



**Friendship Ark**  
HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

**FAITH • FAMILY • FRIENDSHIP**

**Summer 2020**  
**VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2**

## Our COVID-19 Journey

On Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, my family and I boarded a plane for a family vacation. On Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, my family returned to Iowa and in 6 days, everything had changed.

COVID-19 was officially here, and the State of Iowa began to “shut down”. It was especially strange for me as I was out of the country with an information delay. During those 6 days, our Day Hab program was closed, the staff that could work remotely left their offices, and visitors were no longer allowed.

As soon as I returned, there was no time to adjust to what had happened. Everyone sprang into action to find masks and other PPE, move staff around to cover shifts, ensure our core members were taken care of, and try to keep up on the quickly changing guidelines for our new “pandemic” situation. What a whirlwind the past 3 months have been. Life at Friendship Ark has changed in many ways.

We’ve seen a huge outpouring of support to help us navigate through these times. We put out a call asking for volunteers to donate handmade masks for our staff to wear and received 220. We had family members and friends donate games, activity supplies, or come and play music (from a distance) to help bring joy to our core members. We have had businesses offer their support. For example, Barilla donated hundreds of pounds of pasta.

Life in our homes has changed as well, especially for our core members. Our Day Hab program was forced to close temporarily for the safety of our members, which meant they went from being very busy and active in the community to being home 24/7. Our Day Hab supervisors have worked to create weekly activity boxes that are dropped off with new games, arts and crafts, and other supplies for Zoom activities; all to help offer ideas to the staff and core members to keep busy in the homes. Our Giving Tuesday Now campaign that happened on May 5<sup>th</sup> brought in enough donations to cover the cost of these boxes for the next 8 weeks. Thank you to all who donated to help us reach that goal.

COVID “can’t stop good” as we are moving forward and have broken ground on our newest (6<sup>th</sup>) home at 845 Dotson Place and construction

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## Our COVID-19 Journey, continued

continues. There have been some additional challenges with contractor schedules, smaller numbers of volunteers on the job site, so we can keep social distancing in place, and of course, weather. We hope to do a “live” video from the construction site on Facebook very soon, so keep checking our page at [www.facebook.com/FriendshipArkHCS](http://www.facebook.com/FriendshipArkHCS) for updates.

In closing, we have tried to do what we always do, keep our core members and staff as our focus. Our staff truly are heroes! They’ve stepped up and answered the call in every way. They’ve been that shelter in this very scary storm for our core members. So, while it is easy to be stressed with COVID-19 and how it has changed our lives, we hope this issue of the Friendship Ark Newsletter brings a smile to your face and a glimpse of what being “quarantined” has been like for those at Friendship Ark.

Blessings and be well,

*Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director*

## Charity Partner of the 2020 Georges Niang Golf Outing



**New Date: August 31, 2020**

**Changes in the NBA schedule, related to COVID-19, required that we move the date of the event.**

Join Georges, Event Emcee and Voice of the Cyclones, John Walters, Event Chairs Lyndsey Fennelly and Betsy Waite, and a host of celebrities for some friendly competition in a round of golf as we raise funds for Friendship Ark. You may participate as a golfer, be a sponsor or attend the Social Hour. For details and registration information go to

[www.friendshipark.org](http://www.friendshipark.org) and follow the links. Ames Golf & Country Club will provide an experience that aligns with social distancing measures.

**Golfers will receive exclusive gifts and prizes compliments of our great partner, Budget Golf.**



## Virtual QuaRUNtine 5k on the 4th



Join us as we unite virtually in our signature July 4th event by running or walking a 5k route any time between July 4th and July 17th, 2020.

More information and registration at [www.friendshipark.org](http://www.friendshipark.org); follow the links.

Help us connect virtually with every corner of the country. With our teams option you can compete with friends and family no matter where they live. The core members are filling in a map as registrations come in. Have a little fun while at the same time supporting your favorite charity, then follow along on our Facebook page as we complete the map.

Also, if you’ve ever wanted to train to run (or walk) a 5k, it is not too late to join our Facebook training group. Look for Friendship Ark 2020 QuaRUNtine to 5k on

Facebook, join and enjoy encouragement and some fun prizes. You have until July 17th to complete the race, so what are you waiting for?

## How we have experienced COVID-19

We asked our core members and staff about the impact that COVID-19 and the resulting restrictions have had on their lives. Learn about what they said below:

### CORE MEMBERS

#### What do you miss the most during this time?

Family and Friends  
The DayHab Program  
Going places with friends  
Not being able to go to MELC  
Going to ACE  
Going to work  
My mom  
Seeing my sister  
Going home

#### What is something that has helped you be ok?

Delana (Staff)  
Playing cards with staff and talking to them  
Getting out of the house by going on walks and drives  
Activity Boxes  
Drive-by visits with friends and family  
Seeing and talking to family on "Hang Out" on the phone  
Zoom visits and activities  
Coloring and more one-on-one time with staff  
Playing pool

Being able to express feelings and questions to staff

#### What do you look forward to the most?

Seeing family and friends  
Having a normal day again and going back to work  
DahHab and ACE  
Getting to go to church with my family on Sunday  
Going to camp  
Spending the night at my family's

#### What do you enjoy about being at home more?

Spending time with housemates  
Coloring pictures, arts and crafts  
Hanging out, watching movies and being silly  
Playing games  
Each other's company



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## Auction Items Needed

If you or someone you know would like to contribute a unique item or experience to our live and silent auctions for the **Georges Niang 2020 Golf Outing** to benefit Friendship Ark and help us in raising funds to continue our mission of meeting the needs of adults with intellectual disabilities, please contact our office at (515) 292-9556 or [friendshipark@friendshipark.org](mailto:friendshipark@friendshipark.org). Donors will be recognized on event materials.

**Donations to Friendship Ark are tax-deductible under current IRS regulations.**

## New Friendship Ark Home

While we have all been challenged by and paying attention to the COVID-19 pandemic, work has quietly continued on Friendship Ark's sixth home. We are moving along in the construction process and look forward to opening this home, and welcoming five new core members into the Friendship Ark family, this fall. #COVIDCan'tStopGOOD



## How we have experienced COVID-19, continued

### STAFF

#### What have been the biggest challenges?

Explaining to core members why we can't see family and friends.

Video chatting with doctors and others that use different video tech.

A husband losing his job and homeschooling children.

Staying home and social distancing in personal life so as to not carry the virus into the homes.

Staying motivated while working from home.

Not being able to see co-workers and core members in person; Zoom has helped but it's not the same.

Taking care of three children while completing duties for work.

The mental aspect and finding balance between embracing the positives and worrying and being upset to be missing friends and family.

Missing the impromptu collaboration with coworkers.

Not being able to spend time with family and friends.

#### How have you been coping?

Trying to keep the core members busy with picnics and activities.

Calling the office staff for help.

Try to keep active, stay creative, cook healthy meals, and rest.

Through prayer and daily looking for ways that God has been providing, seeing many ways I have been blessed.

Spending more time outside and walking with my dog; also contacting people via phone calls and video chats.

Over preparing.

Taking a break when we need a break; allowing others their distance and emotions; finding ways to help other people.

Drawing on experience gained with another work from home position.

Exercise, listening to books on tape, communicating with friends and family, watching movies, doing puzzles, focusing on developing myself to be a better staff at FAH.

Trying to find the good in the situation and remaining positive; knowing when to take a break to regain perspective.

*To be continued in the next newsletter.*

## Life at Friendship Ark During COVID-19

The core members' lives changed drastically as COVID-19 mitigation efforts were implemented in Iowa this spring. We went from enjoying time with our friends and family and exploring all that the community has to offer to remaining within our household groups and staying home except for an occasional walk or picnic outside with those living and working at a site. During the first few weeks we brightened our spirits, and hopefully the ones of our neighbors, with colorful artwork for our windows and sidewalks.



## Support from Our Friends, Our Families and Our Community



We received games and activity supplies and even the gift of music to keep the core members busy while we have been staying at home so we would be safe. The core members and staff appreciate everyone's thoughtfulness.



Barilla America, Inc. donated hundreds of pounds of pasta which we turned into delicious recipes.



We asked . . . and our community responded. Volunteers crafted 220 cloth face masks for our staff to wear in order to protect the core members.



## Life at Friendship Ark During COVID-19



We have missed our friends and participated in drive-by visits and birthday celebrations.



We have tried new recipes and enjoyed special treats.



We explored new crafts and picnicked social distancing style.



We received Subway sandwiches from a fellow staff member and his mom in honor of his dad, and we even found a way to plant our flower bed at Daley Park in Ames with each site taking a turn.



# Friendship Ark

HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

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## Stay Informed by E-Mail

Contact us at [friendshipark@friendshipark.org](mailto:friendshipark@friendshipark.org) to request our newsletter by e-mail. We will not share your email information with any outside entity.

## Make a Donation

\_\_\_\_ 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please apply my/our donation to the following:

- General Operations     Endowment Fund     New House
- Core Member Outings     Transportation Fund
- Rose/Lois Johanns 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.



Like us on Facebook! This newsletter provides limited space for us to share all of the exciting things happening at Friendship Ark. Visit and like our Facebook page for more stories, news and pictures.

## Wish List

- Fishing Poles, Tackle, Tackle Box, Small Hooks or other Fishing Jigs, Fishing Net
- Disc for Frisbee Golf
- Easy-fill Water Balloons
- Acrylic Paint, Paint Brushes, Sponge Brushes, Acrylic Paint Markers
- Egg Cartons (Cardboard Preferred)
- River Rocks and Rock Tumbler