

# TRANSITIONS

*Black Hills Workshop & Training Center*

P.O. Box 2104, Rapid City, SD 57709

## Achievement Award winners honored

**Brian Bertsch, Heather Kickery, Eric Rude, and Darlene Running Bear** were each honored with *Outstanding Achievement Awards* at our annual Recognition Gala, Saturday, November 1. (See below.)

**Linda Soucy and Pam Rice** from Sears received *Employer Merit Awards*. Thanks to Linda's initiative, Sears currently employs three people from Black Hills Workshop. Along with supporting them to be successful on the job, Linda and Pam have assisted us in promoting employment for people with disabilities.

**Heather Pickering** formerly of Black Hills Community Theatre received our *Community Connection Award*. She wrote and directed *Flutter*, a joint theatrical production of Workshop and Black Hills Community Theatre. Put on in July, *Flutter* was a magnificent production and a wonderful opportunity for those we support to make new friends and express themselves creatively.

Around 850 people attended the Gala which was held at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center and sponsored by Duhamel Broadcasting.

### *Outstanding Achievement Award Winners*

#### **Brian Bertsch**

Brian has been a custodian at Ellsworth Air Force Base since 1993. "I have no doubt in my mind he could run the crew if I was gone one day," says Crystal Young, the team leader for Brian's crew. Brian is an avid walker and has made many friends on his walks. He especially enjoys visiting thrift stores and adding to his collection of die cast farm machines and other vehicles. Brian's father Leonard Bertsch says, "His biggest accomplishment has been independent living. He's learned not to depend on his parents like he used to."

#### **Heather Kickery**

Heather has been very active at First United Methodist Church for many years,

volunteering to help with children's programming and participating in other activities. Some of the children she helped in the nursery have now graduated from high school. She is also involved in People First, an organization which teaches people with disabilities to advocate for themselves. In October, Heather celebrated her fifth anniversary at Wendy's Restaurant. "She's learned some of the jobs so well that oftentimes she is assigned to the training. She loves that," says Kim Kringen, Workshop Employment Specialist.

#### **Eric Rude**

Eric has been employed at the Ellsworth Air Force Base Commissary for eight years. Contract Supervisor Tony Ferrer says Eric unloads trucks; rotates, cleans, and segregates products; scans products with a handheld scanner; and operates the fork lift. "He's the right-hand man for the contract manager during the day shift operations." Paul Kind, Former Assistant Pastor of Fountain Springs Community Church says, "Eric is an example of someone who really has gotten involved --involved in a small group, involved in volunteering here in the office and helping

out with different events, so just lining up with the values Black Hills Workshop is about and being a good neighbor."

#### **Darlene Running Bear**

Darlene works in the Black Hills Workshop kitchen where her supervisor says she has learned to do all of the necessary tasks. "Darlene is just my go-to person. If I need something, she knows exactly where it is and how to get it done in a matter of minutes," says Laura Smith. She is also very sensitive to the needs of others. "It touches me personally because if I've opened the oven, she'll say 'be careful, Laura. Don't burn yourself.'" Her caring for others extends to the three women she shares a house with.

Congratulations to all of our winners. And thank you to our wonderful committee who worked so hard to make the evening special for them: Chair **Patti Herlihy, Sandra Burns, JoVayne Cappa, Jeanette Deurloo, Helene Duffy, Judy Duhamel, Sandye Kading, Rebecca Kramer, Batool Merali, Sheila Muehlberg, Tracy Manning-Egge, Linda Rabe, Dorothy Rosby, Tura Synhorst, and JoAnne Schriver.**



*Eric Rude, Heather Kickery, Darlene Running Bear, and Brian Bertsch pose with their trophies during the Gala held November 1.*

## Lisa Batteen honored



Lisa Batteen has been selected for the Wind Beneath our Wings Award. The award is presented by the Chamber of Commerce's Health & Human Services Committee. Lisa was honored at the 20th annual Health & Human Services Awards Luncheon November 21 at the Radisson. Lisa started as an instructor with BH Services in October 1990 when we took over the food service contract at Ellsworth Air Force Base. In October of this year, she has moved into a service coordinator position at Black Hills Workshop.

## Donate your vehicle

### Benefits to you

As the donor, you may receive a tax deduction. We will pick up your vehicle, and you can be assured that your donation may be helping others to become more independent.

### How to make a donation:

If you have a vehicle you would like to donate, call our mechanic department at 718-8326. If you would like to make a cash donation to help support our transportation program, mail it to Black Hills Workshop, PO Box 2104, Rapid City, SD 57709.



## BHW hosts Native American Heritage Week

Hoop Dancer Dallas Chief Eagle performed during Black Hills Workshop's Native American Heritage Week celebration October 6-October 10. He was accompanied by the North Middle School Wanbli Hotain Drum Group. Other activities included a sweat lodge at Sioux San Hospital, an opportunity to make dream catchers, arrowheads and other Native American art at the Suzie Cappa Art Center, and Lakota storytelling. The week ended with the He Sapa Wacipi (Black Hills Pow Wow) at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center.



Hoop Dancer Dallas Chief Eagle poses with Teresa Krier after performing in the Black Hills Workshop gymnasium during our Native American Heritage Week celebration.

## I love my job!

(Kari Thompson is a service coordinator who provides support to 21 people living in an apartment building in the community. She wrote the following testimonial.)

*Because my husband and I have both worked for the workshop for around 16 years, it really isn't a job, but more a way of life. I love that every day is different and never boring. I appreciate the challenge of figuring out how to get results. It is so exciting to talk to a person served about their hopes and dreams, and then support them in achieving these dreams. It is amazing when a community connection is made and other people are able to see the unbelievable value of people we support. It is so exciting helping people live up to their full potential and seeing them become empowered. I also enjoy working for such a caring agency with such outstanding, dependable staff. There are so many people that work here that I admire and appreciate. It is great to have support from such a large team of people that are willing to do what they can to make great things happen.*

Black Hills Workshop is a great place to work. Our employees receive an excellent benefit package, many opportunities to learn new skills, and the knowledge that they make a difference in the lives of others. If you or someone you know is interested in employment with our agency, call our job line at 343-4581 or see our web site at [www.bhws.com](http://www.bhws.com).



# News from the Suzie Cappa Center

## Suzie Cappa Artists Show Work at School

Artists Nancy Weiss, Russell Steinback, Lisa Crow, and Shawn Bifulco displayed fifteen pieces of art work at the Meadowbrook Elementary School lobby October 6-10 during Art Week in the Schools. Several group projects were also featured.

## Suzie Cappa artists honored

The Chamber of Commerce's Cultural Affairs Committee presented Brad Winter and the artists from the Suzie Cappa Center with an Art Appreciation Award on October 28. They were honored for making the tablecloths which were used at the Rushmore Honors dinner in September as well as six cityscapes which were used at the Chamber's annual dinner in October. Pictured below are artists and members of the committee: **Linda Anderson, Tammy Barrows, Pauline Lunde, Nancy Weiss, Brad Winter, Mike Leithauser, Marta Olson Rangitsch, Lisa Crow, Erica Johnson, and Sue Callahan.** Seated are Darla Drew Lerdal and Rodney Keffeler.



# New Contract at Rapid City Regional Hospital

Four people served by Black Hills Workshop are now working on a new Black Hills Workshop contract at Rapid City Regional Hospital. A fifth will begin shortly. The contract in the medical records department involves purging, scanning, and assembling files, and we are grateful for the new employment opportunity.

Rapid City Regional Hospital has been our partner in employing people with disabilities since 1992. That's when Black Hills Workshop began assembling kits used for standard medical procedures for the hospital. Our partnership has expanded greatly since then. Today 25 people at Black Hills Workshop assemble medical kits such as those used for dialysis and IVs. Meanwhile another 14 people from Black Hills Workshop work on site at the hospital assembling medical kits; de-linting, folding, and wrapping surgical towels; stocking supplies in patient rooms; delivering patient medical chart binders throughout the hospital; and picking up supplies from the warehouse. Some stock the Central Sterile Services Department and prepare the sterilization canisters for surgical instrument sterilization. Others work in the decontamination room cleaning the patient record binders.

We are thankful to Rapid City Regional Hospital for the employment opportunities they provide and their support of our mission.

# Twisted Nightmares

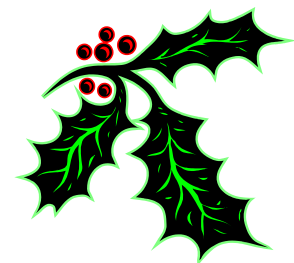
Black Hills Workshop's annual Haunted House scared, shocked, and frightened 897 visitors October 24-25. The employees who created the haunted house and did the scaring were assisted by 17 of the people we support and 36 community volunteers. Thanks to everyone who participated and also to those who got up their courage to attend. Admission was non-perishable food which has been donated to the Food Bank.

## We need a lift--or three!

Direct care employees at Black Hills Workshop lift and move individuals with severe physical limitations more than twenty times each day. Not only is this difficult for our employees, it can cause physical and emotional discomfort for the individuals themselves.

In order to improve the situation for both employees and people living in three of our residential facilities, we plan to install Trak Lift Systems which give individuals more personal control and dignity while using the rest room and provide safer conditions for our staff.

We need your help! Each Trak System will cost around \$13,000, even with our maintenance staff doing the installation. With your support, we can utilize this available technology to make life better for both those we serve and the employees who support them. To discuss how you can help, call Dennis Popp at 605-718-7466 or you can mail your gift in the enclosed envelope and designate it for the Trak System.



BLACK HILLS WORKSHOP AND TRAINING CENTER, INC.  
P.O. Box 2104  
Rapid City, South Dakota 57709  
(605) 343-4550

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## BHW Champs Again!



*Black Hills Workshop took home the YMCA Corporate Cup trophy October 9 for the second year in a row. Our participation in Corporate Cup is headed up by Joe Burmeister, instructor in our Health, Sport and Fitness Center. Joe says he's looking for a "three-peat" in 2009! Pictured are Jason Lind and Jackie Smith helping pull the Workshop team to a first-place win in the tug-of-war.*

## Address changes?

Please check your address label. If you have changes or corrections, send them to:

**Sheila Muehlberg  
Black Hills Workshop  
P.O. Box 2104  
Rapid City, SD 57709**

You can also e-mail your changes to [smuehlberg@bhws.com](mailto:smuehlberg@bhws.com) or call 605-718-6208. Thank you so much for helping us keep our mailing list up-to-date and our mailing costs low.

Transitions is published bimonthly by the Black Hills Workshop Foundation. The Black Hills Workshop Foundation is dedicated to supporting comprehensive, quality services for people with disabilities. The Foundation is committed to ensuring those services now and in the future. Comments and questions are encouraged and may be addressed to Dorothy Rosby, Editor, Box 2104, Rapid City, SD 57709, or call (605) 343-4550. You can also e-mail [drosby@bhws.com](mailto:drosby@bhws.com). Visit us at our web site at [bhws.com](http://bhws.com).

# Thank you to our generous contributors

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# Focus on founders

There are many people to thank for the successes the Workshop has had over its fifty year history. Two of those people are Calvin and Bobbie Swick. Calvin Swick was the manager of the Workshop when it opened at 307 Main Street, which had previously been home to the Rapid City Police Department building. Bobbie was a teacher. Their son Danny was one of the children enrolled in the program. The excerpts below were taken from a letter sent to us several years ago by daughter Carrie Swick Snyder:

*"It is true that the first classroom for special needs children in the Black Hills was in the Kibben's basement and was taught by Elma Kuster. The classroom was not financially supported by tax dollars since this was prior to P.L. 94-142 and the Kennedy administration. The costs for the classroom and the teacher were covered by the parents and the Black Hills Association for Retarded Children. This was the first time that my brother, Danny, was allowed to go to school.*



**Bobbie Swick's photo taken from an newspaper article printed in the early 1960s.**

*The creation of this original classroom was soon followed by a purchase of a large home on West Boulevard, The Children's Center. Here children with special needs were served in three classrooms, with a residential facility as well as a food service training site.*

*In the early sixties my parents sold their business and began to prepare themselves for teaching special needs students. They were very involved in the local ARC. This organization was approached to consider the needs for the older population, specifically by parents in the northern hills. My parents and I traveled to Minneapolis to visit one of the best workshops at that time, in the nation. It was from that trip that my parents began to envision what the future Black Hills Workshop would be like.*

*In approximately 1964 the Black Hills Workshop School was started in the old city jail in Rapid City. The title included the word 'school' to assure pulling in some financial aide from the public tax dollars but it was very limited because the special education laws had not been passed at that point. My mother was the classroom teacher, Mr. Robert Christenson was the Workshop supervisor and my father was the director. Originally only males were served, but the handicapping conditions included not only mental disabilities but physical and emotionally handicapped persons. The Workshop staff worked hand-in-hand with the South Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. The emphasis of the production in the workshop was on local products using natural resources. Therefore, the products manufactured included surveyor stakes, palates, repair of milk and soda pop boxes and Christmas wreaths.*

*Approximately one year later the Workshop was opened to women who also came with various handicapping conditions. The women's workshop supervisor was Hallie Stromer. The women worked side-by-side with the men in the workshop in the morning and in the afternoon they went to the Children's Center on West Boulevard. At the Children's Center they were taught to cook, clean and assist in the classroom. It was during those years that my mother, Bobbie Swick, became the Executive Director of the ARC and through her guidance, these innovative programs began.*

*In 1965 my mother and Elma Kuster were hired by the Rapid City School District to teach at what was called the 'Little Red School House.' This was one of the first public classrooms for what was then called 'Trainable and Severe/ Profound' children. Ethel Bridgeford was the Director of Special Education for Rapid City Schools and took strong leadership in the city for the handicapped population."*

Carrie Swick goes on to say that her mother continued to teach special needs students for over a decade, primarily in the state of California. Carrie entered the teaching field in special education as well and taught for 25 years. Her husband also took up teaching special education, and her daughter Sara Snyder began her career as a special education teacher in

1997. Dan Swick now lives at the Sonoma Developmental Center in California. Calvin Swick passed away in 1988.

We are grateful for the contributions and awed by the sacrifices made by the Swicks and other families of their day. Our thanks to Carrie Swick Snyder for sharing her memories with us.



**Cal Swick in a newspaper article about the Black Hills Workshop done in the early 1960s.**

**Black Hills Workshop  
Pancake Breakfast  
Sunday, February 22  
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**Black Hills Workshop  
3603 Range Road**

**Sponsored and hosted by  
the Rushmore Lions Club**

**Admission is \$5.00  
Children 8 and under eat free**

