Great River Homes, Inc.

8th Street

December Newsletter

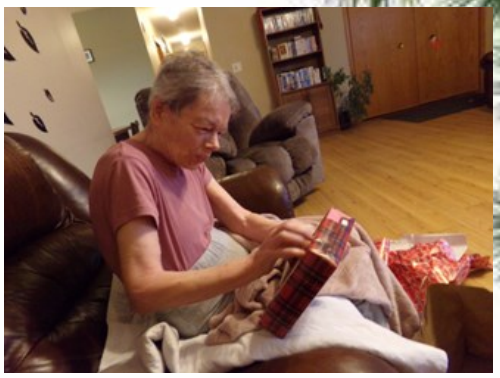
The ladies here at 8th Street cannot believe that the year has come to an end so quickly! December was full of so many festive Christmas activities that everyone enjoyed. The ladies celebrated the holiday season by making a turkey dinner with some delicious desserts, they went to see the Rotary Christmas lights in Lacrosse and got to see the holiday train when it came into Wabasha. They were able to spend time with friends and family with fun activities like bowling, a pizza party, and a trip to Rochester to see The Nutcracker.

Kris spent the first half of the month trying to perfect her recipe for fudge so she could bring it to her brothers for Christmas. She was able to get the recipe perfected just in time. Great job Kris! Kris was excited to see the holiday train when it came to Wabasha and meet up with her friends to enjoy hot chocolate together. She was also able to participate in bowling on Tuesdays for a couple of weeks at the beginning of the month. A few shopping trips were made to find gifts for friends and family and with that, a few meals were eaten out. In addition to shopping and eating out, Kris went with housemates and friends to see the Nutcracker in Rochester. Kris got to spend Christmas in Iowa with her brother, and boy was she happy that the weather cooperated so that she could go! Kris got back just in time to go to the pizza and bowling party that was hosted by Great River Homes. She enjoyed exchanging and opening all her gifts from her housemates, it was a wonderful holiday season.

Jenny got into the holiday spirit by decorating her room with lights and Christmas décor. She started her holiday celebrations by attending the Holiday Train at its stop in Wabasha and enjoyed hot chocolate and cookies with friends. Jenny went bowling on Tuesdays and went to Winona to do her Christmas shopping. Jenny did a great job picking out the perfect gifts for everyone! Good job Jenny! Jenny had a great night out on the town at the Nutcracker with all her friends. Jenny was happy she got to spend a lot of time with her family. They came to visit her at home and spent time doing holiday crafts. Everyone had a great time with lots of love and laughter. Jenny had a blast opening gifts with her housemates and loved all her fun and thoughtful gifts. She ended the holiday season by attending the bowling and pizza party with her friends and housemates.

Emily also had a busy month! Emily was able to participate in all the Christmas and Holiday activities, including the rotary lights in Lacrosse, and the Holiday Train in Wabasha. Emily Enjoyed riding through and seeing all the different light displays. She also went shopping for her housemates as well as friends and family. Emily was able to attend the bowling and pizza party at Riverboat Lanes and had a great time with her friends. Emily was excited to go home for Christmas and enjoyed spending time with family. She says she missed the snow but was glad that it was not cold. You're right about that!

Jeanette had a fun start to her holiday celebrations by helping to carve the Turkey! She enjoyed being able to help serve and share the delicious meal with her housemates, she was laughing and giggling the whole time! Jeanette went to the Nutcracker in Rochester and made the long trip to Lacrosse to “find Santa,” and see the Rotary lights display. Jeanette was baking up a storm this month with the help of her volunteers and independently at home. Jeanette had a blast opening gifts with her housemates and taking pictures. Nice smile Jeanette! Jeanette was able to attend a few Christmas parties around town, and she enjoyed driving around and looking at Christmas lights.



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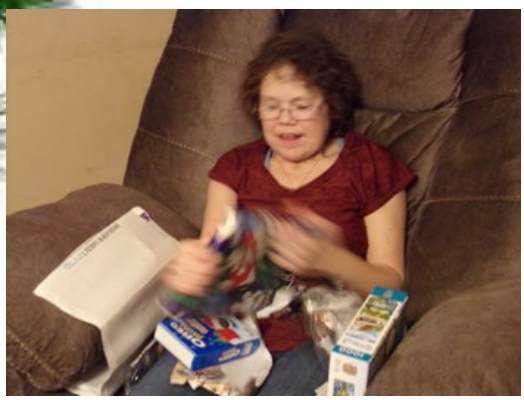

This newsletter segment will hopefully help you learn more about Great River Homes, Inc. Here, we'll discuss agency processes, things that affect us, and ways you can help.

High speeds are often intriguing, highly sought after, and highly valued. Champion Olympic sprinter Usain Bolt once reached a speed of 27.33 mph. The world record speed for a bicyclist is an amazing 183 miles mph. A Peregrine Falcon can fly as fast as 186 mph. 330 miles mph is the world record speed for a car, and a rocket can travel at 25,700 mph.

While speed is often highly valued, team members working with Great River Homes often find there is rarely a quick trip to Kwik Trip when taking individuals to shop there. Akin to the neighborhood barbershop of years gone by, trips to Kwik Trip often lead to intriguing, highly sought after, highly valued visits and connections with friends, neighbors, and the general public.

Unlike generations ago when individuals with disabilities were often isolated from the public in a variety of ways, team members at Great River Homes make a deliberate and persistent effort to involve Kris, Jeny, Emily, and Jeanette in using community facilities and participating in community events of interest to each individual.

Community inclusion consists not just being physically present in the community but supporting individuals as they develop community living skills and expand their social network by actively interacting with a wide spectrum of community members.

At the bowling alley, or the library, or when going out to eat, or at church, or at a sporting event, community inclusion is created by slowing the pace of life and developing meaningful relationships. Unlike a bicyclist going 183 mph or a car going 330 mph, effective community inclusion excludes a quick trip to Kwik Trip or any other community setting.

Jerry McMillin

Development and Education Manger