

# SMILES Center for Independent Living e-News



Celebrating 20 years of service!  
Working to Empower People With Disabilities since 1990

## The Premier Disability Services Organization

Individuals, with disabilities, family members, service providers, community organizations, agencies, and businesses turn to SMILES for information and assistance. Choose from the options below to learn more about SMILES.



Our Mission



Our Philosophy



Our Newsletter



Our Calendar

## Regional Events



[Blue Earth](#)

[Brown](#)

[Faribault](#)

[Le Sueur](#)

[Martin](#)

[Nicollet](#)

[Sibley](#)

[Waseca](#)

[Watonwan](#)

## SMILES Announcements

[Valentine Dance](#) rescheduled to February 27 5:00 pm Red Rock Center for the Arts in Fairmont.

Spring [Recycling](#) Event May 13-14

SMILES Communities: [calendar](#)

Hi {FIRST\_NAME|Valued Customer},  
Welcome to SMILES e-Newsletter! We hope you will find information you need, ideas you can use and access to activities you want!

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The annual Martin County Area Valentine Dinner and Dance was postponed due to weather. The event has been rescheduled and took place on Sunday, February 27th at 5:00 pm at the Red Rock Center for the Arts in Fairmont.

### Technology

We asked Steve Oachs, SMILES "Tech Man" to look into e-readers for us and this is what he found:

The Tech Man

I am going to talk to you about two different



## In This Issue

March 10, 2011

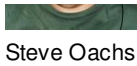
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## [Community Calendar](#)

February 2011						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

Now you can contact us online, comment on our [blog](#), follow us on Facebook and Twitter or make your contribution to SMILES programs and services through GiveMN.org, Leave



Steve Oachs



e-Reader

devices. The first is the Kindle. It is a device that holds over two thousand books. The next item is I-Pod touch, the hand held device. First, item, the Kindle, it looks like a big flat screen. It is about a quarter of an inch thick. It is four inches wide and twelve inches tall. You can download books and read them without having a real book. In matter of fact this device can hold over two thousand books and has capability to go online.

The next item is the Apple IPod touch device. A hand held device can hold music, pictures and has a built in camera. You can surf on the internet and send email, check the weather and more.

I borrowed one for the weekend and I found it a little bit difficult to use because it is small and for me to use it I would have to Velcro it on a steady board. It likes to slide around the table and when I use the Stylist, it is like a pen without the ink. You use the tip on the touch screen. I have found that very difficult to use because IPod is laying flat on the table if it was standing upright maybe I could use it better, but is not a guarantee because I would have to build a stand to make the IPod sit still for me to use.

IPod has many capabilities besides what I mention. I could go on but for now leave it as is until I get all the facts then I will tell you more about it. Technology is growing so fast is almost hard to keep up especially for old tech men like me.

**New SMILES Staff**

Have we met? SMILES has new staff members we'd like to introduce!

Meet Ben Keist, Traci Windschitl, Joann Trimbo and Kristin Larson, who all work out of the Mankato location!

a Legacy Mankato, through the United Way in your community or directly to SMILES Center for Independent Living.

Sign up for Facebook and Twitter to follow us, and share, re-tweet or leave a blog [comment!](#)



*Make a Difference  
In the Lives that Follow*



**LEAVE A LEGACY® Mankato Area**

*In Partnership With The  
Minnesota Planned Giving Council*





Ben Keist

Ben has a background in Health Education, and brings his experience with adaptive sports to his role as Peer Counseling /Recreation Manager/Volunteer Coordinator... a long title that means, "knows how to make fun happen!"



Traci Windschitl

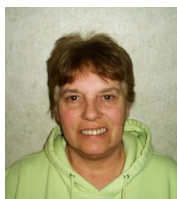
Traci is an Independent Living Skills Specialist who has a background in community social services and loves riding horse, swimming, baking and cooking; all passions she brings to her work with SMILES consumers. Stop into the Mankato office and meet her soon!



Kristin Larson

Kristin has a musical past; she loves music history and the piano. She brings a natural way of looking for the positive to her work as an Independent Living Skills Specialist at SMILES, and you can count on her to help you use your strengths to live independently. Talk to her about your musical interests next time you see her!

JoAnn Trimbo came out of retirement to become an Independent Living Skills Trainer for SMILES in Sibley County. As the oldest of nine kids, she still helps her Dad on his farm. Her background working in a large state institution gave her skills to advocate for her consumers and defend their rights to support for their independent living goals. JoAnn sews and makes quilts. Ask her about how to sew on a button and you are likely to learn how to do it!



JoAnn Trimbo

Welcome, Ben, Traci, Kristin and JoAnn!  
We are glad to have you part of the SMILES organization.

### **Recreation**

#### **Bowling** at the Wow! Zone

SMILES is partnering with LEEP to offer a new opportunity for bowling lovers! Athletes



Bowling Ball

will now have an opportunity to bowl at the Wow! Zone (2030 Adams St) on Tuesday evenings from 4:30-6:00 pm in a league setting. Athletes are encouraged to register for the full 8 weeks (February 15 – April 5) with a cost of \$40 if paid before the event begins.

Athletes will be allowed one guest (person without disability/unified teammate) to join them at the same rate. Or, they can come on a week by week basis for a fee of \$6 per night. *Cost does include shoe rental.* There will be limited staff/ volunteers on hand. No transportation will be provided.

**Baseball** season will be starting on Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> and the banquet will be on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Registration packets will be sent out in the mail within the next two weeks. The deadline to register for baseball is Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Cost will be \$35 and there will be a few partial scholarships available if needed.

Call Ben Keist at 507-345-7139 for registration information.



2010 Baseball Team

**Wilderness Inquiry** will bring their canoe adventures to Fairmont's Interlaken Heritage Days Festival of Lakes on Saturday, June 11 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at Gomsrud Park. This event is designed to make canoe and kayak experiences available to everyone, regardless of their age, background or ability.

Wilderness Inquiry provides trained staff to support people with disabilities and others who may not typically get out and enjoy canoeing or kayaking.

This event is a huge undertaking and we want to keep it free for participants, so we



Wilderness Inquiry

welcome your donations to offset the cost.

We invite you to share the experience by supporting this event in the manner of your choice. Volunteers and donors have the opportunity to help others learn from the Wilderness Inquiry team while enjoying their own canoe or kayak adventure.

Please call Ben at 888-676-6498 to donate or volunteer. Your contribution to SMILES is tax-deductible and you can donate online at [GiveMN.org](http://GiveMN.org). Thank you!

### **AgrAbility**

The Minnesota AgrAbility Project is a partnership between the University of Minnesota Extension Services and EquipAlife to promote, maintain and increase productivity in Minnesota farming communities. Together, these organizations work closely with the Minnesota Regional Assistive Technology Collaborative (MRATC), a consortium of providers who specialize in Assistive Technology, services and related support. Howard Rosten, SMILES Information and Referral / Technology Manager, represents south central and south eastern Minnesota in the MRATC consortium.

Howard is working to raise awareness of what the Minnesota AgrAbility Project can do to help farmers and their families overcome barriers related to disabilities and chronic health problems. They offer practical solutions for a healthy and productive life in agriculture, including low interest loans, education and training, on-farm consultation, safety planning, financial planning, support and advocacy and a peer support network. Assistive technology devices and equipment might be used to equip large machinery with lifts for access



or modify a fence line feeder, for example. He says of the partnership, "we're there to provide help, support and resources to help them stay on the farm." Howard can be contacted at 800-676-6498 toll free or 507-345-7139 in the Mankato area.

Assistive Technology

### **Recycling**

SMILES annual Spring Electronics Recycling event will be held at Madison East Center in Mankato on Friday, May 13th all day and Saturday, May 14th in the morning.

Don't trash your old electronics! Recycle it clean and legal for \$0.55 / lbs. Items accepted: computers, monitors, scanners, printers, stereo equipment, phones, TVs, fax machines, household copiers and microwave ovens. Look for the recycling truck at Madison East Center on the Victory Drive side of the parking lot. Call Howard questions or to volunteer.

**CITIZENS FOR ACCESSIBILITY (CFA)** is a self-advocacy group sponsored by SMILES, committed to improving the lives of people with disabilities by eliminating architectural and attitudinal barriers through education, teamwork, and advocacy. Members practice advocating for themselves and encourage and support others in their self-advocacy efforts.



Citizens for Accessibility meets monthly or bi monthly in local communities within SMILES service area.

**Fairmont:** Second Thursday at 3:30 in the SMILES Office at 820 Winnebago Street.

**Mankato:** Third Thursday at 4:30 in the SMILES office at 709 South Front Street.

**New Ulm:** Fourth Tuesday at 4:30 in the SMILES Office at 1618 South Broadway.

**Springfield:** Last Tuesday at 4:30 at "The Garage;" 3 North Cass Avenue.

March 10: Fairmont

March 17: Mankato

March 29: Springfield

April 26: New Ulm

Meetings are open to anyone interested in disability self advocacy efforts. Call Michelle for more information.

## **Community Education & Training**

### **Nutrition**

Learn about food that tastes good and is good for you! This class offers information and practical skills for menus, shopping and preparing food for nutritious meals. Call Kristina at SMILES in New Ulm 354-7106 or Jennie at SMILES in Waseca 833-1339 for more information or toll free at 888-676-6498. Classes are held in New Ulm and Le Center.

### **Drivers Ed**

SMILES Driver's Education Training is for anyone with disabilities who doesn't have their driver's license. Prepare for the written driver's test and learn good driving skills from instruction by SMILES staff, discussion and interactive computer use.

Mankato Drivers Ed class meets Monday evenings from 5:00 – 6:30 at SMILES' in Mankato, 709 South Front Street, Suite #7

from March 14th through May 23rd.

Fairmont Drivers Ed class meets Monday evening from 5:00 – 6:30 at SMILES in Fairmont, 820 Winnebago Ave, Suite #1 from February 28<sup>th</sup> through March 28<sup>th</sup>.

There is no cost for the class or materials. To register in Mankato call Kristin or Traci at 507-345-7139. To register in Fairmont call Anne or Kevin at 507 235-3488. You can call either office toll free at 888-676-6498 to register and get materials.



**PossAbilities**, for self-esteem, sexuality and personal safety. An informational session will be held in Fairmont on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm at the Martin County Library in the basement. Call Anne at 507-235-3488 for more information.

**Budget 101**, a class in basic money management, will be held at the SMILES office in Fairmont Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am – 11:30 am. Call Anne or Kevin at 507-235-3488 for more information.



### **Disability Awareness workshops**

SMILES Citizens for Accessibility in New Ulm and Springfield are hosting two disability awareness workshops in Brown County. These workshops will help individuals understand and identify what barriers in the community are, and teach self advocacy skills for solving problems that come from barriers.

**Springfield March 29:** 6:30 – 7:30  
Springfield Community Center

**New Ulm April 26:** 6:00- 7:00  
Christ the King Lutheran Church.

There is no cost for these workshops, and the public is invited to attend. Call Anne or Michelle at 507-345-7139 or 888-676-6498 to register and reserve materials.

**SMILES Appearances in Your Area:**

**Blue Earth**

April 6: Mankato Career Expo at Verizon Center

May 13 - 14: Electronic Recycling at Madison East Center in Mankato

May 17: Mankato Senior Expo at Verizon

**Brown**

Disability Awareness Workshops:

March 29: Springfield Community Ctr.

April 26: New Ulm Christ the King

**Faribault**

April 19: Caregiver Support talk at Blue Earth Senior Center

**Le Sueur**

March 10: Youth Expo Le Sueur

April 7 - 8: Le Sueur Business Expo

**Martin**

April 6 Career Expo Fairmont High

**Nicollet**

Miracle League Baseball:

April 17 - June 29 at Fallenstein

**Sibley**

April 12: Sibley County Sr Expo at Arlington Community Center

### **Waseca**

Marh 31: Disability Awareness Workshop at  
SMILES Waseca Office

### **Watowan**

April 21: Disability Awareness Workshop  
location to be determined



Watch your local listings or call SMILES  
Center for Independent Living toll free at  
888-676-6498 for time and location details.

Now you can link to SMILES [blog](#); sign up  
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Remember to register for events and  
trainings you want to attend! Use the links  
provided in the e-Newsletter article or  
contact us by email at  
[smilescil@smilescil.org](mailto:smilescil@smilescil.org).

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