

This is Karl Wheeler! Karl is 69 years old, and has called Polk his home since he was 18 years old. He was 7 years old, and contracted encephalitis; it left him with brain damage. He remained with the family til he was 10 or 11, and made a mistake... he used a candle to go into a church to find a chair that the pastor, had promised him before he left the church. My parents were ordered to put him in a facility. He spent several years in the Mitchell home, then was sent to Polk at age 18. The early years at Polk we're not easy, but over the years so many changes were made for the good of the residents of Polk. Karl worked for many years in the greenhouse, planting and nurturing the plants that he loved, he looked forward to the public coming, and buying his pride and joy! And especially the tips he got for carrying their plants to the car. He also has an office job , and shreds papers. To him it is a very important position.

Karl always enjoyed the activities, circus day, shopping trips, going to dinner with his house brothers. The staff at Polk are so good to him, and treat him with respect and dignity. I am not able to bring him for home visits, due to both of our declining health and mobility. The staff brings him to me for visits when he wants to come see me. , .

His father pulled him out of Polk in the 70s, for selfish reasons, and put him in a group home. The caretakers back then did nothing to oversee him. He would ride a bike unattended all over town, he eventually got in trouble , attempting to talk 2 little boys into taking there pants down. He was court ordered to be returned to Polk, or go to jail. He did return to .Polk, and was so happy to be home. . . . . Karl has many friends in the community, Sandy , a former employee at Polk retired several years ago, and brings him to her home every Halloween to pass out candy. Another employee took him to his home once, so Karl could help make homemade sauerkraut! ...

Karl uses a walker, and scooter to get around now, his mind is aging, he is depressed, and moody. Where he was always happy, and helpful. The thought of leaving his family, and home is taking even more of a toll on him... .. I would appreciate it if Gov. Wolf would come to Polk... spend a day with the employees, and residents here, and really see that a whole community is being sacrificed.. Our people are special, and should not have to go through this stress. ....".....And this might be too much information, but Karl has sexual aggressiveness. Is there a group home suitable for someone like Karl, where others will be safe around him? At Polk, he is monitored, very well. And still treated with respect, love ,and dignity!

Sandy Watt, Karl's sister