

For more information on SEI programs or how you, your business or organization can become involved, contact SEI or visit the website at: [www.service-enterprises.org](http://www.service-enterprises.org).

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Accredited by CARF -Community Employment and Employment Planning Services

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Licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services

SEI is EEO/AA. This report is available in an alternative format upon request.

**SEI SERVICE ENTERPRISES, INC.**  
Opportunities for People & Business  
515 West Bridge Street • PO Box 248  
Redwood Falls, MN 56283

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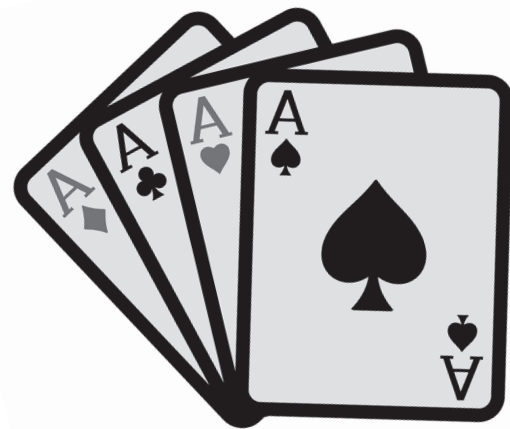
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## 8th Annual Euchre Tournament

Mark your calendar for our  
**8th Annual Euchre Fundraiser and Silent Auction**  
**Saturday, March 2nd, 2024**

American Legion, Redwood Falls  
Contact SEI for more information  
(507) 637-3503



*Mission* ~ Service Enterprises, Inc., through effective partnerships, provides quality vocational training, habilitative and other services to individuals with disabilities to promote their independence and active participation in their communities.

# SEI Enterprise

Fall • 2023

## Happy Retirement Wishes

Service Enterprises knew the day would come when some of our very long time and dedicated staff would leave employment for the greener pastures of retirement. This Summer, we bid farewell to two of our most dependable, dedicated team members.

Kathy Rejsek retired after 24 years working in various settings for Service Enterprises including as a job coach, recycling supervisor and her most recent role for the past 10 years, supervisor of our Assembly production program.

Peggy Huwe retired after nearly 16 years with SEI, spending the majority of those years working with our supported employment crew at the local hospital laundry department.

Both of these gals impacted many lives over the years and while both are very missed, we wish them the happiest retirement and gratefully thank them for their years of service to Service Enterprises.



## Another chapter comes to an end

For 37 years, Service Enterprises had a relationship with the local hospital. Under management of the city, SEI had a contract for years with the Redwood Area Hospital providing linen services; pick-up and washing/drying/folding linens, picking up soiled linens, delivering clean linens and assuring adequate linen supply throughout hospital departments. On average, seven clients made up our laundry work crew; many of them working on this crew for years. Due to the nature of the hospital business, our laundry crew worked Monday thru Friday, week after week, and often worked an occasional weekend and holiday to assure hospital staff had the linens they needed. Even during the pandemic, this crew was known to work seven days a week and a rotating shift just to keep up with the vast need for isolation gowns during the outbreak.

Then came the sale of the hospital to CentraCare and the building of a new hospital. With the new building, laundry needs changed as washing/drying was now being outsourced and our role was now focused on sorting, folding and linen delivery rounds. With this change, so did our crew numbers downsizing from seven to 3 clients who spent much of their day making rounds throughout the large domain.

Many months after the pandemic, but still feeling the effects with the shortage of workforce, we were unable to find the right fit to replace our laundry supervisor upon her retirement. Reluctantly, we had no choice but to forfeit the contract between SEI and CentraCare bringing an end to one of our most successful business partnerships over SEI's history. One of our crew members has now been hired into competitive employment at a local retail chain and continues to receive employment supports from SEI, while other crew members continue to be part of other SEI programs. We're so grateful for this partnership that lasted decades.



## Employment Supports

The pandemic certainly impacted all services provided by Service Enterprises. Our Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) experienced a sharp decline when many of these services were suspended. We have found this past year especially exciting as we continue to revive and expand those services. One of those services is employment support services and we couldn't fulfill the needs of those who are working in the community or our center-based programs without quality job coaches. Our SEI Job Coaches support several individuals in the community and in our center-based production areas who take great pride in their jobs and are working in a variety of local businesses including manufacturing, retail, grocery and hospitality. Whether an individual is working in a competitive employment setting, or with one of our SEI community integrated work crews, we assure each individual receives the right amount of employment support to maintain employment and have opportunities for advancement similar to other employees without disabilities.

While center-based employment gives participants an opportunity to learn about today's workplace and build general work-related skills while being paid, individuals learn many different soft skills, too, such as time management, teamwork, how to get along with coworkers and professionalism. They're able to try a variety of different tasks while on the production floor such as assembly, packaging, sorting, sealing and more. Individuals working in our center-based production center have been busy wiring berries to pine cones for the upcoming Christmas wreath season, packaging and small parts assembly and filling Morgan Brand Popcorn and Jumpy Monkey Coffee orders. Other individuals help with clerical, bulk mailing and janitorial tasks. Practicing these skills in our center-based production area helps individuals be ready if they choose to pursue other employment options later on.

Service Enterprises knows the value of supporting individuals in their employment no matter where they're at in their employment journey. However, center-based employment programs are becoming fewer and fewer due to 14c special wage certificate scrutiny. Clients take pride in their work, regardless of where the work is completed and often, regardless of their level of pay. The industry is changing, and the State of Minnesota is encouraging providers to place people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in mainstream or integrated work settings that pay at least minimum wage. That approach doesn't work for everyone.

If an individual can't produce at the minimum wage level independently, they may need 1-to-1 staffing assistance. Few providers are able to accommodate this need. Many providers similar to Service Enterprises in the surrounding communities are already limiting the amount of work opportunities offered, and recent Minnesota legislation will no doubt have impact on the amount of opportunities Community Rehab Providers can offer.

Federal and state lawmakers need to be informed about the value of center-based work activities and continuing employment options that provide fulfilling, skill-building activities. Family members and guardians have a strong voice in this. The A-Team Minnesota supports people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) by encouraging advocacy efforts, increasing public awareness, and providing advice to those who care for and create policies for people with special needs. Made up of family members, guardians and concerned caregivers, the A-Team Minnesota are strong advocates for individual choice. Concerned family members and friends should check out the A-Team Minnesota at [www.ateamminnesota.com](http://www.ateamminnesota.com).

## Making the Most of Summer (& Fall)

We made the most of our Minnesota Summer by taking advantage of the attractions in our community. And with Fall in full swing, our staff are helping individuals develop life skills while taking part in fun activities. Some of the activities we've enjoyed include: canvas painting and tie dye shirt making, fishing and pontoon boat rides, outdoor water games, farm visits, swimming and hayrides at the apple orchard.

