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**NorthernBridges' Mission**

***Providing our members the best life possible***

## Growing Independence

Gerald Posta knows how to grow a great garden. His peas, beets, beans and cucumbers are the biggest and best in the neighborhood.

“It was a good year,” he grins, then shares the secret to a successful garden. “Plant early and use lots of good black fertilizer.”

Gardens aren't the only thing Gerald is growing. He is growing his own independence, self-reliance and confidence.

Over the years Gerald, who has a developmental disability, has progressed from living in an adult family care home, to living with a family member, to renting his own place, to owning his own home.

“It's a huge accomplishment,” says his NorthernBridges' care manager Carla Musil. “Gerald used to be very shy, quiet and didn't talk to many people. He is now such a social guy with a smile that just beams.”

These days Gerald has much to beam about.

With the help of grants, he bought a mobile home and property on a farm north of Rice Lake.

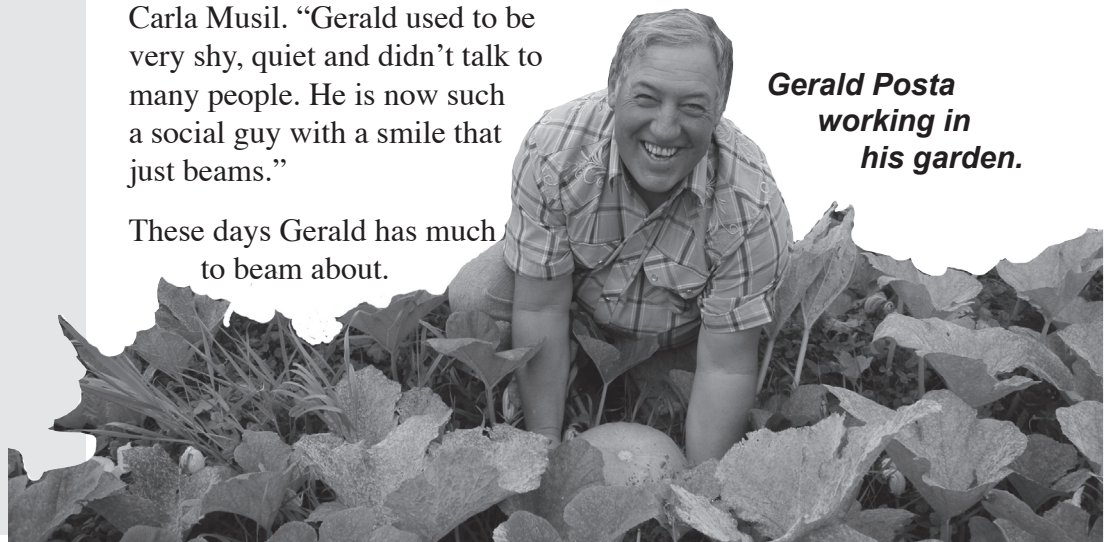
He self-directs his member services, hiring his own workers for transportation to go shopping and get to appointments. He drives his own tractor, working with neighboring farmers delivering hay.

And now, he's taken another big step. He is a member of NorthernBridges' Member Advisory Council.

“They want to know what I like and don't like about NorthernBridges and how to make it better,” said Gerald proudly.

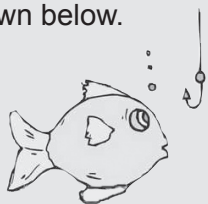
If Gerald can bring the same talent to the council that helped him grow his garden and life, it should be a very successful partnership.

**Gerald Posta working in his garden.**



## Please Drop Us a Line

If members, family, or friends would like to share stories, healthy recipes, caregiving tips, poems, or any other thoughts, please drop us a line. We will post in this newsletter or on our website in the "Members" section at: [www.northernbridges.com](http://www.northernbridges.com) or write us at the address shown below.



*Come for a visit!*

*On the web...*

[www.northernbridges.com](http://www.northernbridges.com)

*At our board meetings...*

Our Board of Directors meet monthly. Check our website for dates and times.

### CONTACT US:

For general questions, please call toll free 1-866-306-6499.

For newsletter, email:

[jjoyce@northernbridges.com](mailto:jjoyce@northernbridges.com)

- or write -

NorthernBridges  
"Member Newsletter"  
514 Service Road,  
Spooner, WI 54801

## Questions From Our Members

*Please send your questions to NorthernBridges "Member Newsletter,"  
514 Service Road, Spooner, WI 54801*

**Question:** Why is my care manager reviewing my services so often?

**Answer:** State guidelines require us to visit members every three months. If you receive supportive or personal care services, you can expect your care manager to review your services at least every six months for several reasons:

- 1) To see if you are satisfied with your services.
- 2) To review if the services you are receiving are what you need or if different services may be needed.
- 3) To see if there has been a change in your condition and you have either improved or need more help.

## NorthernBridges Survey Says Members Satisfied With Their Care

Surveys done by the State of Wisconsin and NorthernBridges show that a large majority of members served by the Family Care long-term care program are very satisfied with their care.

"We used the same core questions used by the state," said Grace Burkinshaw, NorthernBridges' Quality Manager. "We conducted the survey in July 2010 using a random sample of 418 members representing the three groups we serve, which are frail elders and adults with physical and developmental disabilities. We had a response rate of over 43.8 percent, which was better than the 40.1 percent statewide response."

Questions covered members' satisfaction with their care teams, participation in planning and decision-making about services, and communication quality.

Some of the highest levels of positive ratings (ranked as "always" or

"most of the time") were:

- "I am satisfied with the work that my care manager and nurse (or team) does for me." (90%)
- "I participate in making decisions about the services I receive." (90%)
- "I am comfortable with the people who help with my personal care." (93%)

Because the state has found that rapid expansion can sometimes mean lower satisfaction ratings, John McMahon, NorthernBridges' CEO, was pleased with the survey results.

"In our first year, we took 1792 people from the county waiver programs and took 367 off the wait lists," said McMahon. "Such a fast pace caused many changes and challenges for members, providers, and our employees. To see such positive member satisfaction, only gives us more reason to try to keep improving."

## Fighting the Flu

The flu season is here and it is serious business. Every year more than 200,000 people are admitted to the hospital because of the flu and thousands die from flu-related causes. Most of those deaths occur in people age 65 and older.

### Get a Flu Shot

The best way to avoid the flu is to get a flu shot. Getting a shot means you not only protect yourself, but you won't spread the flu to your family or friends.

## Provider Understands His Customers

Robert Sullivan understands very well the members whose wheelchairs he repairs. He uses a wheelchair himself.

"I was in a motorcycle accident 17 years ago," explained Robert. "I can no longer walk so I know how important mobility is to the people whose equipment I service."

Robert didn't let his disability disable his life. "I wanted to focus on what I could do and not what I couldn't do," he said.

He and his wife Kathy started their own business called Sullivan's Supply. Robert repairs manual and electric wheelchairs and scooters and does vehicle conversions such as installing lifts and specialized driving equipment. He also makes ramps and other aids for his customers. Kathy does the bills and other paperwork.

"Robert is very dependable and responsive," said Anita Dugan, NorthernBridges Care Manager. "We've had members who have had safety issues with wheelchair brakes and he goes out that day to take care of it. His actions reflect his high integrity. There have been times he did not charge mileage because he was already in the area. He understands how important it is for NorthernBridges to be as cost-effective as possible so we can provide services to those who remain on waiting lists. Rob and Kathy truly represent NorthernBridges' values."

Robert is also a volunteer with the Three Wishes program where people donate wheelchairs that he loans out or gives away. "I get people moving again," he says with a smile.

The shot is safe and will not make you sick.

"Our goal is to keep all our members as safe as we can," said Nancy Brede, NorthernBridges' Director of Care Management. "We ask all our members as well as our staff at NorthernBridges to get vaccinated. It is very important for everyone to get a flu shot."

Get your flu shot as soon as it becomes available in your area. Ask your care manager if you have any questions.



## STOP THE FLU BUG!

- **Get a flu shot.**
- **Stay away from people who have the flu.**
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve or elbow. Don't use your hands.**
- **Wash your hands often.**
- **Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.**
- **Get plenty of sleep and drink plenty of fluids.**



**Robert and Kathy Sullivan in the workshop of their wheelchair repair business.**



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*Providing members the best life possible.*

## NorthernBridges' Hub Locations

**Rice Lake** / Barron Co.  
2900 College Drive  
Rice Lake, WI 54868  
715-234-1050  
Toll Free 866-994-7484

**Superior** / Douglas Co.  
3631 Tower Avenue  
Superior, WI 54880  
715-392-2288  
Toll Free 877-307-2288

**Centuria** / Polk &  
Burnett Counties  
1001 State Hwy. 35  
Centuria, WI 54824  
715-646-1477  
Toll Free 866-751-3147

**Hayward** / Sawyer Co.  
15735 US Hwy. 63  
Hayward, WI 54843  
715-934-2282  
Toll Free 877-934-2282

**Spooner** / Washburn  
& Burnett Counties  
514 Service Road  
Spooner, WI 54801  
715-635-3122  
Toll Free 877-635-3122

**Ashland** /Ashland &  
Bayfield Counties  
400 3rd Avenue W.  
Ashland, WI 54806  
715-682-1024  
Toll Free 877-434-1025

**Ladysmith** / Rusk Co.  
1500 Port Arthur Road  
Ladysmith, WI 54848  
715-532-3040  
Toll Free 866-532-6534

**Park Falls** / Price  
& Iron Counties  
896 4th Avenue South  
Park Falls, WI 54552  
715-744-2888  
Toll Free 877-857-0696