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# inter **ACT** ion

Summer 2001

Alternative Community Training .....

## Meals on Wheels

# Making friends on the road

*Tuesday and Thursdays are special days at ACT. That's when two ACT crews head out sharing warm smiles and warm food to many home-bound and elderly in Columbia.*

For eight years ACT has reached out to the community through Meals on Wheels. In fact, "it's one of the first community outings we had for the day program," says Steve Terrell. Today, summer trips to neighboring towns, shopping trips and many other activities are part of the Day Program.

But there's something special with the Meals on Wheels effort. ACT participants like Joe, Bryan, Jenny and Danny take the work seriously and gain satisfaction knowing they're helping others.

On one particular delivery day Bryan and Day Program staff member Ed Ricciotti head to the Truman Veterans Administration Medical Center, the headquarters where meals are prepared and distributed.

At every point along the way, Bryan greets other volunteers who know him from his weekly visits. Soon the meals are ready and packed by Bryan into a large cooler.

The meal-delivering van, packed with Joe in the front and others in the back seats, takes off for seven or eight recipients.

Joe helps Ed and Steve Terrell, also a Day Program staff member, navigate to northwest Columbia. Bryan is the first to take a personalized meal to Otto. The two shake hands, chat briefly and then it's off to another address in the same retirement area.

At other stops Jenny and Danny smile broadly and giggle with delight as they take part. At every door, they meet their weekly friend and hand over a warm meal.

"I like to help with Meals on Wheels," says Joe. "Especially on nice days. The people are just great."



**ABOVE**, sharing with others means a lot to all the ACT participants. Bryan, left, gets a lot of satisfaction from bringing Otto a meal.



**LEFT**, Jenny smiles broadly as she heads up the driveway with Ed Ricciotti during her Meals on Wheels home visit.

## CHECK YOUR NAME

Please take a moment to check your name and address on the back of this newsletter.

- Are your name and address correct?
- Is this newsletter being sent to the appropriate individual?

If you have any corrections please call ACT at 573-474-9446 or 800-359-4607, or fax 573-474-7458.

# it's **TIME** to **TRAVEL**



Jan and others traveled to Hawaii during Luau Day, held at ACT's facility.

Summertime means travel time for many participants in the Personal and Social Services Program. Early in the summer many took off for the St. Louis Zoo.

They also took a boat ride on the Lake of the Ozarks. Plans also were in the works to tour two other St. Louis attractions—the Botanical Gardens and the Arch.

The zoo trip began with many hats and caps to protect Day Program clients from the sun. The group left ACT first thing in the morning and returned at about 5 p.m.

“I had fun!” said Joe. “We saw the lions and tigers, and we visited the monkeys.” He added, “they weren’t doing very much though.”

Staff members Ed Ricciotti and Jonnette Whittler coordinated the event. “It went very well,” Ed reported. “I think everyone had a really good time.”

That’s why more trips are on the calendar. “There are a lot of fun places we can go,” says Ed.

## Flashback

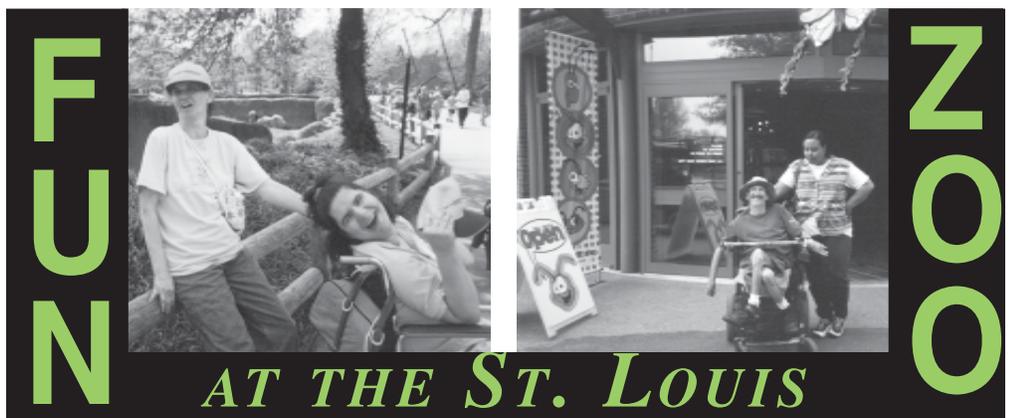
*Spring welcomed  
by lively egg hunt*

It was the Saturday before Easter when over a dozen revelers had an old-fashioned egg hunt and feast on ACT’s grounds. Partygoers enjoyed good food, dance music, and a special “bunny cake” in the lunchroom.

Out on the lawn, staff members hid scores of plastic eggs in the tall grass, around bushes, and in the branches of budding trees for participants to find. There was a contest to see who could find the most eggs. Jodie came in first with 28 eggs, and won a chocolate “Bunny Big Ears.”

“This was the first party I’ve put together at ACT,” says Carrie Griffith, coordinator of the day’s festivities, “and I’m looking forward to doing more.”

Considering the big grins on everyone’s faces, it looks like they are too!



## SIX FLAGS LOGO

## Six Flags discounts!

Six Flags of St. Louis has provided ACT with discount cards for up to \$14 off the admission price. The park now is open on a full-time schedule. For the same admission ticket you can also visit the Hurricane Harbor Water Park. See Tawnty in the front office for your ticket to summer fun at a great price!

# SUCCESS stories

## McDonald's manager knows where to call

Rob Alley doesn't have to go far to find high-quality employees. He picks up the phone and calls ACT.

He knows ACT clients make great employees because of people like Sheila, now working with Alley.

"She comes in, she does her job, and she really knows her job," Alley says. "I worked with other supported employment personnel before Sheila and it's always been a very successful experience."

So when McDonald's opened a new location in town, he knew just who to ask for help with his staffing needs. "I called ACT because I knew I'd be able to hire a good, reliable worker."

Sheila, who has been part of the Supported Employment Program for about five years, is an integral part of the McDonald's crew. Sheila prepares salads, breakfast items and many other menu items for the busy McDonald's.

"Sheila is a very reliable employee," Alley affirms. And Sheila, too, is happy with the match. "I want to put five years in at McDonald's. Rob is cool."



*McD's. Sheila has been a three-year employee at a Columbia McDonald's. Her duties have increased steadily due to her dedication to her job.*

## SPOTLIGHT Charlie Burge

*Charlie Burge has been a part of the ACT family since 1989 when he began as a job coach for the Supported Employment Program. In 1996 he became a program manager for facilities-based programs. He also helps supervise the Personal and Social Services and Affirmative Industry employees.*

### Have you always lived in Columbia?

No, I grew up in Dayton, Ohio and came here to attend the University of Missouri.

### Didn't you have a football career at MU?

Yes. Al Onofrio recruited me from Dayton. I was on the team three years as a wide receiver. We never had a losing season.

### What was your major?

Special education.

### Have you seen a lot of changes at ACT in the last 12 years?

Absolutely. When I first started working for ACT, we were still across the street in the old building!

### What's the best part of your job?

The best part for me is helping the participants. I enjoy that. It's a challenge because they're all so different.

### What do you do when you're not working at ACT? Any hobbies?

I love to travel a lot; I'm going on a cruise to Mexico soon. I also play racquetball. I bought a house about two years ago and I'm still working on it—and on my yard.



*Tiger football coach Al Onofrio brought ACT's program manager for facilities-based services to Columbia. Charlie Burge is always a help to all ACT participants, including Sharon.*

## Welcome . . . Melanie Stapleton



ACT has a new member of the Supported Living Program management team. It's Melanie Stapleton, a lifelong resident of Columbia.

Melanie comes to ACT with a degree in political science from Truman State University. More than a degree, she has a passion for volunteerism and community service.

"My father is a minister, so the idea of helping people was a big part of my upbringing. I was taught it's just what you're supposed to do."

Before coming to ACT, Melanie served as the Deputy County Clerk of the Boone County Commission. In 1998 she was elected to serve as Columbia's second ward committeewoman for the Democratic Central Committee.

Melanie is a lifetime member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. Her favorite leisure activities include attending church regularly, participating in community events and cheering on the LA Lakers.

## NEWS briefs

- Congratulations to new homeowners Bill and Jan! Both moving days are highlighted in this issue of *InterACT*ion.
- Supported Living staff member **Sharla Hyler** recently celebrated her tenth anniversary as an ACT employee.
- **Bill** and **Mark** recently began working for the Affirmative Industry Program. Welcome aboard!
- **Grace Ricciotti** is the newest Job Coach in the Supported Employment Program. Assessment Coordinator **Ute Breeding** already is showing her the ropes.
- The Personal and Social Service Program welcomes new full-time staffers **Elise Dennis** and **Jonnette Whittler**. We're glad you're here!

# A FAMILY HOME FOR AN ACT FAMILY

*Picture yourself  
on a bright white deck  
overlooking a lush green yard  
in southwest Columbia.*

That's what Jan, Jodie and Minna enjoyed this spring and summer after Jan purchased the home. The all-brick home is surrounded by trees and grass in both front and back yards. It's in a quiet family neighborhood and is perfect for the Supported Living Program clients' extended family.

The warm family environment also includes, at different parts of the day, live-in aide Linda Franklin and Kaye Barnard, main relief.

"It's a great home for all of us," says Kaye. "It's a quiet family neighborhood.

Linda adds that spaciousness is a big plus for the house. There are five bedrooms—three on the first level and two downstairs. A rec room and laundry also are located on the basement level. A large shed rounds out many of the key features.

"I like my big room and the big shower," says Jodie. "It's also close to work and closer to the mall." Jodie has been a Supported Living client and an employee of OTSCON for the past five years. She's also teamed with Minna for the past three years.

Jodie proudly boasts of her ACT support. "Miss Kaye is a very special person. We love her. And Miss Linda is a wonderful cook."



**NEW HOME.** An ACT family has recently moved to this southwest Columbia home. Pictured are Jan, Linda Franklin, Jodie, Kaye Barnard, and Minna.

## Help market ACT products

Do you know anyone who might need blank CD's, computer diskettes or video tapes? ACT is happy to sell these recycled products to corporations and private citizens. Refer a buyer to ACT and get a free 10-pack of 3 1/2" floppy disks.

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## Upcoming Holidays



**ACT will be closed the following days in 2001-02.**

**Monday, September 3, 2001**

Labor Day

**Friday, September 14, 2001**

**Saturday, September 15, 2001**

Annual Staff Retreat

**Thursday, November 22, 2001**

Thanksgiving

**Friday, November 23, 2001**

**Tuesday, December 24, 2001**

**Monday, December 25, 2001**

Christmas

**Wednesday, December 26, 2001**

Personal and Social Services

Program closed

**Friday, December 28, 2001**

**Monday, December 31, 2001**

New Year

**Tuesday, January 1, 2002**

**Monday, January 21, 2002**

Martin Luther King Day

**Monday, February 18, 2002**

Presidents Day

**Monday, March 25, 2002**

Personal and Social Service

Program closed

**Friday, March 29, 2002**

**Monday, May 27, 2002**

Memorial Day

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