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Summer games at Marklund

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BLACKBERRY TOWNSHIP – Plastic bowling pins were lined up in formation, just waiting to be knocked down by a well-placed bowling ball.

Carol Franz stood next to her son's wheelchair to await his turn to knock the bowling ball down a ramp and into the pins. Her son, Gary Paul Franz, 22, has been a resident at Marklund for two years.

The adaptive game was just one of several offered Saturday to the 96 residents of Marklund's Mill Creek Campus for adults with severe developmental and physical disabilities.

The 2012 Summer Games is the facility's own version of Special Olympics, in which staff, more than 100 volunteers and family members assist each client in various activities, including baseball, ring toss and bowling.

"We found Marklund through our church, Christ Community Church in St. Charles [Township.] They minister here and we got affiliated with them," Franz said. "They have a lot of volunteers who come



Heather D., a client of Marklund at Mill Creek, competes in a bicycle race with Rosalind Thompson, therapy aid at Marklund, during the 2012 Summer Games in Geneva Saturday morning. (Rena Naltsas - editorial@kcchronicle.com)

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Mimi White of St. Charles was one of the church volunteers helping out during the morning's events.

"I just wanted to come and serve with the church and love on these people," White said.

Volunteer Jeff Atkins of North Aurora was helping wheel Adam, one of Marklund's residents, to the bowling game. Marklund does not release last names of its clients.

"It's important to me, because from our business ... we have a whole non-profit wing," Atkins said. "It's important to see the other side of it, not just the business side. I think it's especially nice to get out and have residents do something on a daily basis because that's living. I think this is great, you see smiles on everybody's face."

Deann Dahlquist and her daughter, Ashley, 16, of St. Charles, also church volunteers, were waiting with a smiling client – also named Ashley – for her turn at an adaptive soccer game. Residents would push a large red ball around with their wheelchairs.



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





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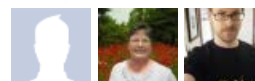
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