



**RACKER CENTERS**  
Creating Opportunities for People with Special Needs

# OUTLOOK

QUARTERLY | FALL 2010

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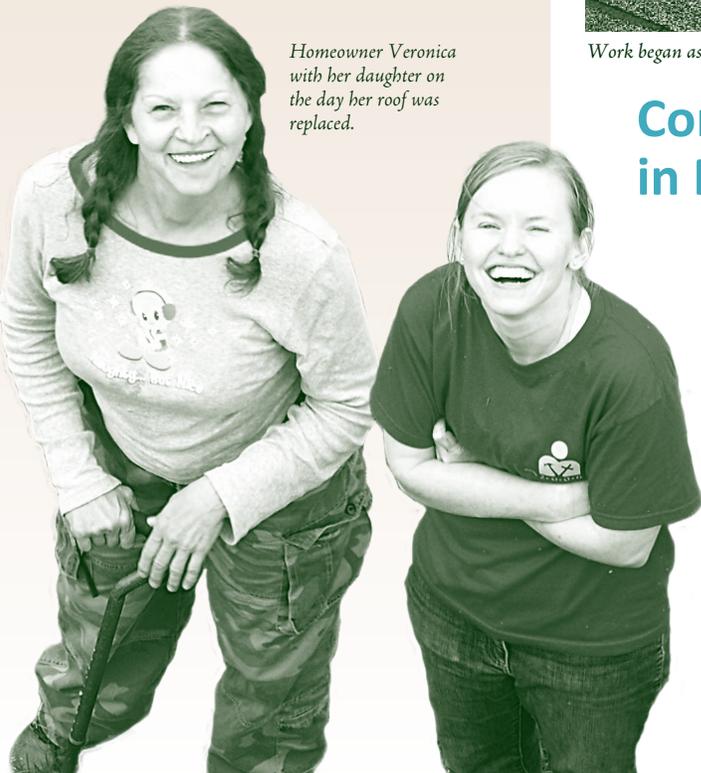
Work began as the sun came up!

## Community Collaboration Results in Much Needed Renovations

Veronica Hayes is a bright-eyed and humorous woman who embraces life. Photographs of her children and late mother are prominently placed around her home, and the joy Veronica radiates is reinforced by the colorful décor of her living space including whimsical posters, dream catchers, and wind chimes. Over the past year, Veronica's trailer in downtown Ithaca has been renovated, allowing Veronica to stay in her home. This was very important to Veronica who is deaf and has Cerebral Palsy and a chronic neck and lower back condition that affects her gait and balance. She wanted to continue living independently but her trailer needed significant repairs in order for her to stay there through another winter.

Amy Stone, Veronica's Service Coordinator through Franziska Racker Centers, jumped into action and started the process of obtaining the resources needed for the renovations. "The roof was leaking badly and

Homeowner Veronica with her daughter on the day her roof was replaced.



# ROGER WRITES

“Two roads lie before us. One leads to misery and utter despair, the other to our complete annihilation. I pray we choose wisely.”

Followers of Charles Dickens would say this is a “worst of times” opening. And of course, these are nowhere near the worst of times, but there certainly are challenges. We have left the “why not have it all? times” and entered a period where choices will have to be made.

We understand that in this time of financial caution, funding for human services from government may need to be reduced, and that individual donors in some cases are giving less. This does not have to mean that organized ways of helping others will disappear. There may be things that are now being done by a not-for-profit with an executive director and a board that could be done in other ways, by informal associations, by activities lightly supported by a larger organization, that would allow the goodness to continue.

I will illustrate with a real and a hypothetical organization. It would be very difficult for good-hearted community citizens to replicate Cayuga Medical Center. The degree of difficulty in the work it does, the multiple skill levels necessary to be effective, the organizational complexity, all make it clear that this needs to be done by a high-functioning organization. In contrast, a support group for people with athlete's foot may not require incorporation to be effective.

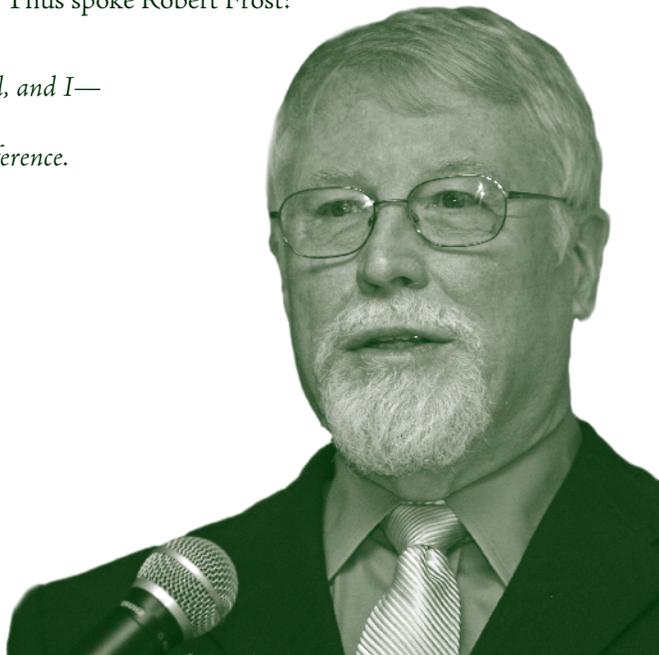
Franziska Racker Centers is not exempt from these considerations. We must continually justify our existence. In the judgment of individuals and families we serve and of the community, it must be clear that what we do and how we do it are essential and must be preserved.

Happily, there are more than two roads before us. None is Easy Street, but that is nothing new. As a community, we will have to perhaps think more carefully about what we want and how it should happen. The new solutions will likely not be the old ones. The future is filled with opportunities for each person to learn, to have friends, and to have a wonderful life. Thus spoke Robert Frost:

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*



Roger Sibley  
Executive Director,  
Franziska Racker Centers



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## In Beaner's Backyard: The Story Behind the Book

Brandon Graves, nicknamed "Beaner" as a kid for his love of baked beans, is definitely on this earth for a reason. The Franziska Racker Centers' classroom aide, who is loved and adored by every child he comes across, has seen and been through a lot. Brandon was resuscitated after a fatal house fire in San Diego in 2003 which left him in a month-long coma and resulted in extensive skin grafts. While still recovering, Brandon started working at the Centers in 2004 as a classroom aide. Brandon describes his work at the Centers during that time as a healing experience for him, a way to get his life back on track. He laughingly reminisces about those times, recalling his comical first attempts at changing diapers in the toddler classroom.

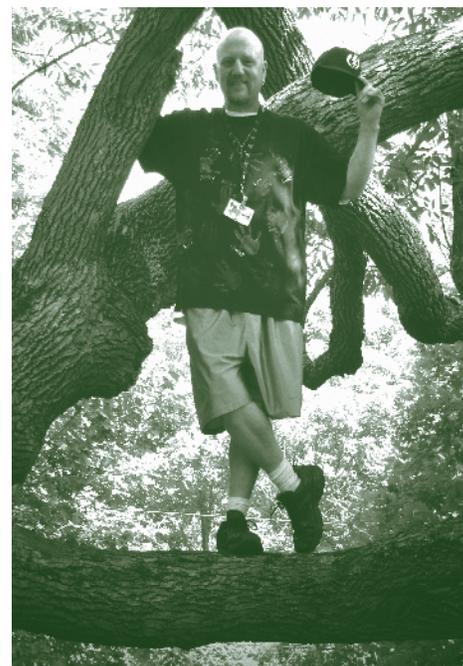
In 2009, Brandon once again faced health problems when, after going to the doctor concerning a sleep apnea attack, a golf ball-sized tumor was found in his brain. He opted for radiation, and so far has received 10 hours of photonic radiation at Cayuga Medical Center. Brandon credits the staff at the hospital for the improvements in his health and the comfort and reassurance they provided during a time of great uncertainty. Most of all, however, "Beaner" credits the caring staff and the fun and loving kids at

the Centers for helping him cope. "The kids and the staff got me through all of the stress," he says, describing his "power" shirt that the kids in his classroom made for him which reads 'Beetles Love Brandon' and includes the handprint and name of each child.

Brandon's diagnosis gave him a sense of urgency to fulfill his dream to write and illustrate a children's book. The result is *In Beaner's Backyard*, a story of a boy who lives in the city, dreaming of a backyard where he can play and be free. Brandon describes the book as entertaining for any kid, especially "kids that look out at skyscrapers and use their imagination." However, what really makes the story are Brandon's impressive illustrations using pencil, pastel, colored pencil, and water colors.

Before Brandon was diagnosed, the book was only an idea. With everything that had been going on in his life for the past six years, Brandon needed an outlet, something to put his heart and soul into. "I needed to give back, do some good," he says. "Everyone here (at the Centers) came together for me... This book is for my little munchkins, man... I love these kids." One of the first decisions that Brandon made upon publishing his book was to donate a portion of the proceeds to the Centers' Early Childhood Services Program to purchase new cool toys, games, and books for the Centers.

Brandon has already published over 1,000 copies of *In Beaner's Backyard*, and a copy has been purchased for the Centers' classrooms in Cortland, Tioga and Tompkins county. When asked about future book ideas, Brandon simply smiled and replied, "Beaner hasn't left his backyard yet." He is looking to publish a coloring book featuring many of the pictures he has created over the years for the kids in his class to color.

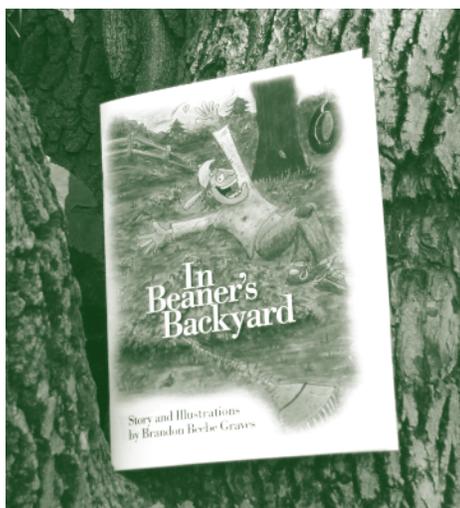


Brandon poses in the tree that inspired the adventures of his character Beaner in his book.

Additionally, Brandon would like to write and illustrate books to help young children cope with difficult issues in their lives, giving them a way to process their feelings at a level they can understand. No matter how many books he sells, Brandon says that he doesn't see himself leaving the Centers anytime soon. He jokes, "They're going to have to pry me out of here."

Copies of Brandon's book are \$9 apiece, payable with cash or check to "Brandon Graves" and are available at the following locations in Ithaca: Franziska Racker Centers (Wilkins Road), Buffalo Street Books, The Glenwood Pines, Pete's Grocery and Gas, Dino's Mediterranean Deli, West Shore Gas and Grocery, Kelly's Dock-Side Café, The Haunt, Orange Blossom Pancake House, The Commons Market, Rongo, and Mira's Movement. For more information or to request a book, email [info@rackercenters.org](mailto:info@rackercenters.org).

— Evan Fitzpatrick, Community Relations Department Intern

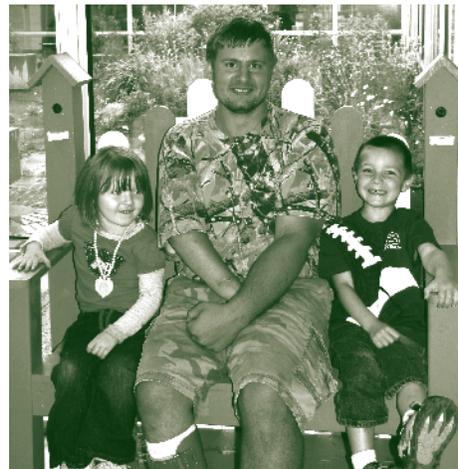


## The Bench That Mike Built

The best networking efforts sometimes occur behind the scenes. Such was the case with the whimsical, colorful bench that was built by Mike with the assistance of his Community Support Staff (CSS) person Adrian Prieto. During a casual conversation in the office, it was mentioned that the preschool courtyard could use a seating area. This remark prompted Family Support Coordinator Rebecca Sussman to reach out to Mike and Adrian. "Since Mike's objective through Community Support is to pursue current interests and engage in community activities, I thought this project would interest Mike since he enjoys carpentry," says Rebecca. "When I told Mike about the request and asked if he would be willing to build a

bench, he was ecstatic!" recalls Adrian.

A donor stepped forward with the funds needed to cover the cost of materials and



*Mike poses with Ashlea (left) and Cameron (right) on the bench he built and then donated to the preschool.*

Mike and Adrian purchased the paint and building supplies needed to begin. Adrian explains that the bench was assembled fairly quickly by Mike since it was a design he had done before, however, the painting took a little more time. The predominant teal color was chosen because it's Franziska Racker Centers' "official" color and the black and white accents were colors that Mike thought would look best in contrast.

The bench was an instant hit amongst students, families, and staff. According to Adrian, "Mike and I have received quite a bit of feedback. Everyone has been incredibly positive, grateful, and appreciative."

— Susan Henninger

## The Melody of Barb's Success

"Are you going to be my new Community Support Staff (CSS)?" inquired a visibly anxious Barbara when I arrived to interview her and Melody, her current CSS. I immediately assured Barb that Melody wasn't going anywhere and thus the tone of the interview was set. Obviously, these two ladies love spending time together. As I observed them begin their work prepping food for the church's weekly dinner, Melody joked with Barb saying, "I went on vacation for a week and you thought I was never coming back!" But now the tables have turned, Barb is

headed on her own vacation soon and Melody tells her, "I'm going to cry and cry while you're gone," getting a smile and a giggle from Barb.

When the pair met two years ago, things were a little different than they are now. In the past, if Barb spent time with a staff person her response to what she might like to do was always "Nothing, I want to go home." Melody agrees in the beginning there were struggles. "I think she was just shy and didn't know how people would react if she approached them," says Melody. Community outings resulted in outbursts or Barb trying to run away from Melody. "When I started spending time with Barb she wouldn't talk to anyone," Melody reflects, "even me!" Lately however, things have changed. "She's a social butterfly!" exclaims Melody.

Indeed Barb has become quite popular with Pastor Rob and all the folks at the

United Methodist Church in Candor where she dons her monogrammed apron made by the church secretary and helps prepare and set-up for the weekly community meal. "Everyone treats Barb with love and respect. Denice and Sherry organize the meals and they welcomed us in from the beginning," says Melody, "Barb thrives on the attention they give her."

Barb's success shines through in her kind smile and great sense of humor. Melody agrees, "Barb has really come out of her shell and she has brought just as much, if not more, to my life as I have to hers." In addition to the mutual benefit the duo has gained from their friendship, Barb's volunteer work has given her the confidence to cut vegetables, use a cutting board, and identify healthier food options, all of which support her personal goals of living a healthier lifestyle and becoming more independent. "The thing about Barb is she's just like everyone else," concludes Melody. "I've treated her that way since our first meeting and she's responded!"



*Barb and Melody prep food for their church's weekly dinner.*

## Giving and Getting Back: A Volunteer's Story

"I love Annie. She's great!" exclaims Franziska Racker Centers' volunteer, Talia Shear. Annie Joyce, a teenager who receives services from the Centers, has been spending time with Talia for a little over a year now and the two have formed a strong bond.

According to Talia, Annie loves chocolate, the Jonas Brothers, her pets, her sisters, and her weekly job at GreenStar in Ithaca. Annie is assigned a two hour shift there on Sundays and Talia volunteers alongside her to provide some extra support. Working at GreenStar was Annie's idea, Talia explains, because her family has always shopped there. The job has worked out well for Annie, "The customers really like her and she knows all of them," says Talia. "She's more on top of the job than me and often reminds me what to do!" Annie's primary tasks at the cooperative market are organizing and cleaning the Alternative Medicine section but Talia is sure that Annie would be happy doing almost anything there. "Working at GreenStar is just one of several initiatives to help Annie achieve her goal of learning the skills necessary to work independently," Talia says. Some of the skills Annie is currently working on include staying on task and learning to be professional in the work place.

*GreenStar is located on Meadow Street in Ithaca.*



**TALIA**



**ANNIE**

**"I love Annie. She's great!" exclaims Franziska Racker Centers' volunteer and Cornell University student, Talia Shear.**

Dianna Snyder, GreenStar's Wellness Manager, trained Annie and she's very enthusiastic about her job performance. "Annie takes great pride in getting the job done, down to the last little detail ... She and Talia work really well together. We are very happy to have both of them here!"

Annie has shown a natural talent for customer service, adds Dianna. "She's so good-humored and social; she knows everyone that comes in to shop. If a shopper needs help, she'll come right over and get one of us to assist them or answer their question."

Though Talia agrees that Annie's exuberance and smile are contagious, these aren't the only qualities that she admires about her. "She's accepting of anyone and everything," Talia observes. "She puts herself out there to people, she's not shy or hesitant, and she tries everything." Though Talia and Annie have been working together for a relatively short time, Talia's not new to volunteering. In fact she notes, "It's a

passion of mine so I do a lot with it!" Originally from California, Talia began working with kids with disabilities when she was a teen and eventually formed a club called "Take Action," a partnership between her high school and the Braille Institute, which allowed her to "expose other kids to my experience working with those with special needs." Currently a junior at Cornell University, Talia serves as the Co-President of the Cornell Union for Disability Awareness.

Annie and Talia's relationship isn't all work and no play either. Talia, who has formed a close bond with Annie and her family, is looking forward to a summer dinner of pasta or pizza prepared especially by Annie and served up in the comfort of her "East Coast Family's" home.

*For more information on volunteer opportunities at Franziska Racker Centers, email [info@rackercenters.org](mailto:info@rackercenters.org).*

— Susan Henninger

*Annie hard at work at GreenStar.*



## Parent Network in Cortland County

*“Wow, this presentation was so helpful. Each question answered was so relevant.”*

*“I really enjoyed and found helpful the way the presenter personalized the information.”*

*“The presenter was great. Never talked above our heads”*

These are just some of the positive comments that parents have made about Parent Network trainings they have attended. Parent Network is part of Franziska Racker Centers' Family Resource Program. “Parents of children with developmental and intellectual disabilities (birth to adult) in Cortland County formed the group as a way to receive timely, current information about the issues that affect their family’s well-being,” explains Team Director Marianne Odell. Parent Network gives parents and caretakers an opportunity to share information with each other and learn from speakers who are knowledgeable in areas that impact their children. For those with financial considerations, Parent Network provides scholarships so parents and caregivers can attend workshops and conferences on disability related topics.

Each month an expert will come and present on a topic that parents have expressed an interest in. Some of their most popular sessions cover sensory issues for people with special needs,

making a smooth transition to kindergarten, and estate planning in which a lawyer speaks to the group about long-term planning for their loved one including wills, trusts, and deeds.

Marianne works hard to ensure that these free meetings are both interesting and accessible to everyone. She has families complete a simple evaluation form to get feedback on the presenters and the topics and always provides child care during the talks.

Recently Parent Network held their first Cortland County Community Resource Fair. According to Marianne, families that have a child with special needs but don't have a service coordinator might not know where to get information from or who to turn to for assistance. Pulling all of the helpful organizations and activity groups into one location seemed like an excellent way for the Centers to promote public awareness and education around special needs. Participating organizations displayed information and showed attendees what services they could offer their children. Table presenters ranged from service providers like J.M. Murray Center that offers workshop groups and Day Habilitation to places like Mayberry Brook Stables where many adults and children with disabilities regularly enjoy therapeutic horseback riding.



*Attendees visit tables and network at the Resource Fair.*

Positive reviews from contributing organizations and families who attended the event have prompted Marianne and her supervisor, Renie Petrovic, Director of Family Resources, to begin plans for a similar event next year.

*For more information on Parent Network in Cortland County or to suggest a future topic, contact Marianne at 607.753.9375 or [marianne@rackercenters.org](mailto:marianne@rackercenters.org).*



*Regional Director Katie Boardman and Assistant Director of Residential Services Brooke Malone at the Centers' table.*

## Staff Development: Train the Trainer

Franziska Racker Centers credits much of the organization’s success and cohesiveness to the quality training that employees receive. Many of the trainings that employees attend are led by peers that have experience and knowledge that will help others to be successful and grow within their role. However, having information to share doesn't always make

an individual a powerful teacher. Therefore, the agency hosts ‘Train the Trainer’ sessions during which attendees learn solid techniques for delivering training material. Topics include: conducting ice breakers, sticking to an agenda and time line, implementing multiple types of training media, using visual aids, and handling trouble areas.

By the end of the training, which *always* ends promptly at the time promised, employees are better equipped to host a training and more confident in their ability to deliver information to their peers.

*— Evan Fitzpatrick, Community Relations Department Intern*

## Thank You Business Partners

*for your generous support and unfailing commitment to the mission and vision of Franziska Racker Centers.*

- |  |  |                                |
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*Our Business Partners are donors who make gifts of \$1,000 or more.*

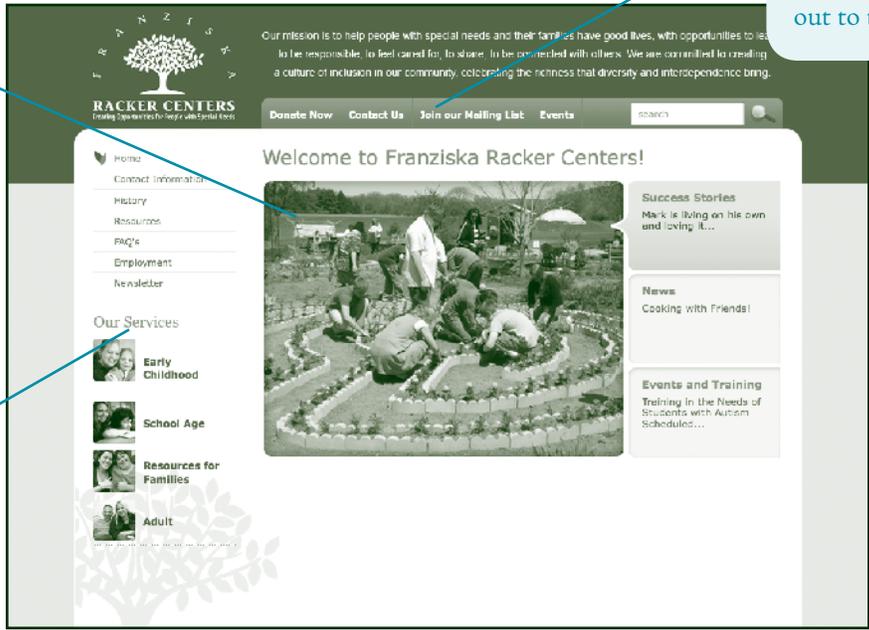
## Website Update Coming Soon...

*We are in the process of receiving a new look and additional user-friendly features on our website. Here's a sneak peek of our improved home page at [www.rackercenters.org](http://www.rackercenters.org)!*

**Bigger tabs** across the top frame encourage website visitors to reach out to the agency.

**Main page** of site will have three large titles of interest, each with a photo. The image and title will change with the click of the mouse and lead to more on that topic!

**'Our Services'** sorted into four areas: Early Childhood, School-Age, Resources for Families, and Adult Services to make finding information easy!



## Making a Difference!

This letter was written by Sue Bogucz to announce her son's graduation from OCM BOCES and recognize those who have influenced him over the past years.

Dearest Ones —

My husband Ed & I wanted to share an honor Eddie received at the end-of-the-year awards ceremony at school. This assembly happens every year and it is a wonderful event because just about every student gets some kind of honest recognition for an accomplishment that was hard for them. It can get very personal. I always cry and this year was no exception. My son Eddie received the 'David A. Jacobsen Award,' given to the student who has made a difference in the school community. His name is now on a plaque in the main office and he has a pin. It is one of the highest honors the school presents. In part, this is what his teacher wrote to nominate him: "Ed Bogucz has shown the qualities of David A. Jacobsen. He cares about his fellow classmates, younger students and staff. Ed has become a respected student in [his] program at McEvoy in many ways. Over the past two years Ed has assisted bus drivers with a younger student on the bus. He took the initiative to walk the student to his classroom every morning.



Eddie with Carol, one of his day treatment therapists.

Ed volunteered in the student's classroom during the 2008-09 school year and during summer school in 2009. This past spring Ed assisted one of the younger classes with their skit in the spring show and furthermore, when asked to talk to a new student or their family Ed has willingly explained the program." We later found out later that Mrs. Ann Derr, the school principal, had never asked a student to do this before. Eddie spoke honestly of his challenges upon entering the school and how the program helped him be successful as a student. Eddie graduated on June 21st, 2010. He will attend Onondaga Community College and study early childhood education. We are very proud of all he has accomplished. I am grateful to all the teachers and staff that have been on this path with us. I have learned, it takes a village, and I have been blessed by each person I've met along the way. It was an honor to be part of the McEvoy community!

Thanks for letting me share.  
With love, Sue Bogucz



Eddie receiving his pin.



(left to right)  
Lisa Trerrotola – Teaching Assistant  
Carol Dannenfelser, LCSW - Day Treatment Therapist  
Sally Manning, Day Treatment Counselor  
Deb Vibbard - Special Education Teacher  
Eddie Bogucz, graduate of class of 2010  
Ann Derr - Special Education Supervisor

Continued from cover

poorly insulated and the set-up of her trailer inside wasn't conducive to her being able to safely move about," explains Amy. After trying many different avenues to obtain funding and working closely with many local agencies, the staff at the New York State Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) approved the use of Unity

**The day of the roof repair, a total of 38 volunteers, including Veronica's two children, worked in shifts to complete the project in one day.**

House's Individual Support Services grant to pay for Veronica's lot rent, homeowner's insurance and other expenses, giving her the ability to make payments on the cost of the materials. Community Faith Partners volunteered to provide the labor to replace the roof through their CARE (Construction and Repair Experts) Network which is made up of volunteers and professionals from many local church congregations who are gifted in all aspects of home maintenance and repair. The day of the roof repair, a total of 38 volunteers, including Veronica's two children, worked in shifts to complete the project in one day. Jim Crawford of Community Faith Partners was astounded at the number of people that turned out to assist with the project. The Ithaca Elks Lodge donated a lunch for the group and the Salvation Army provided dinner. Once the roof was replaced, Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services donated the labor to replace the skirting on the trailer to minimize any frozen pipes, a problem Veronica has had in the past.

Upon completion of the outside projects, renovations began inside the trailer courtesy of Better Housing for Tompkins County's Access to Home Grant. The kitchen sink was lowered to enable Veronica to sit down while washing her dishes and her cabinets were painted and fitted with drawers and lower shelves for easier access and organization. Veronica's bathroom was retrofitted with a walk-in shower reducing the chance of falls. The floor of the trailer was also evened out in areas that were potential tripping hazards.

Next on the list is to secure Tompkins Community Action to replace Veronica's windows through their weatherization program, adding yet another layer of insulation and security to her home. When asked how she felt about all the work that had been done on her trailer, Veronica smiled broadly, looked around her home with an expression that can only be described as peaceful happiness, and said, "It's good."

This story exemplifies the Centers' mission of providing opportunities to those with special needs to achieve their goals for success and happiness. A special

**When asked how she felt about all the work that had been done Veronica smiled broadly ... and said, "It's good."**

thank-you goes out to the many dedicated individuals and organizations that came together to make it possible for Veronica to maintain her independence and her home.

*Veronica smiles brightly for the camera.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

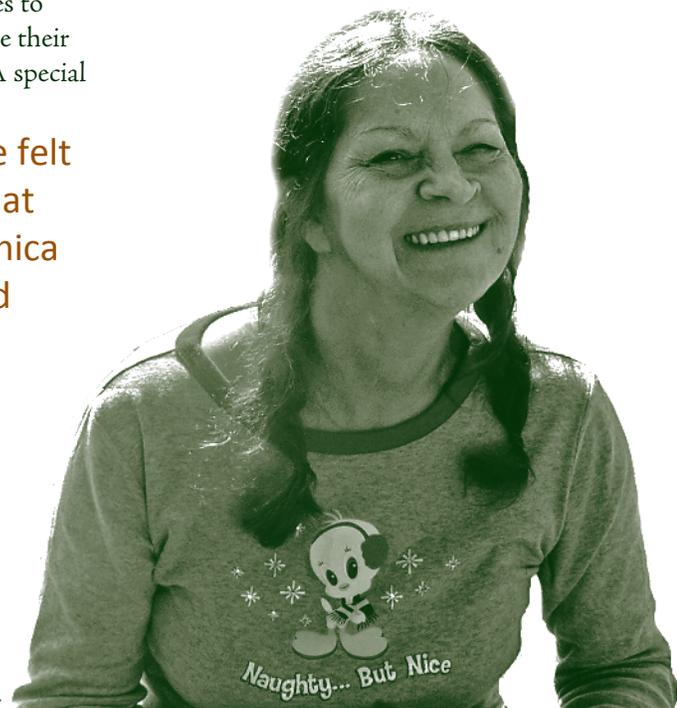
**OMRDD is now OPWDD!**

Since the beginning the mission of OMRDD has been to help people with developmental disabilities live richer lives. Now, in support of the people they serve, their families, and their provider agencies, they are adopting a name that truly reflects their mission.

OMRDD is now OPWDD, the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities.



*For more information on the agencies mentioned in this article, turn to the 'Making It Happen' section of this newsletter (pages 10 and 11).*



# MAKING IT HAPPEN

The article on Veronica's trailer renovations tells the story of a great collaboration between these community organizations.

## TOMPKINS COMMUNITY ACTION

[www.tcactionweb.org](http://www.tcactionweb.org)

Tompkins Community Action (TCAction) is a private not-for-profit charitable organization that partners with individuals in low-income households as they develop to their full potential. Their Weatherization Assistance Program provides installation of energy saving measures in owner occupied homes and rental units. The program is available at no cost to income-qualified Tompkins County homeowners, renters and landlords.



## BETTER HOUSING FOR TOMPKINS COUNTY

[www.betterhousingtc.org](http://www.betterhousingtc.org)

Recognizing that people deserve to live with dignity, Better Housing for Tompkins County is dedicated to increasing sustainable, secure and affordable housing options for rural residents through construction, education and advocacy. Their Home Repair Program assists homeowners with needed repairs that are health and safety related, allowing homeowners to maintain their independence, and/or assist low-income elderly and disabled homeowners with accessibility and maintenance.



## UNITY HOUSE

[www.unityhouse.com](http://www.unityhouse.com)

Unity House of Cayuga County provides transitional and permanent housing, respite care, and rehabilitative and employment services for adults with mental health illnesses, developmental disabilities, and/or chemical dependencies from which they are recovering. Unity House partners with these individuals to develop their personal skills and potential, enabling them to live more full and independent lives. The agency is licensed by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and was able to give Veronica the Individual Support Services grant courtesy of this affiliation.



## SALVATION ARMY

[www.salvationarmyusa.org](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org)

The Salvation Army is a faith-based charity that helps people with all kinds of social needs in virtually every community across America. The work of the Salvation Army is to meet human needs, create fellowship amongst their communities, assist with rebuilding lives following crisis, and to support people of all ages in need. Providing food and supplies for volunteers on the day Veronica's roof was put on shows that the Salvation Army supports their community on any scale needed.





## RACKER CENTERS' SERVICE COORDINATION

[www.rackercenters.org](http://www.rackercenters.org)

Together with their families and others who are close to them, Service Coordinators assist individuals with special needs in finding and utilizing available services that can help them accomplish their goals, foster personal development, and be successful members of their communities. Veronica's Service Coordinator, Amy Stone, brought together the many agencies that repaired and improved Veronica's home, giving her the resources to maintain her independence in the community.



## COMMUNITY FAITH PARTNERS

[www.communityfaithpartners.org](http://www.communityfaithpartners.org)

Community Faith Partners (CFP) is a group of volunteers from members of local congregations that share a vision for serving their neighbors. They believe more can be accomplished together than alone, both individually and within the church. CFP started the CARE (Construction and Repair Experts) Network to help widows, older people and others with needs to maintain the physical condition of their homes and preempt debilitating repair costs. The roof replacement project at Veronica's trailer was documented throughout the day by CFP and can be viewed at [www.communityfaithpartners.org/care-gallery.html](http://www.communityfaithpartners.org/care-gallery.html). Also on their website is information about their upcoming CARE Day scheduled for the end of September. All are welcome to volunteer!



## ELKS

[www.elks.org](http://www.elks.org)

The Elks are a fraternal order with nearly a million members and a network of more than 2,000 lodges in communities all over the country. The Elks are a generous charitable foundation that each year gives millions in scholarships, inspire youth, assist veterans and support their communities. Public service is an integral part of being an Elk. In keeping with this tradition, the Ithaca Elks Lodge supplied lunch to the volunteers on the day Veronica's roof was installed. The philosophy *Elks Care - Elks Share!* can be found in the many programs and events the members of the Elks support to better their communities.



## ITHACA NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES (INHS)

[www.ithacahs.org](http://www.ithacahs.org)

INHS strives to provide programs that assist people, specifically low and moderate income individuals, in obtaining quality housing on a long-term basis. Their services include homebuyer education and counseling, home purchase assistance and rental housing. Additionally, INHS provides home improvement assistance. Their Senior Home Assistance and Repairs (SHARP) program provides voluntary labor for small but important home repairs, such as the skirting around the bottom of Veronica's trailer, that keep Ithaca home owners that are elderly, disabled, or a single head of household safe and comfortable.



# OUTLOOK

FALL 2010



**RACKER CENTERS**  
Creating Opportunities for People with Special Needs  
*....Serving the community since 1948*

[www.rackercenters.org](http://www.rackercenters.org)

Franziska Racker Centers  
3226 Wilkins Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 780  
Ithaca, NY 14850

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## VISION

We are inspired by the vision of our founding families: that all people with disabilities will be valued members of a welcoming and supportive community.

## MISSION

We are dedicated to helping people with special needs and their families have good lives, with opportunities to learn, to be responsible, to feel cared for, to share, to be connected to others. We are committed to creating a culture of inclusion in our community, celebrating the richness that diversity and interdependence bring.

## Faces of the Centers



***It's a Family Affair!**  
Emma and Sophia Stone attend Racker Centers' day care program at Wilkins Road several times a week and their parents, Amy and Robb Stone, both work for the agency.*