

NEWSLETTER FALL/WINTER 2020

Give Shelter. Give Services. Give Independence.



OUR MISSION:

To enhance the lives of adults with disabilities by providing housing options, by adapting to their individual needs, and by maximizing their potential in ways that integrate their lives with the community around them.

Brickways is the pinnacle of Mary Jean Brick's vision to give individuals with disabilities a place to call their own. The name pays homage to the Brick family, who still serve on management boards.

Inspired by her sister and son, who both had special needs, Mary Jean opened the Community Living Center in 1978. Her dedication to the original 16 residents allowed her vision to blossom into six individual living centers that assist over 40 residents.

Mary Jean invited local community members to share in her vision and they continue to support Brickways to this day. We are honored to call Peace Ranch and artBright as our community partners.

As Brickways strives to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities, we salute our small staff, host of volunteers and generous donors. With your help, we have been able to support our community for 40 years!

[Donate Today](#) to help our residents thrive!



Mary Jean Brick

*"Beautiful flowers need **tender, loving care** to bloom.
So do people." ~Jim Genovese*



BrickWays 935 Barlow Street Traverse City, MI 49686

Website: www.brickways.org Email: onans@brickways.org Phone: (231) 932-9030



Have you heard of TRAIL?



TRAIL (Traverse Region Assisted Independent Living) is an amazing opportunity for our residents and the local community. Our dedicated TRAIL staff provides prodigious, tailored support for individuals with disabilities. Staff helps them feel confident and fruitful within their own independent living situations. Individuals participating in TRAIL learn invaluable life skills, such as:

- ◆ **Personal finance management**
- ◆ **Good housekeeping**
- ◆ **Cooking and healthy meal planning**
- ◆ **Physical exercise planning**
- ◆ **Community participation**

TRAIL staff strive to provide an accepting and encouraging environment in which individuals with special needs may flourish. They also help assist in monitoring participants' medication, transporting them to medical appointments, and assisting them during their doctor visits.

Our residents and community benefit greatly from the love, care and individualized education TRAIL provides. There is no better time than now to support our Brickways residents and local community. We need your help to keep this wonderful individual empowerment program funded for years to come. It takes only a few minutes to help provide knowledge and skills that will last a lifetime. [Donate today!](#)

*"Alone we can do so little; **together** we can do so much"*
~Helen Keller



Meet Our Residents: **Elizabeth Marshall**



Name: Elizabeth Marshall

What programs are you in?

I do programs on Thursdays and Fridays. Thursday, I do shopping. With shopping I go all the way out to Walmart, and Friday housekeeping, cooking and arts & crafts.

How do you feel those programs help you stay independent with Brickways?

I have more freedom to do more active stuff like going down to the cherry fest, when that comes up again, and go downtown if I wanted to, go ride my bike and hang out with my friends.

So, it makes you happy? Yes.

Do the programs help you do all the things you love to do?

Yes. I watch movies, do painting, sewing, latch hooking, coloring. I do pour painting and I do sewing on the sewing machine, like dolls clothes, little pouches.

Are you learning this from Julie in the sewing program? Yes, I am.

What are some of the things you do in Julie's sewing class?

Sewing puppets, going out on outings to go to JoAnne Fabrics and Michael's. They give me some ideas what I can do with my next project. I make little birds out of felt, and I do bigger purses, moccasins, and sometimes I poke myself with the needle.

Do you like living here?

I like living here because all my friends are here and I go to work at GTI and we do treads, trash bags, all kinds of things.

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Meet the Director: Susan Onan-Swartz



Take a moment to introduce yourself and tell us what position you hold.

My name is Susan Onan-Swartz. I am the Executive Director at Brickways. I began as finance manager in 2001. Back then Brickways was known as the Grand Traverse Area Community Living Management Corp. (CLMC). I accepted the Executive Director position in 2012.

What is your vision for the organization?

I would love to focus on reaching beyond an individual's disability. Our clients are capable of way more than is expected of them. Their disability is part real and part learned. Through doing things that they want to do, we can create learning, life skill development, and community belonging.

What is one of your favorite memories in your time with Brickways?

We took 16 clients to Disney in 2019. We created special classes to help prepare them for the journey. They were excited to go and were motivated to participate in all related classes. As with any vacation, we ran into all sorts of unforeseen issues along the way. We had to wait for the plane. We had delayed luggage, a security issue, were crammed into lines, overheated, scared to tears, caught in a major rainfall, among other things. We were exhausted, hungry, and tired. But I saw our individuals taking care of each other, facing their fears together, and laughing about their tears. Those individuals grew more in a week than I would have ever thought possible. I can talk for hours about all the incidents and experiences.

How important are donations to Brickways?

Brickways is a 501c3 non-for-profit organization. We are technically owned by the community. Therefore, without community support, we will not exist in the future. We do not receive special funding to cover the cost of obtaining and maintaining vehicles used to take clients to medical appointments, out shopping, attend community activities or for our travel to their home to provide services. Insurance and training costs are always rising, and we constantly retrain our caregivers to meet each client's specific needs. Community and individual donations are a lifeline that help us maintain a high quality of life for our clients. Without these donations, our organization would not be able to help our clients be the best they can be. Every penny of the money donated is used to provide necessary services to our clients.

Become a Brickways Best Friend

Have you heard of our **Brickways Best Friend** program? We created an easy way for donors to enroll in a monthly donation subscription to support our Brickways organization. You can choose to donate as little as \$5 a month to help us maintain vital services for our clients.

As a Brickways Best Friend, we will add you to our Donor Scroll with a personalized note and an opportunity to honor someone you love. There are several set donation plans or you can choose to personalize your own. This recurring donation is an integral part of maintaining our clients' quality of life. It is fast and easy to sign up. [Donate today!](#)

*"It's not how much we **give**, but how much **love** we put into giving."*

~Mother Teresa

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Meet Our **Difference Makers**



Susan Onan-Swartz
Executive Director



Julie Murray
CLA On-Site Staff,
Life Skills Coach



Janet Brzezinski
Accounting Assistant



Sally Woodward
CLC On-Site Staff



Jerry Morse
Life Skills Coach



Kathy Nowak
Life Skills Coach



Michelle Money
College Park Supervisor



Lynn Morton
Life Skills Coach,
Master Gardener



Adrienne Samson
Life Skills Coach



Shawn Carrier
Life Skills Coach



Nancy Kollhoff
Licensed Therapist,
TRAIL Director

Not Pictured: Bob Larsen, Building Grounds, Technology Director; Alana Lahey, Housing Director
Board of Directors: Marie Charbonneau, President; John Sonnemann, Treasurer; Diana Longton, Secretary
Directors: BJ Brick, Tamara Broad, Kathy Britten, Bob Brick, Jim Rossi, Peter Curie, Tommy Corbett

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“For it is in giving
that we receive.”
~St. Francis of Assisi

[Donate Today!](#)