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and wonderfully made.**

Psalm 139:14

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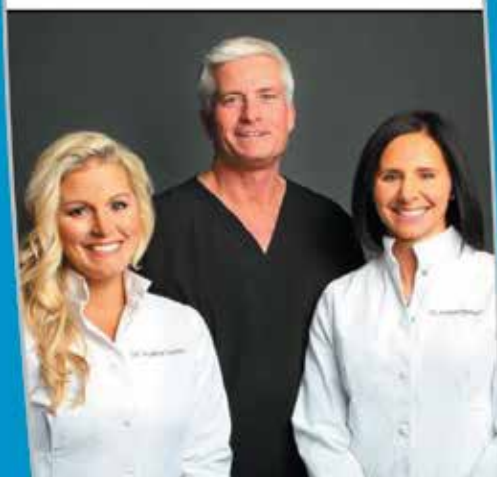
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Editors' Notes



"If you judge people, you have no time to love them." -Mother Teresa

I remember in high school the day I stood up to a bully who made fun of my brother. My brother has autism, and in the early 90s not much was known about autism. I also remember a conversation with my kids about autism and explaining to them that's what their uncle has. They were shocked. They had no idea he was different or that he had a disability. They'd just grown up with him and accepted him, autism and all. There was no judgement, only love.

Shouldn't we all be more like that? Yet it is so easy to judge. As we worked on this issue, I can't even tell you how many "goosebump moments" there were. Every single person featured in this issue has a story that will give you goosebumps. Our cover girl Sady Paulson is one of the most inspiring people I've ever

interviewed. Sady is nonverbal so our interview was done completely via text and email. I'm grateful for the technology that allowed me to get to know her, and that has allowed her to make her dreams come true.

I'm excited that we have added some new writers this issue. We are so blessed with a growing team, whose abilities amaze me. Thank you to everyone who continues to help make this magazine happen. We couldn't do it without you!

Happy reading; I can't wait to hear how many "goosebump moments" you have!

Jody



"The only disability in life is a bad attitude." -Mark Hamilton

Too often I think we allow our attitudes about our own personal limits get in the way of what we believe we can do. I'll admit that was true for me for a good part of my life. Then I changed my attitude.

That's what I hope this issue will do for you. It's not about disabilities. It's about abilities and the beautiful, inspiring people who don't allow a dirty little four-letter word—can't—keep them from enjoying a full and successful life. With the right mindset and focus, the love and support of people who share their vision, and modern technology, they have found the ability to do every day what can so easily be taken for granted by the rest of us.

I encourage you to watch the video that our cover girl, Sady Paulson, created for Apple. As a former TV news reporter and anchor, I edited video on a daily basis. Watching Sady's video on YouTube made me realize how I took that ability for granted. It made me smile and it gave me goosebumps to see how she is living her dream. Sady is incredibly inspiring and her story is the perfect example of why we should focus on our abilities, not our disabilities. Sady is doing something that might otherwise have been considered impossible 10 or 20 years ago. I won't give away the story Jody has written for you. Find it on page 20.

Guys inspire too, so catch up on how Bismarck High School teacher and coach, Mark Unteseher, is doing in this month's "Oh Man." Mark was an avid runner who was paralyzed after a tragic fall and is permanently in a wheelchair. He wasn't okay with his situation at first, but he has changed his attitude. It's a touching story.

We are all gifted with abilities. Our attitude is our only limit. And we get to choose.

Marci

After 72 years of marriage and more than 40 years in the community of Center, North Dakota, Jean and Stanley Buschta are spending their golden years together in a Bismarck senior living community. Their daughter-in-law, Kristie Buschta, is making sure those are active years.

"They are adjusting really well," Kristie says. "I made them come exercise today. They didn't want to but if I'm going to be here, they're going to do it," she laughs.

The Buschtas recently moved from Touchmark's assisted living

sometimes but that's okay. And for being 100 years old I think Jean does remarkably well."

The chair exercises are part of Functional Fitness, a class led by Heidi Dalusong, Memory Care Life Enrichment/Wellness Coordinator.

"When the residents come to live with us we do a pre-test to see where they're at with their exercising," Heidi explains. "We do arm exercises, holding their legs up, and stretching to see how flexible they are. We do this exercise every day for 20 minutes a day. Then, in

FITNESS, MUSIC, AND ESSENTIAL OILS

Caring for the Dying Brain

by Marci Narum
Photography: Photos by Jacy



(ABOVE)
Stan and Jean
Buschta in
Functional Fitness
class

neighborhood to one of the retirement community's new memory care neighborhoods. Kristie joined the couple for a session of chair exercises, occasionally guiding and helping them follow the instructor's gentle stretching, leg raises, and arm movements.

"I think they did very well," Kristie says. "Stan gets his left and his right mixed up

16 weeks, we measure them again and we see how much they have grown."

Heidi says the exercises make a remarkable difference.

"It keeps their legs strong so they can get up and down out of the chair, it keeps their arms flexible so they can dress themselves, and just the daily living activities they do; it helps."

It's the kind of help that provides peace of mind for residents and their families who are already struggling with the transition to this stage of life. According to the Alzheimer's Association, every 66 seconds someone in the United States develops the disease. More than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's. While medication is often part of the treatment plan for patients, it's not necessarily the first line of defense for Touchmark.

Wendy Schrag is Touchmark's vice president of Clinical Services. She tells

"We don't want residents to be medicated and sleepy," Wendy says. "We want them to be active, vibrant, and engaged. We want them to be involved in this community and also the external community."

"Knowing how the brain works when it's healthy and how it starts to compensate for some of the cellular damage and the loss that occurs with Alzheimer's disease helps us with the programming."

That's why Wendy is always looking for more ways to enhance Touchmark's Life Enrichment/Wellness program, which includes Functional Fitness and

(LEFT)
Heidi Dalusong giving a fist bump to a resident in her class

(RIGHT)
Stan and Jean Buschta



family members whose loved ones are diagnosed with forms of dementia that behavior changes which accompany the disease are symptoms of a harsh reality: the brain is dying. But she says if residents don't need medication, they shouldn't be on behavior medication because there are countless nonpharmacological approaches that can be tried.

other daily therapies.

"We know people who have dementia can still generate new brain cells. It's just at a significantly lower rate," Wendy says. "Even though they move into our memory care neighborhoods, we still do cognitive stimulation activities to help them maintain their current level of functioning."

MUSIC AND MEMORY

Wendy says the most powerful tool is music.

"We are introduced to music when we are in the womb. Music is so ingrained in us and continues to affect us until we pass away."

Life Enrichment/Wellness with Music & Memory enables residents to reminisce about their life, family, and stories through songs they know from long ago.

"The brain is divided. The left side controls your ability to speak and the right side controls your ability to sing. A lot of times a person with Alzheimer's will be able to sing far longer than they will be able to speak," Wendy says.

THE BEST FRIENDS™ APPROACH

Another therapy that doesn't involve

in using essential oils with residents on a daily basis.

"We have aromatherapy going in a diffuser all the time," Heidi says. "Right now we have Thieves going which helps with your immune system. We use lavender in the evening when there are more behaviors and it helps calm the residents. Before meals, we give everyone a warm, damp washcloth scented with peppermint oil. The peppermint stimulates the appetite, helps with digestion, and makes you alert."

MEANINGFUL MOMENTS

Wendy says it's possible for someone with memory impairments to still enjoy a good-quality life when programming and people are available to help stimulate the individual's brain. She is involved with the Alzheimer's Association and is always searching for more ways to help



(RIGHT)
Kristie Buschta
doing chair
exercises with
her father-in-law,
Stan Buschta

medication is The Best Friends™ Approach.

"It's just knowing the resident and their life story," explains Heidi, who is a Best Friends master trainer. "We have a little bio outside each resident's apartment. It's just a little summary the family helps us write to tell all the staff about the resident. It gives you something to talk about when you meet the person for the first time. When you know something about them, you can just see their face light up."

ESSENTIAL OILS

Touchmark has also found benefits



individuals compensate for the cellular death of the brain.

She offers some words of comfort for family members:

"It's okay to be upset by the decline but they can still find joy and pleasure in the life that their loved one is going through right now. It's a journey. If you can find the things they are still good at, that they still enjoy doing, you can have meaningful moments with your loved one."

Kristie Buschta is having those moments with Jean and Stanley.

"I'm very, very happy for them and I'm very happy they're here." *W*



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GET REAL WITH YOURSELF

by Lisa Dingeman

To Unleash your Ability

What happens when your girlfriend mentions a fabulous new workout that helped her drop two pant sizes in two weeks or a co-worker mentions how easy it is to stay in shape by going to a cycle class twice a week?

Do you start making comparisons about your own fitness and body image? Comparison is a nasty little thing that steals your joy. It's normal and it's common, but it sure as heck isn't healthy for you. Women are their own worst critics when measuring themselves against one another, especially when it comes to appearance or fitness ideals. The grass is always going to seem greener on the other side.

As a personal trainer and a fitness competitor, I can tell you with complete confidence, comparisons never work for health and fitness goals. Instead, it's better to discover your own personal abilities, and illuminate a path that's customized just for you.

A great place to start is meeting with a personal trainer for a free consultation so that you can 'get real' with a routine that works best for you. If that's not an option, then here's what you need to consider:

ABILITY TO MAKE TIME:

It's important to know your availability. Consistency is more important than volume. In other words, making time for several small workouts a week will benefit your body far greater than spending one long day full of exercise. Set a date with yourself and keep it. The reward will land you in a better mood and healthier state.

ABILITY TO MOVE:

Some people like sprints, some like marathons. Some people like group fitness classes while others prefer long bike rides alone. Whatever it may be that brings you to your happy place and gets you healthier should be your focus. Check out "Find the Right Exercise to Match Your Personality" at vibrantlife.com under the exercise tab.

ABILITY TO SWITCH IT UP:

It's important, for motivation's sake, to keep things fresh. Once an activity becomes stale, the less likely you are to actually do a workout, even when it's planned. Bring it outside or take it inside, but always have a plan. This is one of the top reasons people seek a



trainer: we mix it up. If you're always searching the web for new fitness program, look no further: dailyburn.com is a great source for new ideas.

Narrowing down and discovering your own personal abilities can make a huge difference in your life. It's important to know your exercise goals so you can have a plan of action for

physical activity. Forget what the lady on the elliptical next to you is doing. Do what works for you. *W*



Lisa Dingeman is a devoted wife and the proud mother of two boys. She is a personal trainer at Family Wellness in Mandan and also participates in fitness competitions. Lisa has devoted her life to faith, family, and wellness.



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CARA MUND

Sometimes wishes come true—and sometimes they exceed our wildest dreams.

Cara Mund of Bismarck is still pinching herself over the fact that the annual Make-A-Wish Fashion Show she started when she was only 14 is now in its tenth year.

"It's something I'm just so proud of because I never expected it to be what it is today. The show in total has raised over \$65,000 and has included 21 North Dakota Wish Kids."

Cara was an 8th grade middle school student when she got the idea. It was such a huge success, the Make-A-Wish Foundation suggested she consider making it an annual event. So she did; she even came home over spring break each year during college to oversee the show. Cara graduated last May from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Back home in Bismarck now, Cara is preparing for this year's show and reflecting on the last nine years. She says the event has done much more than grant wishes; it has created a community and a support system.

"The Wish Kids stay connected throughout the year on Facebook and support one another in their battles."

The 10th Annual Make-A-Wish Fashion Show is at 4:00 pm on Sunday, April 2 at Simle Middle School in Bismarck. Get tickets at the door, at Attitudes in Kirkwood Mall, or call 221-0588.



KARI KADRMAS

"I am a miracle."

Kari Kadrmas has an infectious, although slightly lopsided smile. The reason for her lopsided smile is proof she truly is a miracle.

On July 4, 2006, Kari's car was t-boned by an SUV. Her head went through the side window of her car, then snapped back. Kari had multiple brain injuries, massive blood loss, broken cheekbones, a broken jawbone, collapsed lungs, a fractured pelvis, a broken right leg, and a shattered right ankle. Her brain injuries left her half blind and half paralyzed.

"My heart stopped beating a couple of times," says Kari.

Kari spent 19 days in a coma and 81 days in hospitals—first in Fargo, then a swing bed in Mandan, and finally to rehab in Bismarck.

She eventually went back to college and graduated from Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota. She lives independently, has a part time job, and has written, illustrated, and published four children's books. Her latest book is called *"Sophie and the Magic Wheelchair."*

"It's a regular children's story and the main character just happens to be in a wheelchair. It's about self acceptance and encourages acceptance for those who are different.

"I'm trying to be a role model. Yes, I have brain injuries. But I still graduated from college. I want people to look at me and see how well I've done and just imagine all they can do."

Kari's books are available on Amazon and at Barnes and Noble in Bismarck. Join her for a book signing there on March 4 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.



KELSEY FERN

When Kelsey Fern's son was born three years ago, she started wondering what was in the candles she was constantly burning.

"I did some research and discovered the candles I was buying were full of chemicals, plastics, and junk. I was trying so hard to make our home more natural and chemical free, and then I was undoing it all every time I lit a candle."

Kelsey's search for a more natural alternative led her to soy candles, but they came with a big price tag.

"I decided to make my own candles," says Kelsey. "I soon found there was lots of interest in my candles. I sold some to friends and then decided to make it into a little business."

Kelsey opened her Etsy shop, Fern Candle, in May 2016 and started selling at BisMarket later that summer. Eventu-

ally, Fern Candle made its way into several stores throughout North and South Dakota and various other boutiques across the United States. The Fern Candle Etsy store is currently closed while Kelsey fulfills wholesale orders. Kelsey works with each store that carries her candles to create a signature fragrance that can only be purchased in that store. Her goal remains to provide a reasonably priced, safe, and natural product.

"Soy candles last longer, burn cleaner, and are made from a renewable resource produced by U.S. farmers," Kelsey explains. "All of my candles are phthalate- and dye-free with cotton wicks and glass jars."

Kelsey offers a variety of unique fragrances and plans to release more fragrances this spring. Follow Fern Candle on Facebook and Instagram.

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A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair holding a baby. The woman is looking down at the baby with a gentle expression. The baby is looking towards the camera. The woman's hand is visible, resting on the baby's back.

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7 LEGENDARY WAYS TO CATCH 'SPRING FEVER' IN NORTH DAKOTA

by ND Tourism

We're heading to spring, so dust off the clubs, grab the gear and get ready to hit the road.

1. BATTER UP. Two things are synonymous with spring: Sunshine and baseball. In North Dakota, you can enjoy a sunny day at the ballpark on a modest budget and without fighting big-city traffic. Collegiate summer baseball comes to the capital city. The Bismarck Larks have their home opener May 30 at Dakota Community Bank & Trust Field. The Fargo-Moorhead RedHawks minor league baseball team plays at Newman Outdoor Field. You might also catch a high school or amateur game near you. Make memories with your family at a game this year.

2. TIME 'FORE' GOLF. Are you ready to correct that hook or get rid of your slice? Whether you seek an open fairway, plenty of trees, breathtaking views, or challenging bunkers, North Dakota has many great golf courses inviting you to hone your skills. Take your friends on the "Triple Golf Challenge," or take a road trip and check off courses on the Lewis & Clark Golf Trail.

3. TRAINING TIME. It's spring training for those interested in getting ready for athletic activities around the state. From the casual hiker to the hardcore competitor, North Dakota has a fitness adventure just for you. Cyclists are gearing up for road races, taking the scenic routes, and daring to take on the Maah Daah Hey Trail, while runners look forward to upcoming marathons and fun runs or extreme races.

4. READY TO RIDE. Few things are as exhilarating as hopping onto a big two-wheeler, rolling the throttle, and rumbling out onto the prairie. The rumble of motorcycles on the open road is music to the ears of some. It means spring has sprung and people are revved up to get back on the roads and scenic byways. If riding across rivers, climbing hills, and getting downright dirty is more your style, there are plenty of places to do that

in North Dakota too.

5. FORTHE BIRDS. With 63 wildlife refuges and a location smack-dab in the middle of the Central Flyway, North Dakota is a top destination for millions of birds and a large number of birders, too. The action-packed spring migration season provides astounding opportunities to see birds in their natural habitat, boasting beautiful breeding plumage. For those interested in birding, stop by a North Dakota state park to get a bird checklist and information about upcoming birding events.

6. SPRING FISHING. The spring fishing is heating up in North Dakota, and now is the perfect time to plan your trip. To make the planning easy, check out tourism's Hunting and Fishing Guide or Spring Fishing edition of Dakota Country magazine. If you're looking for the local angler's perspective, read the updates on Fishing Buddy.com.

7. FOR THE CAMPERS. It's time to make plans to enjoy North Dakota's great outdoors. Hot spots on Lake Sakakawea such as Indian Hills Resort, Hazen Bay Recreation Area, and Dakota Waters Resort are taking reservations, as are hidden gems including Bayshore Resort and Marina on Lake Ashtabula or Beaver Creek Recreation Area near Linton. If adventure camping is what you seek, stay in a tipi at Fort Lincoln State Park, a yurt at Cross Ranch State Park, or sleep with the buffalo at Juniper Campground in Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

These are just a few ideas to help you enjoy spring and take an adventure through North Dakota. For more info, go to NDtourism.com or call 800-435-5663 or 701-328-2525. *W*

Follow North Dakota Tourism on Facebook at Travel-ND or on Twitter and get tips on what to see and do all year long.



D'ETTE RUGGLES: HER PATH TO GREATER INDEPENDENCE

Article and Photos by Jamie Christensen



"When I was really young, I knew something was wrong," says D'Ette Ruggles, a 50-year-old mother and grandmother from Bowman, who now lives in Bismarck. "When I would run, I would be way behind other kids, and I didn't want to run. I was afraid to walk down the cement stairs to recess because my balance was bad."

At age six, D'Ette's condition was misdiagnosed, but at age 18 she learned she had muscular dystrophy, a group of diseases that cause progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass. It has no cure, although therapies and medication can help slow the course of the disease. Even so, D'Ette finds humor in her situation.

"Early on, people would ask me all the time if I was drunk or high. When I'd get tired of saying 'I have muscular dystrophy,' I would say, 'Oh, yeah, I'm drunk!'" she says with a big laugh.

Having lost her two youngest brothers to muscular dystrophy, she says the disease has brought her family very close together, including her own two children.

"You learn the value of life," she says.

She gives God all the credit for her life, saying that statistically she should not be living today. Her faith and her family keep her going. She is determined to make the most out of each day because she knows "that there is gold at the end of the rainbow."

Five years ago, she and her husband divorced, and she moved to Bismarck where she was determined to be on her own. She does live alone in her home with scheduled visits from caregivers and the help of assistive technology.

With limited mobility and function in her arms and hands, D'Ette wanted to have better use of her cell phone. After watching a demonstration by Tami Ternes, an assistive technology consultant from North Dakota Assistive, D'Ette quickly introduced herself.

North Dakota Assistive, formerly IPAT, is a non-profit organization that works to bring assistive technology to all North Dakotans that need it—with no regard to age, needs, location, or disability. Assistive technology (AT) is defined as any

item, piece of equipment, or product being used to improve, maintain, or increase one's functional capability. Working one-on-one with individuals, and teaming with other agencies and organizations across the state, higher levels of independence are achieved.

With offices in Mandan and Fargo, North Dakota Assistive is a statewide program offering equipment demonstration centers, a short-term equipment rental program, AT funding programs, a used equipment program, telecommunications programs, a device distribution program, Vocational Rehabilitation Transition program, trainings, and AT consultations.

Through a Bremer Foundation grant, the program launched a Home First showroom in Mandan last July, making it possible for people to test a multitude of ultra-low-tech to very high-tech gadgets in all areas of a home to see what can be specifically useful for them.

For D'Ette, North Dakota Assistive created a moveable clamp with a mounting system. This slim unit connects easily to her wheelchair, her phone rests nicely in its mount, and her cell phone connects to a switch. Rather than trying to carefully tap the icons on her phone with her finger, she is able to use the switch to manipulate the phone and access the apps she wants to use.

The barrier and frustration has been greatly diminished, creating that deeper independence D'Ette works hard for. She is grateful for North Dakota Assistive and the creativity they bring into making people's lives better.

"They can help people be at home, doing things they otherwise could not do," says D'Ette. "It's so amazing. People just don't know what's out there—it just blows your mind."

To learn more about the program, visit ndassistive.org or call 1-800-895-4728. *M*

(BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOS)
Home First
demonstration
center in Mandan

D'Ette Ruggles
with her assistive
technology



Jamie Christensen is a full-time real estate agent, a communications and marketing professional, wife, and mom. Making things easier and possible for everyone is a passion of hers as she is mom to a spunky little boy with Down syndrome.



Sady Paulson:

NO LIMITS

by Jody Kerzman
Photography: Photos by Jacy

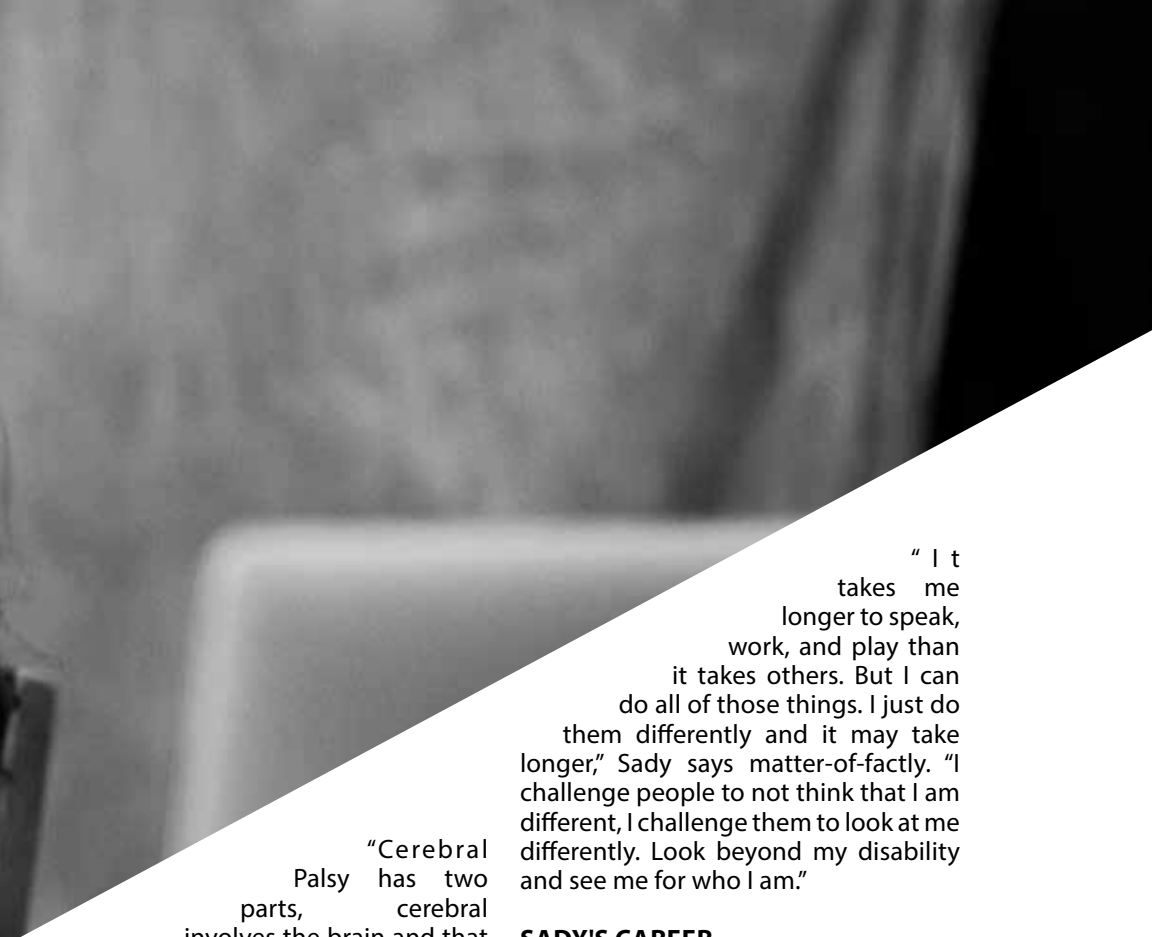
There are some people that cross our paths that make us want to smile and be a better person.

Sady Paulson is one of them.

"Five minutes after we met, we were

Facebook friends!" says Inspired Woman Photographer, Jacy Voglewede. "She's just such a neat person. She's really just like the rest of us, even though she's had more battles to overcome. I left my photo session with Sady feeling thankful, not for my life, but thankful that I had the chance to meet Sady."

And when it comes to overcoming battles, Sady is sort of an expert. She's been overcoming battles her whole life. Sady has Cerebral Palsy, a neurological disorder that affects muscle coordination.



"It takes me longer to speak, work, and play than it takes others. But I can do all of those things. I just do them differently and it may take longer," Sady says matter-of-factly. "I challenge people to not think that I am different, I challenge them to look at me differently. Look beyond my disability and see me for who I am."

"Cerebral Palsy has two parts, cerebral involves the brain and that palsy involves a weakness in the way a person positions their body," she explains. "I can not do physical things, like walking, getting dressed, and eating by myself. I have support helpers who will assist me with all these things. My body doesn't respond the way everyone else's does. This world is set up for people who don't have limitations."

It would be easy for Sady to feel sorry for herself. After all, her life has not been easy. But Sady has no time for self pity.

"Indeed I have faced challenges. Everybody has problems, but I have my own theme of challenges. I will always have some challenges to work through, but that makes me stronger. I don't let the challenges control my life."

Instead, Sady is busy shattering stereotypes, and accepting challenges.

SADY'S CAREER

Who she is is a 29-year-old editor, presenter, and a recent graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Digital Cinematography. Sady has spent her entire life in North Dakota. Sady grew up in Killdeer, attended 8th grade at Bismarck's Wachter Middle School, spent a few years at the Anne Carlsen Center in Jamestown, and now lives in Fargo.

"As a kid, I was always wondering if I could ever have a job that I love. When I met Mark Coppin about 10 years ago, my little world changed in a huge way," says Sady.

Mark Coppin is the Director of Assistive Technology at Anne Carlsen Center. He and Sady met during an occupational therapy assessment. Mark introduced Sady to technology, and showed her how technology could change her life.



Photography: Bill Frakes



(LEFT)
Mark Coppin and
Sady

(RIGHT)
Sady with her
friends.



"He has taught me so much and pushed me to live out my dreams. I could write a book on him," says Sady. "When I was a senior in high school, Mark introduced me to some technology he thought I might be interested in. Then I started attending tech camp at Camp Grassick and became interested in film editing."

"Sady, as well as the rest of the campers, took photos at camp and I would edit them into a video at the end of the week," says Mark. "Sady said she wanted to edit, so I thought 'why not?' She ended up editing a three minute video with transitions, movements, and titles. At that moment I realized I was witnessing something quite special. I knew there was potential and she was only limited by what the technology could do for her."

Mark got Sady hooked up with a MacBook Pro and a scanning system. The scanning system is controlled by switches that are mounted on the side of Sady's head. She has to move her head to control the switches, which then send a command to the computer to move a video or audio clip. It is tedious and time consuming, but Sady loves every second of it.

"What else everyone else can do with a keyboard and a mouse, I can do with my two switches. Now, I'm a big nerd that loves technology! I am like a technology junkie," Sady laughs. "My love for technology is more than just a passion; it gives me access to my world. I need help in some areas, but assistive technology enables me to communicate with my loved ones, and pursue my career."

Sady graduated from Full Sail University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Digital Cinematography.

"When she was getting her cinematography degree, she did it all online. Because it was online, no one on the other end knew she had a disability. All they saw was her ability. Even many of her teachers didn't know she has a disability and she didn't have any special accommodations. She graduated with the advanced achievement award and was one of the top students in her class. Amazing," says Mark.

TECHNOLOGY CHANGED HER LIFE

Technology helped her complete her education, and she uses some type of technology in her daily life.

"I love to make films about real life and the world. I have been a director, cinematographer, actress, editor, and a lot more. I enjoy being able to do something with my skills. I often do presentations about myself and the technology that has changed my life. I hope by sharing my story, other people

will realize that it is possible to live how you wish. There are people out there who make it their sole mission in life, to help you find and access everything you need. These people mean more to me than they will ever know."

Her latest and biggest project was an accessibility video for Apple (watch it here: www.apple.com/accessibility/). Sady was the lead editor.

"I was excited when Apple reached out to me, to use my video editing skills for the video which was also timed to go live the same day as their redesigned accessibility website, where I'm also featured along with other great users of Apple's accessible tech," she explains. "When I went to Anne Carlsen Center, I discovered I had a passion for video editing when I had an opportunity to be introduced to a project. I find that editing is both work and fun for me."

IT'S A GIFT

Sady's Cerebral Palsy means her muscles don't work like they should. Her CP is both spastic (characterized by increased muscle tone, which causes stiffness and creates difficulties with movement and balance) and athetoid (characterized by involuntary, uncontrolled movements, especially in the arms, legs, and hands.) Technology has given her control and opportunities. Her electric wheelchair, which she controls with her head, and her computer, iPad, and iPhone all have connected her with a world she never thought she'd know.

"Cerebral Palsy doesn't limit my abilities to be successful," says Sady. "I've been hit with a lot of obstacles but they have all helped me grow as a person."

In fact, Sady considers her Cerebral Palsy and the challenges it brings a gift. It's her gift to encourage others and to inspire change.

"I hope I can be of encouragement to those doubting themselves. People think having a disability is a barrier, but I see things differently. My hope is to knock down those misinterpretations about this thought process. You have the ability to do anything that you want, but you have to be willing to take a leap of faith.

"I have great support as well."

Her support includes Mark Coppin, professional learning engineer Mark Dohn, and her mom, Diane Paulson.

"My mom is my biggest inspiration. She always told me that I can do anything I want."

Advice Sady took to heart. Next on her list: to go back to school for a second degree, this time in social work. She hopes to one day start her own day program to help others with disabilities achieve their dreams. *M*

Sady and her friend Melissa



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EVEN MORE MAGICAL MOMENTS

Bismarck's Accessible Playground Getting An Upgrade

by Paula Redmann | Submitted Photos

There once was a mom.

This mom had a child with multiple disabilities. She had an idea that all kids, with or without disabilities, should be able to play together on a playground. She brought that idea to parents with similar concerns and to Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD). A community wide committee was formed, and through hours of meetings, plans, fundraising, bids, more meetings, more fundraising, and finally, the dream was realized. The end result: Magical Moments Playground, the first playground in North Dakota that allowed children of all abilities to play together, side by side. That mom is Colleen Stockert of Bismarck. The year was 2006.

Magical Moments Playground, located in Wachter Park, set the standard for inclusive playgrounds and mirrors BPRD's Core Purpose: to provide affordable, accessible, and

sustainable public parks and recreation services.

Newsy update: because of the expansion of Schaumburg Arena in Wachter Park, several play pieces of the Magical Moments Playground are being replaced with new play features. The playground will reopen in late summer.

Wendy Anderson-Berg BPRD Park Planner says in the past 10 years, BPRD has replaced over a dozen playgrounds and designed and constructed five new playgrounds.

"Many of the new playgrounds have themes, all meet or exceed the most recent Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and all safety standards and guidelines," Wendy says. "Several of the newer playgrounds include musical play panels, elevated sand tables, and sensory input panels for those with sensory, visual,



or auditory impairments. Whenever possible, BPRD strives to include a full ramp system, making sure the ramp system is connected to every part of the structure so everyone can play with everything."

Park design has a huge impact on how users experience the park. Anderson-Berg takes into account the surroundings and the terrain of the park, and that it should be appealing and accessible for users with a variety of interests, ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

"Parks and playgrounds should be welcoming and fun places for kids and adults of all abilities, so we keep that in mind when we start the design," she says. "Good design also incorporates accessible paths to ballfields and sport courts for players and spectators, and accessible picnic tables at shelters."

Making sure people with varying abilities have access to fun doesn't stop with playgrounds. One of BPRD's Recreation Managers, RaNae Jochim, is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. That certification means she has the training to make sure that a program or a piece of equipment can be adapted to accommodate the individual.

"Each individual is unique and has different needs.

We figure out how to say 'yes' and work closely with that participant to find out what we have to do to make that person successful," RaNae says. "Kids today are really used to integration and being inclusive, thanks largely to schools. Kids are in the same classroom together, but may learn differently or have an aide. We want to continue that kind of comfort level in all our programs, and communicate with the parent and the child to see how we can make it work."

One of BPRD's programming success stories is that of Triple Star Day Camp, a summer program for kids with varying abilities.

"It's a great recreational and social outlet for those kids and their families," RaNae says. "Plus, we love working with groups like I Can Shine, Dreams in Motion, and Special Olympics. We can provide facilities for their athletes with intellectual disabilities, or mobility or visual challenges, whether it's for bicycling, running, softball, sled hockey, curling, or tennis. Another nice option for people with mobility or health issues is the use of our single rider golf cars at the golf courses. Those cars allow golfers to play right from the ball."

Bismarck's 75-plus miles of recreational trails are designed



to be used for all people. ADA factors, such as trail width, passing space, signage, and slopes are all taken into consideration in the design and construction of the trails.

Ryan Geerdes, Facilities Manager at the BSC Aquatic & Wellness Center, says BPRD has agreements with many local agencies for use of the center's pools.

"Clients of Pride, HIT, and the Anne Carlsen Center use the aquatic center for water therapy and recreation," Ryan says.

"We have a ramp and a lift chair for anyone to use." "We also have kids with behavioral issues from Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch and Charles Hall Youth Services using our facilities. That's why we're here." *W*



Paula Redmann is the Community Relations Manager for Bismarck Parks and Recreation District. She likes to run, walk, play, sing, putter in her yard, laugh with family and friends, and count her blessings. She married her high school sweetheart, Tom. They have two grown sons, Alex and Max.



MANDAN'S UNIVERSALLY POPULAR PLAYGROUND

by Marci Narum | Photo Submitted

Two-and-a-half years after opening to the community, Mandan's Universal Playground is already showing some wear and tear, evidence of how popular it is and how much it's needed.

"It was a surprise to know how many people had been driving to Minot to use the playground there," says Cole Higlin, Mandan Parks and Recreation Director.

Cole says since it opened in September 2015, the Universal Playground in Mandan has become the region's go-to park. There are similar parks in the state with universal playground equipment but Mandan's is the only playground with a fully poured-in-place, multi-colored, rubberized foundation, making mobility from one play structure to another easier. Cole says it provides opportunities for fun and activity to individuals with mobility issues and other special needs.

"This park has really set the standard for the Bismarck-Mandan area and also as a state. During the design and planning process we worked with a lot of special

needs organizations. The Morton County Special Education Department was involved to help us know what type of disabilities were throughout the area to make sure we weren't missing needs."

The Universal Playground was developed for people who have physical limitations including visual and hearing impairments, anxiety issues, and sensory processing disorders.

"Some kids can't handle the static going down a slide, so we put in a stainless steel slide so there wasn't any static when they went down," he explains.

Cole says the response to the Universal Playground has been universal popularity. And he has enjoyed some pleasant surprises.

"What really surprised us is all the teenagers and young adults from 18 to 25 that have never gone to a playground to enjoy it. There are a lot of kids with disabilities that never had the opportunity to go to a park of this magnitude and play and have fun and participate. When you're building a playground you're thinking it's basically for 12 and under. But HIT and Pride have been utilizing it during the day."

Cole says the city's other neighborhood parks and facilities are getting attention too. All are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, but the park district is still making improvements.

"We're trying to get into some of the older areas that don't have a sidewalk leading up to them and switch out sand into the wood fibers. We want to make our regional parks accessible for people of all abilities."

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THE GIFT OF Forgiveness

by Dr. Preston VanLoon

Forgiving is difficult. So is carrying the weight of undeserved hurt and pain.

Michele Knight was one of three women held captive for 11 years in the Cleveland home of Ariel Castro. According to various reports, Knight endured repeated sexual abuse during her years of captivity. She found strength and coped through her faith in God and prayer.

While Knight initially hated Castro for the terrible offenses he committed, with therapy and prayer she came to understand Castro as a sick person, in need of help and her forgiveness.

Making the decision to forgive can be challenging. Depending on the severity and nature of the offense, some hurtful actions can be more difficult to let go of than others. Victims may seek help through self-help books, family and friends, counseling, or even silently carry their pain for years. Others find help through prayer and their faith, or from the forgiveness they received from God.

Many times we don't forgive because we see our offender only through the "eyes" of the offense we suffered. We refer to the person who hurt us as a cheater, liar, thief, or some other label. The person who caused our pain may also be someone who is hurting from terrible life experiences. We may think that the person who hurt us does not deserve forgiveness because of the terrible wrong that was committed.

Forgiveness is a gift, something none of us deserve. During the season of Lent we are reminded of how God offered all of us forgiveness through the death of Jesus on the cross. As difficult as forgiving sometimes is, I do not believe that Jesus would tell us to forgive if we were not capable of doing so. No one has forgiven more than God.

Forgiveness is an internal decision, or choice, that we make freely from the heart (Matthew 18:35). We forgive because we want to, out of our own desire. We cannot change the past hurt we suffered, but we do have a choice how we will move forward. That which we feed our time, attention, and energy will shape and affect our future.

While walking home from a friend's house, Janice's 17-year-old son was fatally shot. For many years she had no idea who took her son's life. After his death, Janice struggled in her life and experienced physical, emotional, and spiritual distress. She suffered a stroke and became angry with God.

Years later Janice found out who killed her son and came face to face in court with his murderer. Janice explained how, at that time and after much suffering, she was ready to offer him forgiveness with all of her heart. When she did, Janice felt a great weight lifted that she had carried for many years.

“ Forgiveness is choosing to let go of the negative thoughts, emotions, and behaviors we have from being unjustly hurt and transforming our negative energy into healing through the practice of compassion, empathy, and kindness, even though our offender does not deserve them.

When we forgive we are not condoning, excusing, or pardoning the behavior of our offender. Nor are we just putting up with or making excuses for the unjust offense.

Forgiveness is choosing to let go of the negative thoughts, emotions, and behaviors we have from being unjustly hurt and transforming our negative energy into healing through the practice of compassion, empathy, and kindness, even though our offender does not deserve them.

When we choose not to forgive, our focus tends to be more on our pain and suffering rather than the healing we need. Withholding forgiveness hurts us twice; first from the actual offense we suffered and second by holding on to painful thoughts and emotions which affect the quality of our life and others whom we love.

Matthew struggled with making the choice to forgive when his wife of 10 years was raped and murdered. Prior to the charges being read against the individuals who perpetrated the horrible crime, Matthew said that everything in him wanted to hate, be angry, and slip into despair.

Instead of pursuing a negative and destructive path, Matthew chose the path to forgiveness, grace, and hope. He learned from the years he spent with his wife that allowing emotions to drive his decisions was a recipe for hopelessness and a poor outcome.

We find strength to forgive when we realize that the past does not need to define our future. Forgiveness sets us free from our pain and hurt so that we can experience peace in the present and have hope for a better future. We may even find a new direction and purpose in life.

Forgiveness is not something we do selfishly, or to only make ourselves feel better. God did not forgive us for His benefit, but for ours. To truly be a gift and an act of compassion, forgiveness must come from the heart. At its deepest level, forgiveness is an expression of mercy toward our offender.

By showing kindness to the person who hurt us, we also benefit and receive grace. When we commit to living a lifestyle of forgiveness, we better understand the need for mercy in our life and the forgiveness that we need from others. *W*



Dr. Preston VanLoon is a chaplain, counselor, author, and much-sought inspirational speaker who has presented domestically and internationally on a variety of topics, including interpersonal forgiveness. He is currently completing the book "The Path to Forgiveness: Moving Forward with Healing and Hope One Day at a Time."



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OH MAN

MARK UNTESEHER: LIFE IN A NEW LANE

Article and Photos by Ann McKenzie

Mark Unteseher had just finished building a giant 38 x 44 foot shop with 16 foot sidewalls for his father-in-law. He had been up and down a ladder all day long putting up rafters, so climbing it one more time to cut down a dead branch from one of his cottonwood trees for the upcoming Fourth of July bonfire was just one more chore to check off his list.

Besides putting one foot on the ladder, and one foot on the tree, Mark does not remember much else about that day. The branch hit the ladder on the way down, bent it at a 90 degree angle, and sent Mark plunging to the ground.

"I even thought about tying off," Mark says. "I was in such a hurry to get the job done so that I could have firewood. But, it totally changed everything."

Mark's fall left him with fractured C3 and C4 vertebrae, broken T5 and T6 vertebrae, lacerations on his leg, three broken ribs, a punctured lung, and a broken sternum. For a workaholic like Mark who put all of his energy into building, coaching, teaching, and hunting, this accident was the ultimate roadblock.

"I told the doctor, 'If I can't walk, I don't want to live,'" Mark recalls. "I've lived a good life, I've travelled all over the place, and I'm happy. I'm not afraid of death, and I'm not afraid of dying. I told the doctor, 'If I'm not going to walk, you tell that anesthesiologist to put something into that gas—I don't want to wake up again.' The doctor said, 'You know Mark, I can't do that.'"

One of the things that changed Mark's mind about wanting to live were some summer school students from Century High School. He was lying in his hospital bed when about 14 or 15 girls came to visit him. They brought bags of his favor-

ite peanut M&Ms and a homemade card that everyone signed. But what really tugged at his heart was when they started singing his favorite song at the time, "Girl Crush" by Little Big Town. It was a song Mark had played daily in class.

"It was so beautiful," Mark says. "They were in perfect harmony. Them singing that song, it hit me right here. It was tough. I just had tears rolling down my face and it's like unbelievable that they did this for me. It was like goodness sakes, you've done it now. I need to be around here."

Mark spent three months at Craig Hospital in Denver, Colorado. The average stay for people in his condition is six to eight months. Craig Hospital is a non-profit hospital that specializes in caring for people with spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries. One of the toughest things Mark has had to learn is adapting to being in the wheelchair.

"When I had to order my wheelchair, it was like—this is permanent, this is it," Mark says. "I think the permanency is what is tough because I was so active. I like to run. I mean, that's one thing I can't do anymore. I can't run. I can still do sports and stuff like that, but not being able to run is hard."

Running has always been a part of Mark's life. While coaching, he always ran with the kids during practices.

"Running is something you can do your whole entire life," Mark says.

Mark still plays basketball—he plays wheelchair basketball. He is also back to coaching track and cross-country.

"I have an attachment that goes in front of my chair," Mark explains. "It makes my wheelchair go up to 15 mph, so that's pretty good. Someday I'll probably invest

in a bicycle. That was something I enjoyed doing at Craig Hospital. They are pretty steep in price though—around \$6,000.”

Another hobby Mark looks forward to is hunting each year. He deer hunts and bird hunts with friends he’s known a long time.

“I go hunting with Randy Palmer,” Mark says. “I have a UTV, so somebody can drive. I hunt with Joel Puffe too. He likes riding in the UTV. Mike McDonald also likes to go. I do look forward to hunting with them. It’s something I really enjoy.”

Time has played a major role in most everything Mark does. Getting ready in the morning used to take him 10 minutes; it now takes him an hour. He can still do many of the things he did before, but it just takes more time to do them. He dresses himself, bathes himself, does dishes, and cooks his own food.

“I used to cook for the whole family, but my wife would rather that I not do that anymore,” Mark says. “So, she comes home and cooks. I still do chores around the house like I vacuum, but I don’t do as

much as I used to do.”

Another change Mark made was prioritizing his time. Since the accident, he doesn’t go home and work all the time. He used to make extra money on the side by building for other people.

“It was a bad thing I got injured, but the one thing it did was slow me down,” Mark says. “I used to work all the time—all the time. Now, I spend more time with my family, my kids, and the kids here (Bismarck High). I’m going to all their athletic events, which I never did before.”

Mark feels fortunate to be back in the classroom teaching math, and outside coaching track and cross-country.

“Things are getting easier for me,” Mark says. “I go through depression just like everybody else. When things get easier and I have less pain, I think, ‘Hey, I can live with this.’” *TM*



Annie McKenzie teaches English, journalism, and leadership classes at Bismarck High School. She is a loving wife and mother to two beautiful boys. Born an extrovert, she loves people of all ages, and never tires of conversation. If sipping coffee with friends all day were a profession, she’d be a millionaire.



Mark with his students at Bismarck High School



HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM ABOUT INCLUSION & FRIENDSHIP

by Renae Hoffmann Walker
Submitted Photos



(ABOVE)
Kayla Baker, Lee
Seaworth, and
Tierney Eagelson

(RIGHT)
Tierney Eagelson,
Jacob Vetter,
Grace Poolman,
Macy Markovick,
and Taryn Nea-
meyer



(BELOW)
Group photo of
CHS Peer to Peer
at a Bowling Event



How would you like to be a high school student and show up at a game with your brother, or worse, your parents?

Every kid wants to hang out with his/her peers at high school activities and make lifelong friends. From this reality, from a seedling of an idea, a program grew and has spread to three public high schools in Bismarck.

It's called the Peer to Peer program. Century High School special education teacher Sara Bohrer met with a couple parents who wanted to brainstorm ways to get students with disabilities involved in after school activities and maybe build some lifelong friendships. They did research on other U.S. programs, but found they were specific to a certain disability or pertained just to in-school activities. So, knowing "why" she wanted to see students of all abilities in the student section at basketball games or at school plays and prom fashion shows, Sara developed the "what" and the "how," which became the Peer to Peer program at CHS.

Last year, students could be in a regular 50-minute class where they learned about various types of disabilities, the meaning of inclusion, "people first" language, and other skills to be able to work with students with disabilities, and foster friendships and relationships outside of school hours. They did research projects and had social skills classes with their special needs peers.

"It's really changed the culture of Century as a whole. You see a lot more understanding; a lot more students stepping up even if they aren't in the class. Being a buddy during P.E. and doing things outside of school. It has also changed the outlook of some kids as they get to their senior year," says Sara. "I can think of six Peer to Peer students right now who changed their career paths because they have made such a great connection with these students and want to do something like that long term by working with people with disabilities."

Last year, CHS had 21 mentors and 28 mentees. This year, because of student interest, Bohrer created a Peer to Peer 2 program. It's a floating class, so any period mentors have open they get paired as an instructional aide in a general education

class with special needs students.

"We've had a huge success with P.E., FACS, and art teachers asking for student aides for peer support instead of an adult because they've seen how it's built confidence in students with special needs. Staff members have also seen a growth in work completion and group participation in classroom discussions."

This year, CHS has two sections of Peer to Peer 1 and one section of Peer to Peer 2 for a total of 37 mentors and 28 mentees. Sara trained Sheyenne Schneider and Lauri Dschaak at Bismarck High and Kaila Rohrich and Therese Estranger at Legacy. Those schools have now started their own Peer to Peer 1 this year; Sara hopes to help them expand to Peer 2 next year. Meanwhile, she has mentors at CHS who want a Peer 3 program. In addition, Sara went to a workshop in February through Special Olympics on how to create Unified Sports in BPS high schools, a long term goal of hers and others in Bismarck Public Schools.

For now, Sara is enjoying the fruits of her labor.

"Just the warmth and fulfillment of being able to see youth take on true leadership roles. There are so many negatives about youth today, but I've seen strong leaders come out of my program, whether they are individuals with or without disabilities, as they focus on everyone's abilities. They've become inclusive of everyone and that's what it's all about." *M*



(ABOVE)
Aliah Walth and
Radek Dvorak



(LEFT)
Sara Bohrer

(BELOW)
Finola Bauer,
Natalie Edwards,
Whitney Tufte



Renae Hoffmann Walker is a Bismarck native and has enjoyed many years as Community Relations Director at Bismarck Public Schools. She and her husband Dwayne are river rats, seasoned travelers, and proud grandparents to a new baby boy.

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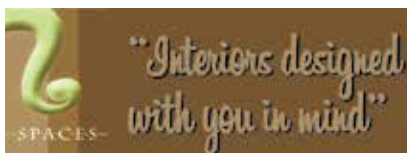
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& TRAUMA & HEALING: THE BIG T, THE LITTLE T, AND EMDR

by Brynn Luger, LPCC, NCC

In counseling, it is believed that one person's trauma is merely another person's irritating event. This means that everyone defines what he or she considers traumatic differently. For example, what is an emotionally crippling event to one person may be nothing more than an annoying occurrence to another. Simply put, trauma is subjective. This can make it difficult for us to understand our own past trauma.

TRAUMA DEFINED

Trauma refers to an event that falls outside the range of usual human experience that causes emotional distress. It may be classified in two ways: "big T" and "little t" traumas. "Big T" trauma refers to the more recognizable traumatic incidents, such as physical or sexual violence, war, natural disasters, or car accidents. Often these experiences lead to symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). However, a "little t" trauma is something that is experienced on a personal level which causes high levels of emotional stress, such as divorce, unexpected loss of a loved one, having or adopting a child, or losing one's job. It is reasonable to say that most people have experienced something frightening, traumatic, or upsetting in their past.

COPING WITH TRAUMA

Mental health counseling may help alleviate symptoms of PTSD, such as low or sad mood, anxiety, irritability, and hypervigilance. Skills gained in counseling can also help individuals learn to manage and cope with the disturbing memories of the events. The type and duration of therapy differs depending on the clinician and the client's preference.

Since the early 1980s, a specific psychotherapy technique has emerged that aims to relieve the associated emotional symptoms of trauma, called eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR).

WHAT IS EMDR?

EMDR uses a combination of bilateral stimulation, which is visual, auditory, or tactile stimulation that occurs in a rhythmic left-right pattern, and talk therapy. In addition to trauma, EMDR is used to treat a variety of mental and emotional issues including depression and anxiety. Research shows that EMDR is an effective tool that reduces the effects of PTSD. The American Psychiatric Association, the World Health Organization, and the Department of Defense consider it an effective form of treatment for trauma.



Trauma refers to an event that falls outside the range of usual human experience that causes emotional distress.

Through changes in the brain's memory networking, EMDR allows people to recover from the distress and symptoms that are the result of disturbing life experiences—big T and little t traumas, for example. The human brain has the power to heal itself after a psychological trauma. However, there are times when we experience a distressing event and it gets blocked in our memory network. EMDR helps clear out the block, and healing can then continue. EMDR's relationship to trauma is often compared to how a scrape or cut heals on skin. These typically heal quickly, unless a foreign body is stuck in the wound. Once the wound has been cleaned and the body removed, the healing process continues.

EMDR is a multi-phase therapy process that includes information gathering, target memory identification, bilateral stimulation (via eye movements or tapping), and closure. The end result that many clients report is feeling empowered by what they have

experienced in EMDR therapy.

HEALING BEGINS

Participating in EMDR treatment will not result in someone forgetting their past; rather, EMDR helps these past wounds close and heal properly—therefore the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to this event have changed, having reached an emotional resolution. This is all done without the individual going into great detail or reliving the event.

EMDR is a relatively fast and effective way to treat many mental health issues. If you're interested in learning more about EMDR or finding an EMDR therapist near you, check out emdria.org and search by location or provider. *M*



Brynn Luger is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and National Certified Counselor at the UND Center for Family Medicine. While specializing in adolescent, adult, and couples therapy, her areas of interest include Native American mental health issues, EMDR therapy, and addiction.

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COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

DREAMS IN MOTION | SUBMITTED PHOTOS



GIVE US A LITTLE HISTORY OF DREAMS IN MOTION:

After attending a sled hockey event in 2011 hosted by Hope, Inc., in Fargo-Moorhead, an inspired group of volunteers began work to create a similar program for youth and young adults with mobility challenges or visual impairments in central and western North Dakota. Since then, the all-volunteer board has partnered with a number of wonderful organizations and venues to provide wheelchair basketball, soccer, curling, downhill skiing, sled hockey, track and field, dance, and tennis to area youth. Now the Dreams in Motion team looks to expand its programs and increase awareness for adaptive sports benefits and opportunities.

WHAT SERVICES OR BENEFITS DO YOU OFFER?

The Dreams in Motion team believes every child deserves the opportunity to play sports. Whether competitive or recreational, sports offer unique opportunities to learn teamwork, sportsmanship, even heartbreak. Our goal is to help young people with mobility challenges or visual impairment gain confidence, enjoy themselves with friends and family, and, if so inclined, follow a path to college teams and national dreams. As part of our commitment, Dreams in Motion organizes sports events, venues and volunteers, provides equipment to participants—including friends and family who are also encouraged to play—and transports athletes to and from other regional events. Oh, and we have a dance team. And a fashion show.

WHO DO YOU HELP?

The Dreams in Motion mission is to provide sporting and recreational activities for youth and young adults with mobility challenges or visual impairments. For example, Hope Reis is a young woman who started Hope's Vision adaptive downhill skiing programs as a Girl Scout Gold Award project in 2010. Since then, she has worked with Dreams in Motion to grow that sport in our region, most recently hosting the annual "Day on the Hill" event at Huff Hills. Likewise, another young woman, Hope Magelky, has a passion for sled hockey and has been instrumental in driving those Dreams in Motion events. These young women embraced the physical and social changes sports activities made in their lives and actively worked to share that experience with other young people. We follow their lead and support them in their efforts because both are prime examples of who we help and why we do so.

HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS LIKE YOURS?


We are not so different from other organizations; rather there are too few of us providing recreational activities and sports programs to these young people—and we'd like to change that. In the next few weeks, Dreams in Motion will become an official Paralympic Club as designated by the U.S. Olympic Committee. With their guidance, we hope to expand our programs and enable more athletes and families to participate.

HOW CAN PEOPLE SUPPORT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

In order to grow, Dreams in Motion needs more formalized programs, additional equipment, coaches, venues, partners, and volunteers. Currently, the organization hosts fundraising events to help cover these costs, raise awareness, and inspire young people to participate.

In fact, on March 19, we will host our March Mobility Madness event, a competitive wheelchair basketball tournament held in conjunction with our Community Days celebration and silent auction at the Mandan Middle School. The event is free and open to the public and teams are made up of both able-bodied and adaptive sports athletes. To help support the event, we are seeking individuals, businesses, and organizations to sponsor and/or field teams, donate silent auction items or funds, and join us in having a grand time!

As part of the event, five-time Paralympian and three-time Gold Medalist Christina Schwab and Rio 2016 Paralympic Games Bronze Medalist Mariska Beijer, along with a number of other expert coaches and players, will share their talents with the teams. We invite you to join us to watch these athletes in action and help us make dreams come true for area youth and young adults through adaptive sports.

More information about Dreams in Motion, the March Mobility Madness tournament, and other events can be found at www.dreamsinmotioninc.com, follow us on Facebook or email our team at dreamsinmotion-inc@yahoo.com. 



(LEFT)
Dreams in Motion
sled hockey



(BELOW)
Hope Magelky
playing sled
hockey



Wheelchair
basketball



APPRECIATING ABILITIES

They are Gifts

by Betty Mills

There's no shortage of familiar expressions when the topic is ability. Some are enlightening while others dwell in the realm of downright dismay. Take that old inspirational jolt: "You can do anything you put your mind to." Really? Immediately the image of the flute soloist at a recent symphony concert floats through my tone deaf brain along with another well worn admonition, "Practice makes perfect."

Those are simply not adages which apply wholesale to all human activity. Yes, I can clean that abysmally messy garage and I can replace the missing buttons on your favorite shirt and I can drive a car and once even a tractor. I can memorize a sizeable chunk of poetry and make a commendable pot of chili. There was even a time in my life when I could knock out a Supreme Court brief on onionskin paper with fifteen copies completely error free.

(Let us stop here for a moment of thanksgiving for the invention of the computer, bifocal glasses, copying machines, and air conditioning all of which were cooked up in the brains of people with commendable ability.)

To return for a moment to the flutist, "It's a gift," certainly applies along with a fantastic memory, a mind boggling accumulation of practice time, and the guidance of experienced artists in her field. Those among us with fantastic skills and the willingness to turn their lives over to developing such perfection add sparkle to our lives.

While I take a selective view of an overzealous application of another old familiar adage, "There's no such thing as can't," actually most of us could make a list of events in our lives when we didn't listen to the pessimistic application. Like the time when, with my Nervous Nellie mother in the car, and half way home on a simple country road, a tire went flat. Mother had a list of alternative activities for me under the circumstances all

of which included miles of healthful walking, but knowing my father had spent several hours in my on-the-job flat tire training. I politely developed a deaf ear and fixed the tire.

Our world is actually filled with people with stunning abilities, and they are the ones who make our world livable, improvable, and sometimes forever etched in our memory banks of great events. They are often the visible ones, the notable, newsworthy, spectacular achievers who play flute solos all over the world and even in ours, who are on demand to share their skills with others in the field or for the public.

More frequently, however, our lives are blessed with more ordinary models of the considerable talents which surround us. Most of us have developed useful skills which serve our lives well, but when the inevitable glitches show up, it is comforting to call for help and know someone with the necessary skills to rescue us is out there.

And how did those rescuers develop those skills? One of my music teachers reduced it to a simple rule: "You have to practice." And study. And ask questions. And be willing to fail as part of the practice. Then time passes and the world changes and the skills developed are no longer needed at home or away. The classic old example used to be the buggy whip, but we have updated that image at an intimidating rate so that, for example, taxi drivers can now worry about driverless cars and publishing houses mutter about the demise of the printed page.

In his book *"Thank You For Being Late,"* columnist Thomas Friedman compares the state of our world in the electronic age to what happened 100 years ago when the advent of electricity fundamentally changed how our world worked. The examples are everywhere in our modern life, but it is not a matter of excluding abilities but of updating them.

Would I like to go back to the manual typewriter where I first learned to pound those alphabetical keys? Not even for a short letter. I don't even want to go back to the fanciest of electric typewriters which I once so gratefully mastered. Give me my computer and the number where my skilled computer rescuer can be reached.

There are abilities which reach beyond the mastery of our physical world. The skill we too often take for granted, and certainly don't financially reward adequately, belongs to those who are responsible for mastering and maintaining that irreplaceable element in our world—human lives. They teach our children, care for the weak and disabled, improve daily lives in small ways, and in crucial ones for all of us.

It is an ability than can be trained and improved and maintained, but it will never go out of style for which I am always grateful and frequently willing to be lost in admiration.

All things considered, it really is a wondrous world we happened upon. *TM*



Betty Mills was a weekly political columnist for the Bismarck Tribune for 25 years. In her 90 years, she has shared many abilities—as an author, tractor driver, and even as a rattlesnake hunter.

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