

IRA Newsletter

August 17, 2009

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

You will notice a new format for the newsletter to make it easier to read when accessed electronically. You will still be able to print it to share with your coworkers, colleagues and friends who are not members. Our next issue will be totally electronic so get your email address to Victoria Kollmann.

The final board meeting of the year will be held on Wednesday, October 14, prior to the conference, at 9:30 a.m. All members are welcome to attend and watch your board in action!

An invitation has been issued for the 2010 or 2011 conference to be held at the Ramada Inn and Sullivan Convention Center in Waterloo. The board will be discussing this in the future. If you want to provide input, please contact a board member or me.

An endowment fund has been started and a committee appointed to work on this concept. The Dubuque Area Office of IVRS donated \$165 in honor of Frank Potter on his retirement. Those wanting to donate funds in the future in honor of a person or in memory of a person should watch for further information on the web site as this endowment fund develops.

We are excited about the upcoming conference in conjunction with the Great Plains Region. Jonathan Ice and his committee have been working hard on program and networking opportunities. Please see articles elsewhere in the newsletter.

I hope your summer has gone well and you are ready to join our colleagues in Cedar Rapids October 14-16, 2009 as we are "Keeping the Boat Afloat – Rising Above the Flood of Adversity". -Harlietta

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Help Us Grow!!

Again this year, we are asking for your assistance with the NRA Membership Campaign. Signing on a new member will result in \$20 off your IRA Fall Training Conference registration. That can be a maximum savings of \$60 when you sponsor three or more new members!!

The Fall Training Conference will be held at the Clarion in Cedar Rapids October 14 – 16, 2009. The registration form is available in this newsletter.

New member applications must be sent to me with the sponsoring member's name on the NRA application in order to receive the perk. Or, for online registrations, the new NRA member needs to send me an email confirmation with his/her IRA sponsor's name.

I can send you NRA materials and registration forms that you can share with potential members. Let's grow!

Victoria Kollmann
319-230-8737
victoria.kollmann@blind.state.ia.us

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KUDOS TO MEMBERS

Members are working hard on your upcoming training conference and the business of the Iowa Rehabilitation Association. Remember to thank them for their hard work on our behalf.

Jonathan Ice, chair of the conference program and local arrangements has a committee of Orville Townsend, Denise Hubert, Doug Keast, Gary Johnson, Mike Williams, Frank Potter and Jeff Morgan working on program and networking events. Tim Gracey is working on exhibitors for the conference. John TenPas, past president, is preparing a ballot of officers for the coming year to be elected at the conference. Marcia Gracey is doing double duty as awards chair and registration chair for the conference.

Ellen Sokolowski has been serving as legislative chair for the Iowa chapter and has decided to take the challenge to run for NRA board member at large. When your NRA ballot arrives soon, please vote for Ellen!

Rosie Thierer has accepted an additional duty as chair of a committee to work on an endowment concept along with Frank Potter (who came up with the idea), Roger Carter, and Ellen Sokolowski. IRA received a gift of \$165 from the Dubuque Area Office of IVRS to honor Frank at the time of his retirement. If you have input for the committee, please contact one of the members.

Mike Williams has been keeping our web site up to date and you should check back often! Encourage others in your network to view it as well.

Roger Carter has prepared possible bylaw changes at the request of the board members and they appear in this newsletter as well as the last one. Be prepared to vote at the annual meeting in October.

Victoria Kollmann is membership chair and talked the board into an incentive program again this year. See her article elsewhere in the newsletter.

Suzie Paulson has worked diligently to pull together articles submitted by members for our newsletter and uses her talents to make them more readable when accessed electronically.



I'm happy to tell you that our reports from NRA are back on track!

At this time, our membership is:

IRA Total 86 - 62 Professional
 5 Student
 19 Full Life

Please continue to send your address, phone and/or email updates to me. It is important for the IRA board to contact you with information about your organization.

This newsletter includes articles about important information regarding upcoming changes in IRA Newsletter distribution and a Membership Drive.

Speaking of 2009 membership, please welcome new members: Valerie Osterberg, Jami Schwickerath, Robert Hendrickson, Lindsey Walker.

Currently, the Membership Committee consists of Marcia Gracey, Tim Gracey and me. We'd love to have anyone wanting to be a part of this committee.

Please contact me at victoria.kollmann@blind.state.ia.us or 319-230-8737 when you have question, suggestions or comments for our committee.

Victoria Kollmann
IRA Membership Chair



Exciting News!! We are preparing to change the delivery of our IRA newsletters in 2010.

Please contact me via email or phone to let me know that you are ready to receive a notification to your email address when the IRA newsletter is available for your viewing on the IRA website. Of course, I'll need your preferred email address, too.

This year's newsletters have already been posted on the website if you would like to check them out. We welcome your suggestions to make the newsletter and the website as user friendly as possible. And you know, you can print from the website if you want to save a conference registration form or other part of the newsletter.

If you prefer to continue to receive your IRA newsletter in a print format, I need to know that, too.

Consider the email notification for your newsletter access. We all are responsible for our environment. Recently, I learned that if we were to lay out all the paper that American businesses generate in just one day, that paper would be enough to circle the Earth about 20 times. Wow!!

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Living Legacy

IRA is establishing a "Living Legacy" program to remember those who die or leave NRA/IRA or the rehabilitation field. The money raised will be used to encourage the new hires in the rehab field to join NRA/IRA. The IRA Board considers this to be a "win/win" program to honor our friends who recently leave us and too encourage more newly hired persons to join NRA/IRA. It is realized that often young people who leave school to start in the rehab field find it hard to pay for professional memberships. Individual donations are encouraged at \$10. Half of the donated money will be placed in endowment to continue to build while the other half will be dispensed toward memberships during the year. It is anticipated that eventually the endowment may grow large enough to provide full memberships for those new persons who join NRA/IRA. The people who are honored will be mentioned at the luncheon at the annual conference. Donations should be sent to the attention of Rosie Thierer, Treasurer, IRA [at her home address]

IOWA WELCOMES GREAT PLAINS REGION

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Members from states in the Great Plains Region will be joining IRA for their annual conference. States in our region include: Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa. Wendy Parent, current spokesperson for this organization, is holding a conference call this next week and invitations have been issued to members from these states. Let's give them a hearty Iowa welcome!

Letter from Ellen

Hello,

I would like to take this opportunity to share information about my candidacy for Board Member at Large for the National Rehabilitation Association.

I have been a long time member of NRA and have held various leadership positions at the state, regional and national level, which are outlined in the attached brochure. I strongly believe in this association and its mission as I have been both a recipient of rehabilitation services as well as being presently employed as a rehabilitation counselor for the State of Iowa. If elected, I would put my time and energy to the National Rehabilitation Association representing the membership of the association.

I am asking you to assist me by passing this information to other members whose names may not be on this list. Ballots are expected to be mailed out to members on or about August 1st. I am asking for your vote and support in this election.

Thank you.

Ellen Sokolowski, MS, CRC
1410 Chestnut Street
Atlantic, Iowa 50022

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ByLaw Change

Proposed Bylaw Change **Roger Carter, Constitution and Bylaws Chairperson**

At the May 1 Board Meeting, the Board voted to **eliminate** Line 1 of Article IV Boundaries which reads: **The boundaries of IRA shall be the same as those of the State.**

Their thought was that this Bylaw seemed to restrict IRA membership to only those people who reside and/or work in Iowa and that people in neighboring states, i.e. Nebraska (that no longer have a State chapter) would be excluded from joining IRA.

To change a Bylaw (no matter how minor) requires the vote of the IRA membership at the Annual Meeting, scheduled this year for October in Cedar Rapids. In addition, any State Bylaw change requires the approval of our parent NRA.

The change obviously has merit, particularly in light of the fact that we had such a great turnout of Nebraska people at last year's conference. As members of IRA, they could take advantage of training opportunities not afforded to them in their home state, even if meant incurring added travel expense. Keep in mind that most of us do that anyway.

On the other hand, the change/deletion may not be necessary. The next Article, Article V Membership, reads as follows:

The membership of IRA shall consist of all members and only those members of NRA who live in the state, or who designate Iowa as their affiliate of choice on their membership application.

This Article suggests then that these same individuals could still join NRA/IRA regardless of residency and still be entitled to the same privileges as those of us who live in Iowa.

Again, it may be a minor change but one that can eliminate any confusion about who can join IRA. This Bylaw change will be on the ballot at the Annual Meeting in October.

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Keeping the Boat Afloat

The 2009 Iowa Rehabilitation Association annual training conference this year will also double as the NRA Great Plains Regional conference. It will be held on Wednesday to Friday, October 14-16 at the Clarion Hotel in Cedar Rapids. Registration info is to be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

As Cedar Rapids still is in recovery mode from last year's floods, it was appropriate that this year's is, "Keeping the Boat Afloat: Rising above the Flood of Adversity." On Wednesday, after our kickoff luncheon, our keynote speaker will be Earl Hipp, a highly regarded speaker from Minneapolis, who will speak on "Keeping YOUR Boat Afloat: A Conversation about Resilience."

Though there may be some alterations between now and "show time," the program is largely set. Wednesday should see breakout sessions on the following:

- Collaborative Support to Iowa Businesses (Mike Williams, Barb McClannahan)
- Collaboration of Rehab with Consumer Groups (panel of consumer group reps)
- Iowa's Response to Henry's Turkey Services Scandal (Terry Cunningham, Jerry Mayes)
- Iowa Workforce Integration (Doug Keast)
- Using O*Net and CHOICES in the Rehab Process (Matt Bruinekool)
- Effects of the ADA Restoration Act (Amy Desenberg-Wines)

Thursday morning should see the following:

- The Spirit of Robert's Rules of Order and Other Aspects of Facilitating Effective Meetings (Jay Brewer)
- Veterans with Disabilities (John Mikelson)
- Iowa's Laborshed Studies (Paula Nissen)
- Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities in Iowa (Robert Snyder)
- Effects of the Stimulus Act on Iowa Agencies (panel)

At Thursday noon we will have the annual awards luncheon, followed by sessions on:

- Ticket to Work (Ruth Allison, Mary Lynn Revoir)
- TBA (presentation related to head injury and rehab, Phil Davis, On with Life)
- Ethics: The 2010 CRCC Code of Ethics (Vilia Tarvydas)
- Ethics (title TBA) (Vilia Tarvydas or Jodi Saunders)
- Decreasing Barriers for Students with Mental Illness (NAMI & Iowa City schools)
- Building Social Capital for Job Seekers (Robert Stensrud)

Friday sessions will be as a large group, and will include "55 and Looking for Work" (Terry Hornbuckle) and a chance to talk with two of our state's most prominent legislators – Sen. Rob Hogg, D-Cedar Rapids, and Rep. Kraig Paulsen, R-Hiawatha. If we are able to get someone from national NRA, that person will complete the agenda. If such a person is not on tap, I have an excellent speaker on diversity available to address us.

Of course, IRA conferences are not all work. IRA conference is a great opportunity to enjoy the friendship of some very fine folks, who happen to be rehab professionals (and, yes, some networking might occur, also). We will have evening hospitality/social programs, with a few surprises thrown in. Attendees are welcome to go out and paint the town in Iowa's

second largest city. During the breaks between sessions, and possibly for a while after, chair massages will be available to all comers at a rate of \$10 for 10 minutes, courtesy of Iowa City massage therapist Lonnie Ludvigson.

I hope you all have saved the dates and plan to come to this fall's IRA conference. As they say in my old home state of Minnesota, "It'll be a heckuva deal."

Jonathan Ice



Iowa Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association

Hi, we will be having a divisional meeting at the IRA Training Conference at the Clarion in Cedar Rapids October 14-16 to vote on the draft Constitution and Bylaws. Lisa Chellew has been keeping up with the revisions on this document. Following that meeting, we will submit our data to NRA RCEA to become an official affiliate.

Again this year, we are accepting nominations for the Counselor of the Year Award to be presented at the Annual IRA Training Conference. Please refer to the link on the home page of the IRA website. Email your nomination by September 1, 2009 to Marcia Gracey at m.gracey@mchsi.com.

The 2009 IRCEA Board is President – Victoria Kollmann; Vice President-Lisa Chellew; Treasurer – Jackie Wiperman; Secretary – Suzanne Paulson; Board Member/Bylaws – Roger Carter; Board Member – Ray Olejniczak.

The remaining IRCEA members are Matt Bruinekool, Marcia Gracey, Jennifer Houck, John Lee-Egan, Thomas Magner, Richard Metz, Jeffrey Morgan, Raymond Olejniczak, Frank Potter, Ellen Sokolowski, Lois Staff, and John Wadsworth.

Please contact me, Victoria Kollmann, at 319.230.8737 or victoria.kollmann@blind.state.ia.us if you have any questions or comments. We'd love to have you join our division.

See you at the training conference!!
Victoria Kollmann



By Marcia Gracey

Have you come up with any nominees for the Achiever of the Year, or the Chuck Wood Memorial Award? I am sure you have worked with a client who has overcome barriers to become successfully employed, or someone who has broken down barriers to improve the quality of their lives. So get out your writing pen, or hit the key board and put a packet together on your nominee, and send it to me.

The Counseling Division and the Job Placement Division each give out an award to professionals in the field of rehabilitation to recognize their work, efforts, and creativity. If you have questions about the Counselor of the Year Award, you can contact Victoria Kollmann at Victoria.kollmann@blind.state.ia.us and if you have questions about the Bill Donahue Award you can contact Matt Bruinekool at matt.bruinekool@drake.edu You can also locate the criteria for all the awards on the IRA website, which is www.iraiaowa.org

If you have questions for me, please either call me at 515-2453-0042, or 515-321-8162, or by email at m.gracey@mchsi.com

I would like to receive nomination packets by September 15, 2009. The mailing address is: 4512 SW 16th St. Des Moines, IA 50315.

The Gerry Byers Award is give by IRA to an IRA member who has demonstrated outstanding service to persons with disabilities and to the Iowa Rehabilitation Association. Past recipients include Tim Gracey, Dennis Brauer, Ellen Sokolowski, Rosie Thierer, Harlietta Helland, Jack Hackett, Becky Cox, and Marcia Gracey.

Exhibers Wanted!!!

SEEKING EXHIBITORS AND ADVERTISERS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Tim Gracey

I am pleased to spearhead the effort to get exhibitors to share their product and services with the membership attending the conference this fall in Cedar Rapids. The rate is the same as last year (\$175/table). I will be sending out letters and registration information shortly, and hope to have them posted on the IRA website. Feel free to send me names of businesses you think might be a good match for our membership, or copy the letter and registration from the website, and contact them yourself (just let me know if you do and who you contacted). If you have questions I can be reached at t.gracey@mchsi.com or 515-971-1297.

CHUCK WOOD AWARD IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD NOMINEES

It's time to start thinking of nominees for IRA awards. One of these, of course, is the Chuck Wood Award, which approximately annually honors a person with a disability who has attained a high level of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency in his/her community. If you know anyone who is a candidate for this, please gather the nominating materials and send them to Jonathan Ice, Iowa Department for the Blind, 411 3rd St SE, Suite 700, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401-1837. If you have questions, call 319-365-9111.

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2009 CHUCK WOOD MEMORIAL AWARD

The **Iowa Rehabilitation Association** is seeking nominations for the Chuck Wood Memorial Award. This award is given to recognize the achievements of a person with a disability who has attained a high level of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency in the community.

If you know of a person who has demonstrated achievement of their goal of independence in their community and personal life, we strongly encourage you to submit a nomination packet.

The Chuck Wood Award will be presented at the Iowa Rehabilitation Association Annual Conference Awards Banquet.

.....

NOMINEE _____

ADDRESS _____

SPONSOR, ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

.....

A nomination packet may include:

- One or more nomination letter(s)
- Information concerning the nominee's disability
- Nominee's personal achievements

Please send your nomination packet to:

Jonathan Ice
Iowa Department for the Blind
411 3rd Street SE, Suite 700
Cedar Rapids IA 52401-1837
jonathan.ice@blind.state.ia.us

Nominations should be submitted no later than September 1, 2009

2009 Annual Training Conference

**Iowa Rehabilitation Association
Great Plains Region - NRA
October 14-16, 2009**

REGISTRATION

Name: _____ **Phone: (w)** _____ **(h)** _____

Address: _____

Name you want on nametag _____

Email Address _____

Early NRA Member Registration by Sept. 22 \$95.00 _____
Wednesday only \$45.00 _____
Thursday only \$60.00 _____
Friday only \$25.00 _____
Member Registration after Sept. 22 \$105.00 _____

Early Non-Member Registration by Sept. 22 \$110.00 _____
Non-Member Registration after Sept. 22 \$120.00 _____

Student Registration by Sept. 22 \$70.00 _____
(Student at _____)

Additional Award Luncheon Ticket \$25.00 _____

Social Work CEU fee \$10.00 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Special Dietary Needs: _____

Other Accommodation Needs: _____

MAIL registration form and check payable to Iowa Rehabilitation Association to:

Marcia Gracey
4512 SW 16th Street
Des Moines, IA 50315

CEUs are being requested for: CRC, CDMSC and Social Work.

Hotel Information

**Clarion Hotel & Suites
525 33rd Avenue SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404
319-366-8671**

Please contact the hotel directly to get the discounted rate of \$79.00 per day. Special rate cut off date is September 22, 2009. Mention that you are with the Iowa Rehabilitation Association. Reservations made after September 22, 2009 are not

guaranteed the discounted room rate and will be subject to availability. Notify the hotel of any special needs you have.

