



Soaring

Empowering Abilities. Nurturing Spirits. Caring for Life

Please Support Our Annual Fall Charity Walk!



Our annual “walk, run, roll” in September makes it a little easier to say goodbye to summer. This year, Made in the Shade takes place from 10 AM-Noon on Saturday, September 17th at Thomas Beach, Lake Calhoun. Together with eight similar organizations, we’ll raise awareness for the disability community. The Moss Piglets provide bluegrass music and a sing-along, and we provide free water, hamburgers, fruit, Kind Bars, cookies and more. This is a family-friendly event that combines fun, fitness, and fellowship and is a great opportunity to mingle with our clients, their families, our Board, and our staff. If you prefer not to walk, bring a lawn chair and enjoy the music and the great views of the lake. You can be part of the cheering section at the finish line if you’d like!

All of the money raised by Wingspan benefits our 24 group homes in the greater Twin Cities as well as our In Home programs. You can make a donation of any size to a specific home or team, and we can accept online donations through our website at www.wingspanlife.org. Or, you can mail a check to Wingspan, 30 East Plato Boulevard, St. Paul, MN 55107 using the donation envelope enclosed (it includes a space for credit card information). We can even take contributions by phone at 651.888.3116. Each of our group homes determines its most important need—it may be new furniture, appliances, something for the garden or patio, funds for camp or for an event or outing.

If you would like to participate in the walk, your \$25 registration fee includes a free t-shirt. Quantities are limited and range from 2T to 4XL. We’ll send you a registration and waiver form to sign. You can also donate on arrival—but you’ll want us to reserve your shirt ahead of time.

Sponsorship levels range from \$250-\$5,000 and offer great marketing exposure. You can sponsor as a family, a group or a business...all for a great cause! For more information contact Darolyn Gray, Development Officer at 651.888.3112 or email dgray@wingspanlife.org. Thank you for supporting our good work!



choice * independence * dignity * fellowship

Record Breaking Success Thanks to Generous Hearts!



We are overwhelmingly delighted and thankful to announce that our 2016 gala, “Coloring A New Chapter,” was indeed one for the record books with gross revenue of \$102,000, including \$38,000 in Fund-A-Need contributions to support our transportation program. We appreciate the generosity of our amazing donors who support our mission and share our commitment to providing a level of love, care, person-centered support, and quality of life enhancement that exceeds just merely meeting basic needs for people with developmental and other disabilities. Together, we can make a difference.

Thank you to our sponsors—especially to Associated Bank, Associated Financial Group and Ahmann Martin for shared participation in the \$3,500 Emerald sponsorship and to Geritom Medical for their \$2,500 Platinum sponsorship. We thank our guests (nearly 300 in attendance this year), our auction donors, Board, staff, and volunteers for making this event special in so many ways. We also thank the Tuma family for sharing their story in our video, Kevin Kling and Dan Chouinard, Rachael Kroog, Shannon Pierce and the crew from StageTime Productions, and AV For You for all of their support.

Save Friday, May 19th for Power of Love 2017! We’ll be going back to the Marriott Northwest for another great event.

WOW—A Brand New Van!

Enormous gratitude goes out to Donna James who gifted our first-ever brand new handicap accessible van for Thomas House in loving memory of her husband, Bob. We are so honored to have The Bob Mobile as a precious and desperately needed gift.



Management Team Updates

Wingspan suffered two devastating staff losses this year—Program Directors Jeannie Rogers and Philip Varchenko—making our hearts doubly heavy.

Program Director Jeannie Rogers passed away in April. She was a deeply loved and treasured member of our Wingspan family (in fact, our longest serving employee), dedicated to her work at Wingspan for more than 40 years. Jeannie was an amazing woman. She was creative, filled with grace, had an incredibly wry sense of humor, was very smart, immensely kind and loving and touched the lives of so many people who lived and worked at St. Ann's/Wingspan. Among her many gifts, Jeannie was also an artist. Jeannie was married to Jim Rogers; they have 3 children, Frank, Margaret and Anne as well as 2 grand children, Esther and Margot. She was completely, and always, devoted to her family. She was Program Director Frank Merrill's sister and Program Director Maureen Merrill's sister-in-law.



Program Director Philip Varchenko passed away in July after a courageous 2-year battle against an aggressive cancer. We are grateful for the friends, family and staff who maintained a steady vigil in his hospital room, and we know that the love and prayers were of great comfort during this difficult, and often painful, phase of his journey. Philip truly lived a life of dedicated service, and his hallmark was his selfless ability to help, to console, to guide and to lift others up. Phillip originally came to the US from Russia, and Wingspan has been his extended family for some 25 years. He enjoyed many styles of music, was well-read, industrious, intelligent, tenacious, kind-hearted, compassionate and, like Jeannie, built an ever-widening circle of friends. Along with Philip's Wingspan family, his celebration of life service was attended by his mother, Sveta, and his brother, Dima.



The leadership provided by Jeannie and Philip has been an integral part of our growth and our success. Equally as important, their friendship provided each of us with treasured memories to comfort us during our time of great grief. We have no words to illustrate how much they will be missed and how great these losses are to all of us.

Are You A Thrivent Member?

If so, don't forget that Thrivent members can allocate Thrivent funds directly to Wingspan. And, through Thrivent Action Teams, each Thrivent member is allocated two Visa gift cards per year, each worth \$250. These funds can be used to help pay for fundraiser events, food for a staff appreciation, a special activity for residents, or any event that creates community or awareness. Wingspan would be a great choice! Talk to your rep today.

Partners in Pursuit—A Wonderful Collaboration

Wingspan was 1 of 3 local organizations (along with The Arc and Living Well) to be selected for a special collaborative opportunity with The Center—an organization in Houston, TX that serves people with disabilities. While biking across the country to raise funds to enhance their campus, learn best practices, and raise awareness for people with I/DD, their Pursuit Ride team engaged us in a learning and celebration event at Surly's Brewing Co. on July 9th which included an outstanding performance by Glee Club. Executive Director Therese Davis and other staff, Board members, and Wingspan families attended. There was also a tour of our Demont House. Tim G. from Oliver House was our designated Ambassador and charmed everyone with his jokes about life at Wingspan. David Baldwin, Pursuit Team Captain and Board member for The Center, sent a glowing letter of thanks expressing how impressed they all were with Wingspan's team and with Glee Club.



Executive Director's Corner

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In my new role as Executive Director, I have never been more grateful for the skills, dedication and hard work of our staff. Several years ago, our Board and Management Team further defined our mission and created a set of core values that would direct our work. Those values include Fellowship, Integrity, Respect, Choice, Growth and Learning. Although our values have become an integral part of our philosophy of service, and are present in our training and daily working life, we have set even more specific goals to define and plan for improved customer service. As pioneers of Person Centered Supports, we are always thinking of ways to improve. We realize that excellent customer service is dependent upon a well-trained work force. Recently we renewed our commitment to modeling and living our core values with intention, and we'll focus on a specific value each month. For July, we chose Fellowship: "A deep commitment to belonging, connection and long term relationships." We've had many recent fellowship opportunities: the Gala, the Magnolia Ball and our Open House. Our Glee Club is another shining example, along with our peer support groups and special activities such as softball in summer and bowling in the Fall. We've started a movie night, and are brainstorming all kinds of fun things you will hear about. We are going to increase opportunities to engage with each other, with our clients and their families, and with our donors and volunteers. We want to get to know you better, and we want you to learn more about the work we are so very proud of. We wish all of you a safe and joyful summer, and we'll look forward to interacting with you as often as we can!



Therese Davis

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