



# MINNESOTA STATEWIDE ACTIVITY PROFESSIONALS

*"A source for education, support, ideas, and opportunities  
to enhance the lives of those we serve."*

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## **Conference Co-Chairs 2017**

Stacie Oakland  
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[DLaGraves@viewcrest.sfhs.org](mailto:DLaGraves@viewcrest.sfhs.org)

# M<sub>N</sub> SWAP NEWSLETTER

## Winter 2016

### President

Can you believe that it is already time to make holiday preparations and order Christmas cards? As I reflect on the past year and possibly make goals for 2017, I'm thankful for the experiences this past one has brought me. Thank you for putting forth the effort to make award nominations. So many deserving candidates were nominated for our M<sub>N</sub> SWAP awards! Heartfelt congratulations to Activity Professional of the Year: Annette Gunnerson, Excellence in Administration Recipient: Anthony Fenstad and Volunteer of the Year: Deb Dodgen. Continue to utilize the Heidi Sibben Memorial Scholarship and make plans for next year's nominations for our prestigious awards. It has been my pleasure to serve you as vice-president and I'm eager to grow through this next venture.  
Happy Thanks-living!

Cheryl Dinsmore  
[cheryldinsmore@ecumen.org](mailto:cheryldinsmore@ecumen.org)

### Vice President

Thank you for electing me as your new Vice President. I am ecstatic to be able to collaborate with an amazing board to provide you with high quality education opportunities within the state of Minnesota. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have at [mhenifin@horizonhealthservices.com](mailto:mhenifin@horizonhealthservices.com). May your year be filled with many magical moments with the individuals you serve!

Michelle Henifin  
[mhenifin@horizonhealthservices.com](mailto:mhenifin@horizonhealthservices.com)

### Past President

Being a member of M<sub>N</sub> Swap makes a powerful statement about Activity Directors and our profession in Minnesota. It shows employers, colleagues, and others our commitment to activities. Being a member of M<sub>N</sub> Swap identifies us as a professional who is serious about our career as well as purposeful about staying informed, educated, and involved.

When I became a M<sub>N</sub> Swap member, I dreamt one day of becoming President for this wonderful organization. After a long winding road with many curves, I became President! It has been a great year serving you and I am looking forward to being the Past President who welcomes our new comers who have joined M<sub>N</sub> Swap. I wish them luck for this upcoming challenging year as we continue to speak with one strong voice on behalf of our profession for our patients, residents and each other.

*"All our dreams can come true - if we have the courage to pursue them." ~Walt Disney*

Kara Reiser  
[kare.reiser@goldenliving.com](mailto:kare.reiser@goldenliving.com)

### Promotions

Hello everyone! I hope you enjoyed this year's conference. It's always great to see everyone as they stop by the promotions booth to see what's the new for the year conference and what other items are available. If throughout the year you come across any items that would be a great promotion idea please let me know. We are always looking for new ideas that will help support our profession. This may be done by contacting me by email: [Sandra.lacek@hendrickshosp.org](mailto:Sandra.lacek@hendrickshosp.org) Looking forward to seeing you at the spring seminar.

Thanks again for stopping by the promo booth.

Sandy Lacek  
[Sandra.lacek@hendrickshosp.org](mailto:Sandra.lacek@hendrickshosp.org)

# REGION REPORTS

## Winter 2016

### Region 1

Region 1 would like to thank everyone who came to the fall conference in St. Cloud in October. We had a wonderful time hosting an amazing group of people! We hope everyone met someone new and was reminded of how they make activities legendary for the people they serve.

As the winter weather finds us, we will be put our meetings on hold until we thaw out in the spring. Our next meeting will take place in Crookston in May. Stay tuned for more details!

Jess Karstens  
[hlcact@rvv.net](mailto:hlcact@rvv.net)

### Region 2

We all enjoyed the conference in October and are looking forward to planning the 2017, MN SWAP conference. Region 2 is putting some fun ideas together. We will meet at the Tavern on the Hill in Duluth and schedule the meetings for 2017. Please contact Stacie Oakland at 218-723-6433 or [Stacie.oakland@bhshealt.org](mailto:Stacie.oakland@bhshealt.org) if you would like to join us.

Stacie Oakland  
[Stacie.Oakland@bhshealth.org](mailto:Stacie.Oakland@bhshealth.org)

### Region 3

Region 3 met at Oak Crossing in Detroit Lakes on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Jenae Becker, Occupational Therapist, talked about effective activities for Alzheimer's residents. In the afternoon, Sheryl Mastin-Sievers shared some ideas for fidget bags that can be individualized for people with dementia. We also met October 12<sup>th</sup> poolside at the convention to discuss themes for the 2018 MN SWAP conference that Region 3 will be hosting. Our next meeting will be held in February in Fergus Falls. Date and location to be determined. If you are new to our region, please feel free to contact [brendlabine@ecumen.org](mailto:brendlabine@ecumen.org) or call 218-844-7157 if you have any questions.

Brenda Labine  
[brendlabine@ecumen.org](mailto:brendlabine@ecumen.org)

### Region 4

We are excited about providing excellent activities for those we serve at our care facilities in Region 4. Our facilities vary in nature, size, occupancy, and services provided but we all share a common goal and desire to offer excellence in leisure activity.

We have a new group leading Region 4. Karlina Zinken is our new Vice-Representative and Lori Lane as our new treasurer. Betsy Horsch will continue as our secretary and I have moved from Vice-Representative to Representative.

Region 4 will be meeting in January to review job descriptions and also start planning for our spring workshop. If anyone has any idea's they would like covered at a workshop feel free to contact me.

Last spring we had a great turn out at the Annandale Care Center in Annandale for our spring workshop. We had a great speaker teaching us about Essential Oils and Aroma therapy. After that, we had a fantastic dementia training, Teepa Snow style, by our own Michele Henifin. She was terrific!

We had a great turn out for our fall workshop that was held at Lake Ridge Care Center in Buffalo. The morning session was Tai chi and Qigong presented by Hilary Studenski and Sara Goodrum. They were fun and it was very interactive. The afternoon session was on Feng Shui.

Lisa Stidham  
[lstidham@elimcare.org](mailto:lstidham@elimcare.org)

### Region 5

Hello from MN Swap Region 5 in southwestern Minnesota! The annual MN Swap Conference was held in St. Cloud October 12 – 14, and was an excellent combination of education, networking, and fun. Hats off to Region 1 for a job well done ~ just as advertised, it was legendary!

The fall conference signaled the end of Region 5 meetings for 2016, but they will start up again in March of 2017 at the Pizza Ranch in Redwood Falls. Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday during the months of March through September, starting with coffee and rolls at 8:30, and running until about 3:00 p.m. These meetings provide educational sessions on a regular basis, covering a variety of topics relevant to the profession, with four hours of continuing education credit available at each meeting. Mark your calendars now to join us regularly for some networking, delicious breakfast rolls, noon pizza buffet ~ and CEUs!

Notices of the Regional meetings are sent out via a group email a few weeks in advance of each meeting. If you are a member of Region 5 but have not been receiving notices of the meetings, please contact me with your email address and I will add you to the group mailing. The session topics and speakers for 2017 will be determined by the Region 5 Officers in February.

It seems so soon to be saying this, but here's wishing everyone a great Christmas and Happy New Year!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, suggestions, or need additional information.

Tish Peterson  
[tpeterson\\_parkview@hotmail.com](mailto:tpeterson_parkview@hotmail.com)

### Region 6

Region 6 met on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Julie Reginek presented on "The Element of Change in the Activity Profession" in the morning session. We looked at ways to identify the Activity Director's role as a change agent and how to support activity staff through the change process. We also identified obstacles to change and strategies that will help us when facing change. The afternoon session was "Activity Intervention Techniques for Working with Residents". During this session, we learned to identify communication techniques and methods to use with different cognitive levels. We also compared and contrasted the intervention techniques of Validation Therapy, Reality Orientation, Re-motivation and Sensory Programming.

Elections were held for Vice President and Secretary.

Our next meeting will be on January 10<sup>th</sup> at Friendship Village of Bloomington. Topics are still TBD. For more information, check out our website at [www.mapatwincities.org](http://www.mapatwincities.org)

Jane Chagnon  
[jchagnon@preshomes.org](mailto:jchagnon@preshomes.org)

### **New Ad Deadlines and Publication Mailings**

#### **Ad & Advertising Deadlines:**

March 1, 2017  
July 20, 2017  
November 1, 2017

#### **Publication Deadlines:**

April 1, 2017  
September 1, 2017  
December 1, 2017

You can submit your articles and advertisements to me by mail to the Annandale Care Center, 660 Park St. East, Annandale MN. 55302 or email them to me at [Annette.Gunnerson@ahcsmn.org](mailto:Annette.Gunnerson@ahcsmn.org). MN Swap does reserve the right to limit the number of ads and articles per issue due to the limited space and content.

Annette Gunnerson, MN SWAP Editor  
[Annette.Gunnerson@ahcsmn.org](mailto:Annette.Gunnerson@ahcsmn.org)

### Region 7

Region 7 Board met on September 9, 2016 at Samaritan Bethany, Rochester. We reviewed registration, budget, and evaluations from the our Spring Workshop. Chapter 4 will be hosting 2017 Spring Workshop on May 19 at Woodlake Conference Center, Rochester. We continue to share concerns and brainstorm on how to increase participation at the chapter level as three of the five chapters are experiencing difficulty in remaining active on a regular basis. However, Region 7 has a strong board presence who continue to support and encourage Chapter Reps in remaining active and informed.

If there are ANY Activity Professionals in the Region that would like more information and/or become involved, please contact Gloria at [gjoakess@gundersenhealth.org](mailto:gjoakess@gundersenhealth.org)

Gloria Oakes-Speltz  
[gjoakess@gundersenhealth.org](mailto:gjoakess@gundersenhealth.org)

### Vendor Chair

Thank you to everyone who supported the Vendors at our past conference. It was nice to see the businesses that did vending for us. The conference was ran so smoothly that the time went by fast. As always if you come across a company that you feel has products or information that should be shared with the members of our organization please send me their address so I can contact them about vending at next years conference. I sent out the initial letter in February so please feel free to contact me. Betty Braegelman, Vendor Chair

Betty Braegelman  
[dhdbhb@mchsi.com](mailto:dhdbhb@mchsi.com),

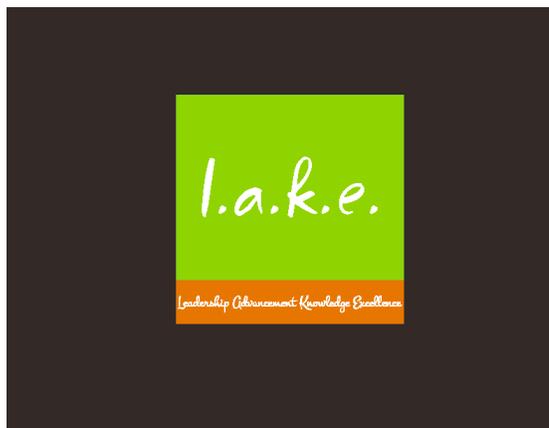
### A Fond Farwell

It is bittersweet to write my final article for the newsletter. I was lucky to be a part of the State Board for five years; two as Co-Chair for a conference, Vice-President, President and my final role as Past President. I am grateful to have been a part of such an amazing group of people. Activity Professionals have the ability to bring out the best in those around them. As my time on the Board ends, so does my time in Activities. I have changed directions in my career and look forward to new challenges. Being a part of Mn SWAP has taught me the value of people, no matter their age or diagnosis and that quality of life is just as, if not more important than quantity. Being a part of a dynamic profession is something I will always remember and hold dear to my heart. The passion, I witnessed from other professionals and experienced at Conferences and Seminars at the State and Region level, helped to stir my passion for Quality of Life. I am lucky that I am still able to use that passion in my new path working with people in Hospice.

Thank you for letting me be a part of this amazing organization and thanks for all that you do to improve the lives of others!

Jennifer Lahmann  
[jlahmann@stcroixhospice.com](mailto:jlahmann@stcroixhospice.com)

## Conference 2017



### Conference Co Chairs

Greetings from Region 2 Co-Chair! We are looking forward to the 2017 October Mn SWAP Conference; planning is underway! The theme for next year is LAKE – Leadership, Advancement, Knowledge, Excellence. These are 4 things that we all value as Activity Professionals. And with Minnesota being the land of 10,000 lakes, we thought they went together perfectly! We have already had some requests for the T-shirts with the logo on them and they will be available next October! Have a wonderful holiday season.

2017 Co- Chairs  
Stacie Oakland [Stacie.Oakland@bhshealth.org](mailto:Stacie.Oakland@bhshealth.org)  
Denise LaGraves [DLaGraves@viewcrest.sfhs.org](mailto:DLaGraves@viewcrest.sfhs.org)

### Education News

Mn SWAP's mission is to be a source for education, support, ideas and opportunities to enhance the lives of those we serve. We accomplish this in many ways but primarily through our educational events held in the spring and fall of each year. Our fall conference is one of the largest most informative and reasonably priced conferences in the nation for Activity Professionals. It is my hope you can join us this October at the Holiday Inn, St. Cloud for this wonderful event. The conference starts late Wednesday afternoon October 12<sup>th</sup> and concludes at 12:30 p.m. on Friday October 14<sup>th</sup>, the brochure will be on the website late August, and mailed out to all members and facilities earlier in August. We are planning a few new things for this year, a larger vendor exhibit grand opening with bigger prizes, including a Lucky Buck Auction, food and a cash bar please join us for this new version of the Wednesday night events. We are also going to trial a poster board session, tell us what you do best... see the attached information sheet on the website. All handouts for the fall conference will be on the website the last week in September for your convenience. Just a reminder no handouts will be available at the conference. Our spring seminar is still in the planning stages we hope to have a date soon, keep checking the website for the most accurate education information.

Pam Hayle  
[plhayle@augustanacare.org](mailto:plhayle@augustanacare.org)

### 6 Tips for Becoming a Successful Workplace Leader

Virtually everyone has the capacity to take on leadership roles within the workplace. It's just that some individuals may need to work on skills that sometimes come naturally to others. Constant communication, praise, and making tough decisions quickly and effectively are some key characteristics of good leaders. You may have to do a bit of research on these points and others to hone your leadership skills if you want to become a successful leader among your team members. Here are six useful tips to help you take the helm at work.

#### 1. Learn about Effective Communication

As a team leader, you need to know how to communicate effectively. This means that you must do a lot more than just bark out orders to your team. You need to be able to think about all angles before saying anything, and make sure that people can understand your message. You also need to learn how to listen to what your team members are saying, and be able to manage and even prevent conflicts between team members, or between your team and management (which includes you).

#### 2. Praise Team Members Individually

It is not enough to praise your team for a job well done. It is even more important to praise each team member for their own contributions to projects. Make sure that your praise is authentic. An empty gesture will be noticed even more than true praise, and this will cause you to lose respect from your co-workers. Let them know what impressed you about their work, and they will continue doing the same things.

#### 3. Make People Think

A successful leader knows how to challenge their colleagues, and make them want to work harder. The more they challenge their team members, the more the team members want to meet and exceed those challenges. Just make sure that you know how to challenge them without overworking them or being too hard on them. This will have the opposite effect of what you are trying to achieve.

#### 4. Learn How to Make Decisions

One of the main things a team leader must do is be able to make decisions on the fly. You can't be wishy-washy when it comes to making decisions. Not only can it hurt the company, it can also hurt you, because it shows that you don't have what it takes to be an effective team leader. You need to master the art of politics and making decisions, and don't spend a lot of time over-thinking any decisions you make, or need to make.

#### 5. Engage Others

You will need to learn how to engage others to make sure that your team is as productive as possible. Tasks should be assigned based on your own observations, as well as feedback from team members. When they are being asked how to improve things, and are able to utilize their skills, they will be much happier and much more productive. If there are changes coming, let your team know so they aren't blindsided. Basically, keep them involved in as much as possible.

#### 6. Know how to Allocate Talent

A good leader knows their employees and their talents, and how to utilize those talents. They know exactly how to bring out the best in their employees, and where they should be in order to be the most effective. As a team leader, you will need to learn about your employees, their skill sets, and how their skills can be best used to make the team more productive and effective. This is going to show your team that you know what needs to be done, and who is best at getting it done.