

NORTH COUNTRY NEWS

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North Country Independent Living

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Family Care Update

Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Contact Numbers

All Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC) in our eight counties are now open. ADRCs continue to enroll members in long term care. Members are those who are: transitioning out of COP or CIP, coming off waiting lists for long term care services or are finding the need for services for the first time.

Contact numbers by Counties:

ADRC of the North serving Ashland, Bayfield, Iron, Price and Sawyer.

Please use 1-866-663-3607 for all offices.

Burnett ADRC 715-485-8449 or toll free 1-877-485-2372

Douglas ADRC 715-395-1234 or toll free 1-866-946-2372

Washburn ADRC 715-635-4460

Angela Leaving North Country

Office Assistant Angela Field is leaving North Country this month. Angela has meant a great deal to North Country in the short time she has been with us. She has assisted Bob in coordinating our Transportation Voucher Program, and assisted with the paperwork that keeps North Country running smoothly. Angela has also been invaluable in helping us assemble and edit North Country News for the past few months. Angela has been attending UW-Superior and recently got married and will be moving to St. Louis soon. We are hopeful that Angela and her husband will find their way back to Lake Superior and visit now and then. There is one thing for certain, St. Louis just became a nicer place to live!

NCIL Welcomes Personal Care Coordinator

I am Amy Andraska, the newly hired Personal Care Coordinator/Developer here at North Country Independent Living. I started in May, and what an exciting few weeks it has been. Michele, our RN, and I were able to go to Washington D.C. for the National Council of Independent Living conference, and it was quite the experience and an excellent way to meet people who have similar programs at their Independent Living Centers. Since then I have been traveling all over the state to learn more about the Personal Care Program.

I came to this area for college and fell in love with all the beauty and people here so I decided to stay, and now I proudly call Superior home. I went to the UW-Superior for a degree in Sociology and minors in Anthropology and Library Sciences. Previous to working at North Country I was the patient account manager at an oral surgery center in Duluth for five years. I am very excited to jump right into my work at North Country and develop the Personal Care Program to its full potential.

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Your help is appreciated...
If you would like to receive North Country News via email please contact North Country at ncilcheryl@superior-nfp.org or call 800-924-1220v/tty

Letter from the Director

From May 11-14th North Country conducted a Quality Indicators for Independent Living Services (QUILS) peer review. The QUILS tool is an intensive 5 day exploration of all facets of an Independent Living Center. Much more than just a compliance review (meeting minimum standards) a QUILS review looks for best practice. A QUILS review is conducted by our IL peers and people who work in the IL field. Our team consisted of Team Facilitator, Maureen Ryan, Director of the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, Madison; Billy Altom, Director of the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living, Little Rock, Arkansas; Kitty Barry, Assistant Director of Option for Independent Living, Green Bay; Karen Olufs, Assistance Director of Society's Assets, Racine; Ginger Reimer, Director of Personal Care Services, Independence First, Milwaukee; William Parke-Sutherland, Independent Living Council of Wisconsin, Madison.

The team conducted intensive interviews with staff, board and consumers, combed through our policies, procedure, paperwork, finances, records, etc. After all of this they develop a report and come back to the entire agency with some recommendations.

I'm pleased and proud that North Country gets strong ratings in our advocacy efforts! The hallmark of an IL center is advocacy and like previous peer reviews in 1996 and 2001 North Country is committed and competent in this most important core service. Our commitment to consumers, consumer control and diversity are also considered best practice. Our staff and board are strong, committed and aggressive. We also received some great ideas on improving our services for peer support and our new personal care program.

Our next step is to incorporate the recommendations into our strategic planning process, a vital task in order for North Country to survive and thrive in these challenging times.

I want to thank the review team for their efforts (they put in over 50 hrs in 4 days, not including travel time!). Also my sincere thanks to consumers, board and especially the awesome North Country staff for making this agency what it is today!

Did you know that North Country's charter calls for our Board of Directors and staff to be comprised of at least 51% people with disabilities? It's part of our way to ensure consumer control of the organization. We strongly believe that the lessons we learn from our disability experiences will enable us to provide valuable information to other consumers.

Board members set policy for North Country and are required to attend quarterly meetings, held in either Ashland or Superior. Travel expenses are covered by North Country. Please consider serving. For more

TELEWORK The Wisconsin Telework Program is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from home or from other remote sites away from the office, such as work on the road or at a Telework center.

Telework is made possible through a grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The Department of Workforce Development and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation received the grant and provide program and fiscal oversight.

North Country Independent Living staff are able to answer questions you may have. Call 800-924-1220 v/tty.

One-Time Opportunity

We have received a donation of used equipment. The following free items are available for pick-up in the Superior office of NCIL on a first-come, first-served basis. No warranty is implied in this offer.

2 commode chairs

1 extra wide quantum Jazzy Power Chair

1 shower/commode chair w/ manual tilt

Please call Gloria in the Superior office if you are interested in one of these items.

If you have items that you would like to donate to others, we can list these for you on our website: www.northcountryil.org Please contact Cheryl at our Superior office for details.



Calendar of Events

All phone numbers are in area code 715 unless otherwise noted.

First Monday of the month, Northern Bridges Board of Directors meeting, Ramada Inn, Hayward, 10290, Highway 27 south and County Road B, 9-3 p.m. Open to the public. Northern Bridges board is responsible for implementing the expansion of Family Care in northern Wisconsin.

Independent Living Council of Wisconsin will be at North Country in Superior, August 10-12 to get input from North Country and consumers on how to improve services. Input opportunities will be available at North Country on Monday, August 10, Tuesday, August 11 and Wednesday, August 12. For more information, call John at our office in Superior.

Social Security “Networking Forum,” August 18, 9-12, Ashland M & I Bank, 100 E. Main Street, lower level. This forum is free. It will focus on the latest information from Social Security, including the Ticket to Work and Social Security eServices. For more information and to make a reservation, call Joani Werner at 866-667-6032, ext 10661 Or e-mail: joani.werner@ssa.gov

Courage Center Duluth Summer Activities South Shore Kayak Adventure, August 19, 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Meet at the UMD Aquatics Center, \$80.

Waterskiing Day of Discovery
August 15, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Pike Lake AAA Club, \$30.

Softball Night of Discovery, August 14, 6-9 p.m., Woodland Community Center, \$10. Scholarships for these and other events at Courage Duluth may still be available. Call Eric for more information, 218-726-4762.

Area PowWows this summer:

31st Honoring Sobriety PowWow July 31 - August 2 Location: Mash Ka Wisen Treatment Center - Sawyer, Minnesota. Traditional Powwow. Contact: 218/879-6731.

30th Bad River PowWow, August 23. For information, call 682-7151 or 682-9989.

St. Croix Wild Rice Fest PowWow, August 28-30. Call 800-236-2195, ext 5338 or 715-349-2195.

Jerry Fairbanks Memorial Scholarship PowWow August 28-30th. Mash Ka Wisen Treatment Center - Sawyer, Minnesota. Traditional Powwow. The location is one mile north of Highway 210 on Mission Road.

We are DARING: **D**isability **A**dvocacy, **R**esource and **I**nclusion **G**roups

At DARING, we are focused on sharing our skills, resources and advocacy with friends who also have a disability. When two or more people come together, great ideas are generated! We ROCK! We are recognizing each other's gifts and abilities, building social connections and creating new dreams while overcoming barriers. We work toward complete inclusion in the community. This means access to structures, services and associations that all others enjoy in their daily life. It means navigating independently, as much as is possible. It means recognizing that we are all interdependent and that no one is an island. We need community and we need each other.

We meet in all eight of our service counties, but meeting times and locations vary considerably due to transportation and scheduling considerations. Please call to get connected to others in your area. Contact Martha at 218-393-7319 or 715-682-5676 ext.3. Check out www.groups.yahoo.com/group/daring_to_make_a_stand/

Benefits Overpayment

If you receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits and are earning money, one of the biggest fears may be getting a letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) telling you that you were paid too much by them. This is known as being in "overpayment status". But not all overpayments have to be repaid. There are three steps you can take to appeal an SSA decision.

If you believe you have been reporting your income accurately, you can challenge the overpayment. First you can ask to have the overpayment decision re-opened by SSA. This is more of an informal process involving a call to a staff person at your local SSA office to discuss the overpayment. Second, you may file a "Request for Reconsideration of Overpayment" and ask to challenge the fact of, or the amount of the overpayment. If you file a Request for Reconsideration, the efforts by SSA to collect the overpayment from you stop until the appeal is decided.

Finally, if you are still found to be in overpayment status, you may request a "Waiver of Overpayment". In this step you have to show that the overpayment was not your fault and that you cannot afford to repay it. For more information about what to do when an SSA overpayment occurs, please contact Scott Anderson at NCIL in Superior.

Reduced Cost Occupational Therapy Clinic at St. Scholastica

Occupational therapy (OT) helps people live life to its fullest. If you have had an illness, injury or have a disability where you need to relearn skills of daily living, the OT clinic at St. Scholastica may be for you.

This clinic is designed to provide OT services for people who are uninsured, under-insured or for those who need additional services. Services are provided by occupational therapy students under close supervision. A clinic access fee of \$10 per session is charged, but there are scholarships available to those who qualify.

The next clinic starts on **September 28** and will run until **December 9th**. Weekly one-hour appointments are scheduled on Mondays or Wednesdays. For more information, check out their website: <http://www.css.edu/x9676.xml> or call Julie at 218-723-5967.

DID YOU KNOW? October is: Domestic Violence Awareness month **and** National Disability Employment Awareness month.

Long Term Care Update

In our eight northwest counties in Wisconsin, people will have the choice of enrolling with NorthernBridges or IRIS for long term care. Both programs are founded on the principle of helping members achieve the healthcare **outcomes** they desire. Rather than the medical model of “fixing” people or their “deficits,” the focus is now on discovering the strengths and dreams of individuals and building a plan around that core. Rather than being given “goals,” members are empowered to state their desired outcomes and to work with programs to achieve those outcomes.

For more information on Family Care through NorthernBridges call (715) 934-2266 or Toll Free 1-866-306-6499 or go online to www.northernbridges.com. There are hub offices throughout the eight-county service area.

For more information on IRIS call 888-515-4747 (24 hr toll free) or go online to <http://www.wisconsin-iris.com>. There are independent consultants available in our area.

Medications and Patient Assistance Programs

Medications can be expensive, and if prescription insurance is an issue, consider applying to the patient assistance programs available through most of the pharmaceutical companies. Pharmaceutical companies are required to have patient assistance programs to help those who may not be able to afford chronic medications. These programs are often guided by income and whether or not you have access to prescription insurance. The physician will often have to sign paperwork and provide a valid prescription for the medication that is needed. To find out if your medications are covered by these programs, visit www.rxassist.org or www.needymeds.com. Both of these sites list medications by generic and brand name and provide links to forms that you'll need to fill out in order to qualify. Eligibility requirements vary according to the company, so read each one before you apply.

Support Groups

All phone numbers are in area code 715 unless otherwise noted.

Ashland Area Brain Injury/Stroke Support Group,
Meets the third Wednesday of the month in the North Twin Island meeting room of Memorial Medical Center from 1-2 p.m. For information, call Stewart at North Country in Ashland.

Superior MS Support Group,
Meets the second Tuesday of each month from 6-8 p.m. at the Superior Public Library. For more information, contact Pam

at 394-6958.

MS Circle of Hope Support Group, meets the third Wednesday of each month (April-Oct) from 2-3 p.m. at the Chequamegon Clinic, 415 Ellis Ave., Ashland. For more information, call Peggy at 682-6506 or Georgann at 682-4734.

Visually Impaired Support Group, Park Falls Area/Wisconsin Council of the

Blind,
Meets at 700 Division Street in Park Falls the third Wednesday of every month, except July and August. For more information, contact Arnold at 762-4018.

Ashland Area Low Vision Support Group, meets the second Wednesday of the month at the Ashland Senior Center. Call the Senior Center for more information, 682-4414.

Time Traders North

There is an exciting development for individuals in five northwestern Wisconsin counties (Ashland, Bayfield, Iron, Price, Sawyer). Through a Pathways to Independence grant and ARC of the Northwoods a new time bank – TimeTraders North – is up and running! TimeTraders North will allow members to deposit and withdraw needed service hours.

Here's how it works: For every hour you spend doing something for someone in your community, you earn one Time Dollar. Then you have a Time Dollar to spend on having someone do something for you. It's that simple!

Time banking changes neighborhoods and whole communities. It helps people connect in positive new ways. **Everyone** has skills they can share, and everyone could use help with some tasks. Be creative and think of all the nice things you already do for people. Where could you use help? Time banks are as varied as their communities.

Our mission is to be Northern Wisconsin's source for connecting people with community involvement opportunities. If you are new to TimeTraders you are welcome to join. Share what you have, get what you need.

You'll need a bit of help to get started and learn about TimeTraders North. The Coordinator is Deanna Yost. Contact her via email at info@timetradersnorth.org or by phone at 715-682-7171.

Others who can help are the Ambassadors:

Park Falls area	Pam Snyder	plsnyder@charter.net
Hurley area	Mary Sobczak	marleas@chartermi.net
Marengo area	Katherine Martin	katherineursulamartin@yahoo.com
Iron River area	Martha Oie	martha.oie@gmail.com or by phone at 715-372-6304
Washburn area	Michele Ochsner	mkoxner@centurytel.net

North Country's Transportation Voucher Program is Full

Consumers' response to this year's transportation voucher program has been tremendous. Unfortunately, because of the tremendous response, we have fully allocated this year's funding and are no longer able to sign up new participants. If you are interested in the program please contact us to get on our waiting list. We cannot promise you will receive funding to travel this year. Your interest helps us identify next year's funding level. More importantly, we'll be in touch with you as soon as we have funding for next year.

For the first half of 2009, the number of participants and the distance they have traveled is impressive. Since January, 67 program participants have made 2500 trips for a total distance of nearly 63,000 miles.

North Country Vouchers are getting people to work, social events, shopping and medical appointments. Surprisingly, medical trips top the list, followed closely by trips for shopping. Travel for social and religious activities is a close third followed by trips for education and work.

The North Country Transportation Voucher Program is supported with funding provided by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's New Freedom Initiative. North Country expects to apply for funding for the transportation voucher program again next year. We extend our thanks to all of our participants and their drivers and to all of you who've helped us get the word out about this vital program.

Collaboration Benefits Student

WisLoan helps people with disabilities get financing to buy assistive technology equipment or make home modifications. The program is administered by Independence First in Milwaukee. All Independent Living Centers work with WisLoan. One recent success involved collaboration between a County Department of Human Services and North Country Independent Living.

A young lady was graduating from high school. Her county social worker knew about the WisLoan program and referred Kira E. and her family to contact NCIL. An Independent Living Specialist worked with Kira and her family to get an application completed and approved for the purchase of a recent model van which could be converted for use with a power chair. Kira's County Department of Human Services contributed the cost of the conversion of the van. The collaboration between NCIL and the county department created an outcome for Kira to own a reliable adapted van. Kira said about her 2006 Toyota Sienna van with a Braun Conversion, "I love it". Kira's father said about the WisLoan program, "I would like to thank the people at North Country Independent Living for the speedy, hard work that went into our loan process. It would not have happened without them."

Kira will also use NCIL's transportation voucher program to hire a driver for her van. She will be able to fully participate in every activity she wishes to participate in, from going to college, to going out to dinner and a movie, to visiting family. This young lady will go far.



WISLOAN

WisLoan is a statewide, low interest loan program that allows a Wisconsin resident with a disability to purchase assistive technology or make home modifications so that he or she can live more independently or productively. **Contact North Country for more information.**

WisLoan is a federally-funded project of the National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and the U.S Dept. of Education.

Donation for North Country Independent Living

North Country welcomes your support in fulfilling its mission of empowering people with disabilities. Your contribution is tax deductible. North Country Independent Living is a non-profit agency with 501(c)3 status.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

Name _____

Organization/Company _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

I would like to volunteer at North Country

Mail to:
 North Country Independent Living
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 Superior, WI 54880

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ALTERNATE FORMATS AVAILABLE

If you require any of this information in an alternate format, please contact us.