

# TRANSITIONS NEWS



**Community**  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CLINTON • EATON • INGHAM

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# TEAM FUNDRAISING EVENT

By Lisa Mack

Being a good sport paid off for a Life Enrichment Team (LET) fundraising event. Being that April is Autism Awareness Month, the timing and teamwork displayed for this special fundraiser was perfect.

An awesome cookie sale raised about \$120! The team is using the money to buy a tuning bowl and other sensory items to help the entire group, and in particular a man with greater needs due to his autism. The yoga instructor where he attends class uses a tuning bowl that he really responds to. He returns from class feeling very relaxed.

Cookies were baked and donated by Conni Artin and sold with the help of a promise of Shane Simon working in a tutu, if the goal was reached. The cookies sold rapidly as not only were they delicious, but the promise of seeing Shane in a tutu provided a lot of motivation!



Thanks to all for helping with this fundraising event.



# Martin Luther King Jr. – My Favorite Civil Rights Leader Of All Time

By: Simone T.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a man who was a dreamer, doer and believer. He was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. His father was a minister in Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. Martin Luther King Jr. was a very religious person all of his life and days through his time in the Civil Rights Movement.

The very important laws that Martin Luther King Jr. worked out was the Civil Rights Laws. He really fought and got President Lyndon B. Johnson to sign the Civil Rights Act law in 1964. By 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. had to work on something big to get President Lyndon B. Johnson to pass the Voting Rights Law of 1965. The big thing that he put together was the march in Selma, Alabama.

I went to see the movie Selma in February of 2015 and it showed and talked about when Martin Luther King Jr. was going through his times of prime during 1964-1965 eras. The biggest thing that I learned from the movie Selma is that Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to make our world better for the future.

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## HOLT HUMMINGBIRDS AKTION CLUB

Members had an opportunity to attend a Bowl-A-Thon sponsored by the Jackson Aktion Club on April 18th. They raised money to attend this special event by fundraising. A Pop Can drive was held and donations were collected from staff, group homes, families, and the Lansing Kiwanis club. The Holt Hummingbirds Aktion Club raised enough money to cover all of the costs for its members to attend. Meeting and bowling with Aktion Club members from all around the state, having pizza for lunch and a t-shirt to commemorate the day! Everyone had a great time!

## What's Happening at Transitions Leslie

By Carol Carpenter



Valentine's Day Party was a success!

Dancing to the oldies, eating pizza, and playing "Name that TV theme song" were some of the favorite activities at the party. "Seeing our old friends from T-Mason" was a sentiment expressed by everyone.

### *Spotlight on.....*

Scott, one of our favorite CATA drivers

Q. What is your favorite part of your job?

A. The people who ride the bus

Q. How long have you worked as a CATA driver?

A. Three years

Q. What job did you have before?

A. Delivering bread

Q. What is the most exciting thing you have ever done?

A. Jumped out of an airplane.....I used to be 6'4"!!!!!!

Q. What would you do if you weren't driving a CATA bus?

A. Be a beach bum!

### Inclusions coming to Transitions Leslie!

In April, community outings will be offered at T-Leslie by using staff vehicles for small groups and CATA rural for larger groups. The news brought excitement and many ideas about where the group would like to go: the mall, movies, McDonald's, library, park, A&W and the zoo! All were in favor of joining other Transitions Satellites at their outings. Some of the group expressed their concerns about some of the outings and they were assured that they could choose the trips they liked or stay at Transitions Leslie and do the activities that they like instead. Whether going out in the community or staying at the T-leslie site, new activities to match everyone's interest are the menu for Spring!

# The Importance of Teamwork

**By: Meaghan Fortsch, Transitions North Student Intern**

Coach! “When are we going to have our first game?” The daily question heard throughout the Transitions North halls from early November to late February. Basketball season was in full swing and the T. North Titans were excited to embark on the first year of the CMH Transitions Basketball League.

Travis R. Neller is a Developmental Disabilities Specialist at Transitions North as well as head coach of the T. North Titan basketball team. This season was Travis’s second year coaching the team and he also played an important role in collaborating with other Transitions Programs to the start up of the official CMH Transitions Basketball League. The League consisted of four teams from Transitions Programs around the Tri-County area; the Titans of Transitions North, the Charlotte Globetrotters, the Twisters of Transitions Central and the Mason Bulldogs.

With the excitement of a new basketball league, the Titans started preparation for the season in early November with weekly practices at a local church that was kind enough to allow the team to use their gym for free. After several weeks of rigorous practice and team building activities the roster was trimmed down to twelve dedicated players and a team manager. The team worked hard through the long practices and the harsh winter months in anticipation of their first game.

After many months of practice the time had finally come, it was Wednesday February 11, 2015 and the Titan’s were prepared for their first matchup against the Mason Bulldogs. The players were loaded with excitement as the moment they were all waiting for had finally arrived. As the starting lineup took the floor, the team bench and crowd exploded with excitement cheering on their team in hopes of a victory. The whistle blew and the game began and finally months of hard work, dedication and practice paid off. Coach Neller and his team started strong and fought hard until the end but were beat out by the Bulldogs. The Titans were disappointed with their loss but maintained an incredible sense of team pride. Players were able to continue encouraging, supporting and most importantly having fun with their teammates throughout the remainder of the season.

The games came and went quickly and the Titans would experience a winless season. But we all know March would not be complete without a little madness, so an all day “Final Four” tournament was hosted on March 25, 2015 at the South Precinct Gym to crown the first ever champion of the Transitions Basketball League. North and Central were the first two teams to play in the tournament followed by Charlotte and Mason. After two hard fought games, Central and Charlotte worked their way into the playoff game and matched up for the championship. Central came out on top and were awarded the trophy as champions of the CMH Transitions Basketball League.

The Titans ended their season with a total of three season losses and a loss in the tournament but to this group of people the importance of a team was much more significant than a trophy. It was amazing to see the teams support and resilience even after experiencing loss. The amount of courage and teamwork shown by these twelve individuals was remarkable and truly inspiring. The importance of a team is not how many games are won, it’s about the bonds created and lessons learned along the way. “I can honestly say coaching the team this year was a rewarding experience and the team helped me to become a better coach,” said Coach Neller following the season’s end.

The first Transitions Basketball League was a success and all four teams demonstrated the impact a sport has on an individual and community. Teaching the importance of team work has a longer lasting impact on an individual than winning a game. A famous quote by Vince Lombardi says, "Individual commitment to a group effort--that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, and a civilization work."

The T. North basketball team and Coach Neller would like to give thanks to the strong support system including assistant coaches, Jeff Hibbs and Meaghan Fortsch, Andrae Webb our traveling referee and Pamm McDaniel, the team's General Manager. A big shout-out is also given to the Titans large fan base who attended all of the games throughout the season. The CMH Transitions Basketball League is encouraging an addition of more teams in next year's season to enhance competition and further the impact of team work throughout the Transitions Programs.

## For The Love of Basketball

By Kristy Hawkins

Swoosh goes the  
ball

Always rockin'  
the score

We always have  
fun

And love the  
crowd when  
they roar!

We love the  
sweet game

More than you  
could

Possibly know because

When it comes to sweet

Victory we steal the whole

Show!!

It's the sound of the crowd and hearing them roar that makes us all winners returning for more! So have a great time and take it all in, it's about the love of the game, not who will win!



## The Independence Movement Spreads in St. Johns

Independence is the name of the game at Transitions St. Johns! And while full community independence is hoped for, planned for and expected for some, it is not quite as easy, and may never become a reality, for others. But remember! Everything can be measured in degrees and just like the temperature-independence can be measured in degrees too! So it is, at TSJ that independence is being measured individually-in terms of each person's abilities in a person-centered way.

While some people served at TSJ are venturing off to both volunteer and recreational activities completely independently-others are finding their own level of independence by carrying their own money for the first time, or by making their first calls to Clinton Transit to schedule or cancel rides. Others are playing a bigger role in their daily routines by checking on their schedules and bus rides and reminding staff of planned – and unplanned, changes to their daily schedules. Self advocacy has increased as well, as a result of their increased self confidence. People are taking leadership roles and acting as mentors to their peers.

People are watching their peers step out into the world of independence and they want to take part too-to whatever degree possible! They are asking to try things they've never tried before and taking greater personal responsibility for their daily activities! It has been truly amazing to watch the personal growth which has taken place in just about everyone served at T-SJ during the past few months. I can't wait to see what happens next!!

Submitted by:

Michelle Sheren  
Transitions St. Johns

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### Fresh Starts

By Erin M. Parcell

Here at Transitions South/West we are excited to welcome Lisa Marshall to our team as of April 27. She brings a wealth of experience and energy to our team and we are so glad to have her. We are also looking forward to welcoming seven new people into our program that are moving from Transitions South to start a new adventure. We are excited to grow together as a new team and see what is in store for this amazing program. Please feel free to stop by anytime and visit!

# Fun lessons learned

*Lanya Aldrich – Transitions Grand Ledge*

The cold winter months are close to being a memory and here at Transitions Grand Ledge we are anticipating another year of traveling to places in our beautiful state to have fun and learn new things.

Last year we went to many fun and educational places, I would like to quiz you about 4 places we went to, to see if you know some of the things that we have learned.

1. How many steps are there to get to the top of Little Sable Point Light house?
  - A. 73
  - B. 139
  - C. 126
2. Was it originally named Petite Point Au Sable Light house?
  - True
  - False
3. Is there a town called Singapore buried beneath the sands of the Lake Michigan shoreline?
  - True
  - False
4. Silver Lake sand dunes are how many acres of moving sand?
  - A. 3200
  - B. 1865
  - C. 2000
5. What is the most popular color of tulip?
  - A. Yellow
  - B. Red
6. How many tulips are planted in Holland MI?
  - A. 6 million
  - B. 3000

Answers:

1. B. and we all climbed them to the top , The view was wonderful
2. True – built in 1874 .The name was changed in 1910. Is listed by the national park service as Little point sable light
3. True – it was a lumbering town founded in 1836, supplied lumber to Chicago and Holland after fires swept through them. Was a busy town until 1870's when supply of lumber was exhausted and people left. Because of deforesting the buildings that were not moved became buried in the sand.
4. Nearly 2000, said to be the largest living dunes found along Lake MI.
5. B. Red
6. A. 6 million –They are planted in private fields, city parks and other gardens through-out town



# My Time at Transitions - Charlotte

By Mary Betterly, CST

As a sub staff I was asked to do a temporary assignment at Transitions – Charlotte and over the last seven months we have been through many experiences and changes.

Over the holidays we learned about “Paying It Forward” in many ways and what it meant. We adopted a family who was struggling and donated funds to purchase the things they needed to enjoy a happy holiday. We’ve found that there are also lots of other very nice and kind people who just want to help and give.

Transitions – Charlotte has been working really hard for almost two years now to raise money for an overnight trip to Mackinaw Island and when it came time to purchase supplies for one of our many fundraisers meals a man in line behind us offered to pay our entire bill. We soon learned that this very generous man was Fred Mendoza, Jr., owner of the King of the Grill BBQ Restaurant on Grand River Avenue in Lansing. We **STRONGLY** encourage you to stop by his restaurant for some great food and don’t forget to thank him for what he has done to support the people we serve. We have found that he is only one of many generous people willing to give from their hearts.

In the past 6 months we have also had two different Charlotte community members pick up the tab for two different lunch group outings. We now spend a lot of time talking about “Paying It Forward” and that the generosity always seems to come back around!

In December 2014 the Transitions – South/West pilot was started at the Galewood building which allowed those traveling into Holt everyday for services to receive services in their own county and closer to home. A slow transition was made for the first eight people starting at T-S/W and they are now looking forward to meeting more new friends who will also be transitioning into the new space over the next many months.

Transitions – Charlotte had been located in the Galewood building since July 2013 and just before the holidays we learned that we had to make a big move. Through no fault of our own we had to quickly find a building and relocate the program. No one really knew what was going to happen but we all pulled together and our motto became “Moving On and Moving Up”. We all rallied behind the move and created the expectation that we were going to make our new space even better than the last one. We lived out of boxes for a while but on February 2, 2015, we began providing services in our new building at 1699 Lansing Road, Charlotte. We are really enjoying the new building as it allows us a much more fluid space to have many things happening at one time which allows multiple choices for folks on a daily basis.

We have now settled into the new building and are getting ready to show it off. MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!! Our OPEN HOUSE is scheduled for Friday, May 8, 2015. From 11a-2pm we would like the other Transitions programs to join us for cake, refreshments and tours of our new building. From 5pm-8pm we will be having a hot dog cook out, music, games and tours for the people we serve, their family members and friends, community members and potential future participants. We hope to see everyone here and hope that you enjoy our new building as much as we do.

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## **Wunderbar!**

By Erin M. Parcell and John Vasquez

In March, the International Food Group that was thought of and developed by John Vasquez of Grand Ledge, celebrated its one year anniversary in March by enjoying a family style meal at the Bavarian Inn in Frankenmuth. The purpose of the group, John has explained is to "help people try new things." As the group's organizer, John has been responsible for laying down the challenge of the day, supplying and collecting feedback sheets, and helping to brainstorm the next place to go. When talking with John he has shared that he feels that the group has gone well and that it has helped him to be a better leader. He shared with great pride that he felt amazing when the whole group applauded him and thanked him to developing the group at the year celebration. The group has now decided to add an educational component and will be meeting ahead of time to talk about the culture attached to the food that they will be enjoying. John says that he looks forward to what the next year will bring.