



**synapse
HOUSE**

the CRANIUM CHRONICLES

Spring/Summer
2024

2024 Family Picnic

by Tom W. and Bryan Y.

The weather was perfect when we arrived at the park. We arranged the tables so that all the attendees would have a place to sit and enjoy their meal. The members started to show up and before long we filled the pavilion. It was nice and festive to see all the members interacting with each other and learning about each other and meeting all the different relatives to this turnout. We had a chance to talk to different people other than the members and get a very positive reaction from the Clubhouse.



We set the tables in a line and placed the food on them. There was meat, salad, rolls, chips, garnish, cookies, cake and water. There was plenty of food, dessert, smiles, comradery, and good conversation to be had amongst members, their family, friends, and caregivers who arrived underneath the pavilion where they enjoyed lunch and dessert and drinks. It was nice to see who could provide what food or dessert item and who made each one, whether it came from a home recipe or was store-bought and whether that recipe could potentially be shared afterwards, depending on its overall delicacy. After all, desserts are not easy to make if you are not experienced in that realm and don't have all the ingredients or cooking supplies for it. A great dessert can open the discussion to other times that you or the other person have indulged in that specific dish before or a similar treat.

The whole time we were interacting with each other, we were constantly being bombarded by a couple pair of barn swallows that were protecting their nests that were up in the eaves of the pavilion. We were lucky that no one was hit by those birds as they zoomed in and out. All in all, a good time was enjoyed by all attendees and we hope that the picnic is a yearly happening.

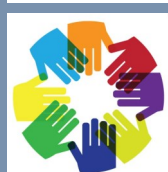
PLEASE CONSIDER SERVING ON OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Impact our future & be a part of our
growth

We Engage, Empower and Employ
individuals affected by brain injury

INTERESTED?

Visit: [www.synapsehouse.org/
board-of-directors](http://www.synapsehouse.org/board-of-directors)



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Join our Board of Directors or a volunteer committee.

Governance Committee · Gala Committee · Golf Committee

Synapse House continues to grow. Expanded program and
service offerings are now available to members.

Interested? Please contact Janet Yardley at
janet@synapsehouse.org



2024 GOLF OUTING FUNDRAISER

By Will B.



I really enjoyed being a part of the golf committee for the Synapse House golf outing this year. We had bi-weekly meetings that helped plan and put together the golf outing, held at Glen Oak Country Club in Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

Admittedly, it was my first time playing golf in a few years (since my injury) and when the idea was first proposed to me, I thought it was ridiculous! I had never seen a disabled person play golf before, not in person or on TV. I knew there were adjustments and plans that could be made to make it happen successfully, but I just had to go through the tough areas of learning and try it. I worked with my Physical and Occupational therapists to find a golfing stance that would work for me so that I wouldn't lose balance or fall. Then I worked with my caregivers on walking on the grass like I would be on the actual course, since they would end up being the ones with helping me on and off the golf cart each time and taking each swing and putt on the tee box, fairway or green.

Overall, we couldn't have asked for better weather, staff, venue, meal or participants at our golf fundraiser held at Glen Oak Country Club. The afternoon lunch was convenient, simple and scrumptious! It was exactly what we needed before spending a few hours on the course in the sun before dinner time that was paired with complimentary drink service, a variety of beers and wine, and an outstanding wait staff. I hope you consider joining us next year even if you are not traditionally a golfer! Worried about what your score would be? Don't worry, the event is set up as a golf scramble, so you play best ball for each swing. And frankly, this way is a lot of fun because it's a team approach meaning everyone hits a shot and travels to the ball that hopefully made it to the fairway after a few hits, which is easier than a normal round of golf.

We even include dinner with the purchase of a golfing ticket (the barbecue dinner in the clubhouse was delicious) that's just how nice we really are over at Synapse House. So, come check us out at next year's golf outing! After participating this year for the very first time ever I know it won't be my last!



Visit our website to learn more about our programs, volunteering and donating.
www.synapsehouse.org

The Cranium Chronicles is published by Synapse House

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877-932-1120



www.synapsehouse.org

Our Support Team

Deborah Giesler, Ex. Director, MS, CCC/SLP
Pattie Zinski, Development Director
James Farrell, Business Office

Clubhouse Work Unit Coordinators

Megan McClain MS, OTR/L
Erika Panatera MS, OTR/L
Kristina Chapman-Rapp MS.Ed, CPT, GEI
Megan Gassel

Employment Services

Jill Mueller MS
David Lee

Exercise Physiologist

Kristina Chapman-Rapp MS.Ed, CPT, GEI

Community Support Specialists

Dustin Bellair
Tony Chairez
Daria Kucera

Transportation

LaShelle Morrow
LaTonya Davis

2024 Board of Directors

Janey Yardley, Board Chair
Marilyn Dingsens, Board Chair (elect)
Nancy D'Andrea, Treasurer
Secretary—**Actively seeking**
Bryan Bacon
Joe Bretz
Matt Dingsens
Melissa Johnson
Anthony Simone
Kelly Snow



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!
YOU ARE THE HEART  OF
OUR CLUBHOUSE!



THANK YOU TO OUR
RAFFLE AND BEVERAGE DONORS!



Joe Bretz Colombos Family Nancy D'Andrea
Matt & Marilyn Dingsens James Farrell
Kelly Snow Janet Yardley



2024 GOLF OUTING STATS

107 golfers (17 women!)

84 diners

49 winning score

(Congratulations to the Kluckman team!)

19 sponsorships

6 Clubhouse member golfers



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND SPONSORS FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT

Bob & Karen Strizak made a donation in honor of Dennis & Kelly Gilroy

Donation made by Diane Lisle in memory of her brother and Clubhouse member Joe Lisle who passed away in June, 2024. We remember Joe fondly for his contribution to the monthly newsletter "joke corner" and always being a mentor to new members. Joe was always welcoming to anyone who entered the Clubhouse and after time, was able to obtain a job with the support of our employment team. He is missed but remembered by all for his contributions to our community and his positivity.

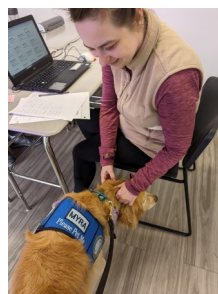


\$1,500 Donation made by the Knights of Columbus in Villa Park, IL—the Father John Barret Council #8635

A visit from Myra

By Sherry N.

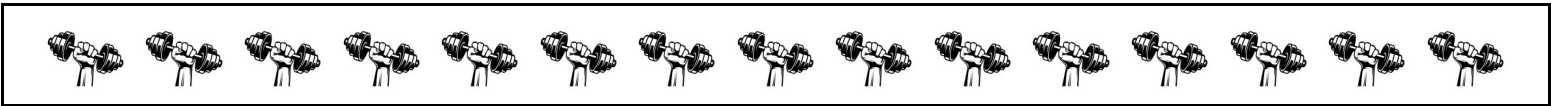
Myra is a 7 year old golden retriever. She is a certified comfort dog from St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Park Ridge, and has been working since June 2019. She is part of ministry through Lutheran Church Charities.



You can find out more about Myra and her work as a comfort dog on Facebook and Instagram at: Lutheran Church Charities and Myra Comfort Dog.

Myra is a seasoned professional and has been a service dog for quite some time. She is there for you, if you had a bad day, she helps make it better. She knows who is sad, stressed or needs a friend. Sometimes, you just need a time out. She is there for you to pet her and forget about your troubles for a while. She loves to hide between your legs and let you pet her. Myra is there for you. She is a valued friend and has the softest hair. She is cuddly too, and takes what one is willing to give. So, lay your stresses with Myra and get out your troubles. Thank you to board member, Kelly Snow, for bringing Myra to visit!

Visit our website to learn more about our programs, volunteering and donating.
www.synapsehouse.org

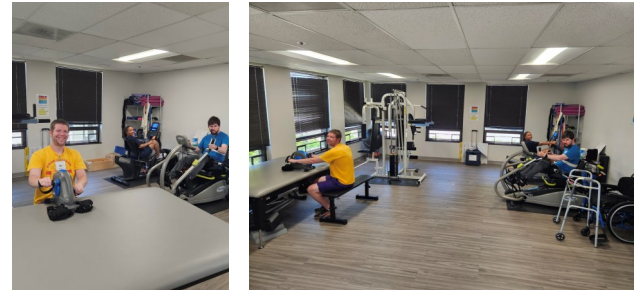


The KNZ Neuro-fitness center started our annual "road trip" challenge on Monday, July 1st. Members are participating in this 9-week challenge to help increase cardiorespiratory fitness.

Participants are riding the bike, NuStep or arm cycle all the way from Synapse House to New York, NY (808 miles)!!! Each minute of exercise logged on the bike, NuStep or arm cycle will be considered one mile on the journey to New York, NY.

Whichever two teams "get to" New York first win!!! (Prizes to be announced).

All will celebrate completion of the program with a New York Style Pizza Party (Held on August 30th).



Congratulations to Scott B. (pictured above) and Rocky A. for successfully completing the Synapse House employment program and obtaining jobs at Home Depot and FedEx. With ongoing support from our employment staff, both gentlemen have maintained employment and are contributing to the workforce community once again!



EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

We'd like to introduce our newest team member, David Lee. David will be primarily working on the Employment team and with CSS. David is excited to take part in the work of Synapse House. Previously, David worked as a Career Coach & Employment Counselor at two different non-profit organizations, where he got to work with various population groups from refugees to the homeless. Also, his experience as a corporate recruiter has strengthened his networking and marketing skills to serve job seekers and employers best.

David's goals are to build relationships and empower the members through the job-seeking journey. He's committed to bringing the best candidate experience and accountability to ensure the best opportunity for employee and employer success.

Welcome to the Synapse House family, David!

CLUBHOUSE PROGRAM

Since January, the Clubhouse has been busy hosting multiple events. In May we had our second annual Clubhouse family picnic at Ty Warner Park in Westmont, IL. We had over 18 members and families attend this casual event in the park. In June we hosted our Golf Outing at Glen Oak Country Club in Glen Ellyn, IL. This was our most well attended golf outing to date, with over 100 golfers and over 80 diners, all able to enjoy the beautiful course and amenities Glen Oak has to offer.

We continue to promote community integration through outings. Each month we go on one lunch outing, one activity outing, and one volunteer outing. Participation within the community is vital to the members' recoveries as they learn to navigate different terrain and obstacles, problem solve through areas that may not be greatly accessible, read and order from menus, manage money, transfer into and out of vehicles, and interact with clerks who are unfamiliar.

We are actively planning for our kitchen expansion which will create more prep space to accommodate adaptive equipment and wheelchairs in addition to offering broader menu options with an oven installation.

After a week long audit in May, we are proud to announce that Synapse House has achieved CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation for 3 more years in the departments of:



- **Community Employment Services: Employment Supports** -
- **Community Employment Services: Job Development** -
- **Community Integration** -



Special Thanks to the Layton family for their donation of a NEW Keurig coffee maker and their ongoing donations of coffee and creamer. Their generosity keeps our coffee station fully stocked and our members VERY happy!

Scott B and his niece, Kayla, won gold medals for bocce in the state tournament this year!



**11th Annual Synapse House Gala
Friday, September 27, 2024**

**Abbington Banquets
Glen Ellyn, IL**

Gala tickets and sponsorship opportunities available now on our website.

Purchase your tickets now at www.synapsehouse.org

NOTE: Discount code available for members, their caregivers and healthcare professionals. Contact us for more information.

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www.synapsehouse.org**



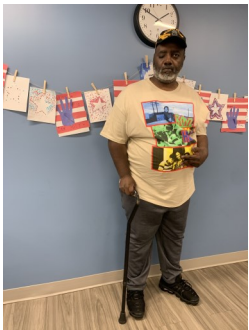
COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES (CSS)
FEATURING: KEVIN B.
 Interviewed and written by Bryan Y., edited by Anwar S.

Synapse House wants to highlight the profile of one of our veterans, Kevin. He was born on March 30, grew up in Chicago, and attended Leo High School. He now lives in Markham and has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Olive Harvey College. Despite his degree, he worked as a maintenance engineer for the National Guard of Armory of Northern Illinois and served America faithfully for 27 years in the army national guard. He also served 18 months of a tour of duty in Iraq.

He met his wife in the army and the couple has been married for 18 years and are still going strong. Kevin has 4 children, 3 boys and 1 girl. His daughter is 32 years old, while his sons are 29, 25, and 22 respectively.

A role model Kevin looks up is his father and he admires his dad for his work ethic. His father worked 2 full time jobs to send his kids to private school for a better education. Some words of wisdom Kevin learned and wishes to share with others are "Stay in school" and "Never give up." Kevin's hobby is watching action thriller movies like John Wick, Beekeeper, and Mission Impossible. Kevin's favorite vacation was a trip to the Dominican Republic; His best friend got married there. Finally, one thing Kevin would like to do again is to drive.

Kevin works side by side with our CSS staff enjoying outings in the community and working on his art interests. He also attends Clubhouse in-person once a week to engage with other Synapse House members. He likes to assist with passing out water and utensils before lunch and he is a great contributor during discussion groups. Kevin always has something to add to discussions and always asks questions to fuel the conversation and dig deeper into what the group is learning.



Thank you, Kevin, for your service to our country. You are a valued member of our Clubhouse community and we enjoy having you participate in multiple facets of our organization.



 * If you know someone in need of services or would like to share information about *
 * Synapse House with your healthcare provider, please contact *
 *
 * admissions@synapsehouse.org *
 *



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SYNAPSE HOUSE WISH LIST & FUNDRAISING

Set-up a donation drive or schedule a supply drop-off.

Email megan@synapsehouse.org for more information. Bold items we have a greater need for.

Copy Paper
White Cardstock
 Hand Weights
 Letter size Envelopes
 File Folders (letter size)

Postage Stamps
Toilet Paper
Cleaning Wipes
C-Fold Paper Towels
Latex Gloves

Gas Gift Cards
Uber or Lyft Gift Cards
Gift cards to Wal-Mart, Jewel, Office Depot, & Mariano's

Synapse House is participating in the Target Circle Community Giving program July 1–September 30



To vote for Synapse House

1. Log in and click on "My Target"
2. Scroll Down and click "change" on My Store
3. Set your preferred store to **60515** zip code and select **Lombard, IL** and hit "Save"
4. Go back to "My Target" and click "Cast Votes"
5. Synapse House will appear and cast your vote! (NOTE: You may have more than one vote (possibly hundreds)...all of your votes can be used for Synapse House.)

For a snapshot of our Clubhouse programming, Culinary unit meals, Employment training and members in the spotlight, please follow us on Social Media:

Facebook: Synapse House

Instagram: @synapsehouseclubhouse and @synapsehouseculinary

Twitter: @SynapseHouse

YouTube: Synapse House



For more information or to register for an event go to Synapsehouse.org/events