

A-Team Meeting
October 8, 2013 3:30 – 5:00 pm
Northwoods Inc.

Present: John, Dallas and Yael Kerzan, Deana Stankey, Jolene Wheeler, Carol and Jeff Aerts, Kit Eilertson, Thomas Cook

Dallas is stepping down as co-chair for A-team. Deana Stankey has volunteered to take her place. Dallas offered to help Deana learn more about how the website and email works. Carol and other members thanked Dallas for her excellent commitment and leadership for the A-team. Andy and Jane Ellis have offered to help Deana. Kit will continue to write minutes.

Deana explained the progress she has had in working with IRIS to establish a program to meet her son's needs.

Thomas brought us up to date on the letter writing campaign that is being waged to fight cuts in services to disabled individuals and providers. Fred Clark wrote a letter to Mark Pocan that was cosigned by many other legislators from our area. Jeff suggested that an attempt be made to encourage legislators from other parts of Wisconsin to do the same.

It appears that groups in support of the cuts are mobilizing. As an example of what an individual can do, Dallas put together a packet she sent to family members and friends. It includes letters and stamped and addressed envelopes to each of the person's legislators, copies of a letter explaining how Northwoods has helped Yael as well as a picture of Yael at work. Kit commented that the addition of the picture is an excellent idea since it puts a face on the issue. As a practical matter people are much less likely to ignore or throw away a photo than a photo copied letter.

Jeff said that Northwoods is planning a public demonstration in the parking lot of their building and perhaps other places as well. The goal is to raise public awareness. He's ordered t-shirts that say "Our Work Our Choice". He will contact all the local newspapers and WKOW television station.

Carol reported that there have been rumors that Northwoods is closing. Of most concern is that the Portage High School seems to have that misunderstanding. Jeff will be speaking with them soon to share correct information.

Carol announced that Northwoods is producing a 2014 calendar that should be ready by the end of the month. The photos will be another opportunity to "put a face" on a program.

Joel Caulum stopped in briefly to bring some A-team buttons that can be worn in hopes of inviting questions and showing support for the group.

There is an Employment Summit that will take place in California.

Next meeting: November 19, 4:00 at Northwoods. November 12th was originally discussed, but was changed due to speaker availability.