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(L to R) Ann Poot, Ann Short (Director), and Bill Poot,

Bon Homie Adult Day Care Celebrates 30-Year Anniversary

By Ann Short

Caregivers are treasured gifts, whose value is priceless. As Bon Homie Adult Day Care celebrates its 30-year anniversary, we would like to recognize and celebrate our "caregivers." Over the years we have interacted and supported many caregivers and have seen firsthand the struggles that they face in caring for someone they love. Caregiving can occur abruptly in someone's life, or it can occur in stages as they watch their loved one decline over years. Many people never expect to become a caregiver and often are overwhelmed with the new role and responsibilities. Some caregivers reach out to us without any knowledge of services, supports and funding that are available for them to assist them in caring for their loved one. Caregiving along with other obligations such as their full-time job and taking care of their family can place additional stress and pressure on Caregivers and effect their quality of life. Bon Homie looks to support our client and caregiver through the services we offer and resources we can.

When we opened in 1992 our focus was on the aging population. Soon after we opened, we had families with adult children calling and inquiring about our services. We realized then that the services we offered would benefit caregivers taking care of their parents, spouses, siblings, and adult children with disabilities. Over the years, we have progressed from a small day care program with a diverse group of caregivers. Bon Homie has also been able to provide Caregivers with the opportunity to meet other people who are in similar positions of caregiving. Having the opportunity to interact with other caregivers has helped caregivers form friendships and gain much needed support when trying to navigate and cope with their new role.

As the owner and director of Bon Homie for 30 years, my biggest reward is when we gain our caregivers' trust. Trying to earn the trust begins on the first day when caregivers are dropping off their special needs child or parent for the first time. They are nervous and hesitant at first when leaving their loved one with us. We reassure them that we will take great care of their child, parent, or spouse. We remind them they can call at any time throughout the day to check on them and that we will reach out also. Because we are in one location and employ nurses, we can address concerns of individual health issues quickly. This allows us to reach out to caregivers, share our concerns and advocate for our clients. We can assist caregivers in recognizing illnesses and help them acquire the care they need to avoid a long-term illness or problem. Interacting with the caregivers on a consistent basis and being available to them in a support role has allowed us to form meaningful relationships with each of them which leads to better care for the individuals we serve.

There is something to say about being part of a families care circle. Caregiving is such a demanding and emotional role, and it forces those in these roles to lean on others to manage their time and meet all their responsibilities. Having the opportunity to interact with caregivers and care for their loved ones for 30 years has been a privilege. I am so proud and appreciative of our staff and the work we do each day, and humbled by the difference we can make in the lives of those we provide services to.

