



"This is Planting Possibilities. You're Supposed to Get Dirty!"

An annual activity in our Planting Possibilities classroom before Halloween is to create jack-o-lanterns. Every student has their own pumpkin to clean out and carve with their own unique design. Two new students were reluctant to get their hands inside the pumpkin to clean out the stringy insides. A seasoned veteran student, who has been with us for a while, encouraged the two new students to dig in to their pumpkins.

"This is Planting Possibilities! You're supposed to get dirty!" he told them, as he enthusiastically dug in to his pumpkin.

On the surface, this could be just an entertaining little quip. However, in the setting of our classroom, it speaks volumes.

If a student isn't used to digging into a

project, they will get that opportunity here. It says to be prepared by taking part in new and different experiences that may seem daunting, but will result in being one step closer to learning how to work. It says that work may seem like getting dirty, but there is so much more to it than that. It's what Planting Possibilities is all about!

Our mission is to provide those opportunities to as many young adults with autism and other developmental disabilities as possible. We do that as much as we can - in our Campagna classroom and garden, as job coaches for our employed clients, and through our new Mowing Possibilities business.

Every year, we are able to expand our programs a little more and are able to convince a few more inexperienced

students and clients that getting dirty is a sign that you are willing and able to work at something to be proud of.

We are humbly grateful for those who support us in our work and mission. We appreciate those who help provide young adults with the opportunity to be proud of their work.

Wishing you all a New Year full of fulfilling activities and pride in your accomplishments.

Mary Anne Neiner
President, Planting Possibilities

Planting Possibilities in the Community

AN UPDATE ON OUR CAMPAGNA PROJECT



We had several shipments of tomatoes, peppers and eggplants to the Alsip Nursery farmers market this season. Our sweet corn harvest was small, but delicious. Still in the field in late fall were gourds that will become bird houses and other projects over the winter. In late October, after the garden was tilled and cleaned from the summer growing season, we planted winter wheat.

A new addition to our garden this year was grapes! A generous donor gave us some

grape vines and fencing material.

When you visit our garden, you will see the grape arbor at the east end of the garden. Edible grapes will take two years to appear. Can't wait!

We invested in some more substantial fencing around our garden this year. Last season we lost more crops than we liked to the local deer population. We learned that deer will easily jump over a single 4 foot tall fence, but they won't attempt to jump two 4

foot fences within 3 feet of each other. We will be testing that idea in the spring.

In October, our classroom welcomed a special guest!. Thanks to Blake Ratajack, a United States Air Force veteran who shared his experience with our students about his path in the military. Thank you, Blake, for taking time from your very busy agenda to come and visit our classroom, for being a wonderful role model for our students, and for your service to our country.

CELEBRATING 2019 EMPLOYER OF DISTINCTION: RICH CHRISTAKES, CEO ALSIP NURSERY



Over the past few years we have had the pleasure of working with an employer who truly understands our mission and what Planting Possibilities stands for.

He understands that Planting Possibilities is dedicated to improving the employment prospects for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities in Lake County. He understands that his monetary donations help us accomplish that goal.

He understands that his excellent advice and guidance on various business aspects of our organization are important to us. He understands that he plays a huge part in our success by

employing and mentoring young adults who are not given the same opportunities and guidance working for other employers. And, these young adults are some of his most loyal employees.

Richard Christakes, CEO of Alsip Nursery, understands us as an organization. He has been a loyal and dedicated supporter of Planting Possibilities in many ways. We proudly awarded Rich Christakes with our first EMPLOYER OF DISTINCTION AWARD at our golf outing in August.

Thank you, Rich, for everything you do for Planting Possibilities!

PLANTING POSSIBILITIES LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors: Judy Allen, Joseph Daniele, Kris Kucer Dombrowski, Karl Dytrych, Marge Dytrych, Paul Gergets, Mark Neiner, Mary Anne Neiner, Bev Strickland, Carol Wachala. **Professional Advisory Board:** Rich Christakes, Mont Handley, Brad Hemingway, James Hitz, David Wendlinger. **Steering Committee:** Beth Ondas, Meagan Yothment, Ruth Yothment. **Communications Committee:** Bianca Cordova, Beth Ondas, Jamie Rex, Meagan Yothment, Ruth Yothment.

MOWING POSSIBILITIES

Planting Possibilities branched out into “Mowing Possibilities” this past summer as we started our own lawn mowing service. We started out slow, but are now ready to double our lawns this coming year. Mark Neiner was our supervisor/job coach as our three employees (Aaron, James and Joe)

mowed, trimmed and edged their way to a paycheck.

If you live in Munster, Highland, Schererville or St. John and would like a quote on our weekly mowing service, please email admin@plantingpossibilities.org or call Mark at 219-237-9353 to schedule a visit.



A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A GOLF OUTING



Saturday, August 10 was a beautiful day for our “Golf for Possibilities” annual golf outing at Scherwood Golf Course in Schererville, Indiana. We began our day with coffee, donuts and fruit, followed by tee-off at 8 a.m. After a morning of golf, we reconvened

in the clubhouse for a wonderful lunch and prizes.

We thank the golfers who came out to enjoy their day, the donors who provided many wonderful auction and raffle items, our

chairperson Paul Gergets, the golf committee and volunteers, as well as the great staff at Scherwood Golf Course for making our day so enjoyable. See you all again next year!

Thank you to the following sponsors and donors:

SPECIAL THANKS TO EVENT SPONSORS

Dr. George Cybulski
Aaron and Sarah Graddy
Griffith Windustrial
SNC-Lavalin/Capital Engineering

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Northern Illinois Steel

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Grindhouse Cafe, Griffith
Value Cool Refrigeration, Alsip

HOLE SPONSORS AND RAFFLE/SILENT AUCTION DONORS

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Sun King Brewing, Indianapolis
Tang Nail Salon, Dyer
The Times
Total Medical Billing / Tina Gray
Turkey Creek Golf Club
Van Drunen Farms
Jeff and Julie Wozek
Jerry Yothment Family

SAVE THE DATE: TEA PARTY

Our third annual Friendship Garden Tea is tentatively scheduled for April 2020, once again at the Hammond Marina Clipper Room. Join us for a relaxing Sunday afternoon visit with your friends while looking out over our local treasure, Lake Michigan.

Bring your favorite tea cup and tell us its

story! Tickets are just \$35 per person. Feel free to get a group of friends together and reserve a half or a full table!

We are limited to 100 guests and have sold out in a matter of 2 weeks in the past. Tickets will go on sale in February. Watch for an email or postcard as well as our social media for more details.



MUM SALE/GERANIUM SALE



Who knew there was such a thing as a multi-colored mum plant! They sold out so fast that very few people had the chance to see them.

Thank you to our supporters who came out to buy their fall mums from us on Saturday, September 14. It is always a fun day to be

able to visit with so many people who support us at our annual plant sales.

We will see you all again on Saturday, May 9, 2020 (the day before Mother's Day) for our geranium sale!

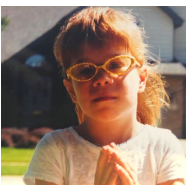
Donor Highlights

These generous donors help us accomplish our mission on a daily basis and allow us to prepare for an expanded future. Thank you for being a part of Planting Possibilities.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alsip Home and Nursery | Marge and Karl Dytrych | Joseph Janostak | Catherine J. Pfister |
| Elaine Apple | Gene and Brenda Fiegle | Lisa R. Krawetz | Rockopelli, Inc. |
| Arcelor Mittal Matching Funds | James Gingerich | Maggie Leslie | Alex and Dorothy Saltanovitz |
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| Ed Bodley | Patrick and Carolyn Gorman | Patrick and Cathy McAndrews | Tornados, Inc. |
| Rita Boss | Indiana State Council Knights of Columbus | Diane L. Morrow | Jerry and Ruth Yothment |
| Barbara A. Dabrowski | | Marilyn Pajor | |

DONATIONS IN MEMORIAM



VANESSA NEWELL, age 24 | Vanessa Newell gained her wings and went to Heaven on Saturday, August 3, 2019. She is survived by her devoted parents, Randy and Lynette Newell; brothers Spencer and Lucas Newell, faithful pet dog Marley, grandparents and many cousins, neighbors, classmates, best friends, best buddies, camp counselors, teachers, therapists, respite workers, doctors and nurses. Although she left us way too soon, her love and spirit brought joy and happiness to all who were blessed to know her. Marge and Karl Dytrych offer their deepest sympathy to Vanessa's family.

How You Can Help



HOLIDAY SHOPPING THROUGH AMAZON?

You can donate Amazon's money to Planting Possibilities every time you make a purchase through Amazon.

AmazonSmile offers the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com, and the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

Visit www.smile.amazon.com to register, and select Planting

Possibilities as your charity of choice. Each time you shop through Amazon, sign in with smile.amazon.com and 0.5% of any purchase will be credited to Planting Possibilities. As of August 2019, we have earned Amazon Smile contributions of over \$300. Thank you for taking this opportunity to help us.

DO YOU PAY INDIANA STATE INCOME TAX?

Planting Possibilities participates in the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). **Donations of \$100 or more, made between July 1 and December 31, 2019, are eligible for a 50% Indiana State tax credit.** Planting Possibilities still realizes the entire amount of your donation! This is a win-win situation for you as an Indiana state taxpayer and for Planting Possibilities. You do not need to itemize your federal taxes to receive your 50% Indiana tax rebate. If you do itemize, your savings are even greater.

Examples (based on 28% tax bracket; varies per your situation)

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Donation to Planting Possibilities | \$100 | \$1000 |
| Indiana NAP tax credit (50%) | (\$50) | (\$500) |
| Indiana state tax deduction (3.4%) | (\$3.40) | (\$34) |
| Federal tax deduction (28%) | (\$28) | (\$280) |
| Actual cost of your donation | \$18.60 | \$186 |

The minimum eligible donation is \$100, and the maximum eligible donation is \$3,748. When donating, please indicate NAP as a Planting Possibilities directed donation. We must reach 60% of our allotted tax credits by December 31, 2019.

Planting Possibilities has a limited amount of tax credits to "sell" with \$449 remaining as of November 15. Therefore, we must offer these credits at a **first-come, first-serve basis**. Please contact us to inquire about availability.

Businesses and individuals may participate. Please email maryanne@plantingpossibilities.org or call Mark at 219-237-9353 with any questions.



VOCATIONAL REHAB PROVIDER CARF CERTIFIED - SERVING LAKE COUNTY, IN

OUR SUCCESS

- Over 82 clients served since 2012 *
- Life skills training on task completion, soft skills, and project planning
- 80% success rate for job-seeking or academic track clients (initial placement/subsequent employment or college/trade school enrollment) **
- Certified one-on-one direct service professional job coaches
- Special needs client staffed lawn service micro-business
- On-site vocational garden and greenhouse
- Certified staff horticulturalist/twice weekly client education sessions
- Opportunities for social interaction through Special Olympics and other sponsored events

* 68 Campagna clients, 14 VR employment services

** 20% switched providers

DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL 2020 (tentative)

Friendship Garden Tea
Hammond Marina

MAY 9, 2020

Geranium Sale
St. Thomas More, Munster

August 2020

Golf for Possibilities
Date and location TBD



Planting Possibilities
PO Box 1805
Highland, IN 46322

Inside:

- >> 2019 Garden Recap
- >> Employer of Distinction
- >> NAP Donation Deadline

Planting Possibilities is a registered 501(c)3 with the mission to provide job-skills training, employment, and volunteer opportunities for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities in Lake County, Indiana.

Our special thanks to Guru Systems, INC. of Munster for donating their mailing services.

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info@plantingpossibilities.org | 219-237-9353

WWW.PLANTINGPOSSIBILITIES.ORG |

Planting Possibilities is a 501(c)3 nonprofit eligible for company matching programs. Your contribution is tax-deductable in accordance with applicable law.

PO Box 1805 Highland, IN

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Credit Card No. _____ Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____


Circle one of the following: MasterCard _____ Visa _____ Discover _____

I would like to volunteer, please contact me: Yes _____ No _____

Please make checks payable to: Planting Possibilities

Planting Possibilities Gardeners Circle Levels

| | |
|------------|-------|
| \$25 | _____ |
| \$50 | _____ |
| \$75 | _____ |
| \$100 | _____ |
| \$250 | _____ |
| \$500 | _____ |
| \$750 | _____ |
| \$1000 | _____ |
| other - \$ | _____ |



If you would like to support Planting Possibilities with a financial gift, please donate online at www.plantingpossibilities.org or complete the form below. We thank you sincerely for your support.

