

DISABLED CITIZENS ALLIANCE FOR INDEPENDENCE

SUMMER / FALL-2021

Serving Crawford, Dent, Iron, Reynolds and Washington Counties



REFLECTING ON YESTERDAY

I have had the pleasure of living 65 years and am expecting to live many more. This is a subject that has come to mind many times over the last few years. My philosophy has always been to look forward and try to make the future better than the past. I have come to realize that there are a lot of experiences that we can all learn from when reflecting on yesterday. I hope that you enjoy this article. Learning from our past is one thing, but we can't get bogged down that we lose focus on making tomorrow better.

Sometimes I find myself just taking a few minutes to remember a few of the positive things that I experienced in my life. In my younger years, I have so many enjoyable experiences of growing up in Northwest Missouri in the community of Rosendale. I was surrounded with an amazing family and friends. None of us were rich when it came to money, but we were certainly blessed with living in a joyous time. It was our weekly schedule to go to my grandparents along with all my uncles, aunts, and cousins. This was such a happy time.

Both of my grandparents owned and lived on farms. This experience is exactly why I wanted to own my own. I wanted to give young children the opportunity to experience being around animals and many of the things that I did when growing up. In my mind, I can still see my family's faces, see their smiles, and hear the sounds of joy and laughter. When I reflect on these times, I immediately start to smile and get a warm feeling inside. Let your mind drift back to a happy experience in your childhood. Doesn't it make you feel good?

So many of us focus only on our daily drama and sorrows that we can't see the positive in our lives. I hate the fact that we can't see the good that is still occurring daily. We have all heard about all the negative things that are happening. I am tired of hearing the national news on television. Isn't it a shame that we consume so much of our time each day listening to this.

As a kid, I remember hearing from the old timers about their life experiences. They would come into my father's hardware and feed store for a cup of coffee. They would start talking about their lives and the joys of the past. I would sit down and listen to their stories. I would let my mind picture the things that they were sharing. They would all get excited about me wanting to listen. I remember a few of them that would love to tell me that they walked 5 miles to school, as a child, uphill both ways. That would always make me laugh! They would end their story saying that they wished that our world wouldn't have changed and were always concerned about the future. This is the same comments we still hear today.

Even today, I look back on how I might have handled something in the past that comes up again at work or in my personal life. I try to remember what worked well and what didn't work. By drawing on our past experience, we can determine what, if any, adjustments should be made. We can't just assume that the same decisions will work perfectly without giving it some thought. I am very thankful for what I have learned from the past. I must admit that I haven't always made the right decisions. For these reasons, we must continue a path of learning for life.

We have all been around someone that hangs on their past success. They don't want anyone to forget what they have done. In my life, I have always tried to just move on to my next goal. I believe that we can celebrate the accomplishment but must move ahead. It is okay to just sit down and think about what you have done. I believe that there is some merit to feeling good about what you have accomplished. Planning what you want to do next should be your focus after taking the time to reflect.

In the normal aging process, we will experience the loss of our parents, grandparents, family members, and friends. These experiences can bring sorrow and grief even after many months and years. Remembering the good times and the lessons they taught us can bring us joy and happiness. I have so many good memories to reflect on. My family and friends will always be remembered and these memories will carry me for the rest of my life.

I am now finding myself doing some of the same things that my grandparents did. I enjoy sitting, in the evenings or weekends, outside drinking a cup of coffee and listening to the ball game. I remember sitting out with my grandpa and grandma on the porch or under the shade tree talking. In my mind, I think about them living on the farm and my experience of doing so now. Our experiences have many areas that are similar even though it is 50 years later. I love that my life has become peaceful and rewarding like theirs.

I am hopeful that you can someday reflect on your life and find joy like I have.

I have been blessed to have had such an amazing family, friends, coworkers, employees, and jobs that have been rewarding and challenging. I am living my dream in having my own farm with cattle filling the pastures. The Lord will, hopefully, find me sitting in my chair having a cup of coffee when he calls me home. To me, there is nothing better than hearing the birds, feeling the fresh air the warmth of the sun, and the gentle breeze while living in the country.

I am glad that I have a yesterday to reflect on. Looking into the past gives me joy and happiness that tomorrow can be better. You know it is all up to us where we go and what we do in the future. Please don't waste a day!

I hope you too find the joy of living like I have. I wish to thank all of you for giving me so many amazing memories. Many of you probably are hoping that I forgot some things. I haven't!

Don't worry it makes me smile. Just remember yesterday but make today something you will never forget.

Dr. Dennis W. Atkins
June 2021



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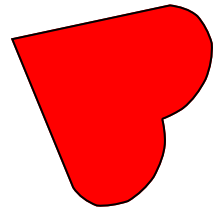
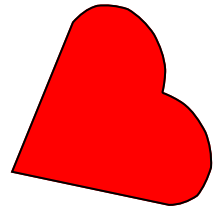
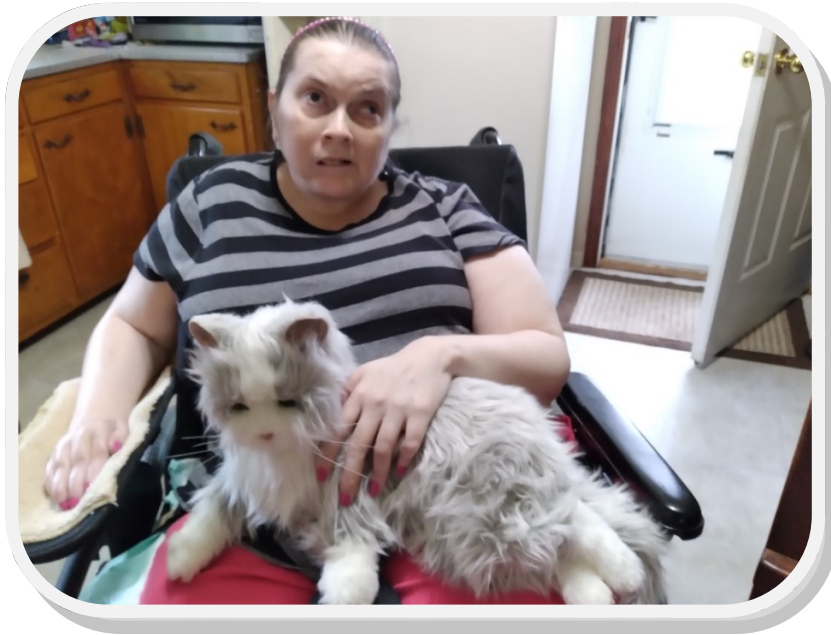
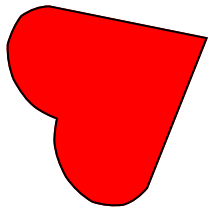
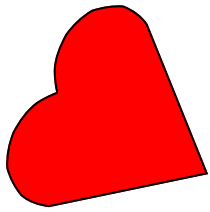
****Paying \$13.00 per hour PLUS weekend and Holiday differentials!**

DCAI Foundation is accepting applications for Part-Time In-Home & Individualized Support Services (ISS) Aides in Washington, Dent, Reynolds, Iron, Crawford and St. Francois counties.

*ISS Care Aide's must have a High School Diploma or GED.

**Must be at least 18 years of age, valid driver's license, vehicle insurance and vehicle required.

Applicants may call for an application, visit our office, download the application on our website @ www.dcai.us Or apply on our Facebook page.



WHY BE LONELY

Robotic pets are making good companions to several of our consumers who have adopted them.

Talk to your case manager for more information .

"The secret of genius is to carry the spirit of the child into old age."

.....Aldous Huxley

Hi, My name is Norma Jean Lee. I am 46 years old. I was in a car accident in 1994. It left me with some brain damage and some other disabilities.

I am the youngest of 5 girls, and yes I am spoiled, very spoiled, and I am the princess of my parents' palace! Ha!

I was given a "Joy for All" Kitty Cat from DCAI. Her name is "Bren". I Love her very much and she loves me too very much. We sit and talk every day.

I want to thank DCAI for giving me the opportunity to adopt Bren.

We enjoy each others company. She is my new best friend.

Thank you so much DCAI!

Sincerely,
Norma

A COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE

Well, COVID is still here just a new strand. It has been a very challenging time this last 1 ½ years. The disease changed the way most of us have been able to live our lives. In some ways, it has caused us to take a serious look at what is truly important. For me, it has been just getting back to focusing on what really matters. I am praying that you, your family, and friends are all well. This is definitely a challenging time, but this too shall pass.

The number of cases is starting to increase in our rural communities. We don't have the large numbers like in the larger cities in Missouri. Unfortunately, we are seeing individuals having to take more precautions to avoid getting this disease. DCAI has resumed our normal operations and services but are encouraging all employees to exercise safety measures.

Here is an update on what has been happening in my life. I am still working for DCAI and plan to continue doing so for 5 or 6 more years. I strongly believe that working is good therapy and helps keep your mind functioning properly. I turned 66 on August 4. Where has the time gone? I remember when I was young, the older men that came into my father's hardware and feed store would always say don't take your life for granted. It will come and go in a blink of an eye. Most of us would say that this is an accurate statement. That is why each of us need to use our time making a difference and helping others. Please don't waste your life on things that don't really matter. We all spend too much time worrying about things which we have no control of. I feel great and enjoy being with the individuals that I work with. So why not continue to work until 71 or 72!

Rita continues to do well. She made a huge transition with the death of our mother. Rita had lived 60 years with mom. She now lives in an apartment I built out on the farm. I have loved watching westerns my whole life so we call her apartment the Bunk House. I have had no luck in converting her into a cow girl. I ask her daily if she wants to go with me to feed the cows and she just laughs. That is okay so long as she is happy. Living on a farm is a relaxing and peaceful type of life. I know I love it!

Getting the opportunity to live in the country on a farm is a dream come true. Our farm is located on a highway that winds through the eastern part of the Ozarks. We can hear cars and trucks that pass our home but nothing like the heavy city traffic. We have plenty of time to just stop and listen to the birds sing, wild life running through the pasture and woods, the cows munching on the grass, and time to just enjoy the peace and quiet. Just taking a few moments each day to stop and listen while breathing the fresh air helps me put everything into perspective. I have had an amazing life! I am thankful for my family, friends, the jobs I have had and have, and the opportunity to live my life as I wish. There is nothing more important than having the freedom of choice. If you aren't doing what you love, then put together a plan so you can pursue your dreams.

July 15, it has been 43 years since I started keeping track of the miles that I have run. It

doesn't seem like it has been that long. I started running with a good friend, Gary Comstock from Topeka, Kansas, in April 1978 and started keeping track of my miles July 15. I am not really sure why I started logging my miles. I guess just for fun. As of today, I have run 108,820 miles. I should break 109,000 September 1 and 110,000 by Christmas. I plan to run as long as the Good Lord is willing. I haven't set any long range goals, just taking it one day at a time.

I believe my running and exercise routines have helped me maintain strength and my positive attitude. My running for 43 years has not made me a good runner. I have never been very fast and now I just jog slowly. I never won a race or set any records, just ran daily year after year. I have had the great pleasure of raising money for children and adults in need. My thought always just wanted to help motivate others to never give up.

I always wanted to be voted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame. I understand now that it isn't enough just to run thousands of miles. The sports person must have done something exceptional to have received this honor. I know that being voted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame would be amazing, but that isn't why I ran for 43 years. Most of my life, I have set very lofty goals. I am very proud of the fact that I attained most of them. I am focusing on making a difference and helping others to find happiness and joy like I have.

This year we have been adding more things to help with our farming operation. We purchased a 2007 Case International 55 horse power tractor to help with haying our cows and mowing the pastures. Of course, I then needed to buy the bush hog mower, the hay spike, a box blade, and a front loader came with the tractor. I can hear some of you say, now that sounds like a man! I needed all the toys just like all the other farmers. Truthfully, the tractor and all the equipment have been a huge help in helping maintain our farm.

We built a 52 x 34 building to store 180 large bales of hay to feed in the winter. I purchased my first heifers on May 10, 2016 and continue to build my herd. I love that I have gotten to experience raising cattle in my life. Many of you might remember that this was a dream that my father and I had. I am living this life for the two of us. Thank you, God!

The Good Lord has blessed us with rain just at the right times this year. I am so thankful for this since my cows need good pasture. I currently have 96.74 acres with about 91 acres of grass. The other 5 to 6 acres are trees and ditches. The past winter and spring, we spent hours and hours of picking up rocks and tree limbs/sticks. If you remember, we cleared 80 acres of trees, brush, weeds, and tree stumps to make pasture. All our hard work paid off in that we have excellent pasture for the cows. Everyone tells me how beautiful the rolling hills of pasture are. I may not be able to physically see this, but I see in my mind, heart, and spirit. I agree it is beautiful!

The number of our farm animals continues to increase. The farm cats are now up to 11. Someone continues to drop kittens off at our driveway. I wish they would be brave enough to

let me know who they are. I would love to repay the favor. If anyone would like to have a cat, we have 5 or 6 that are available. I am sure that the Dollar Store doesn't mind all the purchases of cat food and litter. The good thing is that around the house we are free of mice and snakes. There has to be some benefit!

Currently we have 24 cows and heifers, 1 bull, and 19 calves. We have cows at each farm to eat the grass. There are 19 cows, 1 bull, and 19 calves down at the 84 acre farm. They are all doing well. We rotate them from pasture to pasture each week. This farm is sectioned into four fenced pastures with a pond in each. The cows are always ready to change pastures and go into one that has fresh grass. They will stay at that farm until winter or the grass runs out. I will keep all the cows and calves up at the house to feed hay during winter.

We have 5 cows at the house that will have calves late this summer or early fall. We gave the 12 acres at the house a 2 month break to let the grass grow. Last week, we brought 5 cows home from the other farm. We want them to eat the grass down and we can watch them more closely when they have their calves. Three of them are SimAngus heifers that I bought at the Show Me Select Heifer Sale in Farmington on May 14. We like to have first calf heifers in a smaller pasture since this will be their first calf. By the end of October, we should have 24 calves which will bring our total number of cattle to 49. I love this life!

This is the first year that we have been able to have cows at both farms. It took 21 months to clear the land, plant the seed, fertilize and add lime, build fences, and have three ponds dug. Farming is like every other business, it takes a lot of hard work, time, and money to get it going good. I purchased my first 5 acres and built my home 7 ½ years ago. I heard a man say that it takes 7 years to get a farm going well. I agree with this since I have found this to be true.

This next year, my plan is to increase my cattle herd to 26 cows, 1 bull, and each cow have a calf. I will need to decrease my herd this fall, but only for a few months. I will need to sell 2 or 3 cows this fall to help cover all the expense of building a hay shed, pay on my tractor loan, purchase hay, pay my insurance premium, and taxes. I will be able to keep 3 or 4 heifers this year since they are not related to my bull.

I am also looking at purchasing 2 more SimAngus bred heifers in April to keep increasing the blood lines of my stock. After increasing to a 26 cow herd, we will have to focus on just maintaining that number to make sure we are not overstocking our acreage.

I hope that you have enjoyed catching up on my life and the news. We are doing well. Please take some time to enjoy your life and the time you have to spend with your family and friends. Continue to pursue your dreams and life's passion. I love my life and want the same for each of you.

This is just my country perspective on how I live my life. I hope you get to live your dreams like I have. My dreams have come true and are amazing!

Dr. Dennis W. Atkins
August 2021.

A HEROIC DAY

I have a story to tell you about my aid. She literally saved my life. If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be sitting here right now! About 3 months ago, in the middle of the night, I had a heart attack. I was alone. I was on the floor, I was turning blue. She immediately put my oxygen on me and did CPR. Then she called an ambulance. The ambulance said if she would not have done what she had done by putting my oxygen on and giving me CPR I wouldn't be here right now. I thank God for Patricia Diane Cox. I'm definitely never letting her go! |

Above is Stacy's message she texted to her DCAI Case Manager-Christy Chandler about Patricia's gallant efforts to save her life.

A bonding experience neither one will ever forget!

**Happy once again, as they
should be!**

***Consumer-Stacy Proffer and her
attendant-Patricia Cox***



DCAI PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

HOSTED BY: DISABLED CITIZENS ALLIANCE FOR INDEPENDENCE (DCAI)

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

**WE INVISION AN INCLUSIVE ENVIROMENT THAT VALUES INDEPENDENCE AND
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PERSONS OF ALL ABILITIES.**

Come join us and make friendships and bonds that will last a lifetime. DCAI Peer Support Group offers encouragement to see us through some of the most difficult times in our lives. Come be a friend and make a friend. We share our thoughts, feelings, challenges and successes with one another to build and up-lift a network of friends. Our group is safe and confidential to share your thoughts and feelings.

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED.

**For more information contact Debbie Pryor 1-888-450-5288 or
573-244-3455 Ext.118**

DCAI Peer Support Monthly Group Meetings:

Viburnum—1st Wednesday at 1:00 pm

Potosi Library—2nd Wednesday at 12:30 pm

Salem Senior Center—3rd Wednesday at 2:00 pm

Steelville Telephone Co. meeting room—

4th Wednesday at 12:00 pm

Meetings last no longer than 2 hours.

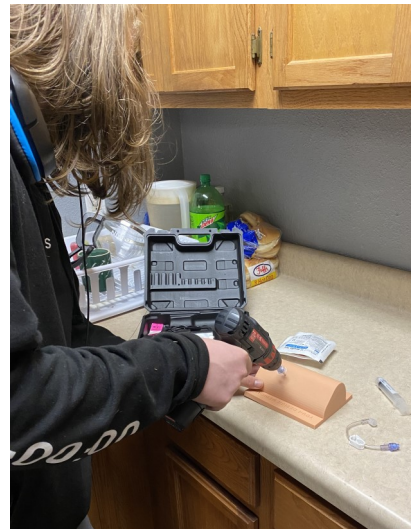
“There is no greater
disability in society
than the inability to
see a person as
more.”

....Robert M. Hensel



ONE STUDENT WAS ALL WE NEEDED!

Covid had put a damper on having our Pre-Et's Transition Camp in June of last year, but this year in 2021 we only had one student! Jordan Hildebrand was able to visit us every day of transition week. One student was fine - we didn't let that stop us from giving him the best experience possible!



On the left is Jordan learning how to intubate a person so they can breathe. On the right is Jordan learning how to give a vaccine.

Jordan was able to experience some hands on job shadowing at the EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) shed here in Viburnum.

He saw and helped prepare meals, worked on budgeting skills as well as learned how to prepare for an interview.

Jordan shopped for clothes to get a professional look for his interview, and even experienced questions through a mock interview given by our Human Resources Director at DCAI.

Jordan pictured at left wearing the clothes he budgeted for and purchased for his interview.



What is Pre-ETS???

Pre-Employment Pre-ETS is designed to prepare youth for the future by using skills such as Career Exploration, Cooking, Job Shadowing, Self-Advocacy, Work Place Readiness and Time Management.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), in collaboration with local education agencies, arrange for the provision of Pre-ETS for students with disabilities. During the week the student had multiple opportunities to experience things such as; shopping for interview attire, experience job shadowing around Viburnum, budgeting and shopping to create a meal, voluntary clean up and restoration of Dillard Mill, and preparing for their futures. That week sure was busy, but at DCAI we wouldn't have it any other way. We are excited to see what next year brings!

If you have a student that will be 16 years old by June 13, 2022 and you would like to know more about DCAI Pre-Employment Transition Services, please contact Ashley Hampton for more information at 573-244-3038 ext. 244.



Jordan also joined DCAI staff to paint a few picnic tables at Dillard Mill State Park.



There is No telling what the future will bring for Jordan, but we're wishing him all the very best to find the passion to do what he believes best.

DCAI PRESENTS

June

13-17

Pre-
Employment
TRANSITION
Services

Free

Transportation

2022

JOB EXPLORATION | WORKPLACE REDINESS | SELF ADVOCACY
GAMES | COOKING | OUTDOORS | PRIZES

FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO REGISTER : 573-244-3038

Ages: 16-21 and returning back to school in fall of 2022