

# Transitions News!



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## MEANINGFUL TIME SPENT WITH FOUR LEGGED FRIENDS

By Michelle Sheren  
Transitions St. Johns

For twelve weeks during the late Summer and Fall, 6 participants attending Transitions St. Johns took part in an equine therapy group directed by Inger Lanese - Certified EAGALA Equine Specialist. Sessions took place at Inger's farm in Eagle and lots of magical moments took place during those weekly visits with Sam, Phoebe, and Scarlett. Participants (several of whom had ridden horses in the past) gained self confidence, learned how to calmly handle the horses, worked as a team and also acquired grooming and other skills such as putting on a harness.

One particularly special session involved guiding the horses and getting them to walk over a pole on the ground without a harness-using only words and gestures. Another involved walking the horse with the lead rope and gets it to "kick" the ball into a small area. This was a challenge and it was fascinating to watch as each person's personality, previous learning experiences and teaching from Inger, came together to influence their actions. Five of six participants were successful on that day.



As an observer of this group and as someone who is not particularly comfortable around horses, I was truly impressed by the skill level of the individuals involved, and the ease and comfort with which they interacted with the horses. One of the participants, who is generally quite shy, and interacts with her peers on a limited basis, was especially impressive. During each visit she would leave the van and go directly to the horses and begin to interact with them. She was also, often the first to offer to try learned skills. Quite a feat for her!

Inger was a patient and understanding instructor and we appreciate her willingness to conduct these sessions with the group. Most of all we miss visiting Sam, Phoebe and Scarlett each week and are hopeful that in the Spring we can return to the farm to see them sometime.

## I HEAR THE TRAIN A COMIN'....

By Dorothy Archambeau  
Transitions Grand Ledge

Transitions Grand Ledge has a new favorite hobby... Karaoke! The "imagine this church" in Grand Ledge has graciously opened their doors to a large group of people from Transitions Grand Ledge, and we have been fortunate enough to have a volunteer bring in his karaoke equipment and work every Thursday! Jim Cooper, who retired from General Motors two years ago, spends several hours unloading and loading up his equipment, and helping everyone pick out their songs and sing. He has approximately 40,000 songs on file!

Everyone has a favorite song they like to sing each week. According to Jim, love songs are usually at the top of this list. Some of our favorites are: Folsom Prison Blues, Amazing Grace, In the Garden, Elvira, I've been Working on the Railroad and Take Me Out to the Ballgame.



Jim has been very busy lately! He and our very own Lisa Lake were married the weekend after Thanksgiving. He recently moved from Durand to Potterville, and is busy fixing up a house that they recently purchased. Jim has been doing karaoke since 1997, and likes it because anyone that can hum can sing. He enjoys watching others enjoy themselves, and finds satisfaction in helping people in general.

## R. SCOTT SMITH WHAT A VOLUNTEER!!!

Submitted by Susan Mahoney and R. Scott Smith  
Transitions North

Does this person look familiar to you? He is someone who is regularly volunteering his time and talents in his community.

Scott recently began attending Transitions North. As we learned more about him, he began to share his

volunteer experiences. Together, we talked about sharing them with the readers of the Transitions Newsletter.

Scott is and has been an usher for the Free United Methodist Church in Williamston for quite a few years.

Scott helps out every year at the Jubilee Festival in Williamston, popping and serving popcorn.

Scott is active in politics and has been an Honorary Campaign Manager for a local congressman.

Scott cares for his pet, helps around the house and is wonderful with his nephews.

Scott was a bell ringer for the Salvation Army for the first time this year. He was very excited about this and states he would like to do it again next year.



Scott is certainly an example of a generous giver, who shares his time freely to make things happen in his community!!!

## A HOWLING SUCCESS

By Lisa Mack  
Transitions South



The annual Halloween bash at Transitions South is becoming "the" party of the year. This year, thanks in large part to the generosity exhibited by friends and family of Transitions South participants, the party was better than ever! Costumes were judged

and awarded prizes for the three best disguises. A really lovely crop of pumpkins appeared at our doorstep to assist with the Pumpkin contest, in which each team room decorates a pumpkin. This event has become more creative each year, however the Senior team repeated their reign as champs and were awarded 1st place again this year. Gift cards were awarded to the best three Pumpkins, again as part of our generous friend's donation.



Donuts, cider and other delicious treats were consumed; dancing with music by DJ MusMus was keeping the place hoppin'.

## TRANSITIONS LOUNGES LEARNING AND FUN FOR ALL

By Susan Mahoney  
Transitions North

In early fall, the Transitions North professional staff began working on ideas to improve our use of some under-utilized areas of the T-North building. They worked on identifying rooms that had empty time available and on identifying types of activities that consumers could enjoy and participate in during their program time. 7 areas of the building were identified and 7 activities were chosen for development. The staff decided to call these areas Lounges and work began on developing curriculum, decorating and purchasing activity items.

As of November, 5 of the lounges are open for business, with two still under construction. A schedule has been developed to "reserve" the lounges for specific teams or groups, with other time left open for short term use. The focus has been on making areas more comfortable and attractive, with activities and plans for using them readily available. The activities and lounges are available to all consumers and staff is using them for individual and group activities.

The lounges and some of the activities include:

Music Lounge--Musical instruments, music CD's, CD player, resource books of music activities. Located in a former shredding/counseling room.

Game Lounge--Lounge chairs, game tables and a variety of board games. Located in the former workshop relaxation room.

Exercise Lounge--Exercise videos, wall mounted TV, exercise equipment and room for movement. Located in and shared with the Drop In Center.

Sensory Lounge--Comfortable seating, sensory activities, relaxing music. Located in Room 113.

Library Lounge--Comfortable seating, magazines, books, puzzles, computer and the daily newspaper. Located in and shared with the workshop office area.

It has been very enjoyable developing the areas and watching the consumers use them. Still under development is an Art Lounge in Room 130, with a wall mounted easel and art supplies. Opening in the spring will be the Outdoor lounge, located in our perennial garden area in the back of the building.

Please stop by and see our new activity options!!

TRANSITIONS  
2011 - 2012 Program Closing Schedule

Winter Holiday Break.....Friday, December 23, 2011  
through Monday, January 2, 2012

Transitions Programs & Dean Transportation resume services Tuesday, January 3, 2012

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Martin Luther King Day.....Monday, January 16, 2012

Presidents' Day.....Monday, February 20, 2012

Inservice Day.....Friday, March 2, 2012

Inservice Day.....Friday, April 27, 2012

Memorial Day.....Monday, May 28, 2012

Independence Day.....Wednesday, July 4, 2012

Labor Day.....Monday, September 3, 2012

Inservice Day.....Friday, September 14, 2012

Inservice Day.....Friday, October 26, 2012

Veterans' Day.....Monday, November 12, 2012

Thanksgiving.....Thursday, November 22, 2012

Day After Thanksgiving.....Friday, November 23, 2012

Winter Holiday Break.....Monday, December 24, 2012  
through Tuesday, January 1, 2013

Transitions Programs & Dean Transportation resume services Wednesday, January 2, 2013

Dear Consumers, Parents, Guardians and Residential Providers:

This is a reminder to you of the procedure to be followed in the event day programs need to close either totally or partially due to inclement weather.

Total Closing: In the event of severe weather conditions, all Transitions programs will close. There will be announcements on local radio stations that approximates the following: “CSDD day programs are closed for the day.” Given this notice, no one, without exception is to be transported to program.

Partial Closing: There are different possibilities whereby the program will be open to people living only in specific geographic areas depending upon weather conditions. In these instances, again, listen to the radio for school closings. If the local district in which you reside is closed, you will automatically know that Dean Transportation will not operate in that district as well. If you or your home transport directly, we are asking that you follow the school district’s lead and not transport. Should you question whether you should transport or not on any given day, please consult your day program coordinator.

Under partial program closings it is important to note that if the following school districts close, the corresponding CSDD program will close as well:

<u>School District</u>	<u>CSDD Program</u>
Lansing	Transitions North & Transitions Central
Holt	Transitions South
Mason	Transitions Mason
Charlotte	Transitions Charlotte
St. Johns	Transitions St. Johns
Grand Ledge/Waverly	Transitions Grand Ledge

CATA/Spectran/CATA Rural/Eatran/Clinton Transit System Riders: When there is a total or partial program closing, carriers will be notified not to provide transportation to specified day programs.

If you need further clarification, please feel free to call your program coordinator:

Susan Mahoney (517)323-9558 for Transitions North  
Deb Voss (517)346-9603 for Transitions Central and St. Johns  
Lisa Mack (517)694-5098 ext.2069 for Transitions South, Mason, Charlotte & Grand Ledge

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Deb Voss  
Program Supervisor CSDD: Transitions and Life Consultation