

# NORTH COUNTRY NEWS

A Publication Of  
North Country Independent Living

Volume 34, Issue 2 Spring 2021

Serving Douglas, Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Iron, Price, Sawyer and Washburn counties including Red Cliff, Bad River, St Croix, and Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Communities

## A Note From the Executive Director

As we approach brighter days ahead with more daylight in our lives, I am hopeful for a brighter horizon ahead of us in 2021. At North Country Independent Living we are eager and excited for the time when we can safely resume in-person meetings & services. Of course we continue providing in-person services in our Personal Care Program, Transportation Program, and on a limited basis, in other programs as vaccinations are occurring.



I have collected information from all of our counties on vaccination distribution and am happy to share this information if you are looking for it. Such information is ever changing as with all of the events of this last year; but please reach out to us at North Country Independent Living and/or your local County Health Department if you have not already for information on getting vaccinated and you are interested.

North Country Independent Living will remain diligent in operating safely using all precautions as services begin to transition to in-person. We will also be creative and take advantage of better weather conditions to provide services to you. In July we hope to be doing a ribbon cutting outside our office building in Superior to celebrate the move we made to our new space one year ago. This is tentatively scheduled for July 26<sup>th</sup> in honor of the 31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act!

More information to come as this day gets closer. Thank you for your continued support of North Country. We remain here for you and truly and confidently say now, we look forward to seeing you soon!

- Jill Nyberg, Executive Director

## April 6th Spring Election

A statewide non-partisan election for WI State Superintendent of Public Instruction will be held on April 6th. Following the February 16th primary there are two candidates in the race, Deb Kerr and Jill Underly.

The candidates' websites offer information on their vision for public education. Should you have questions regarding their position on particular issues related to education they can be reached through their websites. Deb Kerr: <https://kerr4kids.com>

Jill Underly: <https://underlyforwi.com>

For questions about voting in WI: <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us>

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## **ALTERNATE FORMATS AVAILABLE**

If you require any of this information in an alternate format, such as large print, braille, email, or audio format, for example, please submit your request to [info@northcountryil.org](mailto:info@northcountryil.org) or 715.392.9118 V/711 Relay

### Martha Oie is Retiring

After a lucky number of 13 years as an Independent Living Specialist, I'm temporarily moving to part time at North Country (semi-retirement) so I can focus on other volunteer and recreational pursuits. I'm one who enjoys being fully present with folks. The online platforms, calls, emails and texts that allow continued visits have been great, but I miss you all in real time.



I've been an advocate for over forty years, working together with folks across all disability groups; that work will continue in new ways. There will be a new Independent Living Specialist at North Country in the near future. This has been the best fit ever for a passionate advocate – working with a fantastic team of people that bring broad experience and deep commitment to the Independent Living movement!

My career has ventured into nearly every industry, following curiosity and a passion for learning and meeting people, but my heart and work life have always maintained a connection with communities of people who live positively and creatively, who survive and succeed, in spite of marginalization and inequities. So it's not good-bye, it's "I'll see you around!"

### Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Grant Initiative

The Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Grant through the Medical College of Wisconsin is an initiative for Douglas County's Behavioral Health Crisis Response Transformation. It is a systems change grant to improve care for people living with behavioral health needs in Douglas County with a person centered and peer focused crisis stabilization model of care.

At the end of November, a large group of project partners, including North Country Independent Living (NCIL), participated in a Vision Consensus Workshop, led by Consultants at Northspan out of Duluth, MN.

Recently the grant's Advisory Committee chose a new name. They now call themselves the CARE Team: **C**risis **A**ccess **R**esponse & **E**ngagement Team. Having a new name brings excitement as the team pushes through interviewing community partners and the systems mapping phase of the project.

The next step in the initiative is for NCIL and the project's Academic Partner through the Medical College of WI to complete interviews with providers, services and support agencies/groups. A total of 17 interviews have been completed so far. Then a consumer group made up of family members, friends, and peers with lived experience will review the systems map to provide additional feedback and insight.

Once the system map is completed, the grant partners will come together to identify gaps, barriers, or opportunities for improvements to work on that are in alignment with the vision statement for Behavioral Health Crisis Response in Douglas.



Check out our **WEBSITE** : [www.northcountryvil.org](http://www.northcountryvil.org)  
Contact us by **EMAIL**: [info@northcountryvil.org](mailto:info@northcountryvil.org)  
Follow us on **Facebook**!

### Transportation Talk

Hello from the Transportation Voucher Program! I hope you are all in good health during these early Spring days. Warmer weather is just around the corner and I know I cannot wait!

Just a friendly reminder to consumers, people who use miles are at 150 miles per month and cab users are at \$25 a month. While I had hoped I could increase those amounts, the 2021 grant came back less than I asked for so we remain at these amounts for 2021.

If you need vouchers it is faster to call or email me to request vouchers. Mail requests are fine, but please know that it may take a bit longer for me to get them out that way.

In addition, due to the limitations of our 2021 grant, the Transportation Voucher Program is currently on a waitlist for new enrollment. We applied for additional funding with the hope that we can open up the waitlist come summer. I will keep you updated as things change.

Finally, since our office is not open to the public, feel free to contact me by cell at **(715) 817-4646** or email at [sunshine@northcountryil.org](mailto:sunshine@northcountryil.org) if you have any questions. Stay safe and stay well! **Sunshine Lemieux, J.D. NCIL Transportation Program Coordinator**



### Transportation—Volunteer Drivers Needed

North Country's **drivers get 56.5 cents per mile** (the Federal Rate). We are looking for drivers to help provide rides to elders and people with disabilities. For more information or an application, call or email:

**Sunshine at 715.817.4646 Voice/711 Relay or [sunshine@northcountryil.org](mailto:sunshine@northcountryil.org)**

### Personal Care Program

It can be difficult talking about Supportive Home Care services (SHC) and Personal Care services with friends and family members. We understand that it is difficult for a lot of folks to admit that some of our daily living tasks are a little harder and are taking longer to complete.

North Country Independent Living's Personal Care Program is different than other agencies. Our Consumers have an active role in planning their own self-directed in-home services which allows us to offer a unique work environment for our Personal Care Workers (PCW's) to work one-on-one with Consumers in their homes. We set up a routine that does not interrupt the Consumer's daily activities. Our PCW's meet their Consumers prior to working with them. NCIL provides services in your home, with set schedules that can be flexible. NCIL's Personal Care Program supports the Independent Living Philosophy while promoting healthy living to Consumers. Our self directed personal care program encourages individual choices while assisting Consumers with tasks.

We train all the PCW's to your routine. We try to match the consumer up with a PCW of choice. We work as a team to find PCW's that you want assisting you. We are able to hire and train friends, neighbors or family members if you want them to help you. NCIL accepts the following funders: Wisconsin Medical Assistance (Medicaid), IRIS plans (self directed program), Includa (Manage Care program), and Private Pay. Please contact the Personal Care Program at 715.392.2533 Voice/711 Relay for more information.

### Personal Care Program—Caregivers Needed

North Country is always looking for personal care workers with hands-on experience. For more information on caregiver positions, please go to <https://northcountryil.org/employment>

You may also contact **Jodi Zukowski at 218.393.9976 v/711 relay or [Jodi@northcountryil.org](mailto:Jodi@northcountryil.org)**

**Mental Health & Related Resources**

**Disaster Distress Hotline**

1.800.986.5990

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline**

1.800.273.8255

**Veteran's Crisis Line**

1.800.273.8255

**Substance and Mental Health Services Administration**

1.800.662.4357

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

1.800.799.7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522

**National Sexual Assault Hotline**

1.800.656.4672

**Support/Peer Groups**

**Superior MS Group**

Contact: Jackie at 715.398.5043 or Michael at 218.391.6262



**Ashland MS Group**

Contact: Peggy at 715.682.6506

**Webster MS Group**

Contact: Diane Whitcraft at 763.742.8572

**Visually Impaired Group**

Contact: Mary Lou at 715.661.3387

**NAMI Douglas County WI**

Peer Support Group meetings are offered each month on the first and third Thursday, as well as on the second and fourth Wednesdays. All meetings are at 5:30 p.m. (*Join by Zoom or by phone*).

Contact Chrissy at: 920.452.5152 or [ChrissyBarnard22@gmail.com](mailto:ChrissyBarnard22@gmail.com)

***During Covid-19*** support groups are not meeting in-person.

*Please call the contact person listed for each group for more information about alternative means of meeting or when the support group will resume meeting in person in the future.*

### New Intern at North Country

Hello! My name is Madison. I am the new intern at North Country Independent Living! I am a Senior majoring in Social Work at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. My passion is working with active service members and Veterans.

I began my internship in late January, and I have learned so much since my first day. Over the course of my internship I will be learning more about the role of Independent Living within communities and aiding in the development of a new Volunteer Program. My internship concludes in early May, so I am excited to engage and learn as much as I can over the course of this time.



### Social Media and North Country on Facebook

Social media networks are sites people use to communicate and engage with one another on the web. It's grown in popularity over the past decade – for both consumers and businesses. Social media is a term to describe how these platforms are used. They allow you to publish different types of media, including blog posts, videos, and photos. And the purpose is to do it in a social way so people are able to like, share, and comment on your posts. Users are also able to follow your profile to stay tuned in with the posts you make.

One social media outlet North Country Independent Living is using is Facebook. Facebook is a social networking site that makes it easy for you to connect and share with others online. On our page you can find up-to-date information about different trainings and events as well as other important information.

A special feature we have included on our page is our "Assistive Technology of the Week". Each week we have a different assistive technology topic of the week and we highlight an item each day from that category that is in our loan program. It is a great way to see what our loan program has to offer! Another highlight on our page is our virtual tour video of our new office space! You can also get ahold of us through Facebook page by messaging us with any questions. If you see us on Facebook, make sure to give us a "like"!

### Help in Looking for a Job

There are many options to start looking for the next job opportunity. Every job search website is different, so be sure to look at different websites until you find the one that works for you. In the box to the right are a few options to help you start your job search.

If you need any assistance or have questions please contact our Employment Specialist, Emma Duchrow, by email at [emma@northcountryil.org](mailto:emma@northcountryil.org) or by phone at 715-969-6749 Voice/Text/711 Relay.

### **Job Search Websites**

[www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com](http://www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com)

[www.Indeed.com](http://www.Indeed.com)

[www.Ziprecruiter.com](http://www.Ziprecruiter.com)

[www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)

North Country coordinates a network of individuals known as **DARING** (**D**isability **A**dvocacy **R**esources and **I**nclusion **G**roups) their focus is to receive and share information on disability topics such as: new technology, requests for assistance, training, legislative updates, action alerts and more!

If you would like to join DARING please contact: [daring@northcountryil.org](mailto:daring@northcountryil.org)



**Sempre Bluetooth Cell Phone Amplifier**

Today, we highlight the Clarity Sempre Mini Bluetooth Cell Phone Amplifier with Headphones. Hear your mobile phone calls loud and clear! The small and portable Sempre Mini amplifies your personal conversations.

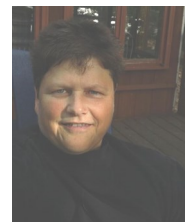


This personal amplification system works with Bluetooth enabled mobile phones (iOS and Android) so you can enjoy extra loud calls up to 116dB SPL. They have built-in clarity power with high-frequency emphasis and a built-in microphone.

The device includes extra-loud headphones or optional binaural earbuds, 3.5mm jack, missed call notification, and a rechargeable battery, built-in shirt clip, and lanyard with quick-release safety mechanism. You are able to recharge in 2 hours for up to 7 hours of talk time.

If you are interested in more information about the Clarity Sempre Mini Bluetooth Cell Phone Amplifier or the Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program (TEPP, please contact the independent living specialist, listed below, who serves your geographic area.

**Ashland, Bayfield, & Iron Counties**  
**Martha Oie**, Independent Living Specialist  
Call/text: 218.393.7319  
Email: [martha@northcountryil.org](mailto:martha@northcountryil.org)



**Burnett & Washburn Counties**  
**Don Posh**, Independent Living Specialist  
Call/text: 715.919.4932  
Email: [don@northcountryil.org](mailto:don@northcountryil.org)



**Douglas County**  
**Angie Musolf**, Independent Living Specialist  
Call/text: 715.919.4451  
Email: [angiem@northcountryil.org](mailto:angiem@northcountryil.org)



**Price & Sawyer Counties**  
**Ann Belisle**, Independent Living Specialist  
Call/text: 715.817.2350  
Email: [ann@northcountryil.org](mailto:ann@northcountryil.org)



**Donation for North Country Independent Living**

North Country welcomes your support in fulfilling its mission of empowering people with disabilities. Your contribution is tax deductible. North Country Independent Living is a non-profit agency with 501(c)3 status.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail to:  
North Country Independent Living  
2911 Tower Ave., Suite 9  
Superior, WI 54880  
ATTN: Accountant

**AMAZON SMILE**

When you shop at AmazonSmile, they will donate 0.5% of your Eligible purchases to North Country! AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support North Country every time you shop, at no cost to you.

AmazonSmile is available at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app.



**WISLOAN**

WisLoan is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows a Wisconsin resident with a disability to finance assistive technology such as hearing aids, modified vehicles, wheelchairs, ramps, computers with modifications, environmental controls, alternative communication devices, and home accessibility modifications so that they can live more independently.

**TELEWORK**

Telework is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows a Wisconsin resident with a disability to finance the equipment needed to become self-employed or to work from home.

# NORTH COUNTRY NEWS

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800.924.1220 (7-1-1 Relay)**

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**Chrissy Barnard**  
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Coordinator & Certified Peer Specialist  
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**LeAnn House**  
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leann@northcountryil.org  
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**Michael Kelly**  
Certified Peer Specialist  
mike@northcountryil.org  
Cell: 715.969.4955

**Jordan Chowning**  
Skills Trainer  
jordan@northcountryil.org  
Cell: 715.969.7316

## Personal Care Program

**Direct Line: 715-392-2533**

**Jodi Zukowski** Ext. 121  
Personal Care Program Specialist  
jodi@northcountryil.org

**Angie Zylka** Ext. 122  
Personal Care Program Specialist  
angie@northcountryil.org

**Ann Martineau** Ext. 123  
Personal Care Program Scheduler  
anm@northcountryil.org

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