



# The Digest

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Phil Jorgensen was Sinnissippi Centers' First Executive Director

## Remembering a Pioneer

Sinnissippi Centers bid farewell to a friend on February 10, 2017, when **Phil Jorgensen**, Sinnissippi Centers' very first Executive Director, passed away at his home in Dixon. Jorgensen served as Executive Director from 1966 through 1970 when John Kidwell took over as Executive Director. Jorgensen stayed on at the agency to serve in several roles. He eventually left Sinnissippi in 1980.

Jorgensen had attended Sinnissippi Centers' 50th Anniversary Celebration a short four months prior to his death. He penned a letter to the agency offering some of his reflections for the occasion in which he said, *"One of the important issues in the development of Sinnissippi is that mental health services were a larger-city and big-city phenomenon at that time. We were the pioneers in the development of 'rural' mental health services. Sinnissippi was one of the first rural clinics in the state and one of the busiest to this day."*

*"Without the foresight, dedication, and support of community leaders, interested citizens and health, education, and welfare professionals, Sinnissippi would not have become the very viable agency that it remains to this day. I'm proud to have been the founding Executive Director of Sinnissippi and grateful to our communities and the fine staff in making Sinnissippi a success over these 50 years. You are a blessing!"*

**Larry Prindaville**, former Sinnissippi Centers' Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, offered his observations about Jorgensen. "Phil was my first supervisor when I started at Sinnissippi in February 1972," says Prindaville. "He was an excellent, experienced social worker, and a very good supervisor. College and graduate school provided the basic credentials for my position as a professional

counselor, but it was Phil's tutelage that developed and nurtured my professional competencies," adds Prindaville.

"Phil consistently espoused the need for, and values of, a spectrum of locally accessible community mental health services," says Prindaville. "In the early days of the agency there was no state funding of our services, so Phil spent endless hours working with city and county officials to solicit local support and funding. He was highly respected throughout the communities of Carroll, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties, and was successful in his efforts to generate local funding for the agency," says Prindaville.

**Kevin Buss**, a Sinnissippi Adult Services Clinician, echoes much of what Prindaville says. Buss was hired by Jorgensen in 1978 and he was Buss' long time supervisor. Buss says "Sinnissippi was starting its additions services program, headed by Phil who was Director of Substance Abuse Services at that time. Phil was a driving force in establishing Sinnissippi's addiction services and getting them off the ground," says Buss. In fact, as part of those efforts, Sinnissippi was the first agency in Illinois to provide Intensive Outpatient Group services in a community mental health setting.

"Phil was very sensitive to the community, by example," adds Buss. "He forged a sense of professionalism into the agency that survives to this day."

"Phil recognized early on the need for integrated treatment of mental illness and substance abuse, that more often than not co-occur, probably about 10 years before the terminology for it existed," adds Buss.

"Phil looked at individuals with mental illness and addiction as the valuable people they were and often said they had 'holes in areas of their lives' that needed filled. He was a visionary and a pioneer

**Jorgensen - Continued on page 2**

Agencies Join For Better Response

## Lee County CPT

You have heard the saying, "one thing leads to another". It's true in Lee County and what it's leading to is a better system for those with a mental illness or substance abuse problem.

Efforts that started several years ago to address the opioid crisis, the Safe Passage Initiative, are now leading to more cooperation locally between agencies to improve the response to those facing a mental health crisis in the community.

Lee County recently launched the new **Crisis Prevention Team**, or CPT, a collaboration between **Sinnissippi Centers**, the **Dixon Police Department**, **Lee County Sheriff's Department**, the **Lee County State's Attorney's Office**, **KSB Hospital**, and the **National Alliance on Mental Illness**. Individuals who are identified by any of the partners as having a serious mental illness that will greatly impact their functioning in the community will receive coordinated services and response from all the partners. The ultimate goal of the group is to improve the response to individuals and identify them before they reach that crisis stage, keeping them out of the hospital or in some cases, out of jail.

Some of the "red flags" that partners will look for to identify these individuals include those who miss appointments, are not taking their medications, or are showing noticeable signs that their mental wellness is deteriorating. Each person in treatment signs a voluntary medical release with the partners in the team so they can better coordinate care by sharing information.

The team was in the planning stages for about 8 months and officially began the initiative in December 2016. Already individuals have been helped that may not have been helped before, or who may have "slipped through the cracks".

Since its inception, the team has already seen the value to clients and to the community. According to President and CEO of Sinnissippi Centers, **Patrick Phelan**, "We have been able to work together more effectively to expedite needed services for clients within the community. We have had a few situations where members of the team from several **Crisis Prevention - Continued on page 2**



*Phil Jorgensen, at his desk at Sinnissippi Centers. Phil was Sinnissippi's first Executive Director*



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SINNISSIPPI CENTERS

## Sinnissippi News

### Follow Us on Twitter

Sinnissippi Centers is now on Twitter. Look for **@SinnissippiCntr** on Twitter, or click on the link at the upper right of our home page at [www.sinnissippi.org](http://www.sinnissippi.org). Social media like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube allow nonprofit organizations to get their messages out to the public in a very low cost and efficient way. On Facebook you can look for the Sinnissippi Foundation. On LinkedIn and YouTube look for Sinnissippi Centers. Each platform is a little different, but the common themes of awareness of behavioral health, awareness of agency services and activities, and stigma reduction are common with all our social media efforts.

### New DBSA Support Group

A new **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)** group has formed to serve the area. **DBSA Sauk Valley** meets on the second Wednesday of the month at CGH Medical Centers' classroom from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Individuals interested in peer support and their family and friends are welcome to attend the meetings. DBSA group meetings focus on mutual aid and strategies for living the fullest life possible. By sharing experiences, insights, and ideas, people get peer-to-peer support from others who have been there. The group offers a safe, supportive, respectful, non-judgmental, and confidential atmosphere.

### Services Being Offered At Crest

Another exciting and recent development for Sinnissippi is the initiation of on-site counseling services for Crest Foods in Ashton. Crest has a very progressive wellness program, but they wanted to be creative in the way they address emotional well-being for their employees. So, instead of just opting for a traditional Employee Assistance Program, or EAP, Crest decided that having a behavioral health clinician available at the nearby Ashton KSB clinic would truly serve their employees. Sinnissippi Centers' President/CEO **Patrick Phelan** says, "I think this becomes a model for other large companies in the area to follow for their own Employee Assistance Programs."

### Sinnissippi Takes Third at Stupor Bowl

Sinnissippi Centers' took home some hardware from the recent Stupor Bowl held in February at Reagan Middle School in Dixon. With more teams in the event this year than the past three, Sinnissippi was able to take third place at the annual fundraiser for Dixon Schools. Sinnissippi team members were **Lyn Brokaw, Drew Mitchell, Jennifer Mitchell, Patrick Phelan, and DeAnne White**.

## Crisis Prevention Team is Already Seeing Results

# Crisis Prevention Team

### Crisis Prevention - Continued from page 1

of the organizations involved worked together to identify safety plans in order to monitor clients in their home, to make sure they were taking their medications, and to make sure their symptoms were not increasing to the point of crisis."

All the organizations involved understand the importance of positive relationships with these families and of intervening before a crisis in order to be most successful.

The CPT is a win-win; it costs Lee County no additional dollars. This is an effort of better communication and coordination between partners who have already been serving individuals with a serious mental illness, and this is a better model of care. However, the group does plan to apply for grant funds to help expand these services and outreach in Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties.

The CPT follows the local Safe Passage Initiative. That initiative started in order to address the growing opioid crisis and offered individuals "safe passage" to treatment. Any Lee County resident who enters the police or sheriff's department and asks for help with their addiction to opiates will be placed into appropriate treatment. Individuals doing this can bring their drugs or paraphernalia with them without fear of arrest or charges being filed.

The Safe Passage group began to expand their scope to take into account mental illness since individuals who suffer from addiction often also have a mental illness, and vice versa. The initiative has been so successful that neighboring counties are either adopting it already or considering adopting the idea.

### Jorgensen - Continued from page 1

in bringing community behavioral health to this area. He, along with Sinnissippi Psychiatrist, **Dr. Wlodzimir Rybak**, saw things way ahead of their time," says Buss.

The **Community Mental Health Act** signed by **President John F. Kennedy** in 1963 gave the means to achieve an agency like Sinnissippi, but Phil was thinking in this direction long before the legislation took shape according to Buss.

"What I remember at the time when I first met him, he was very bright, very knowledgeable, very committed to the agency, and yet very approachable and friendly. He was very serious and yet very warm at the same time, and he had a great sense of humor. He loved to laugh and tell stories of all kinds," adds Buss.

"Looking back, I think what Phil really reflected was the spirit of the early days of the agency in its generosity, in its humanness. He connected very well to the community and he really built as many bridges as he could in the community to make community mental health a success," says Buss.

"Phil, along with Dr. Rybak, had the vision and set the stage for what, clinically, became the foundation that Sinnissippi continues to build on in terms of vision and clinical excellence. Having been here for so many years now I can't imagine us being what we are without that foundation," says Buss.

"Back in the 60's and 70's we were still battling a public perception that wasn't all that warm and inviting to problems in the community existing with either mental health or substance abuse, so Phil really did preach 'the gospel' to the community and to the community leaders and really created an atmosphere of buy-in and acceptance over time that really makes so much possible of what we do today," says Buss.

Buss says that Jorgensen was very good with the community and building alliances, helping the community to first accept and then appreciate what Sinnissippi was doing, and he worked hard to keep those alliances strong.

Jorgensen's commitment to his community remained strong through the rest of his life, he was active in his church, and had owned restaurants in Oregon including the 1890 Club (now LaVigna). He often said, "I have never met a person who has not enriched my life".

In addition to his work at Sinnissippi Centers, Jorgensen was a clinical social worker for Dixon Correctional Center prior to his retirement at age 76 in March 2010. He gave nearly 50 years of his life to mental health.



Lee County State's Attorney's Office



Partners in the Crisis Response Team include The Dixon Police Department, KSB Hospital, the Lee County State's Attorney's office, the Lee County Sheriff's Department, NAMI Sauk Area, and Sinnissippi Centers



Shirley Jorgensen (left) and Phil Jorgensen (right) enjoy Sinnissippi Centers' 50th Anniversary Celebration in October 2016.

Annual Art Fundraiser Features Something For Everyone

# Expressions Art Sale & Reception

One of the signs of spring, at the Sinnissippi Foundation is the arrival of wonderful pieces of art from local and regional artists and the arrival of donations of silent auction items. It means that the **Expressions Art Sale and Reception** is not far behind.

"The first few months of every year are pretty exciting for the Sinnissippi Foundation," says **Andy Jackson**, Sinnissippi Centers' Marketing Coordinator.

"January through March is when all the art and silent auction items pour in for the Expressions Art Sale and each time a new item comes in is an exciting moment," adds Jackson.

Expressions is one of two major fundraising events of the year. It is co-sponsored each year by **Sauk Valley Bank**. "We are happy to see Sauk Valley Bank return as co-sponsor of Expressions," says Jackson. "We could not do this without their support and the support of so many others."

"If you have kept up on news from Springfield, you know 2016 was one of the toughest on the Sinnissippi clients the Foundation assists," says Jackson. "It was a tough year among a string of tough years. However, as the need has gone up, we have seen the generosity of others increase as well to help the Foundation continue its mission of providing for the urgent needs of Sinnissippi Centers' clients and their family members," says Jackson.

**Expressions began April 4, 2017**, when the art and silent auction items went on display. You can purchase art anytime and place your bids on auction items during gallery hours now through April 21st.

Then, **on April 21st, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** please join us for the reception, the conclusion of Expressions. Final sales of art will take place and winning bidders will be determined on auction items. Light hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be served.

There is no charge for admission to Expressions.

Expressions has always featured fantastic art and, as such, has been a great showcase of the enormous number of talented artists locally and in the wider region surrounding the Sauk Valley area.

There's also an incredible variety of auction items up for bid. From theatre tickets, to a stay at a Casino-Hotel, to tickets to see Tim McGraw and Faith Hill in concert.

There are also tickets to major and minor league baseball games, more art, baked goods, restaurant gift cards, certificates for thrilling experiences, and the list just goes on," says Jackson.

"And one of the best parts of Expressions, besides all the art and auction items, is the venue," says Jackson. "We couldn't ask for a better location for our event than The Next Picture Show gallery in Dixon. It's a wonderful local attraction. So many people who move to or visit the area see the gallery and view the art on the walls and are simply amazed. Many say that Dixon has a nicer gallery and as high quality of art compared to galleries in cities like Chicago. That's saying a lot, but it's very true," adds Jackson.

If you would like more information on Expressions, please call the Foundation at **815-284-9380**, or visit our events section online at [www.sinnissippi.org](http://www.sinnissippi.org).



"The Old Mill Run", in Smoky Mountain National Park, by Bob Logsdon

## Youth Garden Project Begins

April showers bring May flowers, and that also means it's time for the Sinnissippi Youth Garden Program to kick into high gear. "We are already in the early stages of preparing to plant the garden," says Sinnissippi Clinician **Shannon Key**. "We have already started preparing for the Gardenstock Art & Music Festival by beginning to tie-dye the T-shirts that will be sold at the event."

Gardenstock is in August, so the youth will continue to work on tie-dye shirts and the garden at the same time. "The Youth Garden Project has been a wonderful program for the teens that are part of it," says Key. "Youth who graduated from the program in past years tell us about the lasting positive impact it has had on their lives," says Key.

"The youth who work in the garden have serious challenges in their lives and the garden project gives them a non-clinical therapeutic experience that addresses those challenges and provides them with some life skills to deal and cope with them in a way we couldn't do in a traditional clinical setting," adds Key.

The kids learn other skills, like communication, leadership, teamwork, and some business skills as it relates to making and selling the T-shirts. It also gives them the satisfaction of helping others - the produce from the garden goes to local food pantries. Look for more information about the Youth Garden Project and Gardenstock in future issues of the Digest and online at [www.sinnissippi.org](http://www.sinnissippi.org).



Vegetables being planted in the youth garden in 2016



## Foundation News

### It's Fundraising Season

Spring is a busy time for the Sinnissippi Foundation as you may have read here. While fundraising efforts never really end, you could almost call it fundraising season for the Foundation. Preparations kick into high gear for the Expressions Art Sale & Reception (see story left) as well as for the annual Sinnissippi Foundation Golf Open. The Golf Open will be held on August 3, 2017, at Timber Creek Golf Club in Dixon. Preparation has begun for the annual Employee, Board, and Alumni Campaign which takes place in May each year. For more information on any of these you can contact the Sinnissippi Foundation at 815-284-9380 or send us an e-mail at [info@sinnissippi.com](mailto:info@sinnissippi.com).

### 25th Annual Golf Open

The **Sinnissippi Foundation Golf Open** will be celebrating its 25th year in 2017. The Golf Open is one of the biggest fundraising events of the year for the foundation and attracts around 110 golfers for a day of fun on the links and raising much needed funds for the Foundation. A save the date card has been mailed and more information is available online at [www.sinnissippi.org](http://www.sinnissippi.org).

### Gardenstock Art & Music Festival

The Annual **Gardenstock Art & Music Festival** will take place **Saturday, August 19, 2017, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.** at Distinctive Gardens in Dixon, 2010 Lowell Park Road. Gardenstock provides the primary funding for the Sinnissippi Centers' Youth Garden Project (see story below left). The event features local and regional bands, artists' booths, and food vendors. Participants can attend all day, or come and go as they please. They can bring their own food and beverages, or purchase them from the on-site vendors. Most "Gardenstockers" seem to do a little of both. Many artists donate a portion of their sales for the day to the Youth Garden Project. Sales of tie-dye shirts, which are made by the Sinnissippi Centers' Youth Garden Project youth, also benefit the program. For more information, call Distinctive Gardens at 815-285-0014 or visit their website at [www.diggersdelight.com](http://www.diggersdelight.com).

## The Digest Newsletter

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# Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.

www.sinnissippi.org

## Dixon

325 Illinois Route 2, Dixon, IL 61021  
(815) 284-6611

## Mt. Carroll

1122 Healthcare Drive, Mt. Carroll, IL 61053  
(815) 244-1376

## Oregon

100 Jefferson Street, Oregon, IL 61061  
(815) 732-3157

## Rochelle

1321 North 7th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068  
(815) 562-3801

## Sterling

2611 Woodlawn Road, Sterling, IL 61081  
(815) 625-0013

## Additional Locations by Appointment

Dixon-Town Square Centre

## 24-hour Emergency Phone Number 800-242-7642



Sinnissippi Centers is accredited by  
The Joint Commission and recipient of  
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# SINNISSIPPI FOUNDATION

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## Donations

If you would like to make a donation to the Foundation send your check to the address above. You may specify if you would like to give your donation in honor or in memory of a family member or loved one.

### Recent Donations

Dean & Darlene Butterbaugh  
Distinctive Gardens  
First Presbyterian Church  
Linda Giesen & Henry Dixon  
J. Gregory Langan  
Bill & Annette Long  
Jay & Alice Reter

### In Honor of....

...**Steve Braasch, for his contribution to enhance the lives of children and families**

Gloria Martin

...**Michael S. Derdzinski**

Terrence & Dolores Derdzinski

### In Memory of....

...**Barbara Deutsch**  
Hal & Rose Wendler

...**Phil Jorgensen**

Kevin Buss  
Gloria Martin  
Larry & Ann Prindaville  
Harold & Mary Scuffham  
DeAnne & Jeff White

## Sponsors & Donors Expressions Art Sale & Reception (to date)

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