



ODC OUTLOOK

OPEN DOOR CENTER

May-June 2023

Why Special Olympics?

Lately, you may have been reading the local paper or listening to the local radio when you learned about the “new” Special Olympics. Although the purpose of the Special Olympics hasn’t changed, it has grown. The North Dakota Special Olympics was founded in 1972 by Dr. Roger Kerns. Fifteen athletes participated in the International Games at Los Angeles. Today there are thousands of people who participate in local, regional, state, national and worldwide Special Olympics venue. This year a person from Valley City served as an athlete counselor and others participated as contestants while Cindy Schopper served as a staff member during the National Special Olympics located in Florida. This year several hundred will participate in the State games to be held at West Fargo High School. Many ask why this growth and why Special Olympics?

The reasons for Special Olympics stretch far beyond the ideas of sports participation and competition for those with disabilities. It provides physical fitness, improved self-esteem, the opportunity to feel success, and emphasizes ability while promoting societal inclusion. It also offers the opportunity to meet new friends and reacquaint with old friends.

Special Olympics is now a year around sports program. In the fall there is bowling and soccer. Winter finds such sports as basketball, skating, snow shoeing, downhill and cross country skiing. While spring offers Bocce Ball, swimming, volleyball and track and field contests. All these opportunities are aimed at personal growth and physical fitness.

The positive effects of participation in Special Olympics parallel those experienced by people without intellectual disabilities who are active in sports. Statistics from the National Office of Special Olympics indicates that almost half of all Special Olympic athletes in the US engage in physical activity or exercise for more than three hours per week in addition to their involvement in Special Olympics. This compares to only 24% of the general population.

These sport activities stress not only playing the game but also physical and intellectual skill development. In basketball there is team competition but also contests in dribbling, shooting, and passing the ball that contribute to coordination development. We all know that skating, snow shoeing and skiing provide great exercise and muscle synchronization. Bocce ball and many of the other competitions requires the thought process of placement of the ball and higher level thinking in order to be successful.

These sports activities encourage the participation of all ages and abilities to engage in more physical activity, socialization, increased learning while experiencing the thrill of victory. Special Olympics develops a “can do” attitude while promoting sportsmanship. However, do not discount the ability of these athletes because results at the Spring Games had a young lady running the 1500 meter run in 7:42 while a young man dead lifted 435 pounds. These are achievements that many of us would like to attain.

In recent years ND Special Olympics has added Unified Volleyball and Soccer. These events pair students with and without disabilities to play and socialize together. Results indicate a change in social-based attitudes that increase acceptance and inclusion of those with intellectual disabilities. It demonstrates that young leaders are more enlightened regarding the ability of those who have an intellectual disability while increasing the function in school, work, community activities and sports by those with and without a disability.

.....continued on page 3

**Open Door Center is a
non-profit corporation
serving
people with disabilities.**

Board of Directors

Bill Cook, President

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REDUCE ~ REUSE ~ RECYCLE



Excellence in serving people with disabilities by:

***Respecting dignity and rights**

***Providing opportunities for growth**

***Fostering independence**

*Open Door Center is an equal opportunity
provider, and employer.*

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Michelle Anderson, Staff Trainer
Ashley Tostenson

ISLA

Heather Muscha
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Program Directors

Matt Jensen, Children's Program
Tiffannie Justesen, ISLA & MSLA
Cindy Schopper, Work Activity

WE WANT YOUR CANS

Open Door Center is looking for donations of *pop cans* for our individuals to crush. Once crushed they are turned in to be recycled.

Our folks get paid to crush cans and look forward to the paychecks they receive.

Cans can be dropped off at the Day Activity Center (north of Pizza Corner).

OR

If you live in the Fargo area, you can take your cans to the MinnKota Recycling center and tell them you want to donate them to Open Door Center in Valley City. They send us a check quarterly.

Please help us,
won't you?



.....continued from page 1

Valley City High School has been a pioneer in the area of integrated sports and expands this opportunity every year. VCSU is involved with Special Olympics in various match ups again providing more socialization with opportunities to learn from university athletes.

Throughout its program, Special Olympics is constantly addressing the challenges faced by people with intellectual disabilities in our society. It is shifting the focus from disability to ability, from isolation to involvement by offering the highest quality Olympic-style sports training and competition. It seems clear that the positive effects of Special Olympics are universal for those with and without a disability in North Dakota and throughout the world.

*Mary Simonson, Executive Director
Open Door Center is an equal opportunity
provider and employer
(Mary's columns are written monthly for the
VC Times Record)*



Special Olympics



***Donations to HI Soaring
Eagle Ranch:***

- * Cynthia Bruce***
- * Litchville Community
Religious Events***
- * Pam and Delray Enger***

***In Memory Of Eunice Venstad
Bonnie & Michael Johnson***

***In Memory of Marlow Smith
Margaret Kensok***

***In Memory of Vanessa Wilson
Jim, Josie & Randy Prescott***

***In honor of Megan Bandaret
Hometown Church– Nazareth
Lutheran Church in
Cogswell, ND***

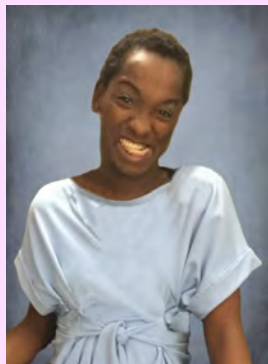
***The Open Door Center would
like to sincerely THANK YOU
for your donations.***

OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL

Vanessa E. Wilson

January 19, 1980—April 17, 2023

Beautifully written by Taylor and Kayla



Our loving Vanessa Ersella Wilson traded her wheels for wings to become our guardian angel on Monday, April 17, 2023, holding the hand of her second mom, Tanya at CHI Mercy Health in Valley City, ND.

Vanessa was born in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, on January 19, 1980, to George and Ionie (Hendricks) Wilson. She lived her childhood years there until around the age of six when Hurricane Hugo hit the Caribbean. Her father brought her to the Anne Carlson Center for Children for a life more suited to her health and happiness.

As hard as it was for George to leave his daughter, he sought out special caretakers to give her the best attention. It was there where she was introduced to her best friend and “mother”, Tanya. The Sabinash family took her in and started traditions that lasted a lifetime. V spent most holidays and special events with family along with various others who treated her as one of their own. She lived and attended school at the Anne Carlsen Center for Children for 15 years. At the age of twenty-one, she transitioned to the Open Door Center at Group Home Five in Valley City, ND. It was here that she enjoyed her work friends and housemates, specialty nights, baking, minivacations, and van rides. Vanessa had a big love for music and attended many concerts with various friends over the years. Her shopping habits didn't go unnoticed as she was very generous to others, always wanting to pick out a special gift.

As we all know, there were things that Vanessa couldn't do. She couldn't walk, or talk, many things others take for granted every day. When some people looked at her, that's what they saw – the things she couldn't do. Vanessa was persistent in showing the things she could do. She had a smile that could light up a room, a laugh that the whole room could hear, a squeeze or handhold that could show she cared, and a sign to show she understood. She also taught us how to be happy because she took joy in simple things – joy in seeing her friends and family, and joy in living life itself.

Vanessa reminded us that most of our problems are not really problems, and to be grateful for what we have. She taught us the gift of unconditional love; loving even when it's not easy, simply because you care. We believe that is the greatest triumph of any life; To love and to be loved. Her life wasn't easy, and it wasn't glamorous. V liked to add in her touch of glitz and glam wherever she could with her flawless complexion, beautiful smile, and bits of sassiness.

Vanessa was our rainbow. When you look up to see blue skies, remember that it is only because we have endured the storm that we are lucky enough to see a rainbow. Through the tough times, the adversity, and the challenges; she shone through with a special light. It's not fair that she shone brightly only for a short time. Yet we can be assured that like the rainbow, she was a blessing from above. May we never forget this beautiful gift, and honor her memory every time we look up to the sky, look past the clouds, and see the rainbow.

*Vanessa—everyone here at Open Door will remember you
always and miss you forever.*



MAY BIRTHDAYS

2-Kellie Schulz
 2-Tiffany Johnson
 2-Brandi Putnam
 3-Cynthia McFadgen
 4-Nick LeMier
 8-Chris Merkes
 8-Gene Bjerke
 10-Garrett Greenwood
 12-Cindy Schopper
 12-Theresa Rose
 13-Jessica Stack
 16-Lori Reimers
 17-Cindy Zahn
 17-Haylie Mullins
 22-Layne Nannenga
 24-Maureen Rueckert
 28-Kandice Novak
 29-Dennis Myers
 29-Nicole Wieser
 30-Lee Webster
 31-Colin Zawaira



MAY ANNIVERSARIES

41 Years

Mary Simonson-Executive Director

28 Years

Jenny Kriewald-ISLA

20 Years

Staci King-YAP
Jessica Stack-MSLA

19 Years

Diana Gehlhoff-Prairie Inn
Collette Jenson-ISLA

15 Years

Adam Maresh-ISLA

10 Years

Tiffannie Justesen-Program Director

9 Years

Brenda Olson-YAP

8 Years

Travis Donnelly-ICF
Jesse Juelfs-Lisbon

6 Years

Larry Duffy-Maintenance

4 Years

Cullen Engstrom-Prairie Inn
Karissa Yturralde-ISLA
Ryan Mathias-Thunderbird/Dakota
Seasoning

3 Years

Bonnie Kapaun-Ranch

2 Years

Dana Cihak-ICF, Cindy Zahn-ISLA
Jocelyn Goulet-ICF

1 Year

Adrian Grafig-ICF, Grace Scherr-YAP
Noah Haglund-MSLA

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

1-Marie DeLorme
3-Teana Rohde
4-Robin Borchert
4-Jocey Kriewald
5-Sherri Horsager
8-Karla Lyon
11-Zach Baumgartner
12-Erin Halland
12-Alexis Wilson
13-Janna Bitz
13-Diane Wagner
15-Emma Fiedler
17-Brenda Liebenow
18-Jackie Grant
18-Bella Grenz
19-Lindsay Simms-Jones
19-Ronnie Mulder
21-Aaron Cluchie
22-Pam Walsh
22-Dawn Larson Schock
24-Russell Conway
24-Jill Taylor
25-Sandra Tiede
26-Dan Johnson
27-Brenda Bjork
28-Missy Leroux
28-Kelly Braton
30-Kathy McGough



JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

42 Years
Julie LeMier-ISLA

31 Years
Matt Harrington-ICF, Alex Lanenga-ISLA

28 Years
Nicole Jones-YAP

26 Years
Deb Borg-Community

24 Years
Kelly Klein-ISLA

22 Years
Matt Jensen-Program Director

17 Years
Katie Sand-ICF

16 Years
Lee Hoff-ISLA

15 Years
Phillip Hill-MSLA, Brenda Liebenow-ICF

13 Years
Cliff Peterson-MSLA

11 Years
Marshall Pederson-ISLA

10 Years
Kandice Novak-ISLA

9 Years
Nancy Knutson-WAC

8 Years
Alexis Wilson-Resident Coordinator

6 Years
Randy Prescott-ICF

5 Years
John Haas-Ranch

4 Years
Sarah Howe-WAC, Bev Howe-Bookstore
Carol McIlvaine-Ranch, Liam Pierce-Lisbon

2 Years
Jocey Kriewald-ISLA
Brandi Anderson-Johnson-ISLA

1 Year
Lynn Wilson-ISLA, Russell Marker-ICF
David Brown-ICF, Madison Maley-ICF
Sara Blaschke-Lisbon

**34th Annual Valley City Special Olympics
& Dacotah Bank Golf Benefit**

**4 Person - 18 Hole Scramble
Friday, June 2nd, 2023
Country Club Golf Course**

**Sponsor A Hole & 4 Person Golf—\$400
Sponsor A Hole & 2 Person Golf—\$225
Single Golfer—\$85
Extra meal—\$18**



**Check-in: 9:00—9:45 am
Shotgun Start: 10:00 am
Supper following the tournament**

Please register by May 25, 2023

**For more information contact:
Mary Tangen at 701-840-3376
Email: thetwotangens@hotmail.com**

**Or Sheryl Solberg at 701-840-0902
Email: sheryl.l.solberg@gmail.com**

**Special Olympics Athlete Motto:
"Let me win, but if I can not win let me be
brave in the attempt."**



Great Opportunity to Support the Local Special Olympics Program

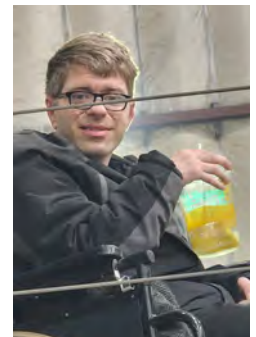
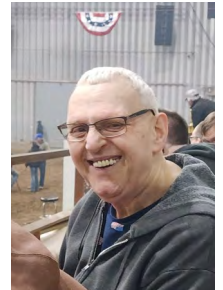
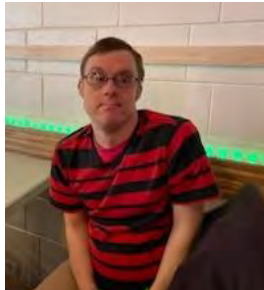
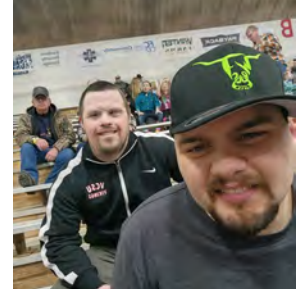
On June 2nd, Special Olympics Valley City will be hosting the 34th annual Special Olympics Valley City/Dacotah Bank Golf Benefit. Back in 1989, when Valley City Mayor, Dave Carlsrud was a member of our Area Special Olympics board he came up with the idea of having a golf tournament as a fundraiser for our program. He was able to secure Dacotah Bank (back then known as Farmers and Merchants Bank) as the major corporate sponsor. Valley City became the very first Special Olympics program in the state to ever use a golf benefit as a means of raising money. From day 1, the concept for the golf benefit has been a 4-person team best ball format. The money raised comes from the solicitation of area businesses for hole sponsorships. We also generate monies through individual golfers' entry fees. Most years, we fill our tournament which means we have 72 golfers on the course. The past couple of years, we have added a new feature which gives a "face" to our Special Olympics movement. It is called our "*Sponsor an Athlete*" portion of the Golf Benefit. This gives non-golfers and family and friends an opportunity to donate to the Valley City Special Olympics program. For a \$50 donation, we will put a picture of your favorite athlete out at the country club. Some athletes' pictures are out on the course and some are in the club house. Regardless of where the pictures are hanging it gives those people participating in the tournament a chance to *put a face* with our event. It gives us a chance to showcase the reason for this event-the athletes. This year we are looking to put 40 athletes' pictures on display.

Please consider helping us meet or surpass this goal. Simply fill out the form below designating which athlete you would like to sponsor, make a check for \$50 out to SOVC Sponsor an Athlete. Help make this year's SOVC/Dacotah Bank Golf Benefit a "Hole in Won" for our local program..... Thank you so much!!!!

<p>Area 8 Special Olympics-Valley City Sponsor an Athlete</p> <p>Athlete's Name: _____</p> <p>_____ OR We can choose an athlete for you</p> <p>I have enclosed my sponsorship of \$ _____</p> <p>_____ Signature</p>

2023 North Dakota Winter Show Fun

Despite the bad winter we had here in Valley City, a lot of people attended many of the NDWS activities. They went to the Tractor Pull, Pony Pull, Senior Dance, Ladies Luncheon and the Rodeo. They enjoyed all the smells, people watching and snacks that are a part of the NDWS.





Hi-Liner Special Olympics basketball team brought home the gold from the Special Olympics State Basketball tournament in Minot. In the first game they were victorious over Bismarck Thunder 40-6. In the semifinals the Hi-Liners won over Grand Forks 23-16 and in the Championship Game they beat the Belcourt Braves 37-27. This is the first Championship for the Hi-Liner Special Olympics basketball team.
CONGRATULATIONS!!

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Here are some summer safety tips to keep you and others safe while out and about this summer:

- Stay Hydrated – Drink enough liquids throughout the day as our bodies lose a lot of water through perspiration when it is hot outside.
- Protect Your Skin – Use sunscreen 30 minutes before heading out into the sun and every 2 hours or after swimming or sweating. Limit sun exposure during peak intensity times – 10 am through 4pm.
- Eye Safety – The sun's ultraviolet (UV) light can harm the eyes. Wear sunglasses year round when you are out in the sun. Sun damage to your eyes can occur any time of the year. Choose a shade that blocks 99-100 % of both UVA and UVB light.
- Know what plants mean trouble – Be able to identify plants such as poison oak, poison ivy or sumac. If these are touched, make sure to rinse off right away with soap and water for 5 minutes.
- Take bites seriously – If you develop hives after a sting or have dizziness, breathing trouble or swelling around the eyes or mouth, go to the hospital right away.

Of course there are other safety tips: wearing a helmet if on a bike, checking the weather before heading out for the day, wearing the right clothing and knowing the risks and signs of Heat Exhaustion or Heat Stroke.

HAVE A SAFE SUMMER!





Cards on a Snow Day

On yet another Snow Day here in Valley City Julie, Diane, Lynn & Pennie got together for some card playing. Here they are into a game of UNO.

Relaxing way to spend time while having to stay home!

VCPS Kindness, Respect, & Inclusion Day

On March 3rd, VC Public Schools paired with ND Special Olympics and welcomed 2 speakers to talk about diversity and individuals with Disabilities. Presenters were Erin Baumann and Ty Terry. Erin travels around ND speaking about ending the use of the "R" word and Ty is an educator in VC and focused on diversity.

Katie visited with them after the presentation and was happy to get her picture with them both.



SUMMER TIME FUN RECIPE FROM THUNDERBIRD RANCH/DAKOTA SEASONINGS GOURMET COOKBOOK

Triple Berry Salad

Ingredieints:

- 1 pkg Thunderbird Ranch Prairie Berry Dip Mix
- 12 oz. Cool Whip
- 32 oz. Vanilla Flavored Yogurt
- 1 small Cheesecake Instant Pudding Mix
- 1 small package Frozen Berry Mix (Raspberries, Blackberries, Boysenberries or Strawberries). Thaw for 15 minutes

Directions:

- Add Cool Whip and yogurt to a large bowl
- Sprinkle on pudding mix and Prairie Berry Dip Mix. Blend well.
- Fold in thawed berries
- Chill before serving
- Enjoy alone or with Thunderbird No Flour/No Foolin' Gluten Free Angel Food Cake!

Corner

Katie's



*As I see it from
where I sit!*

By Katie Sand

Hello Everyone!

Spring seems to have finally sprung! Did you know the word came from the Old English language that's related to the Germanic root meaning "to be able, to be strong, to have power". I think that fits with the season of Spring, with everything regrowing again. The month of May was named for the Greek goddess Maia, who was identified with the Roman era goddess of fertility, Bona Dea, whose festival was in May (per Wikipedia). That seems to also explain the regrowth of many organisms in the Spring. The more you know - right?! Aside from Mother's Day and Memorial Day, there's other fun national holidays in May. For example, I Love Reeses Day on May 18th and National Sunscreen Day on May 27th. Don't forget that this summer!!

Coming into June, did you know June wasn't always the 6th month of the year? In ancient Rome, June was the 4th month in a 10 month calendar and went by the name of Iuno. The name Iuno itself seemed to come from the Latin word iuventas, which means "youth" and is also related to words like juvenile and rejuvenate. June also has some interesting holidays such as National Candy Month on the 1st and National Strawberry Rhubarb Pie Day on the 9th. And in good ol' Valley City, Rally in the Valley is on the 17th. I can't wait for that!!

Until next time.KATIE

A BIG



**Margaret Deah, Madison Kimnitz
Misty Knight, Alex Robinson
and Stephanie Schafer**



COMING EVENTS

MAY:

14 - Mothers Day

29 - Memorial Day - *Center Closed*

JUNE:

14 - Flag Day

16 - 18 - Rally in the Valley - Downtown Valley City

18 - Fathers Day

21 - First Day of Summer

JULY:

4 - Independence Day - *Center Closed*

Have news???
Let Nancy know.
Your news is our
news!



CONGRATULATIONS



Direct Support Professionals
for completing their modules!

Full Time:

Sara Blaschke, Brandi Putnam
Ashley Oberlander

Part Time:

Zach Baumgartner
Jenna Lindgren and Adrian Grafing

ODC PICNIC **SAVE THE DATE**

Our annual picnic will be held on
Monday, August 21st this year
at the Dacotah Pavillion. More
info to follow at a later date.

SAVE THE DATE

OPEN DOOR CENTER
129 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072
701-845-1124

Address Label Here

Celebrating 63 Years

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
ODCVC.COM

Charitable Donation

Please consider us when making your charitable donation. Open Door Center is a non-profit organization which receives support from the North Dakota Department of Human Services. Although it is our main funding source, it is not enough to cover all the costs of our corporation. The money received will help provide continued support and assistance to those supported by Open Door Center. We are very appreciative for the support we do already receive. If you would please consider a financial contribution to help meet the extra needs of our children and adults with disabilities, please fill out this form and return it to Open Door Center, 129 3rd Ave. NE, Valley City, ND 58072.

ENCLOSED IS MY TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION:
I would like my contribution:

☐ \$ 50 ☐ \$250
☐ \$100 ☐ \$500
☐ \$150 ☐ \$Other

In memory of: _____
In honor of: _____
Other: _____

May we publish your name? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Your thoughtful gift will be acknowledged to the family indicated:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

DONATE

You may also donate on our
webpage: www.odcvc.com
Hit the red **DONATE** button
on the home page and choose
the amount you wish to
donate, hit the **NEXT** button
and follow instructions. The
Open Door Center would
really appreciate this donation.