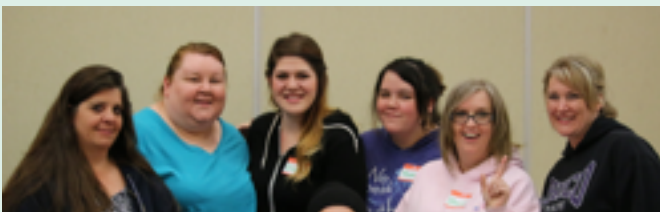




Team Leader and ILS Retreat

by Mary Luft, MA

In April, we gathered all of our ILS Coaches and Team Leaders for a retreat in Fairfield. A retreat, by definition, is designed to take you away from your ordinary life. While this is true, the thing we value most about retreats is the time spent with each other. Compass thrives because of the community that lives inside of it. It was a privilege to spend quality time with the people, who in their ordinary lives, are doing extraordinary things within our community. We challenged our leaders to spend time coming up with fresh and innovative ideas that will help us live out our theme this year: Bucket Filling. We were blown away by the creativity and the passion displayed by our people. We are excited to see what is to come of these ideas! Thank you to all who came to CompEx 2015!



The Compass Newsletter

THE 2015 FAR NORTH EDITION



a bimonthly COMPASS publication



Flying Eggs

by Sadie Hess, Director of SLS & ILS

This edition is dedicated to our Far Northern offices, so this article focuses on Shasta, Tehama and Siskiyou counties, but it is true for all of our offices. Next time, we will focus on Regional Center of the East Bay offices. Yes! I said offices. But that will be in our next newsletter. Stay tuned!

Recently, I was on a conference call in my Redding office, enjoying the view out of my window (there were no vagrants that day, which is always a plus). Out of the corner of my eye, I saw flying Easter eggs! A number of brightly colored eggs were being tossed about by a few of our Team Leaders preparing for an Easter event. They were hiding eggs for what they expected to be about sixty or seventy people. A few minutes later, my view changed to SLS and ILS clients and staff from both Tehama and Shasta County having a great time looking for eggs.

Perhaps you are whispering, what is the significance of an Easter event? For me, it was a surprising moment because I learned about the event as Easter eggs flew by my window! Members of our team and community organized an amazing event without any admin time or monetary support. Continued on page 3

"Events are so much more than a party. They are a way for clients to feel accepted, loved and a part of something bigger than themselves."

- Cassandra Sales



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A Thousand Words

by Andrew Heiligenthal, Case Facilitator

Pictures are powerful. They can put a smile on our face and they can move us to tears. They possess the unique ability to capture and convey meaning and passion in a way words never do. Think about it—pictures communicate what is most important to us. Whether in the news, through social media, a personal photo album and even in the highest priced advertising campaigns they say a picture is worth a thousand words. At Compass, we simply couldn't agree more, and there may be no greater proof than in the life and person of David Gans.

David has been with Compass for over five years. In that time he has endeared himself to pretty much every staff and office team member he meets. Everyone knows the connection between David and pictures. To start, he is a necessity in Compass photography. continued on page 2

Upcoming EVENTS

- May 6th East Bay All Hands Meeting
- May 7th South Bay All Hands Meeting
- May 14th Far North All Hands Meeting
- May 2nd Spring Into Life Conference (All regions invited. Location in Redding)
- June 15th South Bay Brave Buck Event
- June 17th East Bay Bravo Buck Event
- June 26th Far North Bravo Buck Event





“In truth, pictures are the route many of us choose to share our excitement, express our passion and make important decisions. The same is true of David.”

A Thousand Words continued

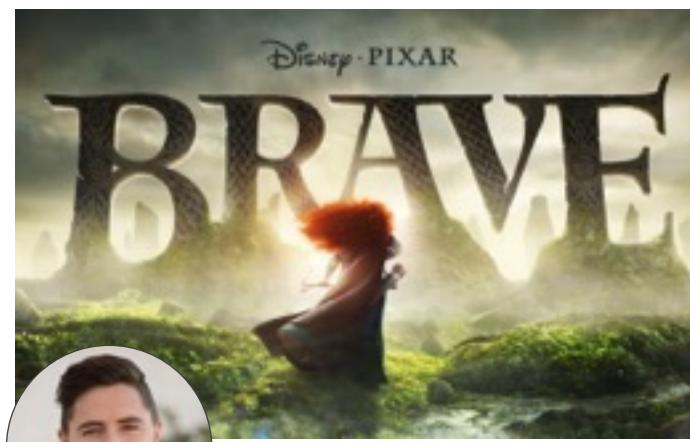
Lining the walls of the Compass lobby is a series of black and white photos of clients and staff. David’s portrait rests center stage and it’s one of the first things one sees entering the office. The smile on David’s face is priceless and it is a statement of sorts. There is just something about the look on his face that speaks to the humor, contentment and happiness available to each one of us in life.

Countless other David moments have been captured between frames as well. There are pictures-a-plenty to document the special grin of David’s avid exploration around town. A deep pleasure and satisfaction crosses his face as he leaves no grocery check-out un-checked, no restaurant table un-sat-at, and no snack un-tasted. Equally memorable are David’s expressions when crafting and building. Whether at work at home with his hand saw or fashioning a project at the Home Depot, there are countless pictures of the focus, drive and precision with which David does his work. He’s been known to spend hours on his creative (or demolition) endeavors. Each photograph seems to magically capture David’s simple and honest approach to life.

Pictures happen to be mainstay for David’s personal communication as well. Part of his diagnosis means he does not communicate verbally with those around him. Nonetheless, David uses many different types of symbols to communicate—and at no less frequency. He has picture after picture at his disposal.

There are snapshots of at-home activities, outdoor adventures and various craft ideas. There are prints of meal choices and restaurant options for David to choose from as well. Some of the shots are generic stock photos, but most are the creation of David and his staff. The moments were captured first-hand while David enjoyed some activity right there on the spot. David will plan out an entire day in pictures. The picture to indicate Bowling Day happens to be particularly worn from David’s use.

In truth, pictures are the route many of us choose to share our excitement, express our passion and make important decisions. The same is true of David. But while some of us rely on pictures merely to aid our communication efforts, David has a more immediate relationship. For him, images are a primary avenue for engaging and interacting with the world and people around him. In one sense, and very much on the surface, David is a man of few words. However, if each picture is worth a thousand words, David is without a doubt one of our most prolific communicators.



Let’s Be Brave

by Aaron Zint,

It is one of my life goals to accumulate every Pixar movies ever made (think Toy Story, Finding Nemo, The Incredibles, etc). Their stories grip our hearts, make us laugh and give us hope. One such Pixar movie is “Brave,” where the heroine Scotswoman, Merida, masterfully uses her bow and arrow to show that she is her own person and not bound by what her culture says she should be. Her true bravery shows up though, when she allows herself to fully love and be loved. At this year’s Compass Community Retreat, we are excited to go to Woodleaf camp and join in the theme of “Brave”. We will be finding the true Scotsmen and women in all of us (please no kilts, Eric and Brandon), but most importantly, we will have a chance to truly be brave. We will get to make new friendships, deepen old ones, sing, dance and be silly. And we will get to love and be loved by the people in our community.

Light it up Blue!



Check out our Facebook page to see more of our Light It Up Blue Pictures! We had so much fun going BLUE with you all!

Flying Eggs continued

Why, you ask-- Because we are an awesome community of staff and clients who “get it” and understand the value of being together and celebrating.

On Cesar Chavez day, we had over seventy people go fishing together. In Siskiyou alone we had a bowling event, an Autism awareness day, and a surprise birthday party for an ILS client that had never had a birthday party— all in the span of about a month! This weekend, ILS and SLS clients are going to be in the Red Bluff round-up parade. We have so many events that I often find out about them by accident, not typically as dramatic as flying eggs, however.

Events are more than just a nice thing we do or a little “extra” we give. They are a central part of our community and philosophy. Cassandra, who has a featured article in this newsletter, brings up how community made a difference in a client’s life. She recently sent me an amazing story and summed it up this way, “Events are so much more than a party. They are a way for clients to feel accepted, loved and a part of something bigger than them...” She went on to say it was a rough season for her client and the event gave him some hope and community at an important time.

Yes, we party hard and often around here. However, it is not just because we like eggs or fish or birthday cake. We party to create opportunities for the better parts of life: connection, relationship, love, memories, laughter and hope. These are the parts of a party that truly make a difference, not just for clients, but for every one of us.



David’s Story of Survival



by Cassandra Sales, ILS Manager, Siskiyou

When life is about the journey, it can be tough when you are thrown extra challenges. David’s journey hasn’t always been easy. He was diagnosed with Autism, and his brother, Troy, also has a more severe form of the same disability. David’s adult life started out rough, and at one point he and his brother both found themselves homeless. Since David has always watched after his brother, sometimes that meant sacrificing his own dreams to ensure Troy’s life could be as positive as possible.

One time, David was struggling to get to work at the Siskiyou Opportunity Center each shift because he was helping his brother get ready to get on the bus, and this caused David to miss shifts at a job he loves.

David isn’t afraid to speak his mind, and he will be the first to tell you, he always has an exit strategy for social events—he enjoys the solitude of his room whenever possible. David has come a long way in just seven short months that he has been with Compass. He has found his voice – and a courageous one at that. The man who has had to overcome great challenges to merely survive is now thriving. David cooks two meals per week for his step-father and brother, ensures his brother has another caretaker each Tuesday and Thursday to guarantee he is able to get to work on time, and also attends Compass events. Even though there are still times when David has to execute his “exit strategy,” there are a few truths the world needs to know about him. David is generous. David loves well. But most importantly, David is thriving in his journey of life.