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Leroy Hicks (left) is honored by KSI CEO Heath Chasanov as the first Participant of the Quarter since the pandemic shutdown.

KSI Awards Participant of the First Quarter to Leroy Hicks

James “Leroy” Hicks of Harrington was recently honored by KSI with the Participant of First Quarter 2025 Award. Participating with KSI since 1980, Hicks is known for his gentle, mild-mannered nature, and for taking on diverse work challenges. He worked in KSI’s Supported Employment Program at a local Wendy’s restaurant for 14 years before his sight diminished. He worked on an assortment of jobs in KSI’s Milford center after that, and was vice president of the participant-led KSI Aktion Club. He’s a compassionate mentor and

advocate for other participants. Additionally, Leroy is currently part of the selection committee for the KSI Staff of the Quarter awards.

As participant of the quarter, Mr. Hicks’s name has been added to a permanent plaque at KSI and he will be given a plaque to take home. He also receives a \$50 gift card or prize, a photo displayed on the Participants of the Quarter recognition board at KSI’s Milford center, a *KSI News* feature, an automatic invitation to the KSI Annual Dinner, and a feature in the Annual Dinner program.

KSI's Mission Is...

to create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to learn and grow. Through training, education and supportive programs and services, we enable individuals to accomplish their personal and work-related goals.

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You can also read KSI News on the Web at www.ksiinc.org.

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A Message from KSI's CEO Heath B. Chasanov



Coming into this holiday season, we have a lot for which to be thankful. We're very excited about the latest continuation of our renovation plan for the Milford Skill Development Center. Providing a quality space in which participants can focus and creating a new center for Life Skills training are both exceptional additions to our programming space. (You can learn more in the article on page 3.)

Participant numbers have been consistently increasing throughout this past year. The renovations were greatly needed to fully serve individuals seeking quality training and experiences for making better lives. The growth in service demand plays up the necessity for completing renovations on the northern half of KSI's Milford facility to better accommodate more participants. That will require a larger fundraising campaign in the coming year.

Concerning funding for KSI's programs, we continue to monitor funding decisions on state and federal levels. Looking at budget shortfalls on the local level and federal funding cuts to Medicaid that will commence next year, all Delaware disability providers are concerned about sustainability moving forward. It's clear that the responsibility for continuing services for people with varied abilities is shifting from a governmental level to the public sector and the very communities in which individuals are being served. Your growing support as KSI's sustainers with your generous donations and sponsorships will make the difference in providing quality programs and services that the hundreds of people depending on us deserve.

We had a very successful KSI Clifford T. Crouch Memorial 3 Club Golf Tournament. Thanks goes to the nearly 100 players that came out September 5. Thanks also goes to the generous sponsors who made the tournament possible. In partnership, they helped raise nearly \$20,000 for KSI's programming. (See page 8 for the full story.)

Looking forward to Thanksgiving, we're nothing but grateful for the lives we've shared as part of our mission and the persistent gracious hearts of those who've continued to help KSI grow and serve. We wish you the best this holiday season, and hope your time with friends and family over the next two months is full of joy, love, and happiness.

Heath B. Chasanov

Renovation of Milford Center Continues

On October 16, KSI hosted a crowd of legislators and community partners to showcase the latest continuation of its Milford Skill Development Center renovation. Attendees toured the new Pre-Vocational Training center, designed to better engage participants in training and personal activities when they are not involved in paid work. Far from the open, manufacturing environment for which the Milford center has been known, this new training space joins the Life Enrichment Program area that was built in the southern wing of the Milford Center in the fall of 2023.

This latest chapter of a master renovation plan was completed this summer. It was funded through a \$500,000 ARPA grant administered through Kent County Levy Court. An additional \$100,000 was provided through the State of Delaware Community Reinvestment Fund as part of the "mini" Bond Bill. It included development of an additional Life Skills Training center that is outfitted with a working laundry set up, cooking and kitchen area,



The newest renovated space is a Pre-Vocational Training center that brings a quiet space in which to focus on employment and personal skill-building.

dining tables, bed, and more. It will offer participants seeking more independent living the ability to practice the skills they need for daily life. The WSFS Cares Foundation donated \$10,000 to outfit the Life Skills Training area with laundry and dryer machines, a refrigerator, and a stove to offer access to a true daily living experience. Plans are in the works to open the Life Skills facility to local schools to allow students transitioning into independent living the opportunity to learn needed skills if their schools did not have a comparable training facility.

KSI has invested more than \$1.3 million dollars in renovating the Milford Skill Development Center so far. The latest continuation of the

master renovation plan was constructed by Delaware City-based Amakor, Inc. Amakor has been operating since 1988, with extensive experience in commercial construction management. The project was designed by Davis, Bowen & Friedel's Milford office.

The organization is moving forward with plan development for the remaining half of the Milford center's 72,000 total square feet. It will rework the northern end of the facility into a flex space that will accommodate both contract production and training space



Included in the continuation of Milford Skill Development Center renovation was a Life Skills Training center to prepare individuals for activities of daily living.

to facilitate full programming needs of Pre-Vocational Training. Conceptual plans are already created for this purpose. The funding for actual construction will

Continued on page 4.

Breast Cancer Coalition Visits KSI's Participants



KSI Vice President of Operations Sandra Hale (left) introduces guest speaker Meridith Rothstein from the Breast Cancer Coalition.

On October 20th, KSI was honored to welcome the Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition to KSI for an important conversation about breast health and breast cancer awareness. Their visit was a powerful reminder of the importance of education, early detection, and support for those impacted.

A special thank you to our guest speaker, Meridith Rothstein, a survivor and advocacy leader. Thank you to Lauren Balcerak from the Coalition for joining us for this vital discussion. We appreciate both for sharing their time, knowledge, and encouragement with us. We also want to give a big shout-out to Caitlyn Gerken, a staff member who coordinated the event. Your efforts made this impactful visit possible!

To show our solidarity, both staff and participants wore pink on October 20th. It was inspiring to see our community come together in recognition of this vital cause.

Renovation continued from page 3.

require a comprehensive Capital Campaign that will commence in the coming months. KSI will be connecting with large funders and smaller donors alike to partner in making this enhanced community resource possible. The final

center redesign will help hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families create better lives.

We thank all of you in advance for having a heart for those KSI serves, and for being partners in their successes.

Weller Does Delmarva at KSI



Jim Weller (left) interviewed KSI CEO Heath Chasanov during a live broadcast at KSI of Weller Does Delmarva.

On November 5, Jim Weller brought a live morning broadcast of his show, Weller Does Delmarva, onsite at KSI's Milford center. All around him during the show, KSI participants were hard at work doing paid jobs as part of their Pre-Vocational Training. Participants Annie Brown, Joseph Gilmore, and James Gerding had opportunity to go on-air with Weller to speak about their experiences learning skills for successful employment. Likewise, a number of KSI staff members, including CEO Heath Chasanov, shared more about KSI and its mission to help hundreds of people working towards better lives.

The broadcast could be heard on Radio Stations 102.3 WNJD and Delaware 105.9 FM, parts of the Fine Day Radio collection of stations. A video of the broadcast can be seen for a limited time on Jim Weller's Facebook @jim.weller.56 page.



Jim Weller (left) with Sandra Hale and participants Annie Brown and James Gerding.



Pre-Vocational participant Annie Brown was a proud on-air guest during the broadcast.

The Frontliners of Service Honored by KSI



Case Managers in Milford were recognized for their heroic efforts with flowers and more in October. Left to right are Jody Clendaniel, Macie Blackson, Liam Armstrong, Brittany Zalewski, Abigail Altman, and Brigitt Wyatt. Not pictured is Ivory Jackson.

This fall, KSI took the opportunity to celebrate Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and Case Managers Weeks to honor those who provide compassionate guidance and support to our hundreds of participants each day. Special lunches, gift cards, and more were distributed throughout the respective weeks to show appreciation for their important contributions to the organization's positive effect in people's lives.

"Their dedication, compassion, and commitment make tremendous impacts on the lives of our participants and on the success of KSI as a whole," said KSI CEO Heath Chasanov. "We're grateful for their unwavering commitment and the heart that they bring to KSI."

Mr. Chasanov emphasized the particularly

complex job Case Managers do every day.

"Case Managers play a vital role in coordinating programming, supporting participants and their families through challenges, and ensuring that every person receives the attention and

advocacy they deserve. Their ability to balance complex responsibilities with empathy and professionalism is truly inspiring."

KSI is able to offer quality services and support to hundreds of people and their families solely because of the daily dedication and caring hearts of its frontline heroes, Direct Support Professionals and Case Managers. They strive to support the success in our participants' lives.



DSPs had a special ice cream treat during their appreciation week. Pictured left to right are DSP Jehnna Moore, Transportation Manager Sherry Schenk, DSPs Jill Willey, Lana Allen, Theresa Rash, and Vernetta Palmer.

Nitan Soni Group Donates to KSI



KSI CEO Heath Chasanov (left) receives a special donation of \$1,000 from Niton Soni and Greg Seger of Niton Soni Group real estate.

Lewes-based real estate company Niton Soni Group's Principle Niton Soni (center) and partner Greg Seger (right) stopped by KSI to donate \$1,000 in support of the organization's programs for people with disabilities. It's part of the company's celebration of its 10-year anniversary in business, during which they are donating \$1,000 to 10 different nonprofits to support community resources. KSI was proud to be #7.



Part of the donation presentation was a video interview in KSI's new Life Skills Training center with KSI CEO Heath Chasanov (right).

KSI Adds Robert Smith as Director of Facilities



KSI recently hired Robert Smith as its new Director of Facilities, replacing retiring facilities management director Shawn Bowman. Robert came to KSI with 13 years of experience as Facilities Manager with Goodwill Industries. With them, he was responsible for 21 properties throughout Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Robert will manage all maintenance and repair of KSI's Milford Skill Development Center, Georgetown Southern Campus, Kamp Lenape buildings, and associated grounds. He will also manage the several properties KSI owns and leases to other businesses. Additionally, he will oversee all renovations to KSI properties.

WSFS & Bryn Mawr Trust Team Up for Financial Literacy at KSI

KSI had the privilege of having experts from WSFS Bank & Bryn Mawr Trust to help both participants and staff members learn everything from avoiding

Senior Vice President of Retail Delivery Shelly Kavanagh. "They loved to participate and asked a lot of good questions."

Later, Ms. Kavanagh

provided an extensive information session for KSI staff members covering all manner of current frauds to beware of as well as tactics to protect themselves from fraud. Throughout the afternoon, Bryn Mawr Trust Director of Wealth Planning Mark



WSFS and Bryn Mawr Trust financial experts visiting KSI were (left to right) Shelley Thomas-Waples, Michelle Elwood, Shelly Kavanagh, Mark Bradford, Lisa Borrelli, and Paul McClatchy.

financial fraud and budgeting for healthy finances, to planning for long-term investment goals. Volunteer financial experts from WSFS started by offering some useful financial education to KSI's Pre-Vocational participants. Given that many of them earn income through paid training jobs or independent employment, learning how to manage their money was an important subject.

"I thought they were very engaged. It was a good reinforcement for them from the basic financial education standpoint," said WSFS

Bradford did pro bono one-on-one counseling with KSI staff to address individual financial challenges and questions.

Presentations like this are invaluable for participant and staff enrichment. If you'd like to propose an event like the one described above, please contact KSI's Sandra Hale at hales@ksiinc.org.



Bryn Mawr Trust Director of Wealth Planning Mark Bradford did one-on-one counseling with KSI staff.

Friends of KSI Quarter Auction Made a Great Night



Occurring the past 13 years, the Friends of KSI Quarter Auction has gained a reputation for being a really enjoyable event with lots of quality packages on which to bid. It draws enthusiastic crowds.

The volunteer group Friends of KSI presented its 13th Annual Quarter Auction on October 17th to benefit the programs and services KSI offers people with developmental disabilities. Hosting a large and lively crowd at the Farmington Fire Company, the night of bidding on scores of donated prize packages resulted in \$7,652 that will go directly to helping KSI's participants gain better lives.

The event was started 13 years ago by Angela Spishock

and her family as a way to give back to the organization that had supported her brother Arthur Bunting for more than 21 years. Arthur has thrived that long as a community-based crew member at Procter & Gamble Dover Wipes under KSI's vocational program. The environment and guidance that the KSI crew provided was a perfect match for Arthur and allowed him to gain income and independence as he matured into adulthood.

Angela brought together the Friends of KSI team, which included Arthur, their mother Kathy Bunting, and friends Linda

Eckert, Fran Dean, and Crystal Southard, along with some dedicated extras. Sadly, Crystal Southard, who had been a long-time backbone of FOKSI's events, passed away in 2025. This year's Quarter Auction was dedicated in her memory for all she contributed to others' lives. Her daughter, Anna Miller, joined the FOKSI team this year to carry on her mother's wonderful legacy.



Arthur Bunting and his mother Kathy Bunting (center and right) present a check for the proceeds of the FOSKI Quarter Auction.

During the last 13 years, FOKSI has donated more than \$55,491 to support KSI through proceeds from both annual Quarter Auctions and Car Shows. Even during the pandemic shutdown, the group didn't miss a beat. Two years' auctions were actually done virtually through online auction infrastructure. KSI is immensely grateful for their passion, dedication, and considerable efforts to help KSI serve hundreds of individuals seeking to improve their lives.



Quarter Auction organizer Angela Spishock (right) and volunteer Anna Miller, daughter of FOKSI star Crystal Southard.

Golf Tournament Supports KSI

Twenty-four teams had a wonderful day at Jonathan's Landing on September 5 during the KSI Clifford T. Crouch Memorial 3 Club Golf Tournament. A beautiful day made playing at Jonathan's naturalized wetlands course a pleasure. Highlights along the way included our classic Flamingo Fling Ring Toss Contest and a new Cornhole Challenge. Nearly 100 community and business leaders showed up for a day of fun and camaraderie while they supported KSI's mission for people with developmental disabilities. The tournament resulted in nearly \$20,000 to go towards KSI's programs and services.

Thanks goes to the tournament's sponsors for helping make the event a success. Special gratitude to our Major Sponsors Atlantic Aluminum Products, L&W Insurance, and WSFS Bank.



Winner of First Place Low Gross was the Sussex Conservation team, including (left to right) Dan Weber, Matt Messina, Ben Carter, and Ryan Wisler.

Additional tournament sponsors included Play It Forward Sponsors Vaughn Crouch and Anthony Taddeo in memory of Clifford T. Crouch, B. Craig Crouch, and Jan Crouch. Food Sponsors were Delaware City Refining Company, Sharp Energy, SPI Pharma, and Tidewater Utilities, Inc. The Putting Contest was sponsored by Best Ace Hardware; i. g. Burton & Company, Inc.; and Tidewater Utilities, Inc. Driving Range Sponsor was The Failing Family.

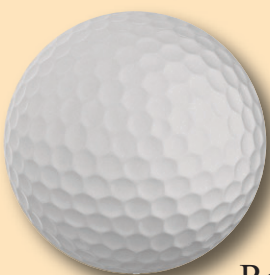
Tee & Green Sponsors were Heath Chasanov; Davis, Bowen & Friedel; Del-One Federal Credit Union; Four Paws Animal Hospital; Thomas & Susan

Kelly; Philip Krauss in Loving Memory of Tig & Mary Lee Krauss; Gregg & M.C. Landis; Lank Johnson & Tull CPAs; Mid-State Insurance Brent Rue & Michael Veith, 302-422-3058; Mohawk Electrical Systems, Inc.; Sharp Energy; Starkey & Company P.A.; and William T. Wadkins Garage, Inc. Pin Flag Sponsors were Delaware Electric Cooperative and Lank, Johnson & Tull CPAs.

Special thanks goes to the golf courses that generously donated foursomes to be silent auctioned during the tournament as part of two premium golf packages. Foursomes were given by Great Hope Golf Course, Green Hill Country Club, Heritage Shores, Hooper's Landing Golf Course, Jonathan's Landing Golf



Dual winners for Highest Score and Best Flamingo Outfits were (left to right) Cindy McPhail, Faye Layton, Nancy Stuart, and Judy Andrews.



Course, Maple Dale Country Club, Nutter's Crossing Golf Course, Ocean Resorts Golf Club, Plantation Lakes Golf & Country Club, and Wild Quail Golf & Country Club. Special contributions were also given by Tony & Ruth Abbate and Eaglewing Embroidery.



First Place Low Net went to the Artesian Water team of (left to right) Shawn Lavalee, Ryan Joswick, Justin Dawson, and Jeff Shughart.

There were plenty of winners on September 5. Winner of First Place Low Net Score was the Artesian Water team with Justin Dawson, Ryan Joswick, Shawn Lavalee, and Jeff Shughart. First Place Low Gross was snagged by the Sussex Conservation team of Ben Carter, Matt Messina, Don Weber, and Ryan Wisler. Closest to the Line Women

and Men were Cindy McPhail and Conner Chasanov respectively. Closest to the Pin Women and Men were Nancy Stuart and Mike McPhail. Longest Drive Men and Women went to Noel Temple and Judy Andrews. The Flamingo Fling Contest was won by Michael Veith, and the Putting Contest went to Charlie Towers after a grueling three-way putt

off. Heath Chasanov won the Cornhole Challenge in a three-way throw off. The team of Cindy McPhail, Judy Andrews, Faye Layton, and Nancy Stuart took away the consolation prize for Highest

Scoring Team and a special prize for Favorite Flamingo Attire.

Keep a look out early next year for information on the 2026 tournament being held Friday, September 11 at Jonathan's Landing. Early Bird Discounts will start on April 1, 2026. Watch ksiinc.org and Facebook @KSIWorks next spring for your chance to join the fun.

Buckets & Boomwhackers Come to KSI



Music School of Delaware's Kelsey Oldman leads the KSI "bucket band" in a class.

Music School of Delaware is bringing a "Bucket and Boomwhackers" class to KSI as part of the school's Sweet Beats percussion program. The program uses buckets and other instruments for helping participants explore the personal benefits of rhythm. Music therapist Kelsey Oldman will lead KSI participants from both the Milford and Georgetown centers in a series of classes bringing various musical experiences.

Bucket bands are created by using five-gallon buckets and pairs of sticks. They offer participants hands-on musical exploration of rhythms from around the world. This class is not just about getting the rhythm in people's hands. It's also about getting the physical connection of rhythm throughout their entire bodies.

Thanks goes to Lowe's of Seaford which donated more than a dozen five-gallon buckets to make the class possible. The Music School of Delaware's class series at KSI is funded by a grant from the Lewes/Rehoboth Beach Rotary Club.

Recent Contributors June 1 - October 31, 2025

- Mr. & Mrs. Tony and Ruth Abbate
Mr. & Mrs. Dallas and Albertha Adams
Ms. Jessie Adams
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard and Nora Anicola in Honor of Joseph J. Anicola
Mr. & Mrs. Chris and Jackie Argo
Ms. Deborah Armstrong in Honor of the entire staff of KSI
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Atlantic Aluminum Products Inc.
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Chick Harness & Supply, Inc. in Memory of Linda Chick
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Mr. Randy Wroten
Mrs. & Mr. Marsha and Harold Wyckoff
Ms. Brittany Zalewski

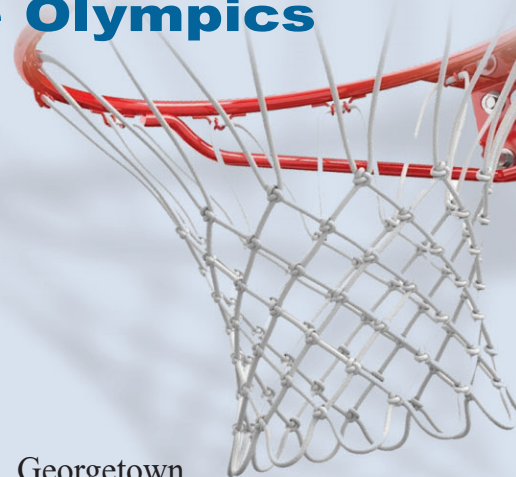
KSI Participants Reach for the Olympics

A number of KSI's participants are serious competitors in Special Olympics athletics. Now, KSI is taking the initiative to involve more individuals in the skill-building activities and team partnerships that Special Olympics programs offer.

Focusing on basketball programs initially, KSI's participation in Special Olympics will give individuals options. If they are already affiliated with a Special Olympics team, they can remain with that team and practice at KSI. They can also become a participant in state-wide trainings and competitions as part of a KSI Special Olympics team.

They can enter in-house competitions and events at KSI's facilities. Participants can also just access assisted skills training for personal physical improvement.

The Milford facility is being outfitted with a moveable practice court, including regulation height basket units. Additionally, the full, paved basketball court at Kamp Lenape will be used for training and practices. Special Olympics Delaware personnel will provide training onsite at KSI's Milford Skill Development Center during programming days. The sports program will also be made available to



Georgetown Southern Campus participants.

While basketball is the beginning, as the program develops it will include other Special Olympics competitive sports like bocce, bowling, and maybe even golf. To learn more about how to get involved, contact Dr. Kris Failing at failingk@ksiinc.org.

KSI Joins Special Olympics Truck Convoy

KSI had the opportunity to join the Special Olympics Truck Convoy during its Delaware run on October 4th. A unique, police-escorted convoy of tractor trailers and other participants through 29 miles of scenic Kent County, the convoy is both a celebration of the trucking industry and a show of support for Special Olympics athletes statewide. The Truck Convoy has been a special event in Delaware for many years and has raised nearly \$13 million to benefit Special Olympics athletes. The national truck convoy initiative was begun by Norm Schneiderhan, a Florida sheriff who was inspired by the Torch Run

and its awareness building for Special Olympics.

On October 4th, KSI drivers Rod Fessler and Craig Fry proudly drove KSI's busses as part of 211 other trucks, 61 of which were provided by Walmart. The drivers were joined by KSI participant Gilliean Walsh and Director of Mission Advancement Dr. Kris Failing, who rode along with Craig and Rod



KSI Director of Mission Advancement Dr. Kris Failing, driver Craig Fry, participant Gilliean Walsh and, driver Rod Fessler went the distance during the Truck Convoy.

during the entire event. Along with them, Seaford resident and KSI participant Ryan Mulvaney was supporting the convoy with another group. Several participants and KSI staff members were along the route to cheer on the convoy.

Jessica Adams Becomes Day Program Director at Southern Campus



Jessica Adams has been named Day Program Director to manage daily operations at KSI's Georgetown Southern Campus. Jessica joined KSI's staff in 2015 as receptionist and quickly learned the organization's mission and how to implement it.

She transitioned to Employment Manager with KSI's Supported Employment program helping participants find jobs and thrive in them. When KSI suspended Supported Employment in 2019, she joined the organization's fiscal department. She advanced to Assistant Program Director and eventually Program Director at KSI's Milford Skill Development Center. In that capacity, she oversaw all Case Managers and Direct Support Professionals at the Milford site, and assisted the Vice President of Operations with transportation management.

KSI's Southern Campus serves between 20 and 30 individuals with Life Enrichment Program activities and community experiences. It is a vital part of KSI's ability to serve people with diverse needs in Sussex County.

Milford Resource Room Open for Participants to Enjoy

KSI's Resource Room is now fully open. It's dedicated to reading and fun crafts for participants to enjoy, as well as being a skill-building environment for individuals to learn. Starting with 120 books

predominantly from The Lisa Libraries and local Delaware libraries, it's grown to more than 800 books and magazines. Additionally, the room is the source for constantly rotating "grab & go" craft kits that offer fun ways for making special projects and gifts during free time.



The participant Resource Room is in full force with more than 800 books and magazines that participants can check out and enjoy.

receptionist when their borrowing time is up. The Resource Room also provides opportunities for participants to volunteer sorting books, color coding the collected publications by category, and organizing the space.

Thanks to The Lisa Libraries project, as well as local donors including Milford Senior Center, Milford Public Library, Harrington Public Library, Bridgeville Public Library, Dr. Donna Smith-Moore and R. Alan Moore, Richard Hughey, Jody Clendaniel, Elizabeth Given, Brandy Markland, Norm

and Millie Remick, Pablo Reyes, Don and Judy Blair, Michelle Cain, Dakota Hollar, Ken Takemoto, and many more. Thanks also to Michelle Cain for her tireless efforts making this a reality.



Revolving craft projects are available in the Resource Room to help fill in time between activities and training lessons.

The lending library allows participants to sign out reading materials for a two-week period. The books and magazines checked out are kept in the Milford center and are returned to the KSI