



Press Release

September 2005

Make A Difference Day Project

Make A Difference Day is coming up. Saturday, October 29, is the official "day" that individuals and organizations make plans to help someone, and Make A Difference in one life or many.

One of the projects this year will be completed at Woodlawn Center. Like many projects, this one takes more than one "day." With the help of the Cass County Community Corrections Program, this project has already begun.

There is a side yard to the east of the Woodlawn Center building. This yard area is used by consumers in good weather during breaks and lunch time. There is a smoking area on one end, sectioned off from the rest of the yard by a shelter and fence, and a few picnic tables and benches scattered around the yard – in the sun and in the shade - for sitting, eating, and playing cards.

One of the problems with the area is that it is not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs, walkers or canes. Many of the consumers can enjoy the area only from the sidewalk. While there are benches placed there, consumers are not able to enjoy the shade trees or get to the picnic tables.

The project is to beautify the area and to make it accessible.

Through an internal contest, staff members were invited to draw plans and submit a budget for the project. Two plans were found to be outstanding, and the two persons submitting the plans were asked to get together to finalize the project plan.

Patty Pankow, Business Office Coordinator, and Bonnie Bell, Workshop Assistant, are the co-foremen and co-landscape artists. They drew plans that included removing chain-link fencing and poles, erecting privacy fencing on two sides and vinyl fencing on the front of the yard, putting benches around a large tree, landscaping with flower beds and a fountain within the privacy fencing, and – most importantly – digging out and paving a rounded area large enough for walking and the placement of tables and benches.

Much of this work is being done by the Cass County Community Corrections program. They started pulling out fencing in September, and throughout October will complete most, if not all, of the heavy work.

The landscaping work will be done on Make A Difference Day, October 29, with the help of several Special Olympians and the Cass County Special Olympics Program.

When the project is completed, the persons who will benefit the most will be the consumers of Woodlawn Center, particularly those who have physical disabilities. The enhanced ability to fellowship with their friends and coworkers will be priceless.