



Friendship Ark
HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

FAITH • FAMILY • FRIENDSHIP

Fall 2024
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The Bill Bergan 5k on the 4th - 20th Anniversary



This July 4th marked the 20th anniversary of our signature summer fundraising event, the Bill Bergan 5k on the 4th. Bill's idea behind founding the race 20 years ago was to have an event that would bring the community together in support of Friendship Ark, and it most certainly has done that over the years. Participants

have included individuals and families from throughout our region and even from other states and some families have made it a part of their annual 4th of July tradition. We are thankful for the continued support of the Bergan family and appreciate the special meaning Bill's son, Mike, gave to the event by addressing the participants before the start of the race. In addition to Mike's words, we began our day with a prayer of blessing by core member Joel and the singing of the National Anthem by Katelyn and Maddie Ellis. The rain that was in the forecast missed us and partly cloudy skies made for perfect race day conditions at our scenic Ada Hayden Lake setting. Several core members participated in the race and we had a record number of participants for the second year in a row. Special thanks to Discover Ames for their sponsorship, to Downtown Ames Fareway for providing water and post race snacks, to Sign Gypsies Ames for the amazing and festive signage, and to all of our volunteers who made the day possible. If you have joined us for the race at any time over the last 20 years, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Your support helps us to provide a high standard of services to our core members and you have made a difference in their lives. If you haven't participated yet, come and join us next year. We can't wait to meet you! (For more pictures visit our Facebook album.)



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Recruiting and Community Engagement Corner

This summer, we continued to be active participants in Rotary and Ames Regional Economic Alliance activities; such as coffee mingles, business after hours, ribbon cuttings, and Leadership Ames. All of these activities are important in helping to connect us to donors, volunteers, and even potential employees. It is also an opportunity for those who may not be aware of who we are and what we do to hear our story. Speaking of telling our story, in June we were able to share about who we are at the Lutheran Church of Hope's Mission Fair and at the Ames Jaycee's event, Ames on the Half Shell. July brought on our race which happened to be our 20th anniversary! In August we were blessed yet again by the Prochnow and Ojard family, as they hosted the 3rd Annual Sara Ojard Memorial Golf Outing benefiting Friendship Ark. One of the best parts of this summer was getting to hang out with my friends Kim, Joel, Tom, and Courtney as we traveled to different business partners to deliver recognition gifts in honor of their commitment to supporting adults with intellectual disabilities. Thank you, business partners!

Staff who celebrated anniversaries this quarter include: Karigan Rossiter, Jonathan Acevedo, Saja Ibrahim, Kashia Tuel, Rhonda Kouhgn, Hannah Velazquez, Julia Daub, and Sophia Riker (1 year) and Jen Pohl (5 years). We also welcomed the following staff to the Friendship Ark family. Please help us in welcoming: Jes Miller, Elizabeth Siddens, Mindy Schaffner, Ashley Monahan, Stacey Parks, Sarah Glade, Kennedy Kracht, Teagan Johnson, Kira Lanphier, and Belle Walter.

As many of us utilize Iowa Summers to soak up the sun, jump in the pool, feel the grass while listening to live music, cheer on the races and discover new parks and culture around us, it was no different for our core members! Wow have we been blessed with another memorable season! We will share just a few highlights and how our core members rediscovered their love for the Midwest Summer below.

We love serving our community and spent 10 hours distributing flyers for Rummage Rampage, we cheered and filled water cups for two races of the Nevada Running Club, 12 of our core members volunteered at Lutheran Church of Hope's Vacation Bible School, and we volunteered with Golf Fore Kids for United Way of Story County. Our summer was also full of a lot of fun activities. We attended the Demolition Derby and Mud Races in Boone, I-Cubs games, the Ames Fly-In, and the World Food and Music Festival, we experienced another OHV ATV ride, we participated in Painting in the Park at Peterson Park and a Wild Night Life Hike at Jester Park, we watched an outdoor movie at Bandshell Park, and experienced Squonk BruHaHa at Cowles Commons in Des Moines. Of course we also love to go swimming and made sure we did a lot of that as well.

By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager, Michelle Jackson, HR Assistant, and Natalie Seibold, Day Habilitation Supervisor

Our Business Partners

Help us to thank our 2024 Business Partners at the Family Level of \$1,000 and above for their generous support of adults living with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community. Business Partners at this level are recognized in various ways, including a quarterly mention in our newsletter. If you find yourself interacting with them or visiting their offices, let them know you appreciate their contribution.



Third Annual Sara Ojard Memorial Golf Outing



We greatly appreciate the Prochnow family for hosting and all of their friends for participating in the third annual Sara Ojard Memorial Golf Outing to benefit Friendship Ark. Through everyone's hard work and generosity, over \$7,500 was raised in support of our mission, carrying forward Sara's caring spirit. This year, thanks to a generous sponsor, two of our core members along with a staff member and her husband were able to participate in the outing and had a fantastic time. Thanks to everyone who played a part in the success of this event!



Introducing our Spiritual Life Committee

Friendship Ark is a faith-based organization and faith was very important to our founders, Joe and Lois Johanns, and is also important to many of our core members and their families. Please note that while we will support core members on the faith journey of their choosing, Friendship Ark is non-denominational and will support core members regardless of whether they choose to pursue a faith or which faith they choose to pursue.

Friendship Ark's Spiritual Life Committee is made up of staff and board members with an interest in this area and has the purpose of nurturing the spirit of God's presence and love within the Friendship Ark community. This committee meets on a quarterly basis and has been working to revive a Friendship Ark Faith Community Facebook page which was set up as a private page some time ago for staff to find community and encourage each other if they choose to do so. The page is for all employees and is a great place to post an uplifting quote, a song, or a prayer request.

Another important role of the Spiritual Life Committee is the oversight of Friendship Ark's Employee Emergency Fund which was established to allow coworkers to extend compassion to each other in times of need. The Employee Emergency Fund is a financial assistance program managed by the FA Spiritual Life Committee and funded by employee donations. The program provides support to employees and their immediate family in times of unusual need. This fund is available as long as there is money available in the fund for disbursement. In order to receive the funds the employee must go through an application process and applications are reviewed by the Spiritual Life Committee for discernment. This program has been a great tool for us to care for one another and show love to our co-workers.

By Laura Dolan, HR Manager and Spiritual Life Committee Member

Save the Date



Business Partner Recognition Gifts

Our Marketing Manager, Beth, and her friends Joel, Kim, Tom, and Courtney have been busy visiting our business partners and delivering appreciation gifts in recognition of their support of our mission. Are you interested in becoming a business partner or event sponsor? Contact Beth at bethl@friendshipark.org for more information.



Kim with Grace Larkey at Chevron - Renewable Energy Group

A Day in the Life of a Core Member - Intermediate Support Services

While you have probably seen our core members out and about in the community or you follow our social media pages and see all of the fun activities they participate in or the ways they volunteer, have you ever wondered what a typical day in the life of a core member might look like? Follow along as we learn how a core member receiving services in one of our intermediate homes might spend their days.

Our core member's home is typically staffed with in-person support staff every day of the week for only about 4-5 hours per day. When in-person staff support is not at the house, the core members here utilize a Night Owl Support System (NOSS). This system in simple terms is a Direct Support Professional, but virtual. The core members at this home can use their phones or a panel on the wall to call NOSS and are able to ask them any questions they have or set up a wake-up call if needed. Our core member will typically use NOSS when they are out and about in the community to ask questions that they may have about what to do if needed.

Our core member usually wakes up independently with their phone alarm around 8-9 a.m. After waking up, they will typically get ready for work or for whatever their day may include. Our core member works at a fast food restaurant in Ames Monday-Friday from 11a-3p. They will ride CyRide or HIRTA to and from work every day! Our core member also chooses to work at Hilton Coliseum collecting tickets for sporting events throughout the year when their schedule allows, also taking public transportation to these events! When our core member gets home from work, they usually choose to hang out with their housemates or spend time in their room playing video games or watching TV. Our core member cooks one night of the week for their house and typically enjoys doing this as they do great in the kitchen! Many of our core member's housemates and staff enjoy their cooking! After supper, they will clean the kitchen and choose to relax the rest of the night. On the nights that our core member doesn't cook, they will often complete their chore chart that includes vacuuming the floors, mopping, cleaning their room, cleaning the bathroom, and overall caring for their home. Our core member shares these chores with other members in the house and they take turns doing these chores throughout the week. Our core member will also work on their daily goals that have been personally created by them and their team to assist them in becoming more independent with daily life skills. Our core member enjoys working on these goals, knowing they will help them eventually move out into their own apartment!



Our intermediate support core members enjoy the increased independence and opportunity to learn new skills that this option provides them. And yes, some of them have been able to take the next step of moving into their own apartment this summer.

On the days and nights that our core member doesn't work or have anything going on, they will choose to participate in Friendship Ark's Day Habilitation program or Arc of Story County sporting events/Special Olympics. For the Arc and Special Olympics, our core member's favorite sports to participate in are basketball, bowling, swimming, track/field, and flag football! Our core member's favorite Friendship Ark Day Habilitation activities they like to go on are Iowa Cubs baseball games, ISU men's and women's sports, and helping volunteer for different Friendship Ark events. Our core member is motivated to make every day great and we are very proud of the many ways they are learning and growing with the mix of independence and support that our intermediate home is providing for them.

By Kole Hilsabeck, Intermediate Supported Community Living Supervisor

Individual Volunteers



Becky enjoys a card game with our newest volunteer, Savanna.

In addition to the groups featured to the right that have been volunteering to help us get some bigger projects done, we also have several individual volunteers who are engaging directly with the core members.

They provide

companionship by playing games and engaging in other activities, they help organize craft projects and facilitate learning opportunities, and they bring their therapy dog to interact with the core members. These volunteers enhance the core members' lives and we are thankful for each and every one of them. Are you interested in volunteering with Friendship Ark? Contact Beth Lucht at bethl@friendshipark.org for more information.

Core Members Enjoy Volunteering Too



As mentioned in the Community Engagement Section on page 2, the core members love to give back to their community by volunteering in various ways throughout the

year. They enjoy the new people they get to meet, and being able to contribute in this way gives them an added sense of purpose. This summer, Morganne and staff had the opportunity to join a group from Lutheran Church of Hope as they volunteered at Food at First. She loved her experience! Thank you Lutheran Church of Hope for including her in your efforts to serve.

United Way Day of Caring



This fantastic group of volunteers from Todd & Sargent in Ames worked hard to spruce up one of our homes by giving several spaces a new coat of paint as a part of United Way of Story County's Day of Caring. They did a wonderful job and we're loving the new look! Thanks again, Todd & Sargent for participating and to United Way of Story County for organizing the event.

We Heart Ames

Volunteers from Harvest Vineyard Church in Ames spent a day this summer cleaning up the landscaping around our Fletcher House and staining the home's deck as a part of the We Heart Ames initiative which is organized



by several local churches.

The ladies at the home have been enjoying how nice their home looks as a result of the group's efforts and time spent outdoors on the deck is so much more enjoyable with the fresh coat of stain. Thank you volunteers!



Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to Friendship Ark's Employee of the Quarter for the second quarter of 2024, Jami Mirka. Jami's nomination stated that being well rounded, caring, committed, and loving



are just a couple of words to describe Jami. She truly goes above and beyond her job duties and it doesn't go unnoticed. Jami consistently strives to make everyone around her a better person and we can't thank her enough. We appreciate Jami's faithful commitment to the core members and to Friendship Ark. In recognition of her award, Jami received a gift of \$100 and will be eligible to be selected for the Employee of the Year award. Nominations for Employee of the Quarter awards can be submitted by any staff of Friendship Ark and winners are selected by a diverse committee of staff peers. All Employee of the Quarter winners for the year are eligible to be selected as Employee of the Year.



Friendship Ark

HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Make a Donation

Name _____
Address _____
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Yes, I/we would like to help Friendship Ark continue to serve persons with intellectual disabilities in a faith-based family home environment.

Amount donated: _____

Please apply my/our donation to the following:

- General Operations
- New House
- Core Member Outings
- Transportation Fund
- Rose/Lois Johannis Educational Fund (Staff Training and Education)
- I would like to learn more about making a planned gift.
- Friendship Ark is a part of my estate planning.

You may use your credit card to make a one time or recurring monthly gift by going to our website and clicking the "Donate" button.

Donations to our Endowment Fund should be made out to Story County Community Foundation and sent directly to SCCF at P.O. Box 1666, Ames, IA 50010-1666, indicating Friendship Ark Endowment Fund in the notes section of your check.



This newsletter provides limited space for us to share all of the exciting things happening at Friendship Ark. Find more stories, news and pictures on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Don't miss a thing, follow us today!

Wish List

- Basketball Hoop
- Badminton/Volleyball Set
- Office Chairs
- Bag Clips (Chip Clips)
- Halloween Costumes, Unique Clothing Items, Dance Costumes (for our Halloween Bootique)

For your convenience, we have created a Wish List on Amazon. You may select the items you would like to donate and have them shipped directly to us by using the QR Code.

