



A quarterly publication of Sertoma Centre

NETWORK

Volume 20, Issue 3/Winter 2013/Supporting Individuals with Disabilities

BIG EVENT APRIL 27, 2013

WANTED: FIREHOUSE CHEFS AND SPONSORS

Firefighters and sponsors are the key ingredients required to make a successful BIG Event, Sertoma's largest annual fundraising event held at 115 Bourbon Street in Merrionette Park, IL. A BIG Event without them would be like having the 4th of July without fireworks or Mom's apple pie without the apples. We just can't do it without them.

Firefighters, we need your delicious ribs, sensational chicken, ethnic dish or firehouse chili. If you are a firefighter or know someone who is a firefighter, then consider competing in the hottest firehouse cook-off on the south side. Trophies and prizes are awarded for each category: chicken, ribs, chili, and ethnic dishes. Chefs are required to prepare sample size portions for 500 people and are reimbursed up to \$500 for food expenses.



2012 Firefighter Cook-off Winners

Become a BIG Event sponsor and promote your business or services while showing your support of Sertoma Centre and the individuals with disabilities we serve. For more information about the benefits of sponsorship such as free publicity, ads, program book and event signage, please visit our website: www.sertomacentre.org or contact the Advancement Department at Sertoma Centre at 708-371-9700.

Dominick Strazzante Achieves 20 Year Goal!



Everyone who has visited Sertoma's facility on 127th Street probably knows Dominick Strazzante. He has worked as a Janitorial Crew Member for 13 years and is considered to be an asset to his department.

In addition to his daily work here at Sertoma, Dominick has worked toward his lifelong goal to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. "This is the highest award there is," stated Dominick. He is a member of Chicago Ridge Boy Scout Troop 665 and earned his Eagle Scout badge by leading a project to collect food for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry.

Dominick joined the Boy Scouts when he was eight years old and has worked on receiving his patches and this award for more than 20 years. He was presented with a plaque at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony held at Our Lady of the Ridge Church in Chicago Ridge, IL.

We are extremely proud of Dominick and this amazing accomplishment. *Congratulations!*

 Sertoma
Centre, Inc.



Gus van den Brink, Executive Director



ADVOCATE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

I hope you had a blessed holiday season as well as a great start in the New Year. Personally I have been enjoying the mild and snowless winter we have had so far, and hoping we don't have to pay for it with a snowy February and March. For the start of the New Year here at Sertoma Centre, we have been working hard to accomplish our mission and manage effectively in an environment of change, limited resources, and a cash poor state.

The positive part of the New Year has been serving people and seeing the satisfaction and joy in the eyes of individuals when they get a job, participate in an activity, or accomplish a goal they have been working on. It is also exciting when we hear of a family that has secured funding for services, especially those that have been waiting for residential services. It is unfortunate that the only way you receive services in Illinois is if you are in crisis or are lucky enough to get pulled from a list of 20,000 people waiting for services, as if it is a lottery ticket. I know Illinois is broke, but people with disabilities should not

be victims of the bad decisions of current and past politicians and public officials.

With the current financial problems in Illinois and the lack of a powerful champion for people with disabilities in the public arena, we all need to focus on grass roots advocacy for services. This means you and I have to do more and be the squeaky wheel to our legislators and public officials.

March is Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Month. It is a time to take action and advocate for people with disabilities including the need to fully fund adequate services in our state. Please take the time before March 1, 2013 to learn of the current needs and issues; and in March, do something specific and tangible to make a difference. I personally would like every family member, guardian, and close friend of a person with a disability to meet with their state representative and senator about the issues and

need for adequately funded community-based services. Public leaders respond best to people they know and who are passionate and active in supporting the things that are important to them.

So I challenge you to learn something new and do one activity or one more activity this spring to advocate for



DON'T CUT OUR LIFELINE

people with disabilities. March is the perfect month to do it. For information and resources, you can google the topic on the Web, contact me at 708-730-6216 or contact Amy Chmura at 708 730-6206. There is great power in numbers. We need to all get involved and be active to make a real difference for people with disabilities.

Board of Directors

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FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL OR WRITE:

Sertoma Centre, Inc.
4343 West 123rd St. Alsip, IL 60803

Phone (708) 371-9700 • Fax (708) 371-9747

info@sertomacentre.org
www.sertomacentre.org



South/Southwest Suburban

Sertoma Centre, Inc.'s Mission Statement

At Sertoma Centre, Inc., our mission is to provide opportunities that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve personal success.

CARF Accredited
501 (c) (3) Organization

Sertoma Centre, Inc. Code of Ethics Policy

Sertoma Centre has the obligation to act in ways that will merit the trust, confidence, and respect of individuals, their families, and the community.

To this end, we have a Code of Ethics.

Our commitment is to ensure any allegation of violation of this Code by individuals, family members, guardians, staff, and members of the community are investigated and addressed.

For a complete copy of the Code and the complaint process, please visit the Sertoma Centre web site: www.sertomacentre.org.

MAKE A RESOLUTION YOU'LL WANT TO KEEP THIS YEAR

2013 holds much promise as we all begin a New Year filled with hopes, dreams and of course New Year's Resolutions that we barely keep until February. But have no fear of resolutions gone unfulfilled this year. I have a suggestion that will help you keep your promises. Why don't you consider volunteering for Sertoma Centre? We have so many fun and exciting opportunities for volunteers throughout the year; the list is endless. You don't even have to rush it- you can make a resolution to volunteer next December at the 2nd Annual Holiday Bazaar (December 6, 2013). Or if you would like to volunteer a little sooner, we have other special events happening such as the Silent Partner Dinner in February, the Housewares Show in March, the BIG Event and Fireman Cook-Off in April, the Ladies High Tea in May or June - and that is just the first half of the year.

We also have plenty of opportunities volunteering with our consumers whether it is in day programs at the agency or at one of our residential homes. Ideas



Volunteers, George and Adriene helped wrap consumer holiday gifts.

we have talked about are game nights, photography contests, art contests, classes such as gardening, arts and crafts, academics, interviewing skills for a job, cooking classes, or time and money management classes. You name it, we can find a volunteer spot for it. We also have volunteer positions such as

lunch and break monitors, parking lot attendants, filing and paperwork needs, data entry, marketing strategies and slots on various planning committees. We are always looking for new and creative ways to empower our consumers to achieve personal success and volunteers are a huge part of this effort. In the New Year, make a resolution you want to keep and volunteer this year with Sertoma Centre.



Holiday Bazaar volunteers made this event a huge success.

I hope to hear from you in 2013!!

In the spirit of service and giving to others, I would like to leave you with a quote from a famous man born in the month of January. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. dedicated his life to serving others while spearheading community action against injustice. A way to honor his legacy is to serve others which empowers individuals, strengthens communities and builds bridges that move us closer to Dr. King's vision of a "Beloved Community." We at Sertoma Centre are proud to provide opportunities that empower others through volunteerism and service. Here's to hearts filled with grace, souls generated by love and to another great year at Sertoma!



"Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities at Sertoma, please contact Laura Gardner, Volunteer Services Manager, at (708) 730-6211 or lgardner@sertomacentre.org

Article contributed by Laura Gardner.

GOOD AS NEW THRIFT STORE WILL BE CLOSING

Sertoma Centre, Inc. has operated its Good as New Thrift Store and Training Centre in Matteson for several years. Although there have been recent initiatives to increase sales and decrease expenses, the store, from a business perspective, had not met certain goals and objectives. After a careful analysis of the long-term sustainability of Good as New, a decision was made that the store should close allowing Sertoma Centre to refocus its resources on additional programs and services to best meet the needs of the individuals we serve. We are grateful to the staff who worked so hard to promote and operate the store, and for the donors and supporters who helped us in this endeavor.

The store officially closed to the public on February 1. Sertoma Centre staff is evaluating future uses for the space to accommodate the demand for services within our programs currently experiencing growth.

Sertoma Centre will also continue to be a preferred charity for the International Housewares Show at McCormick Place in Chicago. New houseware items will be sold through a Super Sale similar to events held prior to the opening of the store.

Watch for upcoming announcements about a date and location for the sale.

The Holiday Bazaar A Huge Success

by Laura Gardner, Volunteer Services Manager

If you were not able to attend the Holiday Bazaar held on December 7, there is always next year, but you missed out on a great time. Attendees were treated to a wonderful day of shopping, browsing, eating, laughter and good cheer as everyone hunted for that perfect holiday gift. The North Pole Café served hot dog and hamburger meals while holiday music played in the background. You could even enjoy coffee, hot cocoa and a baked treat from Mrs. Claus' Bake Shop. All the elves in the gift wrap station were tucked out from wrapping gifts purchased at the bazaar.

Many consumers, family and friends joined the fun and frivolity the first week of December to help ring in the holiday cheer. Above everything else, as I looked upon the winter wonderland before me, I was struck by the camaraderie and generous spirit of Sertoma Centre. There were so many staff, consumers and volunteers all working together to ensure everyone had a wonderful time.

Seeing our consumers interacting with one another as they shopped for gifts for loved ones touched me deeply as I realized this is what it is all about: the Human Spirit.

I realized that I am so lucky to work at a place that helps

people foster their spirit as they strive for their own personal successes every day. Sure some people may say, "It was only a bazaar, a place to shop like every other day." But that's the catch: some of our individuals don't have the same opportunities that we do to do everyday things such as shop in a marketplace and buy a gift for someone they

love. That was the sole driving force behind the Holiday Bazaar-giving everyone the chance to spread their own holiday magic for the people they care about.



Buying gifts for friends and loved ones bring joy to our consumers.

So if you didn't get a chance to stop by this year, mark your calendar for

December 6, 2013 as the bazaar promises

to be bigger and better next year. On behalf of Sertoma Centre and Volunteer Services, we hope you had a wonderful holiday season and wish you good luck for a fabulous New Year!

Consumer Holiday Party & Awards Event

Sertoma consumers know how to have a good time. They enjoy good food, great music, and a nice awards presentation. However, if you throw in a photo booth and a Michael Jackson impersonator, then you really have a **Party**. The more than 300 guests who attended this event had an awesome time at the Lexington House in Hickory Hills on Dec. 2.



Over 300 people attended.



Rico, the Michael Jackson impersonator, got the crowd on their feet.

The consumers, their families and many of the Sertoma staff joined together to celebrate the holidays and the consumers' achievements. Each year at the luncheon, service awards are presented to consumers who have been

with Sertoma Centre for a significant number of years. Those with 5 years receive a certificate. Individuals with 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of service are presented with engraved plaques by Gus van den Brink, Executive Director of Sertoma Centre, Inc.



Frank Sheridan, Marijane Sheridan and Gus van den Brink

Special thanks to the staff committee who plan this event each year. They work hard to ensure that everyone has a wonderful time.

Programs With Purpose - Developmental Training

Contributed by Dina Raya, Director of Consumer Services.

Developmental Training provides a vast array of options to individuals with disabilities. One option is a full work component. Consumers are trained on a variety of equipment and complete contracts from various vendors, respecting both deadlines and quality control issues. Another option is a full curriculum based program, where consumers engage in a variety of activities aimed at increasing community integration, skills building and adaptive living skills. This is what most people expect from a workshop setting.



Consumers lead their own classes in computers, increasing educational abilities.



Consumers are trained on a variety of equipment and complete contracts from various vendors, respecting both deadlines and quality control issues.

But Sertoma's Developmental Training Program provides so much more than that! Currently, self-advocacy and person centered planning education has increased consumer awareness and choice in programming. Consumers are running their own classes in reading, math, computer literacy and crochet. A variety of classes are consistently offered year-round focusing on increasing educational abilities (such as math,

check writing, literacy), reinforcing interpersonal skills (circles, healthy relationships, self-esteem, anger management and warning signs group, to aid in starting the day off right). The Day Program has a consistent rotation of volunteers which aid in successful implementation of classes and tutoring. Several programs, especially Autism Services, have created year-round fundraising activities, which help offset costs of programming and field trips.

This past year a garden was built at our facility on 123rd Street and is maintained by consumers throughout the summer. In just the first year, many vegetables and herbs were harvested, used for cooking classes and even some items were made and sold at the Holiday Bazaar.

In keeping with technology needs, the Autism Services Program has recently secured funding to aid in the purchase of i-Pads®. Adaptive equipment has been purchased for the computer lab at our facility at 127th Street, which will increase communication and technology abilities for individuals with disabilities.

Staff in the Developmental Training Programs continue to problem solve and seek out new ways to involve consumers in a variety of engaging and appropriate activities.

For more information regarding this program, please contact Lynn King, Consumer Support Services Coordinator, at 708-730-6352 or lking@sertomacentre.org. Additional resources are available at www.sertomacentre.org.



Dancing class is great exercise and builds self-esteem.

Programs With Purpose

The intention of this new feature of **Network News** is to help our readers and supporters gain a better understanding of the various programs offered by Sertoma Centre and how these programs help to provide opportunities that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve personal success.

Stroke of Genius

Consumers that enjoy expressing themselves through their creative abilities.

Introducing Beatrice Vega, artist and the featured consumer in this issue of the **Network Newsletter**.

Beatrice participates in the Developmental Training Program at Sertoma's 127th Street facility. Her job is packing Wilton cake decorating products in Work Area 14. This area of the production floor is slightly set apart and offers a little quieter work environment.

Mornings are dedicated to work time and the afternoons are spent in the classroom where Beatrice and other consumers participate in various activities designed to increase community integration and build skills. They include puzzles, arts & crafts, math and the "Learners Box" program activities.

Miss Vega likes to express her creative self by drawing with brightly colored markers on large pieces of poster boards. She has been drawing since she was a young girl and never needed anyone's help creating her art. Beatrice likes to draw pictures of the people she knows and often gives her artwork to people as gifts.

In addition to drawing, she likes to shop, spend time with her family, go to the mall and read Barbie® books. When she was asked what she thinks about Sertoma Centre, Beatrice said, "I like coming here, it makes me happy," and her artwork expresses that!



Cocktails & Dinner "Cruise" Event

We will host our annual Silent Partner Dinner on the evening of Friday, February 8, 2013 at the Sertoma Centre's Martha Polacek Facility, 4100 W. 127th Street in Alsip, IL.

Members should have received their boarding passes in the mail. If you didn't, please contact Regina Robinson, Special Events & Grants Manager, at 708-730-6210 or e-mail: rrobinson@sertomacentre.org.

Sertoma consumers contribute greatly to this special event by greeting our guests, checking coats, and helping serve appetizers, dinner, and dessert.

The purpose of the dinner is to show our appreciation for the generous support provided by our Silent Partner members. Silent Partners make an annual gift of \$500 or more.

Silent Partners support the work of Sertoma Centre on a personal, quiet, and committed level. For more information about becoming a Silent Partner, please call Amy Chmura, Director of Advancement & Communications, at 708-730-6206 or e-mail achmura@sertomacentre.org.



Sertoma Centre, Inc.

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Contact Ike Riley, Janitorial Services Manager,
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Sertoma's Janitorial Service crews maintain the highest levels of cleanliness and sanitation through a continuous follow-up program. Our Janitorial Services provide top quality general cleaning and specialty services to businesses and homes of any size. Sertoma's Janitorial Service is a registered State of Illinois Vendor, MAFBE Certified, NISH Associated, CARF Accredited.

Do You Want To Rock And Roll With Us At McCormick Place?

*Hop On The Tour Bus
And Help Us Rock
The Housewares Show
2013 Style*



The Rock And Roll Itinerary:

When: Tuesday, March 5th, 2013

Time: 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm

Where: **NEW THIS YEAR**

We are relocating and using our building on 127th to embark and disembark the buses this year.

Join the Groupies and board the Rock and Roll Bus at 4100 West 127th Street in Alsip — 127th & Pulaski - between Dunkin' Donuts and Whittingham's Meats.

This is a great opportunity to volunteer and give back to your community all in one night. Many, many "groupies" (volunteers) are needed to make this a success. Transportation will be provided via luxury coach bus with boxed lunches and beverages provided along with a ton of FUN and CAMARADERIE!



BAND MANAGERS (Booth Leaders): We need people to be in charge of several booths and the volunteers assigned to the booths. Organizational skills, flexibility and problem solving skills to ensure a smooth Concert are a must. Will maintain contact with our Communication Hub and move onto other booths as needed to pack up.



STAGE HANDS NEEDED: Volunteers will be assigned to booths to wrap, pack up, box and place housewares items on pallets. Please note that booths are located throughout all of McCormick Place making even the closest booths a far distance to walk from the buses to the showroom floors.



TOUR BUS LEADERS: Two individuals needed to ensure bus is loaded and ready to go to and from McCormick Place, making sure all supplies are on board, and announce information and instructions to bus riders on the way to Housewares Show.

We hope you can join us this year for a rockin' good time!!

Housewares Show registration form on page 10 of this newsletter.

Consumer Holiday

Awards Luncheon



Photos provided by "Take Your Best Shot" Photo Booth

Halloween 2012 - DT 123rd Street



Consumers and staff in Developmental Training are dressed for tricks & treats.

Annual Dinner 2012



Robert Mundy, Insite Employee of the Year, was honored at the 2012 Annual Dinner. His family was present and extremely proud of Robert's achievement.

Holiday Bazaar 2012



Shopping, eating, and celebrating was the plan for the day!

These ladies grabbed some girl time and a bite to eat at the North Pole Cafe.

Holiday Bazaar 2012



Consumers had an opportunity to shop for family and friends at the bazaar.

Thank You For Your Donations!



Generous donations provided warm coats and food baskets this holiday season.

***Want To Rock And Roll
All Nite???***
***Then Join Us At The
2013 Housewares Show
Appearing For One Night Only
Tuesday, March 5Th***



4 Ways to Register:

- 1.) Complete the form below and mail to: Laura Gardner
4343 W. 123rd Street
Alsip, IL 60803
- 2.) Email the same information below to: lgardner@sertomacentre.org
- 3.) Complete the form below and fax to: Laura Gardner at (708) 371-9747
- 4.) Call to register over the phone: Laura (708) 730-6211



Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Alternate phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ Yes, I Will Rock And Roll All Nite And Ride The Tour Bus Down To The Gig At McCormick Place

***Remember We Are Loading Buses At A New Location:

4100 W. 127th Street By 3:30 pm Sharp

_____ Yes, I Will Rock And Roll All Nite But I Will Have My Own Ride To The Show

Are You A Part Of A Group Or Would Like To Be Grouped with others attending? If yes, please list others so we can make sure you are grouped together:

We hope you can join us for a rockin' good time. If you have any questions or if you would like to register by phone or email, please contact Laura Gardner, Band Manager and Groupie Coordinator, at (708) 730-6211 or email at lgardner@sertomacentre.org.

****** Remember *** New This Year ***
We Are Loading The Buses And Getting Our Booth
Assignments At The 127th Street Sertoma
4100 W. 127th Street
For A Rockin' Good Time!!***

Silent Partner Members

Marilyn Aspan	Dennis Dureno	Shirley Mandernach	Robert Scott
Jean Biela	Gene Esposito	Ed McCormick	Don Sharko
Lane Brady	Gene Esposito, Jr.	Dr. Jeanine McMahon	Brian Sheaffer
Glenn Bylina	John Fanning	Egon Menker	Frank Sheridan
Barbara Campbell	Richard Finger	Dorothy Menker	Richard Sorley
Kathy Carlig	D.J. Fioretti	Fran Mildice	Robert Straz
Tony Casale	Steven Foertsch	Edward Mulcahy	Patrick Sullivan
John Cencig	Daniel Hack	Joe O'Connell	Frank Tomecek
Robert Clifford	James Hamann	Larry Owens	Janis (Jay) Tomecek
Sue Colella	Katherine Hamann	John Parker	Gus van den Brink
John Collie	Dan Harris	Dominic Porto	Joseph Varanauski, Sr.
John Cosich	Dr. George Harris	Dr. Laurel Quinn	Kathy Vennetti
Tory Cosich	David Hartley	Joe Racine	James Watters
Robert Cozza	Debbie Hunt	Donald Rizzis	Linda Welsh
Jerry Crotty	Larry Hunt	Patricia Rizzis	Rich Zarembo
Pat Danaher	Arthur Katzmann	Vince Sabia	1 Anonymous
Brian Denk	Edwin Krupa	Mary Ann Sain	
Scott Doerfler	Mary Jean Labriola	Dr. Chris Sarlas	
Tom Donnelly	Paul Lill	John Savaglio	
Mark Duncan	Jerry Lipinski	Lorraine Schultz	

Supporting the work of Sertoma Centre on a very personal, quiet and committed level. Members give an annual gift of \$500 or more to this program.

For more information, call Amy Chmura, Director of Advancement & Communications, at 708-730-6206.

Star Society Members

*Cheryl Assise
David & Kathy Carlig
Gene Cunningham
Beverly Harpold
Roger & Pat Harpold
David A. Hartley
Greg Hase
Cindy & Dave Isabel
Robert McKenna Estate*

*Dominic Porto
Peter & Alice Stratigos
Robert S. Straz
Edward & Donna Sumner
Frank Tomecek
Gus & Jayne van den Brink
Ruth Walsh Estate
Ernie Wulff*

Sertoma Centre Foundation

Star Society members name the Centre Foundation as a beneficiary in a life insurance policy, in a will, or in a bequest. For more information on the Star Society, contact Amy Chmura, Director of Advancement & Communications, at 708-730-6206.

Like us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn: Sertoma Centre, Inc.



www.sertomacentre.org



Please Mark Your Calendars With These Important Dates

Friday, February 8, 2013

Silent Partner Dinner
Sertoma Centre, Inc.
Martha Polacek Facility



Tuesday, March 5, 2013
Housewares Show - Fun Bus
McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

Saturday, April 27, 2013
BIG Event - 2013
115 Bourbon Street



SERTOMA EXPRESS

At Sertoma Centre, our mission is to provide opportunities that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve personal success.

<p>In This Issue:</p> <p>Job Candidate</p> <p>Holiday Party!</p> <p>Sertoma Holiday Bazaar</p> <p>Eric's Story</p> <p>Gratitude</p> <p>Job Candidate of the Month</p> <p>Insite Training Systems</p> <p><small>Insite Training Systems, is the community employment division of Sertoma Centre, Inc. Our goal is to support adults with disabilities to</small></p>	<p>Dear Suzan,</p> <p>We are pleased to announce the Sertoma electronic newsletter has a name! Congratulations to Beverly Hunziker, Janitorial Services Assistant, who submitted the winning name Sertoma Express for our electronic newsletter. We thank all the staff who submitted suggestions. We received 19 creative entries.</p> <p><i>At this time we thank you for your support and wish you peace and joy this holiday season!</i></p> <p>We would love to hear your comments. Click here to give us your feedback.</p>  
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Introducing Sertoma's monthly electronic newsletter. Sign up for the Sertoma Express today! Email address required.

Send your request to
ssimmons@sertomacentre.org

We would love to hear from you regarding the new look of the Network Newsletter, Email your comments to
info@sertomacentre.org or like us on Sertoma Centre, Inc. Facebook Page