

Homes with Heart



NEWSLETTER OF MOUNT OLIVET ROLLING ACRES
Offering care and services for people with intellectual and other disabilities

FALL 2020

VIRTUAL ESTATE PLANNING: The Greatest Gift You Can Give Your Loved Ones!



Learn About Wills
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STUART BEAR

Wednesday, November 18
10:00–11:30 A.M.

A well-thought-out estate plan ensures that your wishes are followed. You can also perpetuate your values by leaving a legacy for organizations important to you.

Sign up for this Zoom meeting by contacting Tyler at thouser@mtolivethomes.org or 612.821.3151 by November 16.

The VocalEssence Christmas Concert
has been cancelled for 2020.
We look forward to the 2021 concert!

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Daniel, Hal & Jill Weldin

Finding New Ways To Be Together

COVID-19 costs everyone something. For some the cost is being uncomfortable behind a mask. For others, the cost is not being able to visit loved ones in assisted living and residential care settings. Still others face the ultimate loss of a loved one or family member. Truth be told, we all have been challenged due to living in this time of a global pandemic with very real, local losses. It is this kind of challenge that causes our human spirits to rise in the moment, to both flex and get creative in new ways, to stay close to the ones we love, and to hang on to hope for a better time to come, hopefully very soon.

Our son Daniel is fortunate to live in the Edina house of Mount Olivet Rolling Acres (MORA), which is only a few minutes from where we, his parents, live. In the pre-COVID-19 world we would have Daniel over to our home for a family meal every Wednesday night, and he would join our Sunday morning routine of church, going for a walk, helping with grocery shopping, and connecting with family. However, in the early days of this pandemic, we could only talk with Daniel through the window or door at his house. We saw the pain and confusion in his eyes as Daniel tried to adapt to the limitation of physical hugs and touch and a whole different life routine. COVID-19 costs everyone—maybe especially the ones we love who cannot understand all the changes of the last several months.

Finding New Ways To Be Together, continued on page 3



Letter from the President

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: . . . a time to weep and a time to laugh . . . a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing . . . a time to tear and a time to mend. . .” (Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8).

As we move from summer into fall, and with winter looming, I am brought to these words: “There is a time for everything.” This is an important reminder to me as our amazing

staff members continue to deliver high-quality services, despite COVID-19.

Are we delivering these services differently than we have in the past? Yes!

Are we giving our best every day despite uncertainty? Yes!

Are we remembering that our mission is all about people, both staff and the people we support? Yes!

In this edition of *Homes with Heart*, you will hear stories. Stories from the people we support. Stories from staff. Stories from families. These stories (and photos!) showcase our mission and impact better than any financial report, dashboard, or statement ever could.

And yes, we still manage to work diligently behind the scenes to stay financially stable, operationally efficient, and creative in addressing our strategic plan.

Our three main goals—investing in our staff, aligning our priorities, and expanding support for our mission—continue to be top of mind.

- We recently celebrated all our wonderful direct service professionals (DSP) during National DSP Appreciation Week. There were contests, prizes, and goodie baskets to show gratitude for the work they do.
- Our employee survey showed a 23 percentage point increase in people feeling informed about news/changes and a 22 percentage point increase in people having the training they need! Plus we doubled the number of people who took the survey from two years ago!
- The finance department has gotten extremely adept at identifying and tracking new governmental funding opportunities. We have received the Paycheck Protection Plan Small Business Administration loan and are now awaiting forgiveness. The CARES Act opened a few opportunities to have remote work technology (i.e. laptops) covered by grants and FEMA is reviewing our request for reimbursement of medical and cleaning supplies.

Striving to stay safe and healthy during COVID-19 is an act of vigilance over the things within our control. It is an act of hope and prayer for the things beyond our control. Through the first six months of COVID-19, we weathered positive cases within our Metro Crisis Coordination Program and were saddened by several COVID-related deaths of case management clients. As of this printing all staff who have tested positive have recovered, and we have experienced only one case of COVID-19 in a resident.

Please stay vigilant, wear your masks and keep us in your prayers. Please enjoy our stories in this *Homes with Heart*. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed and shared their story.

Tracy Murphy, president

Megan's on the Move!



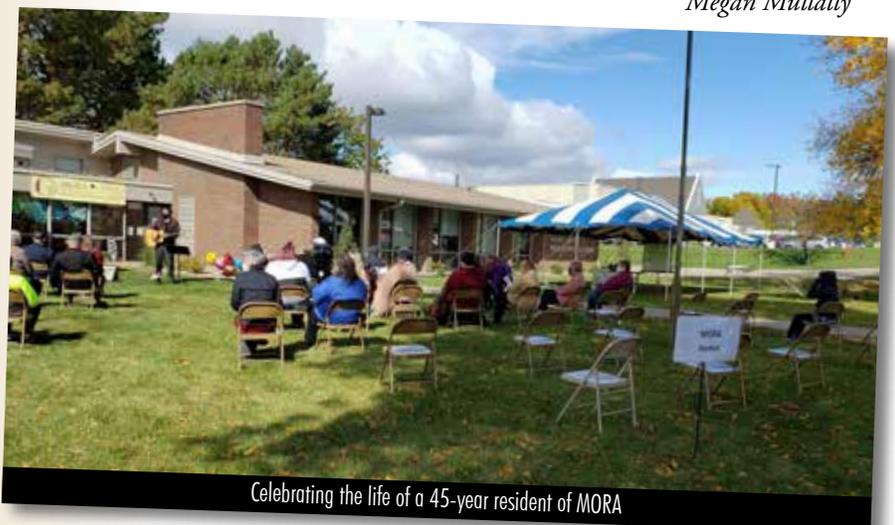
During the time of COVID-19, I've been getting organized and helping my house with Zoom activities. Classes like yoga, Showstoppers, and Sunday Funday. My goal is to get the house and my roommates moving.

Personally, I have been taking classes on Zoom. I've particularly liked Special Olympics Minnesota Leadership Program—Global Messenger. It's all about public speaking and how to give a better speech and feel more comfortable in front of crowds. My goal is to speak at the Summer Games for the Special Olympics in 2021. I will share my experiences at the Summer Games in swimming and basketball.

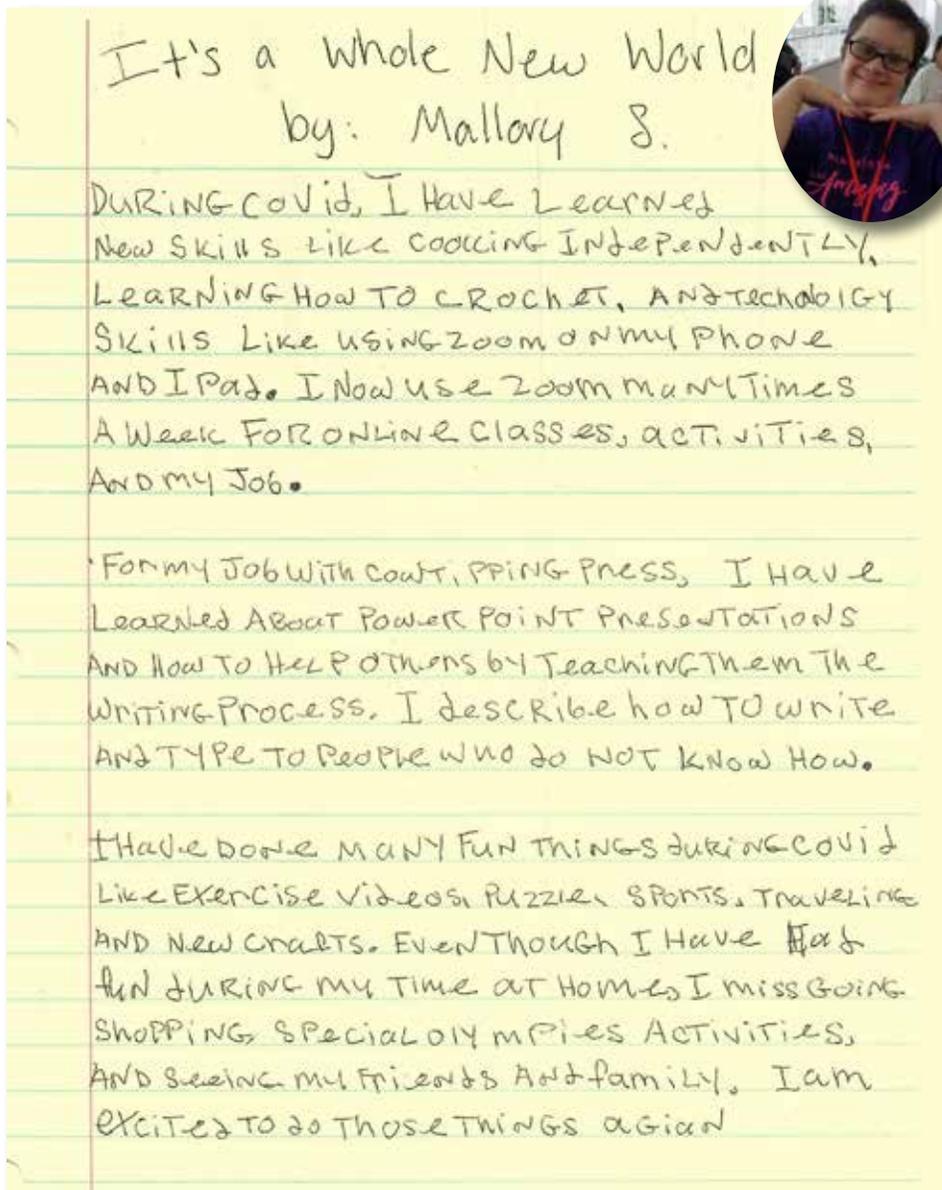
The recreation department has been a great place to help me and my friends grow during this time. They are creative and bring us new ideas and activities. It was also super fun to be part of the planning committee and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the remodeled gym.

Before COVID-19, I was able to share why I chose to live at MORA during the Mount Olivet Lutheran Church Centennial Sunday Service. It was really fun to meet church members and tell my story!

Megan Mullally



Celebrating the life of a 45-year resident of MORA



Thanks for 41 Years!

Jane Moore Clark has taken on many roles with MORA since she joined the staff in 1979. She has been uniquely able to see MORA evolve into the company that it is today. Jane has worn many hats—as a behavioral analyst for the Metro Crisis Coordination Program, a trainer for topics such as sign language, and since 2012 as a program coordinator for the Glen Lake house. Throughout the years, Jane made strong bonds with staff and clients.



Jane at Skol Day at Glen Lake Home

Jane has a strong person-centered style that has changed the lives of everyone she has met. She has always been the first one willing to try something new, such as road trips, shows, and many more outings. Jane truly became family to the individuals she has worked with, especially during the holiday season. Year after year, she would take them to her family home if they no longer had any family members.

“While there are many qualities I admire about Jane, she always put our guys at Glen Lake first. No matter how stressful the job got or what curveballs the day threw at her, the quality of care never flagged,” says Elizabeth Johnston.

There aren't enough words to show how much I appreciate Jane as part of our team. Even though it saddens me that she is retiring from her position, I am excited for her new journey as she enjoys retirement adventures and spending more time with her family and friends. Jane's departure from the Glen Lake house will leave an empty place in our hearts, with big shoes to fill.

Elizabeth Johnston, Residential

Finding New Ways To Be Together, continued from page 1

So we all got creative and ramped up the larger family to make sure that Daniel was called or FaceTimed every day. People who love Daniel stopped by to have a short talk and bring him his favorite treat. Then, as restrictions eased, we brought Daniel's dog Remy over, and we sat outside for a chat. Several times the staff made extra efforts to accommodate a walk around the block or a visit to sit on our deck. In short, everyone—Daniel, staff, family, and those important people in Daniel's life—had to show our care in different ways, not letting the challenge of the moment take away the expression of our love.

COVID-19 may cost everyone something, but it does not have the power to stop us from expressing our love and care for one another. It is an opportunity for each of us to “surf the wave,” flex, and create new ways of sharing and expressing our love. For Daniel, he likely doesn't understand why things are so different, but I'm confident that he knows he is loved and connected. We continue to be so very grateful for MORA and the way they continue to live out their mission in this changing and challenging time.

*Guardians Hal Weldin
and Jill Holte Weldin*

Recreation Department Safely Continues Programs, Develops New Opportunities



Showstoppers then



Showstoppers now



Showstoppers now



Donations for relief efforts collected by MORA in June 2020



The gym after renovation



The Client Art Show in the renovated gym

During these unique times, the MORA recreation department has worked to develop ways to keep individuals and groups connected while still adhering to social distancing guidelines. We have been able to keep most of our recreation programs going, albeit virtually, through the pandemic, including both the Showstoppers and yoga programs, as well as developing new programs for the individuals we serve.

Like so many of us in the past last six months, the recreation department has discovered the wonders of Zoom and Facebook Live video. We have used them for everything from our remodeled gym unveiling to our interactive Sunday afternoon group programs. We also use Zoom to broadcast our Showstoppers and yoga programs to our regular attendees, but we are very much looking forward to the time groups can attend in person again soon!

The gym received some much-needed improvements earlier this year, and, since May, we have had what feels like a new space at our disposal. It has been used for everything from athletics and sports activities to Sunday morning church services and our Client Art Show.

In addition to virtual programming, we have been able to offer some recreation programs in person. These include themed weeks in the gym, computer lab opportunities, and outdoor time at the waterfront in Victoria.

ies, Explores Media Connections During COVID-19 Restrictions

Resident homes have been scheduling sessions for individuals on a weekly basis, and we are so thankful to have the resources available to get people out of the house and moving around a little bit!

We did need to make some significant changes as the spring ended and summer began. We were forced to change both our McGregor Cabins and Discover Summer Camp programs this summer. Both seasons were cut shorter by current guidelines, but we were still able to successfully run both programs throughout the course of the summer. Our Discover Summer Camp program was only about half as long as it has been in summers past, but the camp staff and coordinators did a tremendous job of doing everything in their power to make sure both campers and staff stayed safe and healthy.

Unfortunately, given the current guidelines, we have had to postpone some events until 2021. That includes the annual Mount Olivet Rolling Acres Golf Scramble, the Mount Olivet Homes' Auxiliary Gala, the fall conference, the VocalEssence Christmas concert, a summer picnic, and our Halloween dance.

That being said, we are working on replacements for some of these events, so stay tuned for updates about other recreation opportunities!

The magic of being together—either in person or online—keeps our spirits high and our hopes up as we find ways to learn and grow together.

Nate McKenzie, Recreation



Brad's balloon ride with Jane Moore Clark



Yoga



Boating fun



Celebrating National DSP Appreciation Week



A shortened Discover Summer Camp, for those on the autism spectrum, in the renovated gym

Memorials & Gifts

Thank You, Donors!

July 1 through September 30, 2020

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Lola Pell

Valerie Rule

We apologize if your name was omitted or misspelled. Call Tyler Hauser at 612.821.3151 for corrections.

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IN HONOR OF: JACK HAMMERSTEN

Sue Ferguson

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Jim & Judy Strommen

DANIEL WELDIN

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Navigating Each Individual Crisis through a Global Crisis

The mission of the Metro Crisis Coordination Program (MCCP) has always been to assist individuals in preventing crises affecting their residential, work, and/or educational placements, as well as to support successful living in the community. This important work is accomplished through behavioral assessments, training, collaboration with the individual and their team members, and sometimes placement into temporary crisis housing. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis team has risen to meet the unprecedented challenges presented to the individuals we serve.

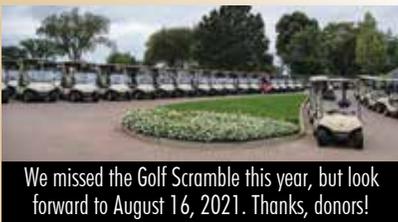
When this pandemic began, we quickly assessed and adjusted methods for accomplishing our work in order to continue to meet the changing needs of our caseloads. We transitioned to implementing a hybrid approach, delivering services through a combination of Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms, phone interviews, as well as socially distanced, in-person assessments in situations where safety precautions and measures could be upheld. Although many of the referrals to the program were similar in nature to those in their history, we began receiving numerous requests to assist individuals and their support systems in navigating through unfamiliar territory presented by the pandemic. These have included identifying and addressing risk factors associated with COVID-19, supports for successful distance learning, creative introduction of structure and routine into the home environment, as well as helping individuals recognize and tap into their own resiliency.

The Metro Crisis Coordination Program team is an amazingly hard-working group during ordinary times and have excelled over the recent months, despite encountering various curveballs both in our professional lives as well as the world around us. It is with our usual determination, tenacity, and dedication that we will continue to rise to the occasion in helping meet the unprecedented challenges presented to individuals and families in our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Karin Nagel, Metro Crisis Coordination Program



The Metro Crisis Coordination Program team



We missed the Golf Scramble this year, but look forward to August 16, 2021. Thanks, donors!

An Artist Within

This past summer, MORA sparked a new idea to create the joy we needed: an art contest for clients from all services—residential services, in-home services, adult day services, case management, and Metro Crisis Coordination Program. With nearly 50 works of art submitted, it was such a success that we decided it will be an annual tradition!

Thank you to all artists who created for MORA's "first annual" art contest and for the staff who encouraged and supported them!

awarded with a certificate, and winners placing first and second were given a pizza party and art kits.

Finance department staffer Christina Calkins-Green chatted with in-home services client and third-place winner, Jessica. Receiving services with MORA for almost nine years, Jessica was very thoughtful to mention that she started painting again with the help of Charlotte Lang, a program coordinator with MORA's in-home services.

Jessica loves to paint nature—rolling hills, apple trees, and currently underway is a painting of a sunset over the ocean—with lots of color! Her favorite though is a painting of a rose.

When asked where her inspiration came from, Jessica responded, "Flowers are God's gift to us." We hope to continue to see Jessica's art in future art contests.

Christina Calkins-Green, Finance



Case Management Perseveres with Flexibility and Humor

COVID-19 has affected all of us differently. In MORA case management, we packed up our cubicles in March, thinking we would return to the office in a few weeks. Going on seven months now, our workspaces certainly look very different—working from bedrooms, porches, kitchen tables, and basement offices.

We miss seeing co-workers in person, and many new employees who have joined in recent months have not met anyone—client or co-worker—face-to-face yet. Connecting with the people we serve and their families requires us to adapt to countless virtual apps, making us more dependent on technology than ever before. Not one aspect of our jobs looks the same as it did six months ago, but our team continues a person-centered approach.

Amidst challenges, we do enjoy some moments of humor with new ways of working and new "office mates" too! For example, lead case manager Betsy Koss is trying to adjust to her new office mate, Walter. Walter, a cat, gets jealous and has minor micromanagement issues. Every time he hears a voice come through a speaker phone or virtual meeting, he gets as close to the computer as possible and "yowls." Also known to bite, Walter is being reported for a meeting with human resources.



Though COVID-19 has taken a negative and even tragic toll, the case management team is overcoming every obstacle. Keeping up with constant changes, we pride ourselves on providing the highest quality services within Hennepin and Dakota counties.

Rachel Rosckes, Case Management



From the Director of Development

Dear Friend and Supporter,

I am so grateful to Hal and Jill Weldin, parents of Daniel, for sharing their poignant story of how they and their extended families adjusted to the COVID-19 crisis, while “not letting the challenge of the moment take away the expression of their love for Daniel.” The image of Jill and Hal talking with Daniel through the front door touches my heart. Their story and the stories

written by Megan, Mallory, and Rolling Acres staff members in this newsletter give us hope and prove that anything is possible when you think positively and use your creativity!

Please join us for our virtual estate planning session led by attorney extraordinaire Stuart Bear on November 18, 10:00-11:30 A.M. Stuart has a gift for presenting a sometimes complicated and emotional subject with clarity and humor. Call or email Tyler Hauser at 612.821.3151 or thauser@mtolivethomes.org to sign up. Using a Zoom link sent to your email, you will be able to participate from the comfort of your home using your computer or your phone.

Our 2020 year-end fundraising will support staff and resident needs, which have increased greatly over the last six months. Please keep Mount Olivet Rolling Acres on your charitable giving list! Gifts of all sizes make a difference in the lives of the people we serve. Watch your mail in November for our year-end mailing. There are many ways you can contribute, so call or email to discuss the best way for you. Thank you for helping support our people!

Stay safe and be well!

With gratitude,

Mari Carlson

*Mari Carlson, Director of Development
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church & Affiliated Organizations
612.821.3150, mcarlson@mtolivethomes.org*



RBC Wealth Management Grant

Mount Olivet Rolling Acres gratefully acknowledges a generous \$3,000



grant from RBC Wealth Management. Both the 2019 and the 2020 grants are designated for important staff training at the Andover Youth Support Home serving children with mental health issues.

The Andover Home has a partnership with the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, which is bringing their training, The Nursery Way,™ to the program. The training enhances the work being done at the home by promoting consistency, deepening staff understanding of what the child and family are experiencing, giving data collection measures, and providing staff with tools to address childhood and ongoing trauma without causing more trauma in the process.

Thank you, RBC!