

HOPE HAVEN NEWS

SPRING HORIZONS 2026

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HOPE HAVEN
FAITH. COMMUNITY. POSSIBILITIES.



SUCCESS STORY: LATORIA LOWE **BETTY DEBERG | COUNTY COORDINATOR**

Six months ago, Latoria Lowe was a young woman feeling discouraged as she attempted to enter the workforce for the first time. With no prior work history and ongoing mental health challenges, the job search process felt overwhelming. Finding an employer who would understand her needs and support her success seemed out of reach.

Everything began to change when Latoria was referred to the IPS program and connected with her Employment Specialist. Through consistent meetings and a strong focus on building trust, the Employment Specialist helped her identify and articulate the skills she already possessed. Together, they created a resume that highlighted her strengths rather than her lack of work experience. Over time, Latoria's confidence steadily grew as she began to believe in her own abilities.

After two months of preparation and encouragement, she agreed to apply for a position at Hy-Vee in Worthington. With Latoria's consent, the Employment Specialist reached out to the employer to advocate on her behalf and discuss a job tryout opportunity. This collaborative approach led to Latoria being offered an interview. At her request, the Employment Specialist accompanied her, providing reassurance and support throughout the process. During the interview, Latoria was able to openly share some of her challenges, including social anxiety, which helped establish honest and respectful communication with the employer. **(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)**

SUCCESS STORY: LATORIA LOWE (CONTINUED)

Latoria was offered a part-time job tryout in the deli department and accepted the position. On her first day, it became clear that food preparation policies would not allow her to wear her nose ring, which she was not comfortable removing. Rather than viewing this as a setback, the Human Resources Manager offered her an alternative role in the merchandising department, where she could continue working in an environment that aligned with both company policy and her personal needs.

Throughout the job tryout, Latoria received ongoing support and consistently positive feedback. She proved to be dependable, engaged, and willing to learn, leading to her being hired as a permanent Hy-Vee employee.

Today, Latoria's self-confidence has grown tremendously, and she genuinely enjoys going to work. She is grateful for an employer who understands her needs and continues to support her success. Her journey highlights the power of individualized support, strong employer partnerships, and believing in a person's potential. What began as uncertainty has transformed into meaningful employment, confidence, and long-term success.

A NEW CHAPTER IN MOBILITY: THE HOPE HAVEN TILT CHAIR

The story of the Hope Haven Tilt Chair actually began years ago, when Mark Siemonsma, former Director of Development, recognized a gap in mobility solutions for children with more complex physical needs. That vision led to a partnership with the Dordt University Engineering program, where the 2019 senior class developed early prototypes. While those designs were never mass produced, they provided valuable insight that helped shape the chair being built today.

In March 2024, that need came into focus again. During a distribution trip to Kenya with Hope Mobility, Terry Meyer, CFO, and Luke Russell, Director of International Ministries, saw firsthand that many children required more support than the standard KidChair could provide.

Once back home, Terry Meyer began reworking the design in his garage before partnering with Austin Vande Vegte, Chief Manufacturing Officer of Double HH Manufacturing. Together, they reimagined the frame and developed seven new custom parts while still preserving key elements of the original KidChair design. The result is a chair designed for children who spend extended periods seated, allowing caregivers to safely reposition them to improve circulation and reduce the risk of pressure sores.

Production began in August 2025 in Sioux Center through a partnership with Whispers of Love, Hope, and Joy and Bethel CRC.



What started with staff and one volunteer has grown into a dedicated team now assembling approximately 10 chairs each week, with a goal of producing 500 in the coming year.

The first chair was distributed in Costa Rica this past January, where a young girl named Carla became the first recipient. Just days later, another chair was delivered in Thailand to a young girl named Walinda, marking the beginning of our global distribution.

The Tilt Chair is the result of years of learning and collaboration and reflects Hope Haven's ongoing commitment to developing better mobility solutions to children with disabilities around the world.

2026 SPRING SPIRITUAL RETREATS

Welcome to the Party! This was the theme of our 2026 spring retreat for members of our programs. With over 200 registrations and a combined attendance of 154 across Worthington, Milford, and Orange City, it was our strongest turnout in several years.

The celebration centered on the story of the Prodigal Son—a joyful reminder of being welcomed, loved, and forgiven. Through a simple drama, participants experienced what it means to return home. Music focused on the “Reckless Love of God”, and everyone created cards to bless or encourage others. The retreat wrapped up with games, a shared Bible verse—“Let’s have a feast and celebrate!”—and, of course, a party with pizza and ice cream.



ANNUAL AUCTION UPDATE

Hope Haven's Annual Benefit Auction, held on March 27 at Te Slaa Trucking in Hull, was an incredible night of generosity and community. With a great turnout and overwhelming support from attendees, sponsors, donors, and volunteers, the evening was truly one to remember!

Thanks to our amazing community, the event raised over \$130,000, including a **record-breaking \$46,000 in wheelchair sponsorships**. These funds will directly support Hope Haven's programs and help empower individuals with disabilities both locally and around the world. We are deeply grateful for everyone who made this night such a success and look forward to gathering again next year and celebrating our 25th anniversary!



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Rock Valley, IA 51247-0070
hopehaven.org | 712-476.2737

UPCOMING EVENTS

SIGN UP FOR EMAILS: Scan the QR code to join our email list! We'll only send a few emails a month, with community updates and reminders about upcoming events.



JUN
5

28TH ANNUAL FISHING BENEFIT 7AM - 4PM | Big Spirit | Spirit Lake, IA

Cast a line for a great cause at our 28th annual Fishing Benefit. Enjoy a day on the water while supporting Hope Haven's mission to serve individuals with disabilities locally and around the world!

JUN
17

36TH ANNUAL GOLF BENEFIT 10AM | Emerald Hills Golf Course | Spirit Lake, IA

Grab your clubs and join us for our annual Golf Benefit. It's a fun day on the course that supports the life-changing work of Hope Haven.

AUG
28

DUELING DUOS The Roof Garden | Spirit Lake, IA

Back by popular demand, Dueling Duos returns for another night of high-energy entertainment. Save the date and join us for an evening of music, laughter, and impact you won't want to miss!

[Learn more at hopehaven.org/events](https://hopehaven.org/events)

HOPE HAVEN MEMORIAL

Memorial Gifts to Hope Haven honor the lives of loved ones by creating a brighter future for individuals with disabilities. These meaningful tributes reflect the donor's love for the Lord and leave a lasting legacy that supports the impactful work of God's Kingdom. Your gift will help meet the special needs of our clients. Each memorial is permanently recorded in Hope Haven's "Book of Remembrance," serving as a beautiful and enduring tribute.

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Craig and Nancy Fratzke
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First Ref. Church-Rock Rapids
First Ref. Church-Rock Rapids
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Herm Struiksma

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Sweert Arends
Daryl Kruid
Daryl Kruid
Kari Van Tol
Chuck Ver Steeg
Chuck Ver Steeg
Chuck Ver Steeg

In loving memory of Arthur DeHoogh: Sara Shea, James and Melody Mielke, Debra Clark, Ryan Achterhoff, Rev. Eugene DeHoogh, Ted & Noreen DeHoogh, Mr. & Mrs. LaVerne Graber, Marty Guthmiller, Mr. & Mrs. Lyle Lundgren, Ronald Noordsy, Mr. & Mrs. Brian Schmidt, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Schmidt, John Van Berkum, Family & friends, Mr. & Mrs. Brent Vandermyde, Mr. & Mrs. Mark Vogel, Mr. & Mrs. Drew Vogel

In loving memory of Ryan Olivier: Lonnie Heibult, Tschetter & Adams Law Office, Davenport, Evans, Hurwitz & Smith, Rich Harr, Collen Zea, Trish Schuver, The Craneware Group, Susan Blankers, Melissa Curran-Moore, Harr Property Management, Al Hodgson, Lois Kamerud, Molly Kuehl, Larry Nickolay, Dave Sullivan, Bill & Lois Olivier-Willman, Carla Shephard, Mr. & Mrs. Steve Sikorski, Holly Bill-Wilsey, Marisa Foster, Steve and Sue Wallinga, George and Shelley Williams, Kevin and Jill Engelhart, Maggie Grotluschen, Larry Simburger, Curtis Zaske, Mr. & Mrs. Ivan Dorhout, Mr. & Mrs. Mike Hilbrands, Richard and Corinne Holland, SDTLA, Caroline Srstka, Roger White, Joe and Kristen Zueger, Jon and Denise Kolba, Debbie Moser, Balloon Federation of America, Mindy Brouwer, Aaron Fox, Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Holzwarth, Liberty National Bank, Nicholas and Sharon Mack, Jessica Oligmueller, Ponaman Healthcare Consulting, Doug and Carolyn Sanders, Kevin Topolinski, Jan Zoss, Scott Brouwer, Brad Temeyer, Pauline Poletes, Goodsell & Oviatt, LLP, Gary Jones, Nicholson Law, Douglas Smith, Lori Gardner, Dr. & Mrs. Richard Friess, Roma Visser, Paul Davidson, Mr. & Mrs. Gary Helder, Lana Kullander, Mr. & Mrs. Ardeen Mulder, Olson Law Firm, RRR Investment Club, John Schulte, Olivia Little, Barbara Thomas, Adam Packer, Beth Van Eschen, Ron Arndt, Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Brouwer, Mr. & Mrs. Dean Bruckneberg, Mr. & Mrs. Stan Burgers, Mr. & Mrs. Scott Fielder, Friese Family Trust, Judy Gaspar, Kevin & Brenda Gisolf, Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Heinemann, Donna Humme, Kristi Jones, Elizabeth Koch, Richard Lauer, Mr. & Mrs. Michael Leimbach, Mr. & Mrs. David C. Link, Nila Martinek, Glenda Masselink, Family & Friends, Mr. & Mrs. Michael Olivier, Beverly Parsons, Mr. & Mrs. Doug Peterson, Mr. & Mrs. Jim Pfeifer, Mr. & Mrs. Jon Schaefer, Mr. & Mrs. Mark Siemonsma, Sioux Falls Balloon Association, Marlene Van Meeteren, Joe Van Tol, Duane Waack, Terry Walter, Elizabeth Wiederkehr, Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Parezo