



CHOICE unlimited

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Warmest Holiday Wishes Friends!

It is hard to believe that 2023 is nearly over, and we are well into the Holiday Season! Where does the time go? Vicki Gustafson is certainly feeling the brightness and whimsy of the season. Her colorful design is featured on our Holiday greeting card this year. Thank you Vicki! Our Holiday Card was recently mailed out, so if we do not have your address, please contact us and we will make sure to add you to our mailing list.



In this edition of our newsletter we feature a photo gallery of CHOICE, unlimited’s 30th Anniversary Celebration which took place on November 2nd. What a fantastic event it was! Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate! In addition we are highlighting our upcoming premiere from BOLD-choice’s production of *Sundown on the Jasper County Jewel*. [Get your tickets here!](#) Along with our regularly featured articles we have an advertisement for a pop-up Holiday Craft Fair which will take place this coming Friday, December 15, 2023 at Grace Lutheran Church in Hermantown from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm. The craft items are one of a kind products from artists in our Arts Vocation program.

Lastly, I added a link below for you to check out our annual report for fiscal year 2022-2023. In this report I summarize our progress in meeting agency wide goals, compare data over the past three years, highlight accomplishments, acknowledge and thank our generous donors, and share feedback and recommendations from our employees, people we serve and their extended teams. Please click on the link for a colorful review of our past year. [2022-2023 Annual Report](#)

Warmest Regards,

Kristie Buchman, Executive Director

Winter Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 28
Issue 4

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BOLD CHOICE THEATRE COMPANY *PRESENTS*



**BOLD
CHOICE**
THEATRE COMPANY

SATURDAY JANUARY 6TH 2024
NORSHOR THEATER

6:30 PM \$25.00

DPH BOX OFFICE: 218 733 7555 QUESTIONS: 218 724 5869



DULUTH
**PLAY
HOUSE**



Rotary 
Club of Superior



Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate our 30th Anniversary on November 2nd at The Garden in Canal Park!
Click here to catch us on [WDIO](#)



*Our hearts are heavy due to the loss of wonderful friends during 2022-2023.
We are thankful for the times we had with these incredible people!*



Eric Sjoblom



Dan Wheat



Jon Gamache



Ann Rantala

A Long Away

by Jayson Knutson

A long away
There is a day
I see
Can't you?
Perhaps it's
A dream or
Perhaps maybe
Just maybe

Something much
Too far, far away
A long way
From now
Can you feel
It?
I can-

Employee of the Quarter

Greg Guzzo has worked with various employers throughout the years, such as Red Lobster, Superior Waffles, Texas Roadhouse, just to name a few. He has a reputation of being a diligent and hard working employee. Old Chicago, his current employer, is close to his heart, as he has worked for them since 2007. After a pause during the pandemic, his supervisor, Kerry Willerd, asked for him to come back earlier this year stating: “It just hasn’t been the same without Guzzo here, and we are excited to have him back.” Greg is very thorough with his job tasks and the place has never looked better. He is well known at work, and has a great relationship with his co-workers. Greg works 5 days a week cleaning the dining room and other areas in the restaurant in particular, keeping the woodwork throughout the restaurant in pristine condition. **Thank you Greg for your great work ethic and the pride you take in a job well done!**



Greg and Kerry

Employer of the Quarter

Old Chicago has been part of CHOICE, unlimited’s employer network for 16 years, since Greg Guzzo started working there in 2007. Old Chicago was founded in 1976 in Boulder, Colorado where they strive to create an atmosphere that inspires “a place where the neighborhood can come and feel at ease, experience regional specialties, and always leave knowing exactly what they’ll come back for.” Known for their pizza, beer and a wide variety of delicious food, including the Sicilian Pepperoni rolls-which happen to be Greg’s favorite.



Thank you Old Chicago, for your partnership throughout the past several years and for your inclusive hiring practices!

Volunteer of the Quarter

Lindsey loves volunteering at the Douglas County Humane Society, and it is easy to see why! She visits the shelter once a week to help with socialization and activities for dogs and cats looking for their forever homes. “I like being around all the animals, holding the cats and playing with the dogs. It’s fun volunteering at the animal shelter. There’s a lot of good animals and they all need homes.” Playing fetch with the dogs and laser tag with the cats are some of her favorite activities. Lindsey has volunteered with the animals for many years. With changes during the pandemic, she had to take a break from volunteering, and was very excited to return earlier this year. When asked about how she feels volunteering at the Douglas County Humane Society, Lindsey stated that it makes her feel happy that she gets to spend time with animals that don’t have homes. Her words of advice? Everybody should volunteer at a local shelter and adopt an animal in need!



Thank you Lindsey, for sharing your time and talent with your community!

**HOLIDAY
POP UP SALE**

FEATURING ART, CRAFTS, AND BOOKS BY
 PRESTON MEHR
 STEPHANIE WILCOX
 JAYSON KNUTSON
 DON SUNDEEN
 PETE BARNETT

12:30-2 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 15th
 at the
CHOICE, unlimited
Holiday Party

FIND GREAT HOLIDAY GIFTS
 AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL
 ARTISTS!

Festive Mint Cream Dessert

Ingredients:

3/4 cup butter, divided
 1 package (16 ounces) chocolate cream-filled sandwich cookies, crushed
 8 cups mint chocolate chip ice cream, softened
 1-1/2 cups milk chocolate chips
 1 cup confectioners' sugar
 3/4 cup evaporated milk
 1 carton (16 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
 Chocolate syrup and red and green sprinkles (optional)



Directions:

In a microwave, melt 1/2 cup butter. Stir in cookie crumbs. Press into a 13x9 inch baking dish. Freeze for 30 minutes or until firm. Spread ice cream over crust; return to the freezer until firm.

In a large saucepan, combine chocolate chips, confectioners' sugar, milk and remaining 1/4 cup butter. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Lower the heat and continue to cook and stir for 3-5 minutes or until thickened. Cool to room temperature. When cool, spread over ice cream and return to freezer until firm.

Spread whipped topping over ice cream (dish will be full). Cover and freeze until firm, or overnight.

Remove from the freezer 15-20 minutes before serving. If desired, drizzle with chocolate syrup and top with sprinkles.

Winter ARTS Program Update



Months of shorter, colder days are upon us and that must be why many of us crave light, warmth, and creativity in the winter- decorating our homes, icing cookies and finding sparkly or festive outfits to adorn our own selves!

BOLD-choice's premiere of their brand-new original musical "Sundown on the Jasper County Jewel" is quickly approaching! The performance will be at the beautiful **Norshor Theatre on Saturday, January 6th at 6:30 pm.** Tickets are available through the Duluth Playhouse box office.

<https://www.duluthplayhouse.org/box-office/special-events/sundown-on-the-jasper-county-jewel>

The show is full of fun, humor, sweetness, and your soon-to-be-favorite songs. It tells the story of a once-famed honkytonk and all the wild and wonderful characters that graced its stage. It's got all the makings of a country hit, with heartbreak, revenge, dreaming, and foot stompin' rowdiness!

This fall, Dance Class continued to have a great time together moving, stretching, gaining stamina and balance all while learning new choreography and making time for letting loose! Students leave class a little more limber and with a spring in their step every week.

Music Class held their first post-pandemic presentation of songs they have been creating together. They shared songs and raps about life, friendship, treats, love, and rebellion. It was a cool mix of personalities and points of view with everyone supporting each other.

Creative Writing Class has just recently begun meeting in a new space-the Great Hall at the Duluth Depot with its gorgeous, spacious surroundings and comfy chairs! Guided and free writing exercises yielded another intriguing set of poetry that was shared on **Friday, December 8th at Wussow's Concert Coffeehouse at 3pm.** All poetry readings are free and open to the public and always guarantee a warm, cozy way to usher in a weekend.



Pam serenading the audience.



Dalton with his warm palette.

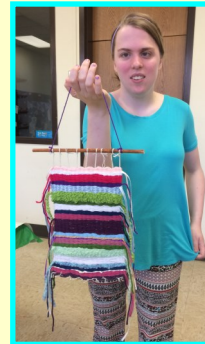
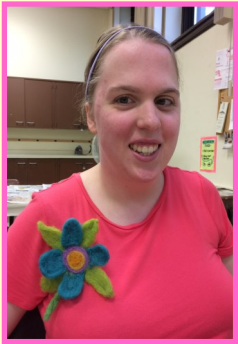
As the fall colors began to burst onto the scene, Visual Art Class took a cue and began a unit on color. Students explored color theory themes across multiple medias including acrylic, colored pencil, and collage. Students learned about warm and cool color combinations and created images to be considered for the new BOLD-choice play "Sundown on the Jasper County Jewel". They created beautiful monoprints and watercolors and an image by Jackie Willis was chosen as the production's new logo. The color unit will move on into winter-when color is certainly a welcome theme!

May your holiday season be full of color, music, dancing and poetry!

Hobby Hub with Bethany

Bethany Erdahl is our featured hobbyist. Bethany has a wide range of talents and is always striving to learn new skills and work in various art mediums. She is known for her flair in handknitting, and a wide array of fiber arts. She has been honing her crafting skills for over five years. Cindy Hollis, a former CHOICE, unlimited employee, taught Bethany how to finger knit and Bethany took it up a notch. Often finger knitting creations are smaller, but Bethany makes a range of scarves and has even made a blanket! She has also learned arm knitting, which is a larger scale type knitting where thicker fabrics are knitted together. Her last creation was a hammock! When discussing her interests, she stated that she really enjoys making knitted items and hopes to sell them in the future. Currently, she is happy to give them as gifts to friends and family. Thank you Bethany for sharing your hobby. We look forward to seeing your future creations!

Bethany and a few of her fiber art creations: Felted flower, hook rug wolf, colorful weaving and finger knit bowl.



Health and Wellness Update

The Health and Wellness Program kicked off the fall season with three pop-up classes in September. Participants learned how to make a healthy banana dessert, learned some exciting salsa dance moves, and were able to sample Tai Chi and seated strengthening exercises in a combo class.

On September 5th, the two Tai Chi groups combined to do a special demo performance at First Covenant Church. Some staff members of First Covenant Church came to watch along with CHOICE, unlimited service recipients and supporters.

The Healthy Lunch Bunch group attended a cooking class at Whole Foods Co-op on October 31st, where they made a delicious and healthy chicken taco salad. Thank you to Whole Foods Co-op for covering half of the ingredient cost! Throughout the fall, the class participants also watched Super-Size Me and had great discussions about the culture of fast food and junk food and the effects it has on a person's health.

Members of First Covenant Church have been invited to join in the exercise classes that are held there on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings. It's a wonderful way to foster inclusiveness and to say thank you to the church for use of their building. We are so grateful for community partners like First Covenant Church and glad we are able to offer something in return.



Thanks to your generous support, we were able to raise over \$5,300 for our ARTS Program during this year's Give to the Max Campaign!

Thank You to our Donors!

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Peggy Shelton | Alex & Susan Hautajarvi | Adele Hartwick |
| Barb Ahlberg | Kelly & Jody Faughnan | DeeAnn Trotta |
| Tom Houghtaling | Karen Schmidt | Marcia Jenkins |
| Aaron Latto | Pam Reitan | Marge Johnson |
| Karen Hennis | Susan Rasmussen | Debbie Freedman |
| Mary K Tennis | Terrie Whitesel | Rick Nelson |



#GTMD23

| | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Jackie Nelson | Georgette & Tom Wondolkowski | Amy Johnson |
| Kelsey Cady | Kristie & Dan Buchman | Benjamin Luoma |
| Global Village | Danny Klotz | Lizette Roebke |
| | Kim Klotz | |

And all our generous Anonymous Givers!

Positions Available

- Employment Specialist/Job Coach *Full and Part time entry-level openings starting at \$16.25 per hour*

Benefits Available Include

- Health, Dental, and additional voluntary benefits
- PTO, HSA, 403(b) Retirement Plan
- Mileage is reimbursed
- Wage differentials for evening and weekend shifts



Interested in learning more about our open positions?

Call Terrie Whitesel, Human Resource Manager, for more information at 218-724-5869 or apply at www.choiceunlimited.org



Although enjoying the lack of snow-so far, our Fashionista was planning for the white stuff and anticipating a lot of boot wearing, which she loves!

She loves the classic Christmas looks, but agreed that there are no rules and that it would be fun to see Santa try out a blue and white fuzzy suit

and have Mrs. Claus in full head-to-toe hot pink! If one wanted to look a little elfish, a pointy hat and lots of green and red would do the trick.

As far as her dream outfit for the holidays, Ms. Fashion would love to don a white, silky, long-sleeved (“it’s cold”), full length gown with purple sparkles throughout-real Sugar Plum Fairy vibes.

When asked what is on her wish list this year, she replied “always gift cards” that way she can pick out her own perfect thing, which is just her style. Take her cues and choose apparel that puts you in the holiday spirit!





Winter Remote Class Schedule

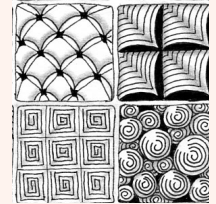


Book Club - Wednesdays 8:30am - Listen to audio recordings of famous literary works. Discussion about the books' happenings included before and after the listening session.



Coffee Club - Thursdays 10am - In coffee club, we get together with our morning beverage of choice and talk about what we did for the week to feel better about ourselves and reduce stress.

Dance - Wednesdays 11am and Thursdays 11am - Weekly dance instruction, exercise and social connection that allows students an opportunity to move their body, get exercise, and see fellow students.



Mindfulness Through Zentangle- Thursdays 9am - A class designed to teach participants to tune into their thoughts and use the Zentangle method tools to increase focus, happiness, and peace.



Music- Mondays 11am and Wednesdays 10am - Weekly music exploration and instruction. Drawing out and honing natural strengths- instrumentation, voice, rhythm and lyric work.



Relaxation-Mondays 9am- Guided meditation focused on relaxing mind and body.

Something to Smile About- Tuesdays 10:30 am - This class shares positive uplifting stories from around the world, giving everyone a reason to smile!



Studio Art- Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 2pm- A creative social hour to spend time working on personal creative projects such as drawing, painting, knitting, or other projects.

Wild Minnesota: Nature Drawing- Fridays 10am - In this class students will watch videos and study pictures of local Minnesota plants and wildlife, including trees, flowers, birds, mammals, fish, and more.



Sweatin' to the Oldies- Tuesdays 9am - Exercise class set to fun music.

****If you are interested in participating in remote classes, call Karen Wright at 218-724-5869 for more information.**

**We would like to recognize and extend our appreciation to the
Community Employers with whom we partner!**

**310 Pub
AmericInn Proctor
Animal Allies
Barkers Island Inn
Bayshore Health Center
Bent Paddle Brewing Company
City Laundering
Defy Duluth
Dicks Sporting Goods
Duluth Art Institute
Duluth Parks and Recreation
Duluth Running Co.
EasyLiving Services, LLC
Ecuman Lakeshore
Enger Park Golf Course
FeraDyne Outdoors
First Lutheran Church
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Gordy's Gift and Garden
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Hampton Inn Duluth
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**Johnson's Bakery
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Northwood Children's Services Main
Northwood Children's Services West
Old Chicago
Old World Meats
Outback Steak House
Perkins West
Ravin Crossbow
REM Arrowhead
Salem Lutheran Church
Slumberland
St. Ann's Residence
St. Mary's Catholic Church – Silver Bay
Super One Foods Kenwood
Super One Foods Miller Hill
Twin Ports Dog Training Club
Voyageur Bus Co.
Walmart Hermantown
Wild State Cider**

**** Denotes a new Employer Partner this quarter.**



Vision

CHOICE, unlimited envisions a vibrant community that empowers individuals with disabilities and fosters a culture of inclusiveness.

Mission

CHOICE, unlimited creates and enhances opportunities for individuals with disabilities within local communities.