

**MARATHON YOUTH SERVICES
NEWSLETTER
August 1, 2006
Volume 6, Issue 8**



Once again, August is upon us along with the Wisconsin Valley Fair. This continues to be a landmark in time for me, and many others I'm sure. It seems that as soon as the Fair ends, the start of school is imminent and summer is all but over. The whole summer experience goes by far too quickly! At my house, it's been a frenzied blur of activity up to now. Much of the past several months were spent in preparations and planning for my youngest daughter's wedding on July 15! And a glorious event it was... Like all parents, I'm immensely proud of my children's' accomplishments and the promise for their futures.

While my wife and I have tried to do our best to raise happy and successful kids, we both recognize that it's not possible without the support and influences we expose our children to every day. Yes, there are some risks involved, but with the right guidance and support, kids generally make the most of the positives we give them. My three daughters have had the benefit of not only parents, but extended family and friends, teachers, neighbors and countless other positive role models as they've grown up. With lots of open communication and involvement in their lives, we've been able to offer a positive influence...and the results speak for themselves.

We also recognize that we have a responsibility as "village citizens" to do our part for others in return. We've tried to be supportive of our kids' friends and families, and to serve as positive role models where appropriate. There's nothing particularly unique about this; parents and families have been doing this for generations, often without giving it a second thought. We "social worker types" however notice these things, especially when we find them missing so often in the families we come to know so well. And of course, that's part of what we do here at Marathon Youth Services; notice these things and try to remedy them.

You'll find in the RGH update to follow that in fact, we're looking at formalizing such an effort on behalf of our youngest residents as they leave care. An extended support system is so important to all of us, particularly where it has been weakened by some sort of family trauma or turmoil. If we can do anything to strengthen those natural bonds and parental desires to "do the right thing", we feel we can contribute to the long term success and happiness of our residents, and our village will be a better place for it...

If at any time you would like to be removed from this mail list, please click REPLY and simply enter UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line. Your address will be immediately removed from the list.

CONTENTS

1. Reynolds Group Home Update
 2. Welcome to our New Therapist!
 3. More Recipes From Susan
 4. Adult Homes Update
-

1. August promises to be a busy month at **Reynolds Group Home** on many fronts... Not only are the boys as busy as ever, we are anticipating 3 discharges this month also. However, Chris reports that all three vacancies have been spoken for already. Nevertheless, social workers are encouraged to stay in touch with Chris in the event that something unexpected occurs and another vacancy becomes available.

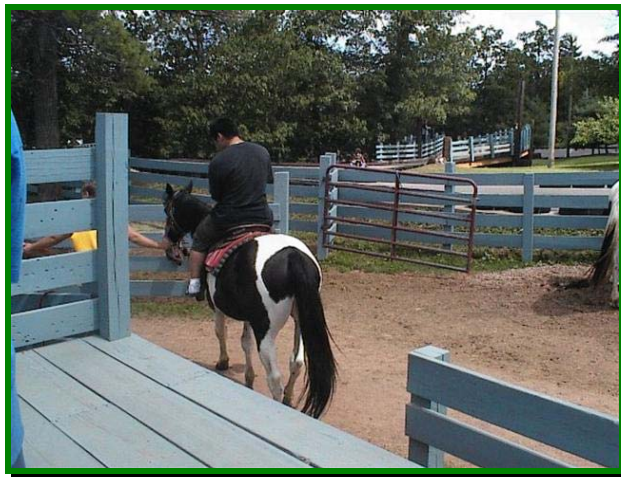
Chris reports that this past month he has begun an initiative we have been considering for some time; a supportive follow-up to discharge. He reports that: *"We have started the monitoring program for 3 residents. We are doing this free of charge to Marathon County in July with kids who have left our program. The intent is to shorten group home stays and provide support to the families and kids leaving RGH. Check-ins currently range from 2 to 5 per day. This effort is currently under review by the MYS Board of Directors for possible inclusion into the regular program of RGH. Eventually, such a program could not only be for RGH kids, but could also be available to social workers as a way to attempt avoiding out-of-home placement all together. When appropriate, we want to keep kids in their own homes and work with them there. It still comes down to what's best for kids, their families and communities."*

One of our recent discharges, Adam, is already benefiting from this program initiative. Adam was discharged July 12th and is part of this monitoring effort. Chris also reports that the RGH staff is doing an Independent Living Program with one of the residents, to begin September 1 until the end of December. This is yet another way we help some of our residents make the challenging transition from group home resident to community citizen.

Other accomplishments this past month include Chris getting a job at Something's Brewing and Matt starting a job at the new restaurant, Freddie's, in downtown Wausau. Both guys are real happy about the opportunity these jobs give them. Cody has also had a few hits on his applications and has an interview pending.

Summer recreation is of course a big part of every week during the summer months. With the heat wave we've been having, the area pools have been a primary hit with the boys. There is also talk of a trip to Great America yet this summer, and more horseback riding.

Darwin took a couple of the guys to Minocqua this past month for some carting and horseback riding.



One final bit of news from Reynolds Group Home, our own Mike McCabe is in Louisiana this week with his church group, assisting in some post-Katrina clean-up. This is the sort of thing we've come to take for granted from Mike...it's the kind of guy he is. We're hoping he brings back some photos and a story to share in next month's newsletter. Thanks Mike...you represent us well.

2. Marathon Youth Services has a long time commitment to providing quality therapy services to our clientele. In keeping with that commitment we have recently been fortunate to acquire the services of a new therapist. **Gretchen Hintz** has joined us and provides services to all our residents, both juvenile and adult. She presents a very welcome addition to our staff and we look forward to a long and productive relationship.

In a way to introduce herself, Gretchen has submitted the following short bio sketch...

Hello...

My name is Gretchen and I am the new therapist with Marathon Youth Services. I have a bachelor's degree for UW-Madison in Psychology and Criminal Justice. After much time and effort I will complete my Master's Degree in Counseling this month from the UW-Oshkosh. I am a member of the Wisconsin Counselor's Association and I am working on my National Counselor Certification which will be completed soon.

Much of my work history has been devoted to helping people to take responsibility for themselves. I have been employed in several agencies working with domestic violence victims and their families to help keep them safe. I have also worked in crisis intervention agencies with adolescents and their families.

My family and I live in Stevens Point and I enjoy all sorts of activities, including fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, swimming, skiing, hockey, traveling around the state and watching Sunday afternoon Packer games. I also enjoy relaxing with a great book or watching a good movie. I have a two year old son and a baby on the way...all keeps me pretty busy.

As a therapist I believe that most people can benefit from counseling/therapy. I practice Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as well as Person-Centered approaches, which means I believe our thoughts have a lot to do with our behaviors and feeling and vice versa. My general goals for therapy are to facilitate self-awareness, self-acceptance, and responsibility for one's own actions and growth. Individuals need to take responsibility for their own wellness, and as a therapist I work to assist clients in building skill to establish such responsibility.

I very much look forward to meeting with the residents of Marathon Youth Services, and working with them to reach their goals.

Gretchen Hintz

3. Susan, our ever dependable Admin. Assistant has once again come through with a couple of summertime recipes for us. These will likely be fun for our residents to try on one of their picnics. One is a veggie dip, the other a no-bake cookie recipe. Have a look...

Veggie Dip

*1 cup Hellman's dressing
1 teaspoon grated onion
½ teaspoon curry powder
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon dill weed*



*Mix well and put in the fridge in a covered bowl.
May double or triple depending on number of people.
Peel, wash and cut up fresh veggies such as carrots, sticks of cucumbers and celery, wash and cut mushrooms, cut fresh broccoli and cauliflower into florets. Refrigerate and after everything is cold you are ready to eat.
Very tasty and delicious.*

No Bake Chocolate Cookies

Measure into a sauce pan:

*2 cups sugar
½ cup cocoa
½ cup of peanut butter
½ cup milk*

Boil one minute. Remove from heat.

Add to this mixture:

*1 stick butter or margarine
½ cup peanut butter
1 teaspoon vanilla*

Stir well until the butter and peanut butter are totally mixed in.

Move the mixture into a mixing bowl and add 3 cups of oatmeal, stirring well.

Using a regular teaspoon, drop teaspoonfuls onto a non-stick surface (buttered waxed paper?) and allow to harden.



Thanks Susan...sounds worth a try!

4. July was a slow month for news from the young **adult homes**. Of some significance though is the fact that **Grand Place** received two new placements. We are now at capacity at all our facilities. That does not

prevent us from discussing the anticipated needs of the social workers and case managers however. If you want to discuss a possible future placement, feel free to contact Sue.

Pam P, manager at Grand Place submitted the following:

“Grand Place became the home of two new residents in July. Both have made friends with clients from all of our homes.

Tou Ta is very creative and talented artist. He has impressed everyone with his drawing and sculpting abilities. He also has been doing some gardening and taking care of a couple pepper plants in the garden at Grand. Dustin enjoys riding bike and being outdoors. He plays drums and has joined a band that he practices with.

John attended a beach party where he had lots of fun dancing. His favorite musical group is The Beach Boys, so this type of party was right up his alley!”



Tou Ta guards his garden!



John and Crystal enjoy dancing!

“Andy, as well as the other men at Grand Place enjoyed taking in the sights and sampling the food at some of the local fairs and carnivals. The men also attended many of Wausau’s local attractions like the annual Chalkfest downtown and the Hot Air Balloon Rally.”

As we move into August, the Wisconsin Valley Fair continues to be an annual favorite. Perhaps next month we’ll have a few pictures of our residents enjoying the sights and sounds of the Fair.

If at any time you would like to be removed from this mail list, please click REPLY and simply enter UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line. Your address will be immediately removed from the list.

Property of Marathon Youth Services, Inc
Produced by Jim Prozinski