

# St. Ann Center's seasons of Life

People of all ages and abilities spend the day at St. Ann Center because of your support. You made these stories of our joyful intergenerational community possible.



Remember moving out on your own for the first time?

**Your support gives St. Ann Center clients that same exciting feeling of independence. Just ask Sarah Lapre.**

"Some days, I hardly think about having cerebral palsy," said the self-assured 33-year-old. Born with CP, she's used a wheelchair for most of her life.

**"I just tell myself I'm not letting anything that's going on with my body get me down. I won't let anything beat me."**

That hasn't always been easy. For a time, before coming to St. Ann Center, Sarah did piecework in a vocational training program. It was physically taxing. "Around that time, my sister brought my niece and nephew to St. Ann Center for swimming lessons," she said. "As soon as she saw the place, she called to tell me, 'Sarah, you have to come here!'"

In the three years that she's been a client at the Stein Campus, Sarah has participated in the center's swimming, ceramics, jewelry-making and art programs and used massage services, as well. But one of the things she values most about her time at St. Ann Center is the confidence it's given her.

"Here, people let me do what I need to do, handle what I can handle, and trust that if I

need help, I'll ask," she said. "That freedom has shown me how to be more independent." Sarah demonstrated just how capable she is a year ago, when she moved into her own apartment. "That was a huge step for me and my family," she added.

The godmother of her young niece and nephew, Sarah enjoys the intergenerational environment at St. Ann Center. "When the kids ask about my chair, I just explain that, for me, the wheelchair is like my legs," Sarah said. "There's no need to be shy around me."

Not one to shy away from anything, Sarah recently went zip-lining while on vacation and loved it. **"I'll try anything once," she said, revealing her next extreme sport dream, "I really want to try bungee jumping."**



## Dear Friend,

The other day, Sue, one of our adult clients, told me about a unique perk of coming to St. Ann Center. "It's made me 'the cool grandma,'" she said. Thanks to our intergenerational music therapy sessions, she knows every word of "Baby Shark" and "The Wheels on the Bus." Her grandkids are thrilled that she can sing their favorite songs along with them.

Our combined music classes for adults and children are always popular. The fun songs and the youngsters' liveliness brighten up everybody's day. Making music together connects people in ways that few other activities can. It truly bonds the generations.

Recently, I dropped by our four-year-olds' classroom. Their teacher told me they'd been working on a song and were ready to sing it for me. I was half-expecting a pop or rap song. Imagine my surprise when they took a deep breath and sang, "You are my sunshine...my only sunshine!" That 1939 hit was one my own parents taught me when I was four.

Our music therapist, Hannah Goodness, let me borrow a picture book she's been using in her intergenerational classes. It's based on one of the greatest songs of all time,



"What a Wonderful World," as sung by Louis Armstrong. As I read it, I couldn't help but notice how beautifully it reflects life at St. Ann Center—a place where we reverence "skies of blue and clouds of white," where the colors in the rainbow "are also on the faces of people going by" and where babies will grow up to "learn much more than I'll ever know."

As the year draws to a close, I thank all St. Ann Center supporters and friends for creating a truly wonderful world, where kids grow up and adults grow older in the best way possible—together.

*J. Edna*

## On Our Wish List

**Small 4 wheel drive truck: \$35,000**

**Flooring for three Stein Campus adult units: \$50,000**

**Our wish list is updated online:**  
[stanncenter.org/wishlist](http://stanncenter.org/wishlist)



**Rita Estremera is the soap star of our Bucyrus Campus.**

## Cleaning Up on a Dream

Rita Estremera is no stranger to the sweet smell of success. Customers are bubbling over with praise for the fragrant handmade soaps and lotions she sells from her cozy shop just off the bustling lobby of the Bucyrus Campus.

The local entrepreneur launched her business 10 years ago, after she taught herself to make soap for her family. "My kids have very sensitive skin, so I decided to switch from commercial soap to something more natural," she explained. When friends heard about her new hobby, they started ordering her soap, too. Soon she was in business.

**(Story continues on page 6)**



## A Double Blessing

Twins Deborah Hill and Denise Cole grew up together. They both went into the healthcare field and shared in the care of their aging mother. And now they live in the same apartment complex.

The energetic 64-year-olds also team up at St. Ann Center's Bucyrus Campus, where they volunteer assisting adult day care clients. "We love giving them that extra TLC," Deborah said as she poured coffee for the early morning arrivals. "And they love telling us, 'Y'all look so much alike,'" Denise chimed in.

The sisters came to St. Ann Center through the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR). As a GWAAR partner, the Bucyrus Campus gives older adults a chance to learn new skills and gain experience needed for

future employment. At the same time, clients enjoy the extra attention that GWAAR volunteers like Deborah and Denise provide.

"We like to spoil them," Deborah said. In fact, the

twins regularly give the clients manicures. And there's more to it than just pretty nails. "We include a warm-water hand soak and massage," Denise said. "It helps the clients relax, and that loving touch makes a real difference."



**Twins Deborah and Denise (pictured with client Carol) share a love for volunteering.**

## Businesses Invest in Volunteering



A typical day at the office turns into a special chance to give back for employees of several major Milwaukee businesses. **In recent months, BMO Harris Bank, Aurora Advocate and Northwestern Mutual gave their staffers a day off from work to volunteer at St. Ann Center.**

"It's great to have big groups like these who are available to work on special projects," said Delma Vega,

St. Ann Center's Director of Volunteer Services. BMO employees spent the day at the Stein Campus sorting children's books, sanitizing childcare toys and playing games with the adult clients. Aurora Advocate staffers helped clients in one of our art classes to complete a jewelry project.

The crew from Northwestern Mutual brought along their own intergenerational project. As part of the Beads of Courage program, they worked with St. Ann Center kids and adults creating gift packets for children coping with serious illness. Each packet included an uplifting message and a special bead representing resilience and healing.



## Postcards Tell Memorable Stories

**St. Ann Center donors ensure our children and adults enjoy the fun and excitement of regular outings. For adult clients, participation in recreational outings can lead to increased self-confidence, happiness and life satisfaction. There are physical benefits from exercise, too.**

For the kids, outings help them build social skills and self-esteem and keep them mentally, emotionally and physically healthy.

**Here are just a few of the places our St. Ann Center family visited in recent months.**

- 1.** Clients from the Bucyrus Campus savor the summer splendor of Boerner Botanical Gardens.
- 2.** The Milwaukee Public Museum excites minds of all ages.
- 3.** St. Ann Center baseball fans root for the home team as the Brewers play the Braves.
- 4.** Adult clients from both campuses take in a movie matinee—complete with popcorn.
- 5.** The Milwaukee County Zoo is a popular spot for animal-loving adults from both of our campuses.
- 6.** Our summer campers have a blast exploring nature trails that wind through Wehr Nature Center.
- 7.** The kids let curiosity be their guide through Discovery World's aquarium and science and technology rooms.
- 8.** The summer camp kids have a grand time on a Great Lake, skipping rocks and beachcombing along the Lake Michigan shore.
- 9.** The children find adventure under glass during a visit to the Mitchell Park Domes.



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## Bus Stop Draws Attention



Mayor Tom Barrett congratulates artist Tyler Copes.

Tyler "Tystarr" Copes has joined a citywide movement to take the boring out of Milwaukee bus stops. St. Ann Center's Creative Director, Tyler has turned a bus shelter on the corner of North Avenue and 27th Street into a graphic example of the beauty of our intergenerational mission.

Entitled **Seasons 414**, Tyler's piece is part of the Milwaukee County Transit System's Bus Shelter Art Project. His colorful illustration depicts a diverse group of people enjoying Wisconsin's winter, spring, summer and fall months. Only a couple blocks from St. Ann Center's Bucyrus Campus, this is the first shelter located on Milwaukee's north side to be part of the project.

"I definitely was inspired by working at St. Ann Center," Tyler said. "It's an amazing thing to see how people of different ages and ethnicities come together here." His seasonal scenes feature men, women and children of all ages and include a man in a wheelchair "checking his cell phone and just chillin'," Tyler added.

Part of what motivated him to participate in the bus art project was his love for Milwaukee. "I wanted to contribute something to the city that adopted me," the Brooklyn native explained.



SEASONS 414 Panel



Grade-schoolers forge a Cameroon connection.

## To Africa with Love

Fourth graders at Bay View's St. Thomas Aquinas Academy recently took on a special fundraising project. Not for a class trip or party, it was to help other children more than 6,000 miles away through St. Ann Center's Cameroon Goat & Chicken Fund.

Sr. Helene Mertes, OSF, visited the class, explaining how the program works.



Money raised buys goats and chickens for the poorest residents of Cameroon in Central Africa. This livestock provides both a food source and added income for families in need.

Teacher Kelly Orlowski helped the kids launch a school-wide campaign. They wrote letters to parents, drew posters and spoke about the project during morning announcements. To keep track of their progress, they wrote donors' names on paper chickens and goats displayed in the school hallway.

**"The kids stayed after school to work on the project and sold goat and chicken coupons during lunch," said Principal Frank Edgeworth. Their hard work paid off—raising \$1,116!**

## Contest Lets Kids Show They Care

The new Overnight Respite Center at the Bucyrus Campus is the picture of hospitality, thanks to an amazing group of talented young artists.

St. Ann Center volunteers Leigh Peterson and Patt Krejci offered to decorate the nine-bedroom wing. They were almost finished when they noticed something was missing. "The Bucyrus Campus reflects the culture of the neighborhood," Leigh said. "And we wanted the respite center to do the same."

Patt reached out to Milwaukee High School of the Arts teacher Carrie Hoelzer. Together, they came up with rules for a student art contest. Its theme: African-Americans in our Community.



Judges marvel at art created for display at St. Ann Center.



"The kids enjoy taking what they've learned in the curriculum to help the community," Carrie said. The contest had more than 60 entries. They ranged from watercolors, oils and acrylics to photography and digital illustration. All will be permanently displayed in the respite center and throughout the Bucyrus Campus.

**Top winners are (left to right): Jade Washington, Judges Choice for her photo manipulation; James Whitelow, first place in photography; and Amya Caberos, Best of Show for her painting.**

## *(Continued from Inside Cover) Cleaning Up on a Dream*

"I grew up in the Dominican Republic, and we had Aloe vera plants growing in our backyard," Rita recalled. "We used the gel inside its leaves as a healing ointment." Those memories inspired the name of her business, Aloekui, and her line of homemade Aloe-packed products.

Up until a few months ago, Rita sold her soaps primarily online and at Milwaukee's Cathedral Square Market. That's where she met Sr. Edna. "She's sold her jewelry right beside me for years," Rita said. "Last summer, she told me there was a place at the Bucyrus Campus that would be perfect for me to set up shop. I took a tour, and I was immediately hooked.

"The best part is that I'm from the community," she added. "I live five minutes away." Rita spends hours making soaps, bath bombs, shower gels, shampoo bars, salt scrubs and more in the basement of her home. She also makes time to participate in St. Ann Center's First Fridays 4Business, a fast-growing networking group of north side entrepreneurs that meets monthly at the Bucyrus Campus.

"I thank God for this opportunity and for putting so many wonderful people in my path," Rita said. If you'd like to check out Rita's products, stop by her Bucyrus Campus shop, open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m., or visit [aloekui.com](http://aloekui.com).





## *A Garden St. Francis Would Love*

Mary McCanna and Ken Huber (above) have a friendship that's anything but garden-variety. Mary is a massage therapist and part-time gardener at the Stein Campus. And Ken lends a hand and his green thumb as a volunteer.

"I came in for a massage six years ago and mentioned I was looking for something to do," said Ken, a Bay View retiree. He's been seeding, weeding and watering alongside Mary ever since.

"It's important for our clients to be able to go outside and take in the beauty around them," Mary said. The childcare classes benefit, too. "I brought in a monarch caterpillar the other day," she added. "We're going to teach the kids how to grow milkweed."

Mary and Ken are always happy to share their garden smarts when clients and staff ask for growing tips. They're also quick to pass along seeds, slips and extra plants—many of which are donated. Mary's neighbors donated daisies and irises. A client's caregiver contributed a garden statue and birdbath. The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi pitched in, too. "This year, they gave us 30 geranium plants they raised in their hoop house," Mary said.

This time of year, Ken is hauling pots full of annuals inside. They'll spend the winter in the center's sunny atrium. But he's much more than a fair-weather volunteer. "A lot of damage is done to walls by wheelchairs," he said. "So when it's cold out, I do touch-up painting inside until it's gardening season again."

**Many of our clients don't have the space for a home garden or the physical ability to maintain one. Thanks to you, our donors, they enjoy the life-giving beauty of flowers at St. Ann Center every day.**

## FALL FEATURED EVENTS

### Charity Cash Raffle Drawing Saturday, Oct. 26th | 2pm

Stein Campus: 2801 E. Morgan Ave.

**Grand Prize – \$200,000 CASH**

50 prizes given away!

**Tickets: \$50/each or \$100 for 3**

**Purchase:** 1 (800) 272-1938 or **visit**

Stein Campus, 6am-6pm | Mon-Fri

Visit: **StAnnCenter.org/Raffle**

### Chili & Jewelry Sale

**Saturday, Nov. 23 | 9am-1pm**

Stein Campus: 2801 E. Morgan Ave.

**Featuring chili from top Milwaukee restaurants.**

Enjoy a bowl or a flight of 4 tasting portions while you shop our Vintage Jewelry Collection and local vendors.

Visit: **StAnnCenter.org/ChiliSale**



## *Gala Donors Set Record*

The 15th Annual Dream Together Gala was a record-breaking one for St. Ann Center. More than \$283,000 was raised on Aug. 16 at Discovery World Museum.

**Our thanks to our generous sponsors, donors, volunteers and friends who made the event so successful!**

**Field trips  
for all ages**

*Inside...*



**Plus,**  
Come to our  
Chili & Jewelry Sale!

**STEIN CAMPUS**

2801 E. Morgan Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53207  
(414) 977-5000

**BUCYRUS CAMPUS**

2450 W. North Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53205  
(414) 210-2450

*To update your mailing preferences:  
(414) 977-5064 or [sselz@stanncenter.org](mailto:sselz@stanncenter.org)*

**CALENDAR UPDATES** Bucyrus ● Stein ●

(Both Campuses Closed Nov. 28-29; Dec. 24-25)

Oct. 2 & 16 Caregiver Support Group ●

Oct. 4 First Fridays 4Business ●

Oct. 4 Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group ●

Oct. 10 On the Table MKE ●

Oct. 11 Parkinson's Support Group ●

Oct. 15 Parkinson's Support Group ●

Oct. 17 Benevolent Touch (BT) Workshop ●

Oct. 17 Jewelry Sale @ Marcia Coggs Center

Oct. 18 BT Instructor Training ●

Oct. 26 Charity Cash Raffle ●

Nov. 1 First Fridays 4Business ●

Nov. 1 Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group ●

Nov. 6 & 20 Caregiver Support Group ●

Nov. 8 Parkinson's Support Group ●

Nov. 19 Parkinson's Support Group ●

Nov. 23 Chili & Jewelry Sale ●

Dec. 4 & 18 Caregiver Support Group ●

Dec. 6 First Fridays 4Business ●

Dec. 6 Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group ●

Dec. 12 Jewelry Sale @ MKE County Courthouse

Dec. 13 Parkinson's Support Group ●

More info at: [stanncenter.org/events](http://stanncenter.org/events)



*Perfect Traveling Companions*

There's one thing that always gets 3-year-old Alexis and 84-year-old Alice up and at 'em in the morning—each other. Alexis is the daughter of Rosemarie Alloway, lead CNA in the Stein Campus Veranda Unit. And Alice is a longtime Veranda client.

"Alexis has known all of my clients from the time she was born," said Rosemarie, who enrolled all her young daughters in St. Ann Center's childcare program. "She likes being around them so much, I was having a hard time getting her to go downstairs to her classroom in the morning."

Then Rosemarie had an idea. "I know Alexis likes tagging along with Alice when she uses her walker," she said. "So we started a routine—the three of us walk downstairs to Alexis' classroom together." Not only does the tradition get Alexis to preschool on time, it gives Alice extra exercise she needs. Best of all, Rose added, "seeing the two of them together gives everyone a smile."