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Clarence Herbst - Gifts from the HeART



Clarence Herbst with
"Telling of Legends" by
Howard Terpning

What does Avenues to Independence have in common with artist and illustrator Howard Terpning? The answer is simply Clarence Herbst.

Affectionately known by his friends as "Joe," Clarence recently donated to Avenues three Native American themed paintings he owned by the celebrated artist. Avenues, in turn, auctioned the paintings, which resulted in proceeds of \$2.6 million – an unprecedented gift for Avenues.

When our Campaign for Independence began four years ago, our vision was to raise \$3.8 million. It was a goal

many thought would be very difficult to achieve, but through Joe's exceptional philanthropy and his dedication as Honorary Campaign Chair, the three year Campaign raised nearly \$5.2 million to provide greater financial independence for the people of Avenues.

This extraordinary gift has already had enormous impact on Avenues: It has benefitted our residential program by enabling the purchase of new homes and provided renovations for our existing homes; helped offer job opportunities, funded the Thrift Shoppe expansion, and paid off debt.

Joe's philanthropic story was featured in the February 2, 2015 edition of *Crain's Chicago Business*, where he was quoted, "Avenues is my philanthropic future... I want to witness the results; I want to be involved with where it goes. I think that's essential for philanthropists."

To read the full story that was published in Crain's please visit: <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20150130/ISSUE09/150129763/if-this-alum-gets-angry-get-a-grip-on-your-paintings>

Calendar of Events

- April 12 Annual Family Meeting
- May 16 Recycling Walk-n-Roll
- May 28 Sasser Society Dinner
- June 19 Annual Dinner and Dance
- July 20 Avenues/Gorman Golf and Tennis Classic

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Avenues to Independence is dedicated to putting aside old ideas about what is possible.

We work in partnership with the community to support and encourage people with disabilities to lead the lives they choose. Our success will eventually be measured by how little we are needed.

Avenues to Independence is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization providing services for adults with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities. All services and employment are provided on an equal opportunity basis. Avenues is accredited by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities).

There's No Place Like Home!

Daryl Falcone, one of more than 40 home based participants, enjoys a visit with Home Based Services Facilitator Elaina Kray.



Avenues Home Based Services supports Independent living

Since Avenues' beginnings, we have encouraged people with developmental disabilities to live as independently as possible. One key program that helps achieve independence is Home Based Support Services. Funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services, the plan provides eligible individuals and their families services in their home.

Avenues supports more than 40 participants in the program, and many of those, like Daryl Falcone, have had home based services since they graduated from high school.

Daryl has been part of the program for thirty years. He looks forward to his bimonthly visits from Elaina Kray, one of Avenues' Home Based Services Facilitators, who assists the participants and their families with their service plans. Pictured on the cover, Daryl is showing Elaina his progress using a fork at mealtimes – one of his goals this year. Daryl's parents Dominick and Arlene, says they have "a very nice relationship with Avenues," and Elaina has been extremely helpful. "She was very instrumental in coordinating everything we needed to get an adaptive bathroom for Daryl."

Avenues home based program enables a quality of life many of us take for granted. Elaina, along with facilitator Sabrina Edwards, coordinate a multitude of eligible services, including obtaining equipment and vehicle modifications to make a home accessible. Sabrina is currently sourcing a special bicycle for a homebound participant so she can ride in the community.

Because it offers so much flexibility and promotes independent living, home based services have become a very popular option for families. According to Elaina, "When I started being a facilitator in 2010 I had a caseload of about 25. Seeing the program grow so we can serve more people has been amazing."

Joni Kraft, Avenues Social Services Director, adds: "The program is successful because it puts total control of services in the hands of the participants and/or their families. They are able to design services specifically

centered around their individual needs, wants and desires. Additionally, family members are sometimes eligible to sign up for and get paid to provide personal support for their adult child."

Terri Kaisling, sister of participant Noreen, has benefitted from that personal support. "Working with Elaina helped me immensely. I didn't know about any of these available opportunities, but she identified ways that could help us, like getting a personal support worker to assist with Noreen while I was still working full time."

Many Avenues employees, in addition to their full time work, have been hired by the families as personal support workers. It's a mutually beneficial relationship, because the employees get to spend more time with the clients, and the clients feel very comfortable working with people they already know and like.

Kelly Johnson, Production Manager at the Wheeling Work Center, works several days a week at the home of Shannan Machnica and Jerilynn Ross, and they have established a close relationship. Jerilynn, who proudly boasts that Kelly taught her how to cook and do laundry, says she "loves working with Kelly – we all need her. I'm able to stay in my house (because of Kelly) since I'm not very independent on my own."

"Home based services are a great way for people to stay at home," adds Elaina, "Even after the parents are gone, we can continue to provide home based services for them if they live in a private home and continue to be eligible; or they may be able to transition to Avenues' residential program."

Whatever the future holds for these families, Avenues' long term commitment is to support and encourage our participants to lead the lives they choose, and as independently as possible.



a. Avenues resident Cheryl Grafman (left) benefits from home based services and reviews her schedule with facilitator Sabrina Edwards.

b. Noreen Kaisling has learned to make her lunch, fold laundry, and improve her communication skills through the home based support she receives.

c. Shannan Machnica, who shares a home with Jerilynn, says the home based program has "helped our whole house immeasurably."

d. Exercise, along with doing laundry, cooking, and going to the library or shopping, are just a few of the ways Jerilynn Ross (left) gets assistance in independent living from Personal Support Worker Kelly Johnson.

Chicago and Suburban Partnership Boards elect new leadership

Avenues congratulates Partnership Board Members Collin Sasser and Lauren Lavorato, newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of the Chicago Division, and Sue Feldman, newly elected Chair of the Suburban Division.

The power of partnership

The Avenues to Independence Partnership Board is a group of business and civic leaders that wish to promote opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to live and work independently in the community. The Partnership Board has two divisions, one that meets in the suburbs and one that meets in downtown Chicago. Together the groups are nearly 40 members strong.



Collin Sasser, who has served on the Chicago board for six years, takes on his role as Chair of the Chicago Partnership Board "with excitement and enthusiasm." Over the next two years he would like to foster understanding of the changes and implications of federal, state and local policy and their impact on Avenues, while

advocating for enhanced opportunity on behalf of Avenues' clients.

Collin, who recently received a Masters in Leadership & Public Policy and works at the School of Law at Northwestern University, wants to increase Avenues' awareness through friend-raising and fundraising, and collaborate with the other boards and staff to support our clients. Collin lives in Chicago with his wife Alison Whittington.



Sue Feldman is passionate about her opportunity as Chair of the Suburban Partnership Board, and believes that "belonging to the Avenues' family of clients, staff and volunteers is truly a privilege. The work ethic and determination of our clients, along with the enthusiastic commitment of staff and volunteers makes Avenues an organization that I am proud to be part of." One of Sue's goals for the Suburban Partnership Board is to create and support additional activities that engage clients, while exploring volunteer opportunities that allow the clients to give back to the community.

Sue, a graduate of Elmhurst College, spent more than 20 years in the food service industry, and lives in Park Ridge with her husband Jerry (Board of Directors Vice-Chair), and their son Richard.



Lauren Lavorato, Vice-Chair of the Chicago Division, looks forward to "actively helping Avenues create dignity for those living with disabilities and increasing awareness about Avenues' mission". Lauren says "the Avenues clients are both an inspiration to me personally and a wonderful example of how, with the right resources and people, one fantastic organization can

touch many lives." Lauren, a Senior Vice President/Director at BMO Harris Bank, resides in Glen Ellyn with her fiancé, Joe, and their Vizsla puppy, Gipper.

Generous Foundation Support: Avenues is thankful for the grants we received since our last publication.

- The Coleman Foundation - for the Thrift Shoppe AveVentures Employment Program
- Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust - Employment Programs
- George M Eisenberg Foundation for Charities - Red Cross training for staff
- Laughing Acres Family Foundation – Security cameras at the Work Center
- Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation – Job Placement Program

Avenues earns prestigious CARF Accreditation for three year term

Congratulations to the staff and board on receiving another three year accreditation from CARF(Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities).

Founded nearly 50 years ago, CARF is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. Avenues has been accredited since 1993 and continues to receive exemplary reviews from the surveyors. The accreditation process itself is quite rigorous, involving anywhere from 1200-1500 rules and

requests, and the CARF team is on-site for a full three days evaluating our practices and standards. The process is strictly voluntary, but Avenues chooses to re-certify every three years because it gives us an added seal of approval and provides quality improvement ideas.

According to Cathy Kerr, Avenues Vice-President of Programs, "Being a CARF accredited agency means that we go above and beyond the rules, regulations and funding restraints to create homes,

jobs and a community that truly benefits our clients. It means we listen to families, funders, donors and most importantly our clients. They are the heart of everything we do here and it is gratifying to be recognized for all that we have accomplished."



Avenues travels Somewhere Over the Rainbow at Love Affair 2015

Avenues proved on Valentine's Day that dreams really do come true somewhere over the rainbow. On February 14, more than 250 supporters raised more than \$160,000 at our annual Love Affair Gala at the Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel in Rosemont.

After guests were greeted by Glinda, the Good Witch, they followed the yellow brick road and traveled through a poppy field. Here they were served a welcome champagne cocktail, specialty martinis, and tempting hors d'oeuvres as they bid on a large selection of silent auction items.

Upon entering the Emerald City for dinner, guests were welcomed by Avenues' Ron Reeves, the master of ceremonies, or as he

called himself, "The Wizard of Od." Keeping the Somewhere Over the Rainbow theme in perspective, Chair of the Board Peg O'Herron stated, "We don't need to travel along a yellow brick road or meet a wizard to care for individuals with developmental disabilities; "Hearts" to care for individuals with developmental disabilities; "Brains" to understand their needs and desires, and "Courage" to boldly create a future for them that is rich and fulfilling. Executive Director Robert Okazaki echoed Peg's sentiments and thanked all the guests. "We wouldn't be standing here tonight without the "Heart" that's embodied in all of you and the many other donors who have supported our organization for the past 62 years."

A live auction was held to help ensure that Avenues' residents continue to have a great place to live. Avenues' friend and volunteer Mike Bruni served as auctioneer and stressed the need for safe and new flooring in 13 apartments and the hallways at Sasser Family House and Herbst Family House. Thanks to the generosity of our guests, more than \$35,000 was raised for new flooring.

While we may not have Dorothy's magical ruby slippers, we are grateful for the wonderful support that took us Somewhere Over the Rainbow.

(more photos are available in the media gallery at avenuetoindependence.org)



a. Love Affair Co-Chair Sara McKittrick (2nd from left) is pictured with her husband John (left) and Beth and John DiMeo.

b. We thank our major benefactor Clarence Herbst, who attended with daughter Kathryn Lindholm.

c. Anne Stewart, Love Affair Committee member, and Doug Hinshaw pose in front of the Emerald City Martini Bar.

d. Triple treat! Auctioneer Mike Bruni poses with not one but three Dorothys, and Toto of course.

e Board of Directors member Jolene Silverman with Glinda (Meghan Nugent).

f. Kudos to Elke Quade, Love Affair Chair, and Alonso Walker, who presented a special poem he wrote honoring Avenues.

Dale Kendrick – Recipient of the Jane and Albert Wohlers Visionary Award

Jane and Albert Wohlers believed that everyone deserved the opportunity to be a productive member of the community, and they understood how important it is to ensure those opportunities.

Although they are no longer with us, their legacy and vision continues to enrich Avenues every day. In their honor, the Jane and Albert Wohlers Visionary Award was created and is presented annually to recognize an individual or organization that shares their vision and positively impacts the Avenues to Independence community.

Natalie Malik, granddaughter of Jane and Albert Wohlers and Executive Director of the Wohlers Family Foundation, has presented the award since its inception four years ago. "I feel privileged to continue their memory and philanthropic legacy."

This year Natalie presented the award to Avenues' long-time friend and philanthropist Dale Kendrick. "Dale has been an important member of the Avenues' family since the 1980's. He hires Avenues' workers at his Barnaby's Pizza Restaurant in Des Plaines, and ensures there's a Work Center holiday party every year by donating pizzas – and he has donated more than 2,000 pizzas since the late 1980's. Dale's philanthropy to the Campaign for Independence allowed Avenues to purchase a ranch home in Des Plaines for five residents."

Vice-President of Development Ann Marie Ehrlich also acknowledged Dale's close friendship with Avenues. "Dale's generosity and vision for the people we serve continues to inspire others. Dale says he continues to be part of the Avenues family because he sees a strong bond between himself and the people of Avenues. I am honored to call him my friend."



Natalie Malik, second from left, granddaughter of the late Jane and Albert Wohlers, presents Dale Kendrick with the Wohlers Visionary Award, as VP Development Ann Marie Ehrlich and Executive Director Robert Okazaki looks on.



Ron Reeves holds one of the 65 pizzas Dale Kendrick (right) donates every year for the holiday party at the Work Center. Assisting Ron is participant Charlie Giera.



g. Chicago Partnership Board Member Ryan Jalowiecki and his wife Karla.



h. From left, Andy and Sarah Topus, Sheila and Suburban Partnership Board Member Marc Blumenthal

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT OUR EVENTS!

Avenues is always looking for volunteers to assist at our events including the Love Affair and the upcoming Avenues/Gorman Golf and Tennis Classic. Please contact Ann Marie at 847-292-0870 X108 or email: ehrich@avenuestoindependence.org

We thank our Love Affair Benefactors

Clarence "Joe" Herbst - Major Benefactor

Dale Kendrick - Premier Sponsor

Glen and Laura Amundsen
Matt and Ed Coyne
Ray and Sylvia Emerick
Jacki and Shelly Kimel
Lawson Products, Inc

Patricia Maroney and Joe Kogut
William Onderdonk
Ed and Bonnie Reinhart
Collin Sasser and Alison Whittington
Oscar Serna

Jolene and Steve Silverman
Anne Stewart
Robert and Roberta Washlow
Friends of Avenues

18th Annual Irish Fest a grand celebration

More than 350 friends, families, volunteers and supporters, including 67 Avenues program participants, enjoyed a traditional St. Patrick's Day dinner and celebration at the Cotillion in Palatine on March 8.

Thanks to the generosity of the guests, donors, and sponsors, more than \$50,000 – a new record for Irish Fest - was raised to support Avenues programs.

Back by popular demand was Irish Fest's own Grafton Street, named after the upscale shopping street in Dublin. The Grafton Street Market featured crafts made by Avenues clients: greeting cards, coasters and paintings, ornaments, jewelry, and floral arrangements.

The music and dance of Ireland was showcased with a rousing performance by the Joyce Boys Irish Band and celtic harp music by Marysue Redmann and flutist Barbara Holland. Perennial favorite, The Irish Heritage Singers, sang familiar Irish tunes, and everyone enjoyed the fancy footwork performed by the Weber School of Irish Dancers.

Bob Healy, co-founder of Irish Fest, expressed, "Many guests commented that there was something for people of all ages to enjoy – and that is not easy to accomplish. We had parents with their little ones, as well as grandparents and grandchildren, and nearly 20 of Avenues' participants enjoyed the celebration with their own families."

View more pictures in the Media Gallery at avenuestoindependence.org



- a.** Many thanks to The Joyce Boys Irish Band and all our Irish Fest performers who donated their time and talents to entertain us!
- b.** A family affair! Special thanks to the Irish Fest Co-Chairs From left: Peter, Christopher and Kelly Doheny; Pat Grimes; Jeanne Doheny ; Mike, Nora and Mary Prindiville; Kevin Healy, Peg O'Herron and Bob Healy.
- c.** Toasting to Irish Fest is Mike Boychuck (left) and John Reilly.

- d.** Ready to party in his Irish "tuxedo" is participant Jeffrey Jones.
- e.** Irish Fest Co-Chair Pat Grimes buys "lucky" raffle tickets from Connie Kannapes, one of three volunteers from The Women of AT&T.
- f.** Thrift Shoppe participant Laura Kazmarek proudly displays some of the hand-crafted items she made for the Grafton Street Market.

Great Things Happen at Avenues!

- a.** The PepsiCo Enable Group of Chicago donated \$1000 to benefit Avenues' art and recreation programs. The gifts were given by PepsiCo's Molly Walsh (right) and Steve Budd (left). They are pictured with (from left) Elaina Kray, Home Based Facilitator and coordinator of Avenues art program; participants Stephanie Kegermann and Shannan Machnica; and Chicago Partnership Member Karen Clarke (3rd from right).
- b.** Participant Charlie Giera was a proud recipient of the Park Ridge Newcomer's Club holiday philanthropy. Courtney Bowles of the Park Ridge Newcomers Club presents the gifts, as Michele Shoolin, VP of Development (left) and Residential Manager Linda Smith look on.
- c.** On January 27, Avenues was named a recipient of an "AT&T Investing in Illinois Award" and received a contribution of \$2,000. State Representative Michael McAuliffe (R-20th District), presents the award to Bob Okazaki. They are pictured with Eileen Mitchell, (left), Sylvia Aldrete (right) and participant Jim Kearns.
- d.** Board Member Jill Liska (3rd from right) and her Sargent Lundy co-workers in Chicago display a handmade quilt that was auctioned off to benefit Avenues.
- e.** Special thanks to the Suburban Partnership Board for sponsoring this year's holiday party at the Work Center. Pictured from left is Board Chair Sue Feldman, and members Sara McKitrick, Cheryl Border, and Kathy Korsch.
- f.** From left Khan Nguyen, Kathy Rumishek, Case Manager Katie Garrity, and David Blachut celebrate at the Work Center holiday party.



Investing in Avenues Future

For decades, the Sasser family's philanthropy has been making a difference at Avenues to Independence.

To that end, the Avenues to Independence Heritage Society, created in 2000 to ensure the future of the people we serve, was renamed the Sasser Society in 2012. During the past 15 years, Avenues has received more than \$2.1 million dollars from Society members who chose to include Avenues in their estate plans. These gifts have provided support for every aspect of our programs.

The 70 individuals and families that currently comprise the Sasser Society will meet for a reception on May 28 at the Park Ridge Country Club to celebrate their ongoing and future commitments to the people of Avenues.

The evening will be hosted by Fred and Pam Sasser.

To learn more about the Sasser Society, please contact Michele Shoolin at 847-292-0870 x116, or email shoolin@avenuestoindependence.org.

Leona "Lee" Childs – Thank you for 40 years with Avenues!



Not many people can boast dual celebrations at the same time, but Lee Childs is certainly one of them. We recognize Lee, who serves as Avenues CFO, for an amazing 40 years of working with Avenues, and congratulate her on her upcoming retirement.

Lee also holds the distinction of serving Avenues longer than any other employee in Avenues' 62 year history.

What began as a part time clerical position at Avenues in 1975 quickly developed into what Lee calls her "second home - Avenues is part of my family." Lee has also been inspired by Avenues clients since day one, and loves when they come to visit. "I credit Avenues with providing an environment that makes them so happy to be working and living in the community; and I've been very proud to be part of that." Now we can look forward to visits from Lee!

Lee has many special memories with Avenues, including her 20th anniversary party. "I was really amazed and very touched by everyone. I feel my time here has been worthwhile; it's not just a job."

After 40 years, there hasn't been much Lee hasn't accomplished at Avenues, but she still has one major goal – to become a great grandmother. Hopefully Lee's "other family" will make her desire come true!