cancelled the film festival had it been scheduled even a day later. That evening and the next day, schools started

announcing closures and the Governor restricted groups of 250 or more. I am grateful we were able to have our event, it was well attended and the films were truly inspiring.

Since that day, we have been diligently working to protect our clients and staff as well as responding to directives from the State DD office. First off, we called a safety meeting with our administrative staff, managers and our nurse. We took stock of our Personal Protective Equipment, posted signs to wash hands and implemented training at each program. At the request of the State, we updated our Emergency Plans and submitted them for review. We've participated in several webinars with other providers and the State to make sure we have the latest information and understanding of the expectations. So far, two individuals in our Supported Living Program were tested for COVID-19 and both tests came back negative.

On a bright note, just prior to this pandemic we succeeded in filling all of our management positions (we typically struggle to find enough qualified candidates). As a result, we have a very competent team of managers working assiduously to keep programs staffed and safe. Our administrative team continues

to function efficiently even as we are working from home half-time. We take turns at the admin office so we are no more than 50% staffed at any time. LogMeIn has graciously given us 90 days of free services for GoToMeetings and GoToMyPC, allowing us to access our work computers from home computers and to plan and schedule online meetings.

And in other good news, Thayer Construction has worked steadily over these last few weeks on the third and final phase of the Teater House Remodel. The garage has been framed, dry walled and painted for the new office. Soon, they will be cutting concrete in laundry room for new plumbing.



Teater House garage, before and after

Our biggest fear, besides people catching the virus, has been staffing shortages. We've been chronically understaffed for the last year or two; this virus had the potential to be crippling. Fortunately, we've been able to divert staff from our Vocational and Supported Living Programs to help fill gaps in the group home staffing. Also, Collaborative Employment Innovations (CEI) has graciously loaned us three of their vocational staff.

This has been a strange time and a real test of our resilience and ability to adapt to change. I am proud of our managers, staff and clients for their efforts thus far during this pandemic. I look forward to the day when we can look back at these days and say, "Whoa, those were some crazy times!" -Dave Zaback



A huge thanks to the people & companies that donated facial coverings to our programs making and helping keep our staff and supported individuals safe!

- Bolts to Blocks
- The Corvallis Sewing Brigade
- Kim Joslin
- Kathy Hinz, Special Olympics

Our Programs During the Pandemic

Residential

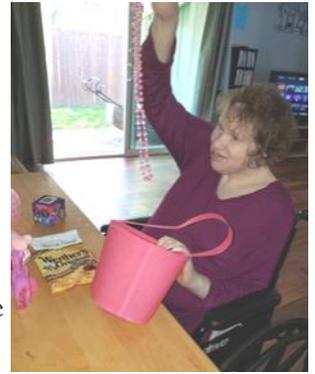


As anyone can imagine, life in the residential homes has changed dramatically in the past month due to this pandemic. The supported individuals are generally busy people. During the day everyone heads out in different directions to jobs, day programs, errands, and educational opportunities. In the evenings we gather for socializing, sports practice, and live entertainment. When the Stay at Home Orders came, all that came to a screeching halt. Thankfully Home Life employs an amazing group of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who imaginatively assist the individuals to adapt to life as we know it.

Creativity has reigned throughout the homes, crafts are being done, games are being played, and we are all thankful for the timing of Disney+ and it's comforting sing-alongs. Supported individuals and DSPs alike are learning more about technology:

they're finding new ways to stay in touch with friends and family, figuring out how to navigate remote learning, and even seeing their doctors remotely on telehealth calls.

This all takes time to learn, teach and implement, so of course our DSPs are working harder than ever. On top of more people in the house during the day, we've also seen a reduction of available staff due to complications of the pandemic and businesses being shut down. Thankfully both the Vocational and the Supported Living staff have offered their help to fill some of the open shifts. In this time of change, the supported individuals are also getting to know new faces and teaching new DSPs how to support them. It's been a difficult transition, but all the Homies are adapting, supported people and DSPs alike.



Supported Living

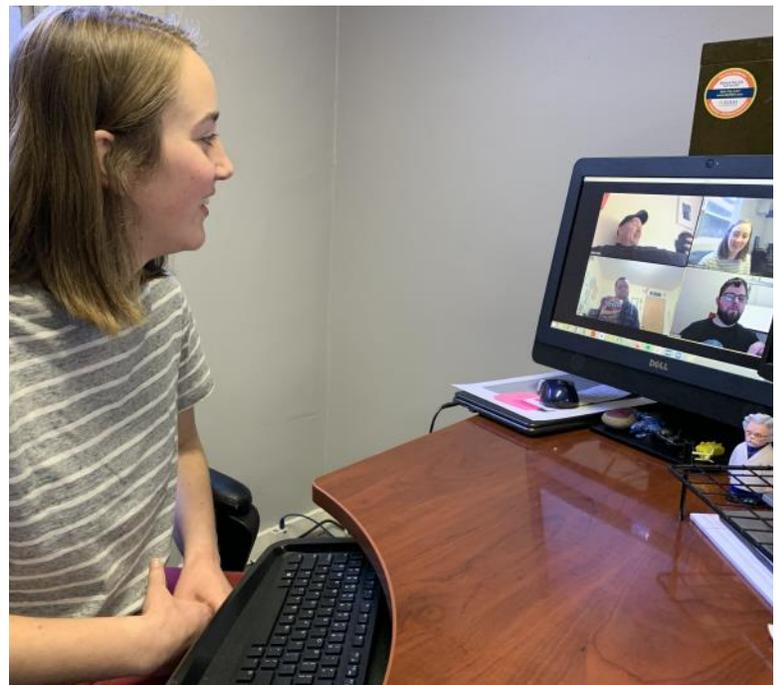
Supported Living during the COVID-19 pandemic has been a brand new experience for even our most seasoned staff! Each new day brings a different set of restrictions, rules, obligations and unknown expectations on where to go and how to proceed.

All of our staff have been trained on the pandemic, the signs and symptoms and how to proceed with ensuring that everyone we have living out in the community is safe and educated to the highest possible standard. Supports have shifted from direct care to indirect as we encourage people to stay home while staff run errands and pick up take-out food and coffee orders for them.



We've also gotten creative in providing social supports: reaching

out with regular video calls and phone check-ins, including our first online Coffee Social in mid-April; setting up a special



Facebook page, where supported individuals who cannot read can access photos and videos to help them stay connected and entertained; and parading in cars through the streets of Corvallis to visit the people we support from afar (complete with cheers and loud music!). Visit our new Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HLSupLiv.

Vocational Resources

Home Life's vocational program has been profoundly affected by the Coronavirus. We initially suspended our group Employment Path services in line with the school system as a precaution. We quickly saw that supported individuals in jobs in the community were being affected. Small and non-essential businesses closed their doors and some individuals couldn't risk being exposed while working and were given doctor's orders to stay home. We went from a bustling job coaching program supporting 24 individuals in various capacities in their jobs to six people still actively working.

The state has allowed vocational services to be done remotely, so we are doing some of our coaching check-ins, meetings and job development via phone. Our Job Developer, Darcy McCullough and Program Manager, Krista Garrison have cre-

ated a virtual learning platform through Google Classroom to continue teaching and learning with Employment Path. We just launched the remote Path program, and we're excited because many individuals "stuck at home" are joining. We are starting with one hour of vocationally-related, interactive learning four days per week, and people are grouped based on their learning styles and interests.



Our Vocational program was also awarded a grant from the state of \$31,000 based on our average funding. We are grateful to have this and to have a strong, supportive team to get through this trying time. We plan on fully reopening with all of our vocational services when the Executive Order is lifted.

Donor Corner

Donor Appreciation Picnic



In anticipation of Governor Brown relaxing some of the restrictions on gatherings by mid-summer, we are moving forward with planning our Donor Appreciation Picnic. Mark your calendars for Sunday, July 19th from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Rotary Shelter

at Willamette Park. This annual event, hosted by Home Life's Board of Directors, is an opportunity for us to thank you, our faithful donors, for all the ways you contribute to the work and mission of this organization. We hope to see you there!

You're Impact: The Holiday Appeal

Congratulations and copious amounts of gratitude are in order!! Sixty-two generous donors together raised \$16,000 for the work and mission of Home Life by responding to our Holiday Appeal. One of those 62 donors, a particularly generous anonymous donor, had agreed to match up to \$5,000 in new and increased donations at up to \$200 per donor. I'm delighted to announce that thanks to your incredible response to the appeal, and to the generosity of our Board of Directors who took us over the finish line, we succeeded in completing the match!!

These donations will help Home Life to fund the gap between what we receive from our state and federal contracts and what it actually costs to give our supported individuals the care they need and deserve. One of the roles that falls in this gap is the staffing we provide for activities. At Coho, for example, a staff

person dedicates 20 hours per week to supporting residents to participate in a variety of activities, including attending church services, art classes, meals out, date nights, family events, and Special Olympics events. She also assists the individuals in ensuring their exercise regimes are completed and supports them in continuing education opportunities.



This kind of social engagement is essential to our mission to assist people with I/DD to enjoy active, productive, and empowered lives. The salary and benefits this staff person receives for these 20 hours is roughly equivalent to the \$16,000 raised by the 62 donors to Home Life's Holiday Appeal. Congratulations to each and every one of you for making such an important impact in the lives of the men and women supported by Home Life.

More Ways to Help: Wish Lists

- Activities for the houses, including puzzles, group games, and craft supplies (Residential)
- Contributions to Sackett House's New Furniture Fund
- 3-4 iPads for Supported Living clients to stay connected to staff, friends, and family during the Stay at Home Order
- 2-3 new computers with cameras for Supported Living clients to conference and attend telemedicine appointments



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Remembering Jeff Wegner

04/19/1962—01/19/2019

Jeff lived at Mumford House, a group home with Home Life, for more than 30 years. He enjoyed working as part of the landscaping crew for Cornerstone Associates and was very active in Special Olympics. At Mumford, he built strong relationships, including a special connection to his best friend Brian. Jeff's family was very active in his life and encouraged him to always be the best he could be both at work and school. Jeff attended local public schools with many of his friends who later came to live in Home Life.

Jeff was a fan of OSU's different sports teams from basketball to football. He enjoyed watching the games and really enjoyed taking care of Reser Stadium as part of the Cornerstone landscaping crew. Jeff was a Special Olympics athlete, participating in track and field in the spring and bowling in the fall. During these events, he won several medals and encouraged his good friend Brian when he was also participating.

Jeff's close relationship with Brian stood the test of time. They were an inseparable duo enjoying comic conventions,

numerous movie outings, and just relaxing around the house with squirt guns, with which they targeted many Mumford staff. Jeff had a gentle soul and deep wisdom towards life. He passed on many lessons to those who knew him such as work hard, enjoy every moment, and help others. He is remembered for applying his life motto, "it's ok, it's alright," when any disturbance occurred to affect others or himself. His easy-going nature will be missed in this modern "hurry up and get things done" age.



Home Life assists people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to enjoy active, productive, and empowered lives.