

Providing quality support in employment and community for people with disabilities and other special needs!

www.esrworks.org

East Suburban Resources

October 2009

Richerts is a handy volunteer to have around

No one knows how many hours Rod Richerts has volunteered with East Suburban Resources over the last six years, because he doesn't keep track.

"It's not important," he says simply.

Richerts, a Stillwater resident, has been ESR's fix-it person since 2003 when he answered a

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Fixing a towel dispenser is among the easier tasks Rod Richerts has done during his six years as a volunteer for ESR.

Agency's story captured on film

Video will premier at Night of Dreams event

Some ESR consumers may feel a little like movie stars as the agency contracts with a video production company to tell its story on film.

ESR is partnering with Seraphim Communications in St. Paul to produce a promotional video that will premier at

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Ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opens Forest Lake expansion



The Forest Lake expansion project was officially opened recently with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by ESR consumers and their friends and families, staff and members of the Forest Lake Area Chamber of

Commerce. The 1,900 feet of new space gives the agency room to meet the growing need for services in the northern half of the county.

From the director

Preparations underway for agency growth, third annual Night of Dreams

It's hard to believe that October has arrived. Summer finally decided to make an appearance during September, so there is a little extra shock waking up to temps in the 40s. The unfortunate part of all this is that two months from now we will consider a day in the 40s warm!

There are two interior windows in my office. Looking out either of the portals yields a view of construction as this article is written. Phase one of our expansion in Forest Lake is complete (See the photo on Page 1 of our ribbon-cutting ceremony.) Program space reconfiguration in Stillwater is also virtually complete with a few nitty-gritty details to be finalized this month. Now it's our admin office staff's turn to work in chaos for a short time while we make room for our sales staff, create a welcoming environment for staff and visitors,

and prepare for the future needs of the organization.

Another significant activity heating up around ESR is preparing for the third annual Night of Dreams event scheduled November 13th. Staff and volunteers have been working since early spring to put together a fun evening of entertainment and delicious food for our guests.

The purpose of the event is two-fold. First, we want to tell the story of the successes of consumers supported by ESR in our community. Some stories will be told in pictures, some in words, and a few stories will be featured in a video produced by ESR Director of Marketing/Development Natalie Johnson in conjunction with Seraphim Communications. The video is sure to be a hit and should be useful far beyond the event itself

Of course, the second purpose of the event is to raise revenue necessary for ESR to continue supporting consumers in their



Ed Boeve

community experience. Last year's event resulted in a net of about \$22,000 for ESR, a number we hope to match or exceed this year.

We need your help to achieve that goal. You will find several opportunities described in this publication for you to participate, but most of all, please come to the event. We will have a great time, learn more about ESR programs, and share some stories. I'd love to see you there.

Consumer's employer honors his athletic accomplishments

Matthew S., a nutrition and culinary services employee at Boutwell's and an ESR consumer, was featured in a story that appeared in the "Boutwell Messenger" in August 2009.

In the story headlined "Let's brag about our Olympic champion," Matthew was congratulated for his accomplishments in the state's Special Olympics held in June. According to the story, Matthew won gold

medals in the 4 x 100 relay race and the running long jump, earned a bronze in the 100 meter dash and finished fourth in the shot put event.

The story goes on to say, "Matthew is a member of the Maplewood Monarchs Olympic team and has a possibility of going to the national competition if his coach determines that it is appropriate for him to compete there. We're all proud of you, Matthew!"

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small ad he found in a local newspaper. Over that time he has done electrical work and plumbing, installed and reinstalled hand towel dispensers, lights and electrical sockets, fixed holes in the wall and much more.

And all the work is done after he puts in a full day at his regular job with UPS.

"It's fair to say that Rod has saved this agency thousands of dollars over the years," said ESR Executive Director Ed Boeve. "It would be very expensive if we had to hire someone every time something is broken. We truly appreciate the work that Rod does. He keeps our site looking nice."

A list of requested repairs hangs on a clipboard in the Stillwater site. It lists problems like, "leaking under the sink in the lunchroom," or "broken towel dispenser in the men's restroom" that give Richerts the direction he needs. He surveys the problems and either goes to pick up the necessary supplies himself, or he helps staff place the orders required to get replacement parts. Depending on the task, Richert may need to make more than one trip to the local hardware stores.

"Rod is so consistent," Boeve said. "You don't always find that consistency and commitment when working with volunteers, but Rod has adopted this site as his own. He is always so patient and willing to help."

Richerts is humble about his work at ESR. "I'm really not doing this for the glory," he said. "It takes the edge off of giving back if you're looking for credit."

Instead, he does it because it makes him feel good.

"I'm handy with my hands; I learned a lot from my father," he said, as he installed a new towel dispenser in the restroom, ensuring the towels came out smoothly as he snapped the cover in place. "It's an instant reward for me to see the job done."

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the Night of Dreams event on Friday, Nov. 13 at the Dellwood Hills Country Club.

"We've had great cooperation from business partners, consumers and their families for this project," said Boeve. "People have been very willing to tell their story and allow cameras into their workplaces. We are grateful for the support."

Newsletter adds a little color

After purchasing a heavy-duty color copier, ESR decided to give its newsletter a shot of color.

By printing the newsletter at the agency, ESR hopes to save money on printing costs. The added benefit of the equipment is that it prints in color. This gives us the opportunity to bring you ESR's news in a more colorful format.

We hope you enjoy our more colorful look.



Stillwater construction progressing

After an expanded program and production area were constructed in September, work progressed to other areas of the Stillwater site. A larger conference room, new offices and a reconfigured administrative space are all on the schedule. Everyone is expected to be in their new places by the end of October.

The video features a number of ESR consumers at their jobs and includes comments from their employers, family members and support teams.

The finished product will be shown at the Night of Dreams event and then used at school transition fairs, county events and civic meetings to promote ESR and its work in the community.

The *WORKS!*

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Editor's note: The poem that appears below was printed in the April 2009 edition of ESR's "The Works" newsletter with authorship attributed to the wrong individual. We are running the poem again, with credit given to the correct author. Our sincerest apologies to Amy D. for the mistake.

My sight

By Amy D.

Opening and closing
my eyes tonight
The world is dark
without my sight
Is it night or is it day?
Without my sight,
I cannot say.

If I could only have my way
My sight would return
and forever stay
Now knowing God is near
He teaches me from up above
Following me with lots of love.

Amy's poem was published in her high school's publication and in her church's newsletter.

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