

Laura Baker Services Association



*..to respect the life choices and dreams
of people with developmental disabilities
and help them reach their goals.*

Inspiring Possibilities ~ Realizing Dreams

*When I'm alone and in my room I sit and dream
of all the things I'd like to be.
A teacher, astronaut, a dancer in the dark
A chance to see what I might be.*

*Every time you show someone how to grow
Help them come to know their life's a miracle, then they will
have the hope to say, dreams come true some day
They will find a way, I feel it happening, so I sing...*

*Of all the things I'd like to be outside this room
of races run, of mountains climbed.
You give me hope to be the person I can be
You open doors that free my mind.*

What I Might Be ©2010 Paul Krause

Most of us remember a time in our lives when we had a place where we could dream about our future. We were young, still finding out who we were and who we might become. This ideal space made it safe to reflect on secrets, ponder worries and fears, and imagine life as we would like it to be.

We might also remember the people around us who helped us come to understand that we were worthy of our dreams — that some day those dreams might be realized.

And so it was for Laura Baker. From the moment she first turned the key in the front door of the house on Oak Street in Northfield, Minnesota, Laura Baker knew that she had discovered just the right place. The developmentally disabled people in her charge deserved a place of enrichment that honored the dignity of individual differences. This was more than just a place to live: this would be a home filled with dreamers and those who would help to make those dreams come true.



Margaret Graves Hall Entrance



An aging exterior



Narrow,
"cold"
hallways



Exposed plumbing

Margaret Graves: Then and Now

Today, it is hard to imagine how progressive Margaret Graves (MG) appeared when it was opened in September of 1929. At the time, developmentally disabled people in Minnesota were typically housed in large custodial institutions with 10 to 20 people sharing a room and community bathrooms. There were common spaces but few opportunities to individualize—not much of a nurturing home life.

In stark contrast, Margaret Graves offered individual bedrooms with a bathroom shared between two rooms and a substantial living area. Certainly an improvement over the large institutions, this building offered a better chance for a nurturing, supportive environment. It was a place that was highly prized and in demand.

Over the 80 plus years since it was built, Margaret Graves has been of great service to the many clients who have lived and developed there. Although the building has provided safe, clean and modest accommodations, the costs of maintaining the structure now outweigh the benefits. Even though Margaret Graves has aged well, it is time for her to be retired.

As the photos show, MG still provides service. That said, individual residents repeatedly ask, “When do I get my new home?” They see life as it might be lived in the Cottage, the newest campus home, and naturally want to be part of that environment.

The staff is also keenly aware that a homier atmosphere would make their jobs easier and more rewarding. They strive to provide the best care possible while heroically coping with the limitations of Margaret Graves. They also realize how much more could be accomplished in a cottage environment. So, what can be done?

Our plan is to raze Margaret Graves and replace it with two new residences just like the Cottage (shown next page). Since we have a Cottage in place, we can easily compare and contrast living conditions there with those at Margaret Graves. The differences are dramatic!



Crowded laundry room and shared bathrooms



Cramped social spaces and exposed pipes in lower level rooms



At Home in the Cottage

To be respected, not demeaned; to be cared for and loved, not shunned; to have relationships that nurture, not diminish; to be able to express thoughts, not be put down; to feel secure, not fear surroundings – these are all fundamental human needs and desires.

Self Respect and Personal Dignity

Margaret Graves (MG) is not handicapped accessible, so only the most physically able clients are housed in MG. Until the new cottages are built, MG clients have fewer housing options.

The institutional look of MG reinforces commonly-held fears and personal safety concerns of the larger Northfield community regarding developmentally-disabled people. The façade is seen as uninviting, off-putting and surrounding potentially dangerous people. This misunderstanding has the potential to negatively influence community relationship building and indirectly affects attitudes about and toward its clients. Over time, this apprehension further diminishes dignity and respect.

Better Space Utilization, Order

From almost any angle, the spatial qualities of the Cottage surpass those of MG. For example, the Cottage has the familiar outline and proportions of a residential dwelling. Where MG says dormitory, the Cottage says home. This is reinforced by the outdoor patio. Most months of the year, clients and staff find this a sunny space to chat together. There is nothing like it at MG.

A flowing, orderly progression from entrance to exit creates a feeling of serenity and calm for residents. The floor plan begins with a common room, continues to the bedroom hallways along the back sides of the building, and ultimately concludes with the utility and storage rooms at the back of the building. Movement is straightforward, unimpeded, and sure.

Opening the front door of the Cottage, people step into a common room which is flooded with natural light. To the right, there is an entertainment nook and to the left, comfortable chairs and a special “quieting” swing for one of the clients.



The appearance of home - a welcoming entrance, human proportions, relaxing and engaging places to gather with family and friends.

The center of the room features a large community dining table and meeting space, allowing clients and staff to come together in meaningful ways. Toward the back of the room is a full kitchen with lots of storage space. Ceilings are higher than those at MG, and exposed plumbing and other utility hardware is non-existent.

Unlike MG, where each bedroom opens into a dark, central corridor, bedrooms at the Cottage are arranged around the perimeter of the community room. Each bedroom has a spacious bathroom and other storage amenities.

Light

The design of the Cottage takes full advantage of natural light. In contrast to MG, light is abundant in the Cottage. The community room is awash in sunlight all day. The large windows and carefully selected lighting of the Cottage bedrooms also create a pleasant, sunny atmosphere.

Nurturing Relationships, Fostering Self-Expression

"We make Margaret Graves a home by how we treat each other. The physical environment of MG is not conducive to a family atmosphere."
~LBSA staff member

Caring and loving LBSA staff members, regardless of the environment, always treat clients warmly, encouraging their potential to grow and develop. The clients in MG receive this kind of care every day. It is simply a little more difficult to create a close-knit, family atmosphere in a more challenging environment.

Security

Central to LBSA's mission is the belief of clients being "safely held." Clients who live on campus are unable to live independently in the larger community. They often have multiple challenges which can put them and others at risk. The nurturing attention and care that they receive lessens some of this risk, yet there is still need for supervision. The warmer atmosphere of the Cottage may result in fewer complex situations that need to be managed.

"We want to give you a safe place and a place where you have an opportunity to grow."
~Sandi Gerdes



LBSA Stories: The Spoon

I was only 19 at the time and had only been working at Laura Baker Services for about a year. I was working on the little boys unit and it was there that I met “Jerry.” Although we all try to care for each client equally, I believe we still have our favorites and he was the one for me. The moment I saw him, I just had this connection with him and wanted to get to know and help him.

I had a deep belief that Jerry could learn – that we could find a way to release him from the trap that a “double whammy” of physical and mental disability had ensnared him in. He was nonverbal, had cerebral palsy, a developmental disorder and limited communication skills. But where would I start and how would we connect?

At that time, one of my challenges was to set annual goals for my clients. Conferring with other staff members, I decided to try to increase his independence in eating.

You see, Jerry couldn’t feed himself. The simple act of taking a spoon, filling it with food and bringing it to his mouth was beyond him. He had some special adaptive equipment, but we had to feed him. If we could find a way to help him accomplish this basic task, I just knew it would make a difference in how others might view him and, more importantly, how he viewed himself.

For a full year, we worked slowly and methodically with him. At every step we praised his very limited progress and encouraged him to continue. It was such a challenge for him, but I could tell he was really trying. We worked together three meals a day, day after day, for a year.

The first time that he picked up the spoon and put that bite of food in his mouth without any assistance at all, we all clapped and praised him to the sky. Then he smiled and clapped back.

It was the most special moment that I’ve ever had working at Laura Baker, and it was the moment that I knew that this was the work I was meant to do. I learned that communication and bonding were true gifts we gave to each other.

Jerry went on to learn other skills. I think for both of us, it was a breakthrough moment into a new life.



LBSA Stories: Peaches or Pears -- the Power of Choice, Love and Imagination

Respect for the choices that our developmentally disabled clients make is a core value here at LBSA. But what if the client's disability gets in the way of making choices, even simple ones like choosing peaches or pears for an afternoon snack?

Jacque Marin, a Household Director, wanted to help "Jill" learn how to make a choice. In part, this was due to Jacque's commitment to LBSA's mission and also because she had a soft spot in her heart for Jill. "Jill is very dear to me – it makes my day when she recognizes me and maybe even says my name."



So, what is the dilemma? Because Jill is almost non-verbal, it is easier for her to simply agree to the last thing she hears. If offered peaches or pears, she chooses pears.

If offered pears or peaches, she chooses peaches.

From time spent with Jill, Jacque knew that Jill seemed to like pears more than peaches, but how could she get her to actually make that choice? Creativity is a key value at LBSA and Jacque used hers to come up with a number of imaginative solutions.

For example, Jacque placed peaches in one small bowl, pears in another. Then she set both dishes on the table and gave Jill a spoon. Guess what!? Jill simultaneously ate the fruit from both bowls. What to do?

Jacque knew that Jill loved eggs, could say the word "egg" enthusiastically and if eggs were served for breakfast, would have a happy morning. So, instead of offering Jill peaches or pears for the 3pm snack, Jacque began to offer her a hot egg or a bowl of cold pears.

For two months, Jill said, "eggs, eggs, eggs..." with no mention of pears. Although it looked like this approach would not work, Jacque persisted. Eventually, Jill began to substitute pears for eggs. She began making a real choice. Jacque was overjoyed.

Jacque says she also learned something important: "As a mentor, I'm a role model for clients and staff members. Most people take for granted how important it is to make a choice. Sharing this experience illustrates the empowerment associated with making a choice. Now both staff members and I keep this in mind." Jacque is the kind of person who makes her own choices. Now, so is Jill.

LBSA Stories: Patch and Pepper

Jane Fenton loves her work as LBSA's Director of Community Relations. She also loves dogs, as you shall see.

As an administrator, Jane doesn't get too many chances to interact with clients. Early in her LBSA career, she asked if, once a month, she might bring her dog Patch to LBSA. Certified in pet therapy, Patch offered clients a chance to connect with a friendly and furry animal. And, to add to the fun, Pepper, Jane's other dog, would come along too.

Although Pepper was in training and a little shy, Jane thought he could learn from Patch's gregarious approach. As the two dogs worked their magic on LBSA clients, Jane had her chance to get closer to the clients. Over time Pepper learned to enjoy all the attention and became much more outgoing. Things were going well. Then, tragedy struck.

Over the Christmas holidays, Pepper was hit by a car. A Good Samaritan stopped and cradled her for over an hour until the Sheriff arrived.

January's pet therapy day arrived, and Jane was apprehensive. How would the clients respond to Pepper's death? The staff knew what had happened, and the word had spread to the clients. Would Jane be inundated with "childish" questions and remarks?

Arriving with Patch that cold day, something remarkable happened. A client came rushing up to her, saying how sorry she was that Pepper had been killed. Others brought pictures of Pepper and they spent the morning sharing stories about their lost friend.

Jane was deeply touched by how thoughtful and caring everyone was. "They miss her as much as I do." She also realized that the deep caring and attention that clients receive at Laura Baker give them the scope to deeply share their own cares and concerns.

Even though it had come at the loss of a good and true friend, Jane received the precious gift of new understanding.

Lance and Patch



LBSA Stories: A Thunder Storm with a Ray of Hope

Mary was a client who lived on the Oak street campus. Before arriving, Mary had learned to express her needs through physical violence. When she needed something, she would strike out and end up hurting someone. For over a year, the staff tried to help her deal with a serious behavioral problem, but nothing seemed to help. With great reluctance Mary was returned to her family home with the assurance that LBSA staff would come by to assist on-site.

This is where Sandi Gerdes arrived on the scene.

At the time, Sandi was re-evaluating her career choices. Stepping back from full-time staff work she became a substitute care-giver for LBSA and was assigned to Mary's case.

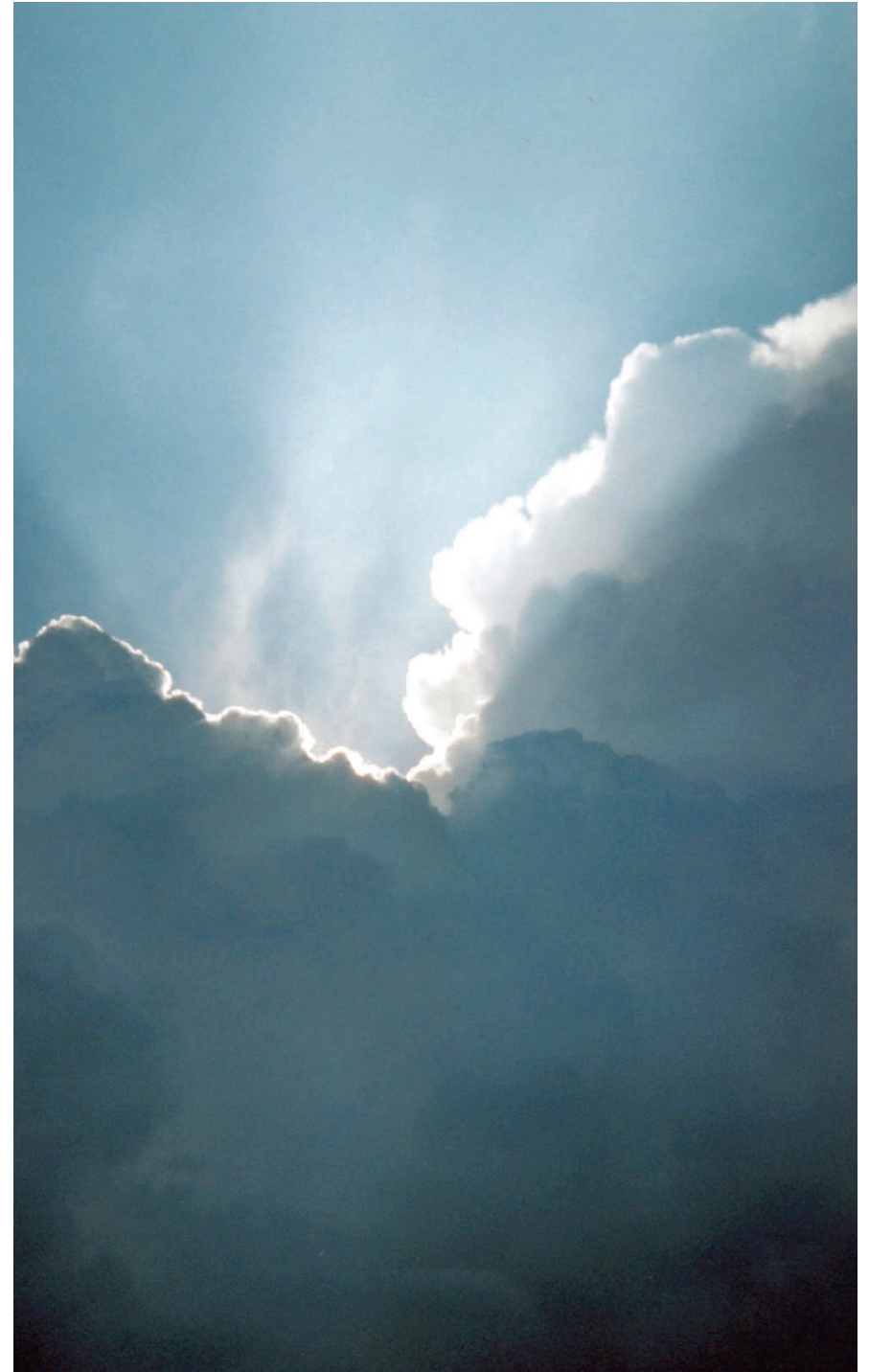
Trips to see Mary were daunting. She could be very aggressive and scratches and bruises were quite common. At one point, Sandi recalls her dad asking her, "What happened to you?"

Sandi discovered that Mary needed a calm, quiet environment and training in new ways to communicate her needs. Whenever Mary became aggressive, the family was taught to ignore her, even if it meant painfully enduring her attacks. Once Mary realized that nothing could be gained from being aggressive, she was ready to accept other options.

After many months, Mary began to respond and to change. Her parents were eager to see her find a home where she could continue her development. They decided to purchase a home for her and others who had similar needs. This home became LBSA's first supportive living house in Northfield. Mary is still living there and doing beautifully.

In a way, Mary became a pioneer.

Sandi also became a pioneer care-giver, and the experience confirmed her own commitment to the developmentally disabled and Laura Baker's mission. Today, Sandi is Executive Director of LBSA.



How Can We Keep From Singing?

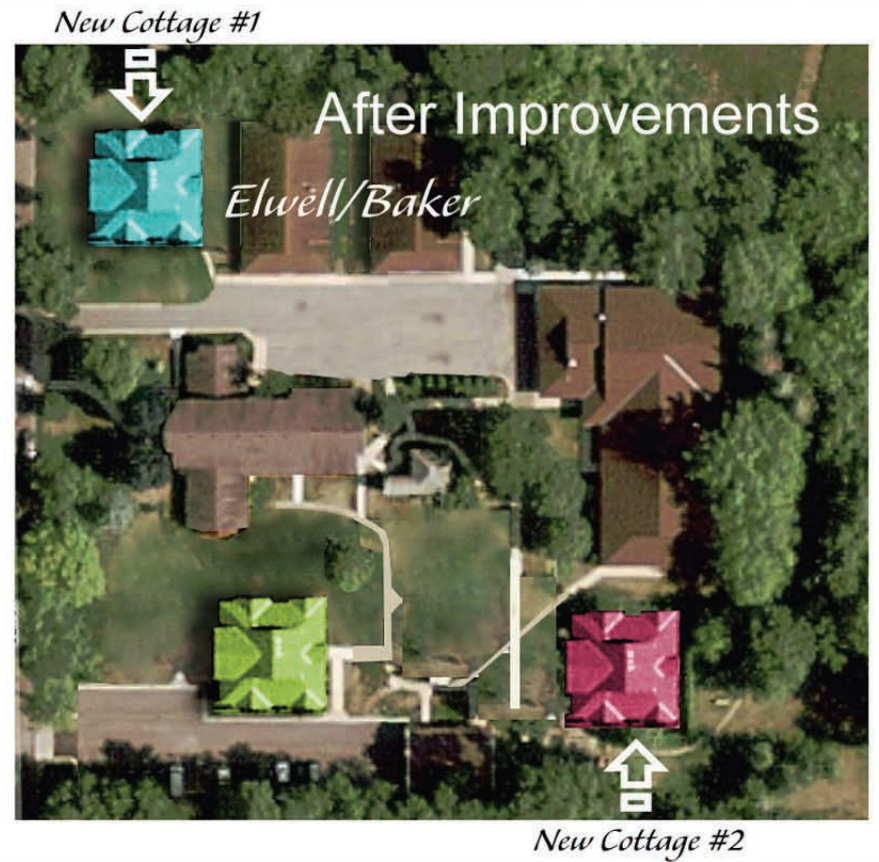


What We Will Accomplish





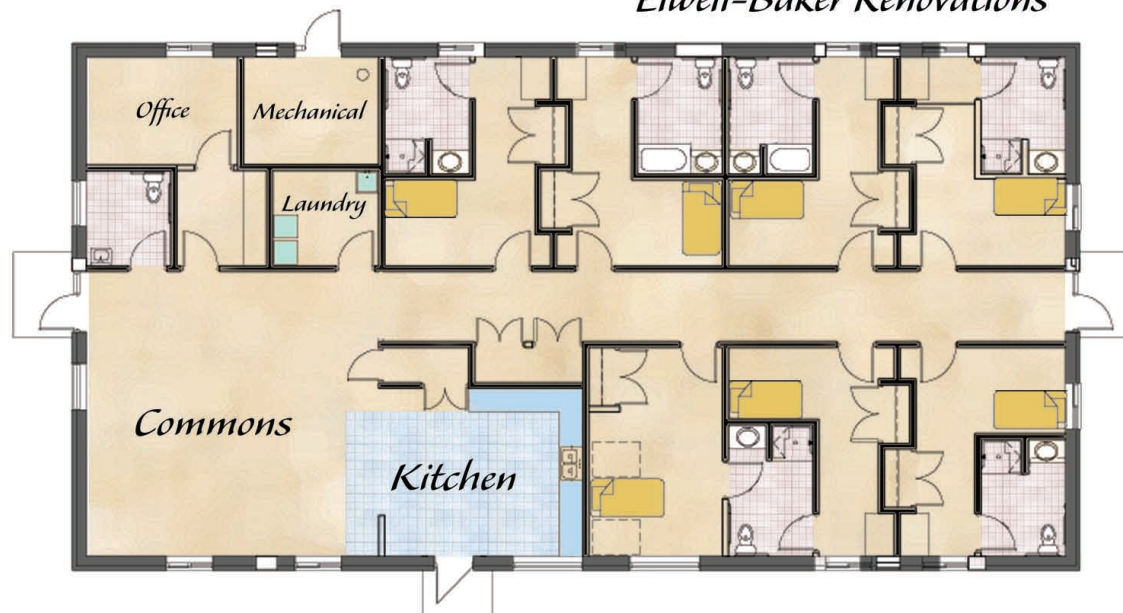
Before and After



Project Floorplans



Elwell-Baker Renovations



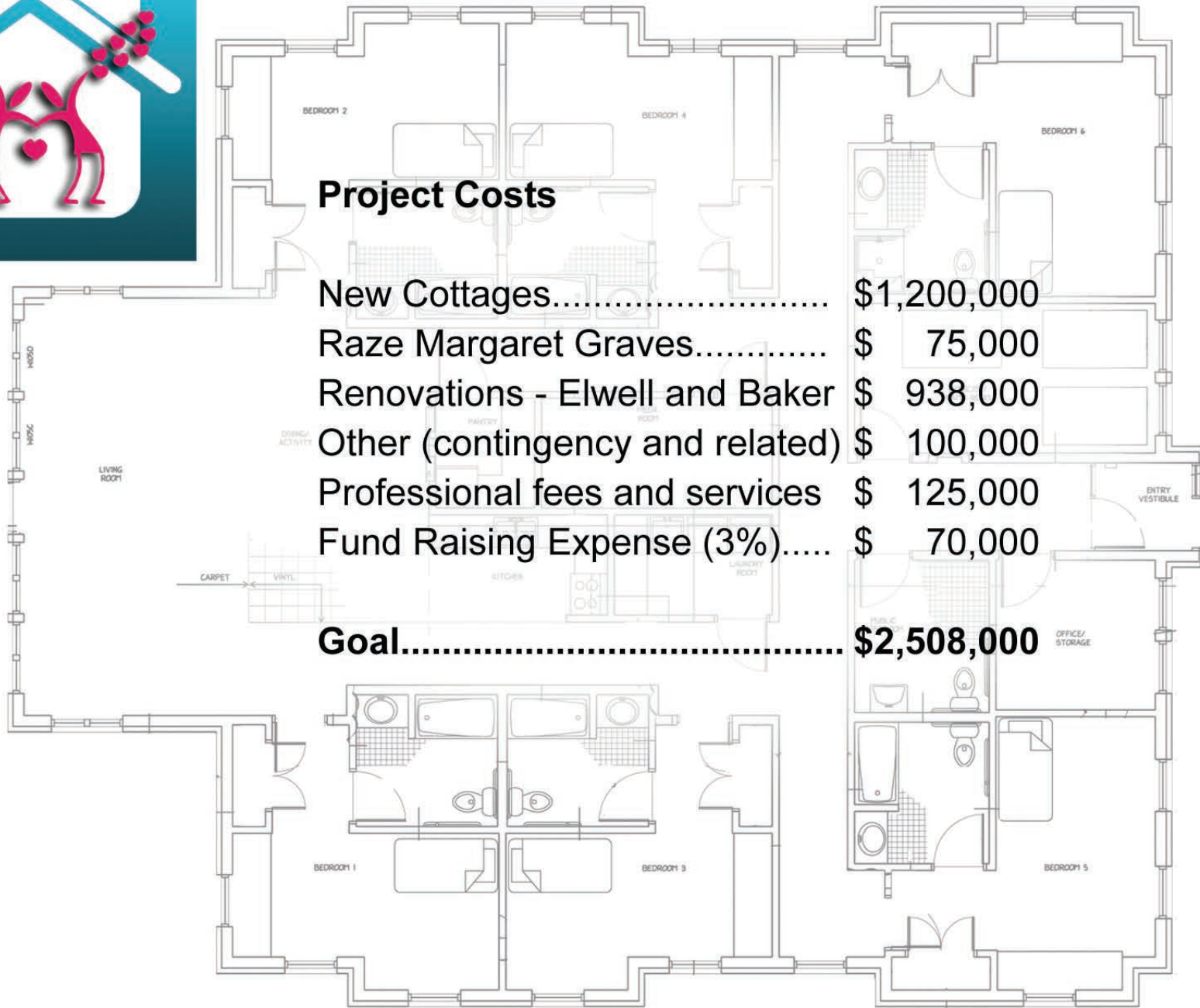
Inspiring Possibilities - Realizing Dreams



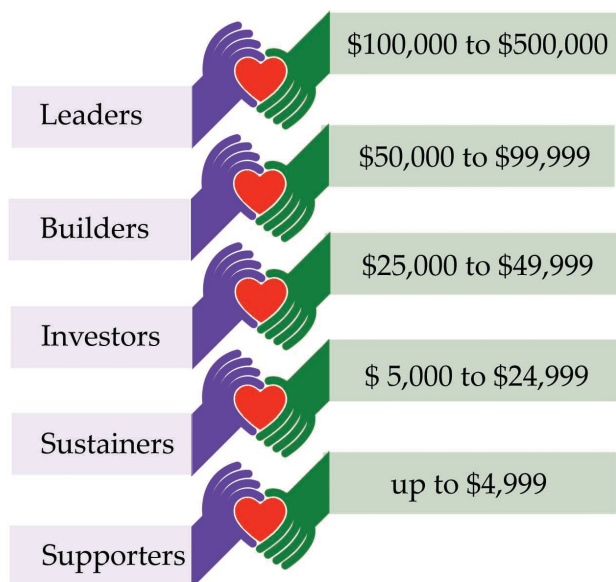
Project Costs

New Cottages.....	\$1,200,000
Raze Margaret Graves.....	\$ 75,000
Renovations - Elwell and Baker	\$ 938,000
Other (contingency and related)	\$ 100,000
Professional fees and services	\$ 125,000
Fund Raising Expense (3%).....	\$ 70,000

Goal..... \$2,508,000



Gifts Table



Gift Type	Gift Range	Number of Gifts	Total
Major	\$500,000	1	\$ 500,000
	\$100,000	2	\$ 200,000
Special	\$ 50,000	4	\$ 200,000
	\$ 25,000	6	\$ 150,000
	\$ 10,000	10	\$ 100,000
	\$ 5,000	15	\$ 75,000
General	< \$ 5,000	many	\$ 75,000
			\$1,300,000

About Laura Baker Services Association

Our mission is to respect the life choices and dreams of people with developmental disabilities and help them reach their goals.

Laura Baker Services is dedicated to dispelling the myths about people with developmental disabilities. We recognize the similarities among us all and strive to support our clients in the least intrusive way possible. We specialize in assisting people others have labeled as “difficult to serve.” We have a special program to serve people with Prader Willi Syndrome.

Laura Baker laid the foundation for our work in 1897 when she located her residential program for people with developmental disabilities in Northfield. Her vision was clear - she saw a future that included more opportunities, education, and normal and productive lives for the people she supported. Her vision has been sustained for over 100 years by dedicated professionals who emulated her progressive spirit and her commitment to the service of others.



Oak Street Services

Oak Street Services at 211 Oak St. in Northfield is a licensed, 30-bed intermediate care facility that offers residential services for people 16 years and older who, because of their developmental disabilities, are not able to live independently in the community.

Clients live in a safe, nurturing atmosphere in one of five households on campus. Trained staff provide 24-hour supervision and implement individualized treatment plans that emphasize continuous learning and growth based on each person's wants, needs and dreams. Clients design their own goals in areas such as social skills, daily living skills and money management. Participation in the larger community through recreation or work is encouraged.

We recognize the importance of family involvement and support and nourish the connection between people supported and their family and friends.

Statement of Unrestricted Activities

Support and Revenue

Client Services	\$4,609,881
Donations	199,941
Other Income	48,950
In-Kind Donations	10,407
Unrealized Net Loss on Investment	32,065
Total Support and Revenue	\$4,901,244

Operating Expenses

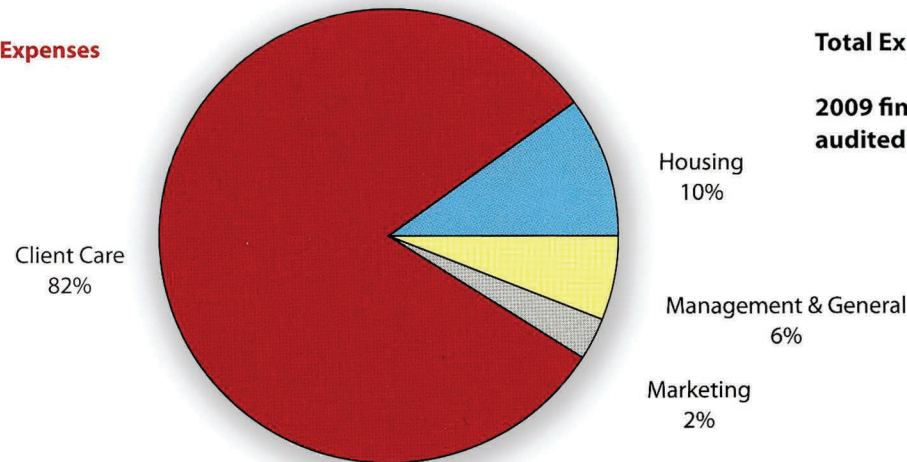
Salaries & Benefits Client Care	\$3,275,762
Client Program Supplies	135,002
Transportation	40,634
Contracted Services	196,465
Housing	475,297
Food	175,444
Other Client Care Expenses	105,050
Total Client Care Expenses	\$4,403,654

Management & General	\$292,187
Marketing & Events	94,086
Total Support Services	\$386,273

Total Expenses **\$4,789,927**

2009 financial results
audited by Olsen Thielen, Co., Ltd.

2009 Expenses



Balance Sheet

as of December 31, 2009

Assets

Current Assets	\$796,578
Investments	199,348
Building & Equipment	2,067,732
Total Assets	\$3,063,658

Liabilities

Current Liabilities	\$353,813
Long-Term Liabilities	—
Total Liabilities	\$353,813

Net Assets

Unrestricted Assets	\$2,709,845
Total Net Assets	\$2,709,845

Total Liabilities & Net Assets **\$3,063,658**

LBSA's Board of Trustees



President **Cheryl Buck** lives in Northfield with her husband, Dave, and two children. She is the director of sponsor relations for PRMIA, a global risk management association. She is active in the community through a variety of volunteer opportunities, including LBSA, and has been on the Board since 2004.



Bob Bonner, Professor of History Emeritus at Carleton College and an LBSA parent has been on the Board since 1989. He recently published a book on Buffalo Bill Cody. He is looking forward to the next Capital Campaign so we can provide new housing for clients.



James Gleason is the great-grand nephew of Laura Baker and joined the Board of Trustees in 2007. He is owner of American Excavating in Northfield.



Eric Stratton, an LBSA parent, joined the Board in 2006. He and his wife, Tammy, are deeply appreciative for their daughter's life and are passionate about our mission.



Charlie Sewich, partner at Heartman Insurance, joined the Board in 2002. He serves as Chair of this year's Capital Campaign and is an enthusiastic supporter of the golf tournament. He is particularly good at inspiring others to support our cause.



Becky Behrens joined the Board of Trustees in April 2009. Becky is Vice President of the First National Bank of Northfield. She has been an enthusiastic supporter of LBSA for years.



Michael Hero, local attorney, has been on the Board since 1989. He served as President from 1992 to 1999. We appreciate his steady hand and stalwart heart during those tumultuous times.



Julie Thorsheim, social work consultant and founder of KST Associates, has been a Board member since 2002. She understands the need for our services and the need for them to be provided with integrity.



Natalie Chell is treasurer for College City Beverage and has served on our golf tournament committee for several years. Her community projects include the YMCA and Women in Northfield Giving Support. She is our newest Board member.



Gail Jones Hanson is a communications professional with thirty years of experience in corporate and not-for-profit marketing and public relations, including strategic planning, print and website copy development, article writing and book creation.



Ed Lundstrom is a longtime Northfield businessman, now retired. He has served as CEO of Sheldahl and CFO of All-Flex. Ed and his wife Anne are the founders of Fermentations restaurant in Dundas.



Frank Zastera lives in Cloquet and has a family member at LBSA. He started in 2000, continuing the Zastera family tradition of service on the LBSA Board of Trustees.



Treasurer, **Steve Kelly** is a professor of music at Carleton College. He was inspired to join the Board of Trustees after he saw what raising a special needs child was like for a close friend. He enjoys telling others about LBSA and doesn't miss a golf tournament or Gala.



Wayne Eddy, longtime local radio personality, has been on the Board of Trustees since 1998. He is a tireless advocate for LBSA, having first become acquainted by being Santa Claus for us in 1969.



Aggie Pavek has been on the Board of Trustees since 2005. She started a company that provided transportation for people with developmental disabilities, based on her experience of having a sister with special needs.



Judy Jones is a family member and guardian for a client who has been with us for over 50 years. Judy comes from a Milwaukee family with a long philanthropic tradition.