



**Friendship Ark**  
HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

**FAITH • FAMILY • FRIENDSHIP**

Winter 2023  
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## Friendship Ark Opens 8th Home



We are excited to announce that we have successfully opened our eighth home, providing an opportunity to take the next step on their journey to greater independence for five more core members. Just like our Fletcher Home, the Sargent Family Home will operate as an intermediate home, providing reduced hours of in-person staff support supplemented by an electronic monitoring system for safety, to allow the core members to

transition to more independent living. The home is named after the **Sargent Family**, who has made a significant financial commitment to support Friendship Ark. We could not continue to grow and provide the quality services we are known for to additional core members without the support of generous donors such as the Sargent Family. We are grateful for their compassion and belief in our mission.

Since moving into the home in mid-September, the five young men living in the new home have experienced a whirlwind of activity. They were welcomed with a housewarming celebration hosted by our friends at Calvary United Methodist Church, have enjoyed meals on the patio, learned some meal-prepping skills, hosted a FA Halloween Party, and experienced the welcoming spirit of their neighbors as they brought over a soup supper and dessert for all to share so they could visit and get to know each other. The group of core members is already making strides in growing their independence and we look forward to supporting and guiding them on their individual journeys.



*Enjoying the patio.*



*Dinner with neighbors.*

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## Recruiting and Community Engagement Corner

Excitement and joy are in the air as we embrace the holiday season. We enjoyed engaging with the Ames community at our **3rd Annual Halloween Bootique** and look forward to meeting many of you when we present our **2nd Annual Hot Cocoa Bar** courtesy of the **Downtown Ames Fareway** at the **Beautiful Land Holiday Market**. We are grateful for the support of the Beautiful Land Market for providing us with the opportunity to raise funds and share about our services and mission.



We continue to focus on learning, being active in our community, and spreading awareness. This means being a part of committees and clubs such as the **Story County Transportation Collaboration**, the **Non-Profit DEI Group** and **Ames Rotary**. We attended the **United Way's Day of Caring Kick Off Event** and various Chamber events such as the **Annual Steak Fry**, **Women in Leadership**, **Chamber After Hours**, and **Ribbon Cuttings**. We enjoyed speaking about Friendship Ark at **1 Million Cups Ames**, which provided us a new forum for telling our story. We continued our tradition of hosting an **Iowa State HDFS class** to share about opportunities to get involved, which sparked an interest in volunteer service learning projects. We interacted with students at the **People to People Career Fair** and with retirees at the **Rock on Symposium**, reaching prospective employees and volunteers at both ends of the age spectrum.

Last month, core member Kim and I were excited to meet past and potential **Business Partners**. What I loved most about this experience was watching Kim's fearlessness in speaking to others. This is a skill many of us struggle with, yet Kim did this with ease. I also appreciated her sincere thanks to current Business Partners we visited. I could sense that she really knew what their contribution meant in relation to her, and it made me pause and reflect at how truly important these relationships are and how things like our upcoming **Gala on 4/20/24** and our **Annual Appeal** truly make a difference in the lives of those we support. What a blessing it was to deliver these with Kim and learn from her! Interested in becoming a **Business Partner for 2024**? Contact me at [bethl@friendshipark.org](mailto:bethl@friendshipark.org).

*By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager*



## Our Business Partners

Help us to thank our 2023 Business Partners for their generous support of adults living with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community. If you find yourself interacting with them or visiting their offices, let them know you appreciate their contribution.



## Meet Our New Marketing Team



Beth (l) and Martina (r)

As Friendship Ark has continued to grow, it became apparent that we needed to add a dedicated marketing team to represent and promote Friendship Ark in the Ames community and beyond. This summer we welcomed Beth Lucht (Marketing Manager) and Martina Luppen (Marketing Assistant) to new positions with Friendship Ark. Beth and Martina go back to the beginnings of Friendship Ark, when Martina held the position of Administrative Assistant and Beth became our first Supervisor over three homes. In 2007, Beth's husband's career took her away from Friendship Ark for a number of years while Martina stayed on, transitioning from Administrative Assistant to Office Manager to now Marketing Assistant.

If you would ask either of them if they ever saw marketing in their future, both would have firmly said, "NO!", which makes it even more ironic that the two are now paired together and both pushed themselves out of their comfort zones to find something new they enjoy. One might even say they have been inspired by seeing our core members try hard things and being encouraged to say, "I can" instead of "I can't"! Together, Martina and Beth hope to tell the story of Friendship Ark through pictures and words on social media but also demonstrate the love of our core members through their interactions with everyone they meet.

Beth grew up in Gilbert, graduated from Gilbert High School, and pursued her degree at Iowa State with a major in psychology and a minor in sociology. It was during college that Beth was introduced to this field of work and held the position of Direct Care Professional with another agency. After graduating from ISU, she was a Department Manager for Fareway for a short time before a relative of a former client connected her with Friendship Ark's Executive Director and Beth became our first Supervisor. During her time away from FA, Beth served as a Training Coordinator, Small Business Owner, Assistant Preschool Teacher, and Family Life Educator. However, God intervened and brought the Lucht family back to Ames and she was rehired as the Recruiter/Scheduler at Friendship Ark.

Martina grew up in Germany, where she attended Trade School and an Apprenticeship Program in Office Administration. After graduation, she worked in various administrative roles for a pharmaceutical company, a luxury apartment complex, a bank, and Burke Corporation in Nevada, IA, before deciding to resign her position to stay at home to raise her children for a number of years. Martina started with Friendship Ark in January 2004, becoming the company's first office employee. As mentioned above, she transitioned through several different roles with Friendship Ark, growing her responsibilities and adapting to the growth of the company. Beth and Martina look forward to meeting you, seeing you out in the community, and welcoming you at our events.

## Save the Date

Please plan to join us on **April 20th, 2024** for our second annual Tropical Sangria Escape fundraiser. We will be welcoming you to our tropical oasis at the **CPMI Event Center** with entertainment by **Jason Whorlow Dueling Pianos**.



Core members and staff had a lot of fun dressing up in costumes and enjoying fellowship, food, and even a few frights together at our annual Halloween gathering.



## Recruiting and Community Engagement Corner, continued

This quarter we welcomed the following staff to the Friendship Ark family: Sandy Kapek (Westfield Coordinator), Sandi Vaughn (Sargent Coordinator), Amanda Goodrich (CFH Coordinator), Shelby Perry (Dotson Supervisor), Samantha Chizek (Dotson Coordinator), Shelby Chizek (DSP), Becky Shubert (DSP), Misty Miller (DSP), Michelle Guzman (DSP), and Vivine Foncham (DSP).

Please also help us to congratulate our employees who have celebrated their **one-year** anniversaries: Molly Daily, Bella Herreweyers, Amari Ingram, Michelle Jackson-Worrick, Deb Long, Laura Millage, Nicole Moe, and Janelle Wright, as well as Tadd Kingsbury, Christy Family Home Supervisor, who celebrated 10 years with Friendship Ark this year.

We thank all of our staff for their dedicated service to, relentless advocacy and unconditional love for the core members. You are what makes Friendship Ark great and we are blessed to have you as a part of the family.



*Tadd Kingsbury*

## Why Did We Adopt the Philosophy of Gentle Teaching?

Did you ever wonder where Gentle Teaching came from or how it became such an instrumental part of Friendship Ark? Well, much like how Friendship Ark was formed, it was introduced by our founders Joe and Lois Johanns. Joe and Lois became intrigued by Gentle Teaching early on and had Dr. John McGee (founder of Gentle Teaching International) come to their home and work with their son. After meeting John, Joe encouraged FA management to investigate the principles of Gentle Teaching further and implement it as a staff training. When the International Gentle Teaching Conference was going to be held in Chicago in August of 2005, he convinced Mary Beth, the Executive Director at the time, to allow two staff members to attend with him. Along with DSP Pat, who worked with Joe's son at the time, I was selected to attend the conference with Joe. Joe, Pat, and I set off for Chicago and I would say my life was forever changed because of it. I went from "I am not sure if this will work" to coming back with vigor and saying we **MUST** get this implemented at Friendship Ark. Much of it was common sense, but I found myself changing and being more cognizant of the way I interacted with the core members in small ways. One thing that was talked about is touch (i.e. a pat on the back) and how important that can be, as long as you have built the relationship first and the person is receptive to it. Thus I started to give more high fives, pats on the back, and hugs and the difference it made in my relationships, both professional and personal, was huge. Other things like being more present and being patient were also key. I realized if I let go of my social norms, such as being stressed if we would be late somewhere, taking that pressure off made all the difference. One example of Gentle Teaching I was able to implement was the "Peek-A-Boo" method of leaving and returning to the room several times to complete small steps with a gentleman who was slow to get up in the morning, which allowed him to wake up in a slower fashion. Sometimes it was just sitting on the edge of the bed talking softly to him. Before too long what would take me 2 hours in the beginning was completed in 30 minutes or less. To this day I still have a strong bond with this individual even after leaving Friendship Ark for many years and then coming back. I credit this to Gentle Teaching.

Upon returning from the conference, a provider from Nebraska, who was trained by Dr. John McGee, came to Ames and helped us to create and implement a formal training. This training continues to guide staff today. Gentle Teaching has 4 pillars and those are in place to make our core members feel safe, loved, loving, and engaged. We hope to continue to provide you with information about this great training tool in future newsletters.

*By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager and Gentle Teaching Taskforce Member*

## FA Friendsgiving



We treasure our tradition of inviting the Friendship Ark family of core members, staff, board members and volunteers to our annual Friendsgiving celebration, where we

come together to share a traditional Thanksgiving meal, visit, and celebrate the holiday. Special thanks to board member, Heather Botine, for joining us and saying the blessing, and St. John's by the Campus for providing a welcoming and beautiful space.

## Campfire, Smores, and Carousel Rides

On a sunny afternoon in September we gathered the entire Friendship Ark family of core members and staff and their families as well as board members and volunteers for a campfire



cookout with smores and an entire hour of free carousel rides at the Story City Carousel. The smiles on the core member faces and those of their loved ones as they experienced the joy and nostalgia of a carousel ride said it all. The event was a huge success, and we made many memories that will be treasured long into the future.



## Second Annual Sara Ojard Golf Scramble to Benefit Friendship Ark

In July, the Prochnow family held the second annual golf scramble in memory of their daughter and sister, Sara Ojard, raising over \$10,000 for Friendship Ark.



We are humbled by their generous spirit and grateful for the event they have created to continue Sara's legacy of spreading kindness and being endlessly caring and supportive to each and every community that was lucky enough to have her. Would you like to be a part of this wonderful event next year? Contact us and we will add you to the mailing list for information.

## Friendship Ark Receives Theisen's Grant



We were excited to be awarded a Theisen's More for Your Community Grant this fall. With this grant we will be able to purchase generators for all of our homes. This is an extremely

important project for us which will allow us to keep the power on to ensure medications and foods don't spoil should a power outage occur for a long period of time. Thank you Theisen's for choosing us as one of your grant recipients for 2023!

## Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to Friendship Ark's Employee of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2023, Josh Tuel. Josh's nomination recognized him for striving to make every day better for the core members



and staff since coming to Friendship Ark. Josh knows how to make everyone feel safe and comfortable. He came into the Johanns home and completely changed the culture for the better. Thank you, Josh, for your faithful commitment to the core members and to Friendship Ark. In recognition of his award, Josh received a gift of \$100 and will be eligible to be selected for the Employee of the Year award. Nominations for Employee of the Quarter and Employee of the Year awards can be submitted by any staff of Friendship Ark and winners are selected by a diverse committee of staff peers.



# Friendship Ark

HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

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## Make a Donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I/we would like to help Friendship Ark continue to serve persons with intellectual disabilities in a faith-based family home environment! Amount donated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please apply my/our donation to the following:

- General Operations     Endowment Fund     New House
- Core Member Outings     Transportation Fund
- Rose/Lois Johannis Educational Fund (Staff Training and Education)
- I would like to learn more about making a planned gift.
- Friendship Ark is a part of my estate planning.

You may use your credit card to make a one time or recurring monthly gift by going to our website and clicking the "Donate" button.



This newsletter provides limited space for us to share all of the exciting things happening at Friendship Ark. Find more stories, news and pictures on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Don't miss a thing, follow us today!

## Wish List

- Uno Cards (Multiple Decks)
- Skipbo Cards (Multiple Decks)
- New Deep Freeze (greater than 5 cu ft)
- Murder Mystery Books
- Lawn Games
- Garage Organizers
- Small Organizing Baskets
- Halloween Costumes, Unique Clothing Items, Dance Costumes (for our Halloween Boutique fundraising events)

For your convenience, we have created a Wish List on Amazon. You may select the items you would like to donate and have them shipped directly to us by using the QR Code.

