

ELDER NETWORK NEWS

2021

"Those 55 and better and their caregivers have the opportunity to thrive and lead rewarding lives."

Note from Kathy



Hello! I would like to introduce myself! My name is Kathy Scheid and I became the Executive Director at Elder Network in October of 2020. I am from Battle Creek, MI, but my husband and I have called Rochester our home for the past 37 years. I have spent my career working in health care and the non-profit world which has been a wonderful preparation for working at Elder Network. Serving seniors is a mission I am passionate about and I am blessed with a wonderful team who serve with kindness and enthusiasm. Please forgive us for not sending out Newsletters in the past 12 months. We have not forgotten our supporters but have been very busy as you will see on the following pages. We have not only been busy coping with the challenges of the pandemic but also busy continuing to grow and meet the needs of our elders and their caregivers. One good outcome of the pandemic has been that Elder Network has received support and developed the know how to offer many of our educational sessions on-line via Zoom! On page 3, meet some new staff that joined us in 2021. On page 4, read about 2 exciting new programs we have added. On Page 5, catch up with Bonnie and Barb and the new classes they are offering. Thanks to the support of our dedicated volunteers, Companions and staff, Elder Network has continued to offer in-home Respite and Transportation throughout most of

PEARLS Introduction

2020-despite COVID-19. In June of 2021, as people became vaccinated, we saw a renewal in demand for all of our services.

Meet the Fitzmaurice's who faced tough times in COVID. Edna, the primary caregiver, was physically unable to keep up with the housework and supporting her husband, Jim, who has dementia. Jim and his wife are pictured below with their son, who travels between New York and Southeastern Minnesota to support his parents. With COVID-19, he wasn't able to live with his parents full-time. He rested easy knowing that he had Elder Network to support his parents while he was not able to be with them. Additionally, while he was living with them, as a caregiver, he had the support of Elder Network to provide him with respite while he was working from home. Thanks, in part, to grant funding from the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, Elder Network was able to offer this family and others a scholarship to help defray some of the costs associated with the Respite services.



Make a senior smile today!
Give a gift to Elder Network
www.elder-network.org

Friendly Visitor Program

Loneliness is as dangerous as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Friendly Visiting volunteers have already begun connecting with our clients, face-to-face. We are excited to continue meeting with our older friends. We can offer in-person, phone or virtual meetings.

Living Well With Chronic Conditions Planned for 2022

If you have a condition such as: Diabetes, Arthritis, Heart Disease, Chronic Pain, High Blood Pressure, Anxiety, Depression, and others this workshop can help you take charge of your life.

Call Melissa at 507-285-5272 to sign up!

Caregiver Support

Are you caring for a spouse or parent? As winter nears it is important for caregivers to take stock and ensure that you are supported and needs are being met.

Olmsted Caregiver support meetings in the Elder Network office 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, from 1:00-2:30 pm ***See page 5 for more class options!***

Elder Network can help:

- Companions can assist with tasks inside and outside the home like housecleaning, grocery shopping, errands, and transportation to appointments
- Respite care for caregivers to need a break
- Caregiver supports to provide group peer support or 1:1 Coaching

Transportation

Elder Network-Olmsted County only, provides rides for mobile seniors to health-related appointments for doctors, dentists, vision and hearing checks, physical therapy, counselling, support groups, and health classes. **Non-medical rides are available** on a limited basis.

Clients must be able to get into and out of a vehicle independently, and will need to go through an initial intake before a ride can be scheduled. Rides must be scheduled at least one week in advance.

Call Melissa at 507-285-5272

Powerful Tools For Caregivers

A class for family caregivers of older adults

This workshop is designed to help you take care of yourself while caring for an older relative or friend. Over a period of 6 weeks, this workshop will help you develop stress-reducing skills, communication tools, and increase positive self-talk.

We are planning both virtual and in-person classes for 2022, please call to get on our class list and learn more.

Would your church or civic group like to sponsor a class? Call us!

Senior Advocates Give Free and Confidential Service to older adults and their caregivers.

A Senior Advocate can assist accessing services and programs, caregiver support, navigating health insurance counseling, forms assistance, and helping seniors "get their affairs in order", identifying housing options to best meet your need. Senior Advocates make connections with other services available in our community; home health, chore assistance, companionship, visiting, transportation, nutrition and legal services to name a few.

Schedule an appointment today!

Contact our Olmsted County Sr. Advocate, Kate Jirik at Elder Network in Rochester
Call: 507-285-5272 (office)

Email: katej@elder-network.org



In Winona -Contact the Friendship Center @ 507-454-7369

In Wabasha—Contact Three Rivers @800-277-8418

Our New Staff Members

Kate Jirik– Olmsted County Senior Advocate

Kate spends her time offering information, referral and assistance to individuals in Olmsted County age 60 and over and those that care give for them as they live independently in our community. These resources allow persons to remain healthy and independent in their homes and help support their caregivers. She is excited for this opportunity to circle back around in her career and come back to where it began. Kate started her human services career in 1993 as an intern and then program coordinator at Elder Network. She holds a BS in Mental Health and Human Services from Franciscan University of Steubenville (OH) and a Masters in Social Gerontology from the University of Central Missouri.



Melissa Stone– Olmsted County Volunteer Coordinator

Melissa coordinates the Friendly Visiting, Transportation and In-Home Respite Programs. Melissa manages the volunteers for these programs and coordinating services for clients since joining Elder Network in June of 2021. She has several years of experience working in long-term care, providing care and art therapy to those with dementia, and teaching psychology and neuroscience courses to undergraduate students. She has a BS in Psychology from Truman State University and a Masters of Gerontology degree from the University of Missouri – St. Louis. She also has conducted cognitive neuroscience research at Saint Louis University to better understand learning and memory strategies throughout the lifespan. She hopes to bring these skills to Elder Network in order to improve the lives of elders in the community.



Kyle Johnson– Technology Assistance Program Coordinator

Kyle coordinates the Technology Assistance Program (TAP) for clients, overseeing the staff and volunteers who provide support to clients. He started working at Elder Network in the winter of 2021. He is responsible for the intake of new clients into the TAP program. He has created a curriculum for the volunteers that will teach clients the basic use of technology with iPads.



Donna Proeschel– Technology Assistance Program Assistant

Donna is assisting with the Technology Assistance Program. With over 30 years experience in creating and implementing innovative community programs, she is eager to share information on the Apple iPad and establish personalized training and support for daily use. Born in western Minnesota, Donna received a B.S. in Family Life and Child Development Education from the University of Minnesota and completed post-graduate work at Macquarie University in Australia. Most recently, she has been the primary caregiver for a parent with Alzheimer's and is a volunteer at her grandson's Montessori preschool.



Becca Herbstritt-Development Manager

We congratulate Becca on her promotion to Development Manager in June. Along with committed volunteers she pulled off a very successful Fall Fling Gala September 25th, 2021.



Elder Network launches two new programs

PEARLs (Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives)

With winter approaching and the pandemic still affecting our lives, social isolation can be more serious for seniors than ever. Feeling sad or blue, or having trouble enjoying life? PEARLs may be a great fit for you. Elder Network offers trained PEARLs counselors who can meet 1-1 in the comfort of home, on the phone , or virtually on the computer. Skills and support are provided to develop an action plan to take big problems and break them into small actions that can bring results and grow confidence. Guidance is offered to help set goals to become more physically and socially active and find a renewed zest for life. The participant will have 8, 1-1 sessions with the counselor and then monthly follow up phone calls to provide support and encouragement over an additional 4 months. PEARLs is funded in part by SE MN Area Agency on Aging which helps keep sessions affordable. Sessions are offered on a sliding fee scale based on income. Call Elder Network to learn more and take back your happiness.

New Technology Assistance Program! A Window on the World

No matter where you look, internet technology has become a part of everyday life. We rely more and more on technology for social interactions and connections to resources for daily living. Making appointments, interacting with loved ones and engaging in recreational activities are now common on-line activities. Now it is easier than ever for seniors to learn basic computer skills because of a new program at Elder Network.

Elder Network's Technology Assistance Program (TAP) was established in February 2021 in the midst of the pandemic. This program is designed to combat isolation and provide an option for seniors to connect with the outside world; a means to socialize with family and friends-and see their faces, shop on-line for necessities for daily living (groceries), use health portals to make appointments and connect with medical home, and enjoy leisure activities such as games, music, reading, reminiscing, crafts and sharing photos.

Participants are loaned an iPad, provided access to the internet, and matched with a trained volunteer who will teach basic features of the iPad, internet safety, fraud prevention, and assist with selection of applications depending on personal interest. Volunteers dedicate 1-2 hours weekly with clients and staff offer support on an ongoing basis as well. This program is possible thanks to funding from the CARES Act and the Otto Bremer Trust allowing us to offer a free month and an affordable sliding fee scale for additional months. Please call Kyle or Donna to learn more about this program at 507-285-5272.



Wabasha County News



Bonnie Sandberg, Elder Network's Wabasha Coordinator, is connecting seniors with friendly visiting, caregiver support and companion services to help them manage their health and well-being.

"We want to get the word out that we are still here to help. If you need help getting your groceries or someone to help with errands, Elder Network can help. If you are feeling down, our friendly visiting support and caregiver supports can help you feel connected. **PEARLS** is a new 1-1 counseling program to learn how to break big problems, that are impacting your happiness, into small actions and make progress to living your best life.

Wabasha caregiver support meetings are the first and third Monday of each month from 10:00 -11:30 a.m.

Memory Café will begin on Dec. 9th, from 1-2pm, at the Chocolate Escape 152 W Main St., Wabasha. This group will meet monthly on the 2nd Thursday of the month and is open to those living with dementia and their care partners.

Aging Mastery Plan (AMP) classes encourage living a well thought-out, healthy, productive chapter in our post-retirement days. This 10 week class is important for those planning to retire or who are retired. People create a plan, set goals, and are active and productive in their retirement. Call for more information

As always, we are looking for people that have a heart for helping seniors in Wabasha County! If you have time to volunteer even 2-4 hours per week or would like to join our staff as a companion to one or more seniors, please give me a call.

Please contact Bonnie at Elder Network at 651-564-0351 or bonnies@elder-network.org to sign up for classes, to get a volunteer, or to pursue a job opportunity.

Winona County News



Barb Parker, Elder Network Winona Coordinator, is connecting seniors and caregivers with caregiver support group options, respite and companion home service, and art-as -therapy classes to help manage their health and well-being.

Winona Caregiver Support Groups

Caregiver Support group on Zoom or phone is currently being offered every Wednesday morning at 10:30 a.m.

In-person Caregiver Support group is available from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. and will be held on the first, and third, Thursday of each month in the Winona Room, Suite 315, in the WKM Building located at 902 E. Second Street, Winona, MN.

New Creative Aging Classes

In conjunction with the Minnesota Conservatory for the Arts, Elder Network is offering art classes taught by an MCA art instructor . New classes are being planned for 2022. There is a fee for the class to off-set the cost of supplies. Funding for this class is provided through grant money from the Winona Community Foundation.

Mindfulness Book Club is a 12-week program using the book *Mindfulness Workbook for Beginners*. This class will help discover ways to reduce stress and find joy. Call or e-mail Barb to be put on the list for Spring 2022. .

Job Posting

Elder Network in Winona is seeking a few good men to spend time visiting with our male clients. Must be able to provide positive client interaction and be available 2-4 hours per week. Must have reliable transportation. Rewarding, flexible, work that is perfect for a compassionate, caring adult.

Seeking Companions to hire to meet the increasing needs of seniors in our area. 10+ hours a week, flexible schedule and rewarding opportunities.

Elder Network provides ongoing education in dementia and memory loss for employees and clients. For more information on how you can help, please email or call Barb Parker more information.

Please contact Barb at Elder Network to sign up for any of the above classes at either (507) 452-0850 or barbp@elder-network.org.

We Say : THANK YOU!

As seniors are at increased risks from COVID-19, we have been extremely grateful to the people and organizations that have stepped forward to support our seniors during this uncertain time.

Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging administers critical grant funding that ensures our programs can be available on a voluntary contribution basis or through sliding scale fees.

Otto Bremer Trust provided a grant to support the launch of our new Technology Assistance Program, as well as operating support to faithfully serve clients amidst the pandemic.

Mayo Clinic provides funding that supports our programming for seniors and caregivers. In 2021, they provided a Gold-Level sponsorship for our Gala, also serving as our matching grant donor.

Olmsted County provides funding to support our Senior Advocate program which helps seniors get access to services, navigate complex decisions and receive support and resources.

United Way of Olmsted County provides multi-year grant to support our peer and caregiver supports that empower individuals to age well.

Rochester Area Foundation supported our increased need for support amidst budget cuts from the pandemic. They have also just committed their support of our Mental Health Access Program to provide PEARLS and Chronic Conditions Support Groups to clients

Slaggie Family Foundation and Winona Community Foundation for supporting seniors in Winona County-particularly with newer programs focusing on mental health and access to services through technology-PEARLS, TAP, and others education and support groups.

United Way of Goodhue, Wabasha, and Pierce to support our programming in Wabasha County.

Medica Foundation and Alzheimer Foundation of America for supporting our rural community outreach.

Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation for supporting scholarship funding for respite care, and for serving as a Gold-Level sponsor of our Gala.

Wabasha Kellogg Area Community Foundation for their support in running a successful Give Local Campaign this spring/summer that helped Elder Network receive much-needed support to reach clients in the Wabasha Kellogg Area.

Think Bank for support of Elder Network's programs, and a Silver-Level sponsorship for our Gala.

Morning Pride Lions, Olmsted Medical Center, Pro-Stall Auto Glass, Rochester Home Infusion, Hawkins Ash CPAs, and Wagner Oehler, LTD. for supporting our mission and serving as Bronze-Level Sponsors for our Gala.

Re-Max Results Realtor Kim Groteboer, RochesterMyHome, and First Alliance Credit Union for their support of Elder Network's mission as Friend-Level Sponsors of the Gala.

KTTC for serving as a Media-Level Sponsor of our gala.

The **Elder Network 2021 Fall Fling** was a successful event that helped our agency to net over \$27,000 through the support of our generous donors and contributing supporters. Thank you to all who attended and who helped to make the event a success. This was our first in-person gala since 2019, and it was so nice to safely distance and see one another. With COVID-19 precautions in place, we were able to safely greet approximately 120 guests. It was a splendid evening, and we hope to see you in 2022 at our next gala! *Pictured:*



Elder Network Thanks You for Your Support

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 RAF Donor Advised Fund Ron and Diane Yannish
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Memorial Gifts

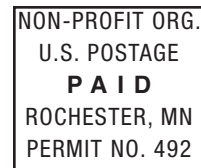
Mary Boyne in memory of Bill Boyne
 Maureen & Mary Doffing in memory of Chuck Doffing
 Mark Fister in memory of Cindy Fister
 Sharon Haack in memory Valentine Kellam
 Jane Peterson in memory of Mary Griffin
 Laverne Anderson in memory of Shirley Anderson
 Diane Carey in memory of Nikki

Gifts In Honor

Wayne Gannaway in honor of Erin O'Brien's wedding
 US Charitable Gift Trust in recognition of -
 Diane Pritchett

To find out more about leaving a gift in your will, or making a memorial gift in someone's honor call 507-285-5272.

" I don't know what I would have done without the Services of Elder Network"



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Rochester office:
507-285-5272

Wabasha office:
651-564-0351

Winona office:
507-452-0580



Supported by:



If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or know of someone who would like to be added to our mailing list, please call us at 507-285-5272.

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Happy
Holidays
from the
Elder
Network
staff!

(Donna and Kyle
not pictured)



Drivers Wanted

Safe drivers are wanted to transport seniors.
Flexible scheduling during day hours!

Friendly Visitors

Spend 1 hour on the phone or in-person, per week,
to help a senior feel less isolated.

Volunteers needed for Winona, Lake City, Plainview,
Wabasha, St Charles, and Rochester.

Event Volunteers

Assist Elder Network with planning and hosting our
Gala. Volunteers are needed for a variety of roles:
planning, publicity and "on-the-day" helpers.

Technology Support

Many of Elder Network's clients are learning to use
technology to maintain social connections and access
telehealth appointments. Volunteers needed.

Companions Needed Immediately

Olmsted, Wabasha & Winona Counties are currently
looking to hire companions to help meet the rising
needs for our clients. Must be able to work 10 hours a
week, background check cleared & training provided.
Contact our office for more details!