

Community Options Newsletter

Fall 2013

Community Options, Inc.

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There's more inside:

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- ~ Photo and information about our pioneer members. (page 3)
- ~ Additional photos (page 4)

Welcome To Our Newsletter!

Our newsletter will provide information about programs, people, and events. It will contain news about you, our programs, the people who make them possible, and information for consumers, family members, staff, and volunteers.

We want this to be **your** newsletter, so please send your ideas, news, and any information you'd like included in future editions to:

Newsletter, PO Box 1352, Belchertown, MA 01007.

How We Got Here

Over the years, Community Options, Inc. has evolved into quite a unique program. In 1977, when we began as a sheltered workshop, who would have thought that 36 years later we would still be providing services to some of the same people? These people were quite the pioneers! Back in the seventies and early eighties, not many people with developmental disabilities were working alongside non-disabled people -- almost unheard of in Western Massachusetts at the time! However, given the opportunity, they jumped on it. They were quite courageous, showed strength, resilience, and perseverance. Unknowingly, they paved the way for many others.

Today some of those same people still want to work while other people do not. So as of January 2013, our Community Based Day Support started making arrangements for people to begin retirement sorts of activities. Some of these people are now spending the afternoon fishing, competing against a friend to see how many strikes they get in their bowling game, or listening to music at the Senior Center. This component of the Agency will no doubt grow as more people get older and choose retirement.

This program also serves people for whom full-time work is not a goal. For these individuals, we are providing assistance in developing or enhancing personal interests. One person is working on his photography business, while another person is further exploring his interest in trains. [\(continued on next page\)](#)

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How We Got Here (continued from first page)

And yet our mission remains the same: we are here to assist people in finding ways that they feel productive and have personally meaningful days. Of course, this is what we all want when we wake up in the morning and go to sleep at night: to feel it's been a good day. Each year, we are growing the numbers of people we assist, whether they are students from various school systems, private pay individuals, people referred from Mass. Rehabilitation Services, or DDS. In 1977 we served twenty-five people and today, while still trying to remain small, we serve about seventy people. Our values and principles remain the same.

Announcements

- Our thanks to all of you as it has taken all of our efforts to make this organization what it is today.
- The Community Options, Inc. Lawn Care business has already expanded their customer base so that they were able to hire a second support person. Josh Flieder was interested and was offered this position. The business still has room to grow so spread the word! They do a great job and are competitively priced. **(See crew photo on last page!)**
- Community Options welcomes Donna LeBoeuf to the Agency. She brings many years of experience and will be assisting people in finding work.
- Welcome back GeeGee. We're glad you're back and doing well!
- The following people are to be recognized for their many years of service:
 - 20+ years: Betsy Grim, Jacki Dupre, Paul Yandoli
 - 15+ years: Cindy Hews, Jean Russell, Marianne Piekos, Judy Carle, Michele Ducharme
 - 10+ years: Jean Plouffe, Vic Tetreault, Jackie Jurkowski, Eric Osgood, Diane Madore, Gail Holt, Karen Hoffmeyer, Clark Choquette, Gail Belanger
 - 5+ years: Bob Paquette, Kevin Alfaia
- This fall we are planning on being involved with the Citgo fundraiser. For those of you who didn't know, Community Options participated in this fundraiser in 2012. Each day we voted online for our favorite non-profit...and that was Community Options, Inc. After the designated time period, votes were tallied. The top companies receive about \$5,000 of free gasoline. We were competing against companies like United Way and the VNA, but we held our own- small and mighty!! A notice will come out about it. We appreciate all efforts to help us win.
- Rannsaka is on Facebook as "Rannsaka Crafts"! Check it out!!

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Bill Hurley: In 1984 Bill worked at Woodbridge's Restaurant in South Hadley and later at the University of Massachusetts Apple Orchard, Valley Bicycle, Atkins, and Stop & Shop. He has dedicated fourteen years to the Valley Veterinary Hospital and is now also working with the Community Options Lawn Care in Belchertown.

Judy Carle: Judy worked at Fresh Pasta in Northampton, Mt. Holyoke College, Econolodge, Hot Mamma's, Filene's Basement, and at Howard Johnson's. Now she's working at Rannsaka and taking art classes.

Larry Ditman: Before working at the Belchertown Copy Center, the Mucky Duck, and Tiger Press, Larry worked in a woodworking shop. He has sold designer greeting cards and is now going to the Belchertown Senior Center and enjoying day trips and art classes.

Warren Williams: For many years, Warren has been working at Stonebrook Stables. Though offered work closer to home, he chose to stay. Now he works mornings and enjoys fishing, bowling, and relaxing at home afternoons.

Delores Larose: Delores has worked for the Work Coop with Vicki Woodard, delivered mail, gardened at Hickory Ridge Golf Course, and worked at Swift River Crafts. The Community Options personnel miss her since their move to State Street.

Linda Giroux: For at least ten years Linda worked as a carpenter apprentice. She later worked for Atkins Fruit Farm, and is now enjoying her days visiting with friends, taking an art class, and listening to music at the Senior Center.

Larry Bassett: Larry enjoys working with his friends and being generally helpful. Whenever there's the opportunity, he vacuums the program car and helps with errands. He likes working with electronics and dismantling small equipment.

Some Of Our Pioneer Members



Back row: Bill Hurley, Warren Williams, Delores Larose. **Front row:** Linda Giroux, Larry Ditman, Judy Carle, Larry Bassett.

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Our Lawn Care Crew! Front row: Bill Hurley, David Kimball Back row: Rich Groux, Josh Flieder, Carl Dahlquist



Judy Carle in sewing class. Judy works at Rannsaka and has been making wine gift bags.



Warren Williams enjoying a day of fishing. Warren works at Stonebrook Stables.