



# MILESTONE INC.

Building Lives • Building Futures

## MATTERS

Newsletter For The Friends & Supporters of MILESTONE, Inc.



### FALL 2020 CONTENTS



Planning for  
the Future  
3

New Sensory  
Walkway  
4

COVID  
Celebrations  
5

Exercising &  
Gardening  
6

Helping Milestone  
7

Camping at Home  
8

### CHANGES AT MILESTONE INDUSTRIES



While COVID19 presented many limitations and restrictions—it also provided an opportunity to step back and look at all the programs at MILESTONE to see if they could be changed to better meet the needs and interests of the individuals we serve. Since March the staff at MILESTONE Industries and MILESTONE Training Center have been looking at every aspect of the overall program and for ways to make it better. Safety remains the number one concern for the reopening of MILESTONE, only one van will be loaded and unloaded at the start of each work day, work areas will be expanded, and there will be no co-mingling among the individuals from different group homes.

Programs are being developed that will combine home based training with work at MILESTONE Industries and community experiences. Each program will be designed based on the interests of the individuals. For example if a group has an interest in photography, the at

home training could be combined with a community photo shoot allowing everyone to test their new skills.

Classrooms may become multipurpose rooms that incorporate specialized programs.

Bill Grahn, Senior Vice President of Adult Services says this will allow MILESTONE to increase the overall quality of life for the individuals we serve by giving them more choices, adding MILESTONE already does a great job of meeting the needs the people we serve, we want to make sure we are also fulfilling their interests.





## FROM THE DESK OF SHAWN WAY, MILESTONE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Friend of MILESTONE,

When last we spoke we were knee deep in the new reality of COVID-19 infection, protocols, anxiety and concerns for the individuals we serve and the staff that care for them.

Fast-forward. Those concerns continue to exist, but we are moving forward

At the time of this writing (September 1, 2020) we are preparing for our adults to return to Day Training and the children we serve at RocVale to return to school. Day Training sites have been re-engineered and new protocols are in place to allow individuals to return to some level of the “new normal”. The children attend a variety of schools, all of which are have also re-engineered, mixing in-person with online education. After 5 months of “Sheltering in Place”, we have slowly begun venturing back out into the world.

Unfortunately, COVID remains in our life. We’re obsessed with safety for the individuals we serve and our staff, but even with our laser focus, we’ve had more than 25 of the individuals we serve infected with COVID-19. For the most part the individuals we serve have come through quite well, but unfortunately the passing of one of our long-time residents may reflect COVID on his autopsy report, though cancer ultimately took his life.

We have had more than 40 staff members infected with COVID. The impact of COVID on staff has ranged from many being asymptomatic to a handful admitted to the hospital. At this time all have come through the fight and 38 have returned to work. As a reminder, MILESTONE is deemed a “congregate setting”, a living arrangement with large numbers under one roof. Try as we might to keep COVID out of our lives, this insidious disease is nearly impossible to stop. Despite the ongoing concerns, our heroes have jumped into the flames of COVID. Direct Service Providers and Nurses are heroes here at MILESTONE. Are they fearless? No, absolutely not. But do they continue to care for the individuals they serve? Yes, that’s what Super Heroes do.

In closing I’ll simply state while the COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives we have adapted and are moving forward. Our management team does an incredible job in the best of times, but have shown their metal during this most difficult time.

I thank you for your support. I would never have imagined the challenges mankind has faced in 2020, but despite it all we press forward.

Thank you!

M. Shawn Way  
President and CEO





## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE



Janet has called MILESTONE home for over 40 years. She spent her childhood in Maryland with 7 brothers and sisters. When she was six years old her family moved to DeKalb, and both of her parents

became involved in development of programs for children with Intellectual Disabilities. As the years passed her parents realized Janet would feel more comfortable around children like herself, so they found residential placement. After her mother died and Janet entered her teenage years, her father worked diligently with the Diocese of Rockford to create a residential facility for teenaged mentally disabled children. St. Vincent's in Freeport opened and Janet resided there until she was 19. Soon, it was time to look for Adult placement, her father knew about MILESTONE and spoke to Jim Hamilton and soon after Janet moved to MILESTONE.

She was one of the first residents at Elmwood Heights and has made many close friends with fellow residents and staff through the years.

She loves spending time at her brother's and sister's homes, but most of her brothers and sisters live out of state, so the family appreciates the fact the staff will work with them so everyone can visit with Janet either on the phone or with Facetime.

Janet loves music, dancing, food ,especially salads, cheeseburgers, spaghetti, pop and ice cream, and hugging people. She also enjoys outings, including Special Olympics and Camp Winnebago in the summer.



Her family says MILESTONE is truly Janet's home in every way. They add communication between staff and family is outstanding, the care and respect for all individuals is beyond amazing, the opportunities for growth and experiences are abundant. They say the interaction with everyone is truly wonderful. Her family also appreciates how staff in all areas including residential service, vocational training, social services and the Dental clinic work together to create an environment that allows Janet to grow and thrive.



Her family also advises other families to start planning for their loved ones future early and to also stay involved in their lives after they receive placement, and to take the time to get to know the staff.



## MILESTONE MISSION STATEMENT

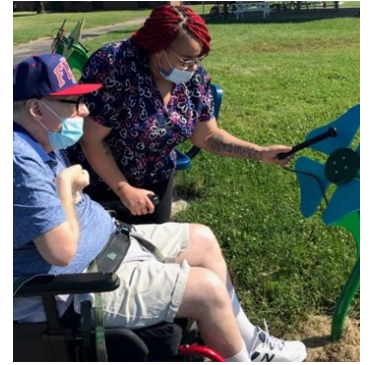
"Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, to participate in community life, to develop and exercise personal competence, to have family and friends, and to make decisions in their lives." MILESTONE, Inc. exists to ensure that persons with developmental disabilities can exercise these same rights.





## NEW SENSORY WALKWAY

Music fills the air at Elmwood Heights thanks to a new Sensory walkway lined with musical flowers and drums. The walkway also includes an activity water table, adjustable basketball hoop and a tetherball. Kids Around the World helped with the installation. A donation in Honor of The Whitcher Family and a Memorial for RoseMary Hendershott provided the funding for the project.



## NEW SWING SET

Thanks to another donor, the Elmwood Heights Sensory walkway will be expanded and a new swing set will be added. Again Kids Around the World helped with the installation.

## REMEMBERING A LONGTIME FRIEND OF MILESTONE

A special garden was installed near the entrance of home 63 at Elmwood Heights in memory of Su Gilbert. Su was a long time MILESTONE employee who always went the extra mile for Individuals MILESTONE serves.

## THANK YOU TO PEOPLE HELPING TO KEEP US SAFE

Thank you to the people making and donating the cloth masks being worn by staff and our Individuals. You are helping to keep everyone safe.







## A COVID ALTERNATIVE TO GOING TO INDUSTRIES.



Instructors at MILESTONE Industries were creative and found ways to continue activities at MILESTONE's Group Homes during the COVID19 restrictions when Individuals could not travel to Industries. The staff made it work and everyone enjoyed the activities.



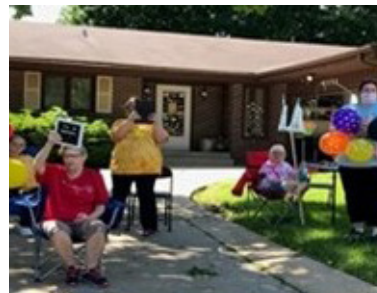
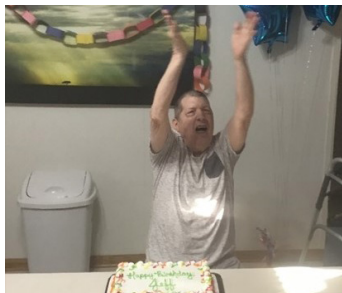
## WE ALSO HAD FUN

Parties with special themes helped put a smile on everyone face. They always included special activities and special food.



## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS PUT SMILES ON EVERYONE'S FACES

MILESTONE's staff made sure everyone had a great birthday during the COVID-19 pandemic. Celebrations included cakes, presents, drive-by parades and signs.



## A SPECIAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Winnebago County Sheriff's department deputies helped mark a special birthday for Terry. Everyone gathered outside to see a parade complete with lights and sirens.







## GETTING A WORK OUT DURING COVID

Our staff and Individuals kept moving during the COVID restrictions. They took the opportunity to explore areas around their homes while getting daily exercise.



## HOW TO MAKE THINGS GROW

Many MILESTONE homes took advantage of “Sheltering in Place” and used the time to plant a garden and watch the vegetables grow. The best part was eating the results of their labors.







## MILESTONE NEEDS



### ROCVALE CHILDREN'S HOME

Outdoor Sensory Water Fountain \$5,000  
Outdoor Sensory Equipment \$10,000  
New Furniture - 3 homes @ \$5,000 \$15,000  
Therapeutic Recreational Opportunities \$5,000



### MILESTONE TRAINING CENTER

Outside Recreation  
Area Upgrades \$2,000



### MILESTONE INDUSTRIES

iPads - 4 @ \$400 \$1,600  
Various Educational Materials \$3,000

### ELMWOOD EAST

Enclosed Patio \$10,500  
Replacement Windows for Home \$20,000

### AGENCY WIDE

AED Training Units \$2,000  
Robo-Coupe Commercial Food Processor 2 @ \$1,900 - \$3,800  
24 chairs for Training room \$4,000  
Smart Board and Stand for Training Room \$6,100  
Standing Cooler for Main Kitchen \$32,000  
12 and 15 Passenger Vans - 9 @ \$30,000 \$270,000



### ADULT GROUP HOMES

Slings for EZ-stand - 3 @ \$350 \$1,050  
Patio \$1,500  
iPads - 4 @ \$400 \$1,600  
Exercise Equipment \$2,550  
Support Railings \$3,000  
Washers and Dryers - 6 @ \$1,000 \$6,000  
Screened Porch or 3 Season Room at 1 Group Home \$7,000  
Carports at 2 Group Homes \$11,000  
New Furniture - 10 Homes @ \$4,000 \$40,000  
Bathroom Renovations - 2 @ \$30,000 \$60,000



### ELMWOOD HEIGHTS SPECIALIZED CARE FACILITY

Adaptive Swing Set with Wheel Chair Swing \$8,000  
Medical Equipment \$10,000  
Positioning Slings - 40 @ \$275 \$11,000  
Sensory Equipment - 6 Homes @ \$5,000 \$30,000  
Bedroom/Bathroom Remodels and Upgrades in Each Home - 6 @ \$10,000 \$60,000  
Replacement Carpet for Two Homes \$20,000  
EZ lifts - 5 @ \$8,000 \$40,000  
EZ Lift Replacement Batteries - 10 @ \$100 \$1,000  
Replacement Windows for 6 Homes \$80,000



### MILESTONE DENTAL CLINIC

Parking Lot Repair and Repaving \$40,000  
Replace Carpeting/Flooring \$9,000  
Ultrasonic Surgical Equipment \$7,000

MILESTONE, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) Illinois not-for-profit organization. MILESTONE Matters is developed to inform the public of the program services we offer to developmentally disabled citizens from Northern Illinois. To learn more about MILESTONE and the individuals we serve, please call (815) 654-6100.

President and CEO: M. Shawn Way  
MILESTONE Matters Editor: Arles Hendershott  
Copyright © 2020 by MILESTONE, inc.

## EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

### **10 years**

Brian Bunkers	July
Jeffrey Hilden	August
Jeana Jones	July

### **15 years**

Tameka Porter	July
Carol Jackson	August
Christina McCullough	August

### **20 years**

Beck Olthoff	August
Susan Al-Saiyani	September
Rosanna Collins	September

### **30 years**

Sheila Myers	July
--------------	------

### **40 years**

Martin Taylor	August
---------------	--------



4060 McFarland Road  
Rockford, IL 61111

**Address Service Requested**

---

---



## MILESTONE MATTERS

FALL 2020



### CAMPING AT HOME

The Adopt a Camper program took a different form this year. Since no one could go away to camp MILESTONE's staff designed a camp at home program. Each week activity boxes with special projects were sent to the group homes. All donations for Adopt a Camper were used for this program. A grant from The Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities and the ARC also provided funding for the Camp at Home activity boxes.

