

ELDER NETWORK NEWS



Quarters 3 & 4 2025

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

A Note from Kathy



Last fall, I celebrated my 5th anniversary with Elder Network. As I look back over these years and all that we have accomplished, I am so very proud to be a part of this wonderful organization and team of people, including staff, volun-

teers and supporters who passionately live our mission. Elder Network was created in 1988 to address the significant unmet needs of older adults and caregivers in the communities we serve. This is still our mission today and with that said, I am pleased to announce that we have received a grant from the Rochester Housing Coalition to assist older adults in navigating housing transitions. We call this program H.O.M.E:

Housing, Outreach, Mentorship and Empowerment program. Through one-to-one mentorship, education and resources, H.O.M.E will empower older adults to make informed decisions to find the right home for their current and future needs. This is a large undertaking, so we are pleased to be doing this work in collaboration with Family Service Rochester. We are currently hiring for a part-time program coordinator, so please share this information or call Elder Network for more information.

As we are stuck indoors-due to the ice and cold of a Minnesota winter-it is a great time to try some creative activities, and I would like to reintroduce to readers the idea of PLAY. The National Institute for Play states that play is a state of mind, play holds our attention, so engaging, so enjoyable that you continue doing it for no other reason than that you love doing it. Think back to some favorite playtime activities in childhood, such as Jacks, finger painting, playing with toy figures or

toy cars, board and card games, coloring or water color, puzzles or word games, Marbles, pick-up-sticks or Tiddlywinks. Maybe it's time to introduce the family, children or friends to a vintage play activity or pick something new to try.

Consider dressing up in costume to watch a movie or show-the Kentucky Derby, Winter Olympics, Academy Awards. Any child in your life will be thrilled-and maybe some adults too!

At Elder Network, we know the health benefits, reduction in stress-and sheer joy-that play can offer, and we include a big dose of it in our Group Respite Program. Group Respite, is an offering that gives a caregiver a break while the person they are caring for has an outing with Elder Network staff. We bring 3-5 people together at a local coffee shop or restaurant (who have agreed to welcome us), for conversation and fun games geared towards their interests and abilities. We have participated in accessible fishing, a picnic on a farm-and even-a baseball game. See page 2 for more information, and a Group picture on page 3.

We are proud to serve our community of older adults and caregivers who need a little extra help, and also, to provide employment and purpose to older adults who wish to remain in the workforce, or as a volunteer.

One such staff is Janie C. (pictured on the right with Holly), who retired after 12 years as a respite Companion for Elder Network. We thank Janie for her

years of service and all of the care and kindness that she brought to her clients.

Remember, “Life goes on, it goes on better with a smile.” ~Keri Berit



Come to our 13th Annual Fall Fling Gala, on September 19th, 2026 at the Rochester International Event Center.

Learn more and/or donate online at: www.elder-network.org

The Power of Presence: The Gift of Friendly Visiting

In an increasingly digital world, sometimes the most profound gift you can give is simply showing up. Our Friendly Visitor program connects volunteers with 55+ older adults, bridging the gap of isolation through the simple act of human connection.



What is a Friendly Visit?

A Friendly Visit isn't about providing professional care; it's about providing friendship. The Friendly Visitor program at Elder Network matches eager volunteers (of many ages- & even-a parent with a child) with older adults, for regular socialization.

Why It Matters

For many older adults, a visitor might be their only human contact during the week. Research suggests that 100% of participants in some Friendly Visitor programs, report a decrease in loneliness. Beyond social joy, these visits offer critical health benefits:

- ♥ **Mental Well-being:** Regular socialization helps alleviate depression and promotes "brain health."
- ♥ **Safety Monitoring:** Visitors often act as a vital link, noticing changes in an older adult's health or home environment, that may require professional referral.
- ♥ **Independence:** This extra layer of support helps many older adults live dignified and independent lives, in their own homes, for longer.

A Two-Way Street

The benefits aren't just for the older adults. Volunteers often find that they gain a sense of purpose, learn resilience from their matches and develop a deeper perspective on the aging process. Many "matches" turn into enduring friendships that last for years.

How to Get Involved

If you, a family member or friend have ever considered volunteering to visit with an older adult, we would love to hear from you and facilitate a match with one of our wonderful clients.

If you are an older adult, and would be interested in being matched with a Friendly Visitor volunteer, please call **Jen at 507-285-5272** or email her at **jennr@elder-network.org**.



ACTION STEPS TO AGE WELL



Elder Network is pleased to offer Aging Mastery Program® (AMP). This eight-week class meets once a week for ninety minutes.

Build your own personal playbook for aging well. This fun, innovative program empowers you to take key steps to improve your quality of life, add stability to daily living, and strengthen ties to your community. Each class adds a new chapter to your personal playbook for aging well. Meet new friends and provide encouragement to one another as you take the Aging Mastery journey together!

Olmsted County	Wabasha County
Wednesdays April 8th-May 27th	Tuesdays March 3rd-April 21st
Forte Living Rochester, MN	Lake City Public Library Lake City, MN

Register early to secure a book today.
The class is free but pre-registration is required.
Give us a call or email to register today!

Contact Elder Network for more information or to register today!

Phone: (507) 285-5272

Olmsted Email: PaChaV@elder-network.org

Wabasha Email: BonnieS@elder-network.org



Elder Network's GROUP RESPITE



For Those Aged 55 & Better



Are you looking for a fun activity for your care receiver while giving yourself a little break? Our program is designed to be a safe space that offers activities that stimulate their mind while allowing them to make friends and have fun.



This program can provide continued independence for the caregiver and care receiver.

CONTACT US  Our Phone +507-285-5272  Our Website www.elder-network.org



Friendly Visitor Program

Our Friendly Visitor Program offers weekly meetings to elders facing loneliness or isolation. Meetings with your matched volunteer visitor can be in person, by phone, or virtual-to be flexible to your needs. This service brings meaningful socializing with the goal of adding some joy back into life. **Call our office at 507-285-5272 to sign up!**

Chronic Conditions Support Group

This group is helpful to those experiencing chronic conditions, such as diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, chronic pain, mental health concerns, etc. Join this in-person group on the 2nd Wednesday, and/or online on the 3rd Wednesday, from 1-2pm.

Call 507-285-5272 to register for this group!

Transportation

The transportation program is an easy to use, curb-to-curb service for non-driving adults. We strive to foster independence and help non-driving adults feel more connected to their community. Older adults can feel isolated with the loss of their vehicle, and lonely as friends and family pass or move away. Elder Network coordinates a pool of volunteer drivers to help our older neighbors with transportation needs. We provide rides, along with conversation and kindness. We welcome Michael Brody to our transportation team. Michael works 10 hours a week in scheduling and intakes. His background in spreadsheets and Rochester streets has become a welcomed addition. Clients enjoy his “Thursday” ride confirmation calls. Michael likes to travel and meet people. **We need additional drivers who want to give back to the community. Contact Donna at 507-285-5272, to learn more.**



After the Diagnosis Workshop

Mayo Clinic is partnering with Elder Network to provide this educational program for persons newly diagnosed with cognitive impairment, Alzheimer’s disease, or a related dementia-and their families. The workshop will be held in Rochester, on August 14th, 2026, from 11:30am-4:30pm. This is a free event. Call 507-538-4048 or register online at <https://After-the-diagnosis.eventbrite.com>.

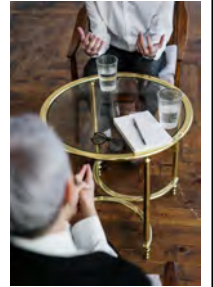


Caregiver Support

Are you caring for a spouse, parent, adult child, or friend? Whether caring locally or long-distance, it’s important to feel connected and know you are not alone on this journey. We offer a variety of ways to get you connected:

- Support Groups
- Caregiver Consulting
- In-Home Respite/Companion
- Online Caregiver Portal– Trualta
- Group Respite
- Education workshops

Please contact Holly for more information at 507-285-5272. We’re here to help.



Virtual Caregiver Support Group

Meets every Wednesday, from 10:30-11:30am, over Zoom. **Call 507-285-5272 to join or to learn more.**

In-Person Rochester Caregiver Support Group

The Rochester office (1130 1/2 7th St. NW, Suite 205) hosts an in-person support group that meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays, from 1-2:30pm, monthly.

Dodge County Opportunities

Are you interested in working with older adults and helping caregivers? We are looking for a Group Respite Facilitator and more Respite Volunteers. The Group Respite Facilitator works independently with older adults to facilitate activities that stimulate their minds and allow friendships to blossom. Respite volunteers visit clients in their homes and engage in socialization with care receivers, while caregivers get a break. **Call 507-285-5272 or email pachav@elder-network.org**



NEW: Caregiver Community Connection

Caregiver Community Connection is a free opportunity for caregivers and community members to support each other and learn more about resources and supports available for caregivers. Meetings are in-person every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, from 1-2:30pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 101 6th Ave, NW, Kasson, MN 55944. **Call 507-285-5272 to learn more and register.**



Updates from Our Staff Members

Kate-Olmsted County Senior Advocate



As we enter into 2026, it is time to think about taxes and other financial goals. For lower-income older adults, there is a great, local program that can make this process easier and free.

Olmsted County VITA Tax appointments are NOW open for scheduling! To

schedule, visit their website at www.semntaxes.org, the process is quick, easy and available 24/7. They will have you register by answering questions for eligibility, and if they can serve you, they will then have you schedule an appointment. If you have any questions or need help scheduling, please email help@semntaxes.org. Or you can use the community referral number by calling 211 to schedule. **To reach VITA in Winona**, please call (507) 474-7202, starting January 21, 2026 to make an appointment at one of their area tax sites-which includes Winona, La Crescent and St Charles. We, here at Elder Network, also partner with Legal Assistance Olmsted County (LAOC) to offer a free “wills” clinic in the Spring and Fall, annually. This clinic helps low-income older adults to develop a simple will, power of attorney and/or healthcare directive. Reach out to Kate or LAOC at 507-287-2036 to join the waitlist for the upcoming clinics.

Holly-Caregiver Respite & Supports

We are proud to be offering a variety of caregiver education workshops this year. Here’s more information on one of the workshops we offer: **“Powerful Tools for Caregivers”** 6-week, evidence-based workshops will help anyone caring for an older friend or a relative, to help develop a wealth of tools to:

- Reduce Stress
- Change Negative Self Talk
- Communicate More Effectively
- Recognize the Messages in Emotions
- Make Tough Caregiving Decisions

Upcoming session dates:

- Wednesdays, May 6-June 10th, 6-7:30pm-virtual. Register by April 29th.
- Wednesdays July 1-August 5th 10-11:30am-location TBD. Call for more information.

Workshop fee is by Donation, additional fee for workbook, (financial assistance available for those who qualify).

To learn more, please call Holly at 507-285-5272.



Friendly Visitor Program

Friendly Visitors make a difference in our community! Have you considered joining the Friendly Visitor Program? Would you like to serve as a volunteer who meets weekly with older adults, to provide conversation and company? We offer training, mileage reimbursement (for those age-eligible), and insurance. Our Friendly Visitor volunteers offer companionship that is invaluable to so many. Call today to volunteer.

Here are a few recent client testimonials: *“I have built a wonderful relationship with my visitor. He has helped me keep my world ‘big;’”* *“Amazing visitor who has been in my life weekly for the last 3 years. A great friend now!”* *“Able to feel a sort of community by getting out to coffee shops, public spaces.”*



Kyle-Technology Assistance Program

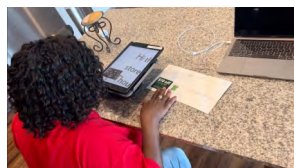
An in-service was held for volunteers in February to discuss the major changes in the updated operating system, iPadOS 26. We like the Apple eco-system because it stresses simplicity and ease-of-use. Questions on low-vision accessibility and guided access were addressed along with new native Apps: Password, Preview, Camera, Journaling, and Organizing with folders. An increasing number of clients own their iPad, but need a “refresher.” We are ready to share new things with our clients!



TAP is taking it’s show on the road! Information on TAP, and safety and security, was presented in Oronoco. We plan to present in Byron and Wabasha. If there are other communities interested in learning about the iPad and our personalized in-home training, please call our office.



Marlene is a TAP client who has also been volunteering in our office. *“This job makes me feel like a normal person again.”* A message left on our phone from a grateful client in rural Olmsted County: *“I wanted to thank you so much. I’ve been using my Elder Network iPad. My phone died before I went into the hospital. Having the iPad has been priceless.”*





Wabasha County News

Wabasha County is buzzing with older adult activity!

Connections Café - We are having a lot of fun

making connections among our older adults in Wabasha!

We enjoy games, trivia, fun holiday activities and goodies! We are always open to presenters and special musicians, so let us know if you'd like to be a part of our monthly meetings!

We meet on the 2nd Thursday of every month, from 1-2:30pm at the UCC church in Wabasha (317 W 2nd St-near the bridge). We'd love to meet you! Bring a friend! Bring a loved one or care receiver, we welcome all older adults!

Caregiving-It is a full-time job. We have a lot of supports for our caregivers!

Caregiver Support Groups-

Lake City: The 2nd and 4th Tuesday mornings at the Lake City Public Library from 10:00 am to 11:30am.

Wabasha: The 1st and 3rd Wednesdays from 10:30am-noon, at Faith Lutheran Church.

Caregiver Consulting - One-on-one consulting or with families that are caregiving. Give us a call! Sometimes, it helps to get some advice, more resources or another perspective.

Caregiver Respite – We can bring somebody vetted and trained, in to help give you a break. It gives peace of mind that your loved one is in good hands while you tend to your own needs.

AMP Classes this Spring! – March 3rd-April 21st (Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m. at the Lake City Public Library). Aging Mastery Program (AMP) is an interactive class-where we work together on 6 areas of aging well, setting goals and having fun with peer-to-peer interaction! AMP aims to help those 55 and better to take key steps to improve their well-being, and add richness, meaning and depth to their post-retirement years. Class participants all work on their own plan for aging well-via actionable goals, sustainable behaviors, social engagement and gratitude. **Register today by calling: 507-285-5272** (book cost is covered by the library and class cost is covered by South Country Health Alliance)! Pre-registration is preferred. Class size is limited. For more information, give me a call.

Bonnie Sandberg -Program Manager for Wabasha County
Phone:651-564-0351

Email: bonnies@elder-network.org



Winona County News

Winona's Dementia Friendly Month takes place in April. The kick-off event takes place Monday, April 6, when Dr. Joseph Gaugler presents on healthy aging and dementia research/awareness.

Other events throughout the month, include a Dementia Friendly Movie Morning, Community Bingo Night, Older Adult Resource Fair, Forget Me Notes Concert, Forever Young Chair Fitness, and Memory Café. Please plan to attend these interactive sessions-which take place throughout the community.

Winona program offerings include:

Caregiver Consulting

Caregiver Consulting provides individual or family sessions for those that are caregiving.

In-Person Caregiver/Older Adult Listening Sessions

Following interest to form an In-Person Caregiver/Older Adult Support Group, we gather to plan a new group on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings, at Bluff View Estates, from 10:30am to 12:00pm.

"After Caregiving Ends, Now What" Support Group

This grief support group, for people that have lost a loved one, meets every Monday, via Zoom from 11:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. Join us as we work through our grief together (**all counties of service are welcome**). Call 507-285-5272, today.



In-Home Help through Respite Companions

Companion services are available in Winona County, serving older adults wherever they live, with social interaction, light housekeeping, grocery shopping, cooking meals, and transportation. Elder Network provides Respite services so that the caregiver can take several hours to themselves, to get things done, knowing their care receiver is in good hands.

Call 507-452-0580, today, to learn more.

Friendly Visitor

Friendly Visitors provide a visit, weekly (1 hour)-either in-person or over the telephone. Friendly Visitors provide engagement in activities and much-needed relief from isolation!

Lisa Lind - Winona County Program Manager
Phone: 507-452-0580
Email: lisal@elder-network.org



Thank You to Our Funders!

Alzheimer's Foundation of America
 American Legion of Kasson-Post 333
 Bethel Lutheran Christmas Tea Team
 Coalition for Rochester Area Housing
 Co-Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
 Evangel United Methodist Church
 Gail Burton-Sparkle with Joy
 Gramercy Park Co-op
 Gunderson Clinics-Wabasha Area
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 Wabasha Kellogg Area Community Foundation
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Consider Monthly Giving

Monthly donations help us to minimize administrative time and keep programs and services low-cost and donation-based. Start today:
elder-network.org/giving-information/

Monthly and Quarterly Donors

Would you like to donate through direct deposit? Please call 507-285-5272 or use our website's donation portal. The individuals below have chosen this simple and sustainable option of giving:

- ♥ Michael Brody
- ♥ Holly Brown
- ♥ Pat & Leroy Christofferson
- ♥ Kyle & Becca Herbstritt
- ♥ Dr. Diane Elizabeth Holland
- ♥ Kate Jirik
- ♥ Kay Lovett
- ♥ Tiffany Olson
- ♥ Jason & Phoebe Wagner
- ♥ Dr. Nathan Mannix



Individual Donors

- ♥ Craig Allen
- ♥ Gala Beckendorf
- ♥ Mary Boyne
- ♥ Tom & Julie Byrne
- ♥ Pat & Leroy Christofferson
- ♥ Gerald Cichanowski
- ♥ Jeff Colwill
- ♥ Luis Cotto
- ♥ John C. David
- ♥ Bill & Mary Doucette
- ♥ Colm Fitzmaurice
- ♥ David & Barbara Frogner
- ♥ Darlene Haack
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- ♥ Marie Hlava
- ♥ Cindy Swessel-Hofer & Kent Hofer
- ♥ Shirley Hultz
- ♥ Ray & Sue Johnson
- ♥ Kathy O's Kindness & Grace Charitable Fund
- ♥ Patrick & Lori Keane
- ♥ Mary Kostner
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- ♥ Kristine Litzow
- ♥ Nancy Paine
- ♥ Linda Patterson
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- ♥ Dave Reynolds & Tricia Schilling
- ♥ Mary Rose & Scott Schwalbe
- ♥ Shannon Springer
- ♥ Dean Stenehjem
- ♥ Steven & Carmen Stenhaug
- ♥ Jan Strand
- ♥ Fred & Mary Suhler
- ♥ Bob Ward
- ♥ Nick & Therese White
- ♥ Alexandra Yaszemski
- ♥ Ken & Mary Zaiken
- ♥ Fred J. Ziecina



Elder Network Thanks You for Your Continued Support!

Memorial Gifts

Heather Renier in memory of Jenny Dervin

Marie Robinson in memory of Gerald Guenther

Anonymous in memory of Gerald Guenther

Linda Diedrich in memory of Gerald Guenther

Bill & Mary Doucette in memory of

Marianne Lucchinetti

Deborah Banister in memory of Candi Johnson

Leila Blilie in memory of LaVonne Carlson

Michael Connell in memory of Henrietta Madson

Timothy V. Berg in memory of Hank Madson

Kathleen & David Zarling in memory of Hank Madson

David & Tammara Holtorf in memory of Hank Madson

Ronald & Marcia Freeberg in memory of Hank Madson

Tricia Schilling in memory of Lynne Hemann's Father

Tricia Schilling in memory of Dr. Barb Loring's Father

Kimberly A Hleuger in memory of Barbara Schroeder

Mary Olson in memory of Barbara Schroeder

Jon & Carol Lofquist in memory of Judith Borgschatz

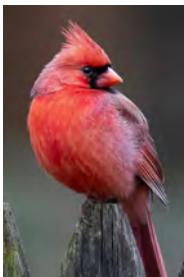
Virginia Vermeersch in memory of
Jerry Vermeersch

Cecelia Lamb in memory of George
Lamb

Julia Pearson in memory of Bruce L
Pearson

Ethel Renner in memory of Harry Renner

Ruth Holty in memory of Barbara J Schroeder



Rachel Boyum in memory of Barbara J Schroeder

Eugene Long in memory of Barbara J Schroeder

Cindee Hoberg in memory of Mark Hoberg

Bob Nelson in memory of Jenny Dervin

Bev Vogt in memory of Margaret & Richard Hanson

Tricia Schilling in memory of Gerry Henry

Judy Ernst in memory of Dean Ernst &
Glen & Marie Scott

Renada Moehnke in memory of David Moehnke

Gifts in Honor

Loraine McCaleb in honor of Ronald McCaleb

Foot Care Professionals in honor of the
Dedicated Staff of Elder Network

Mary Alice Richardson in honor of Holly
Brown

Peggy & Joe Marchesani in honor of the
volunteers who make such a difference in our
community.

Karen Fredin in honor of Kate Jirik

BJ Tanberg-Mitchell in honor of Bonnie Speltz

Dolores Onnen in honor of Ivan Zenker

Additional Ways to Give

Thrivent Choice dollars can be designated to Elder Network if you are a [member](#) and go to service.thrivent.com. We accept Donor Advised funds, IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD's), and other gifting options. Our EIN is: 41-1704390. Call our office today to learn more, at 507-285-5272.



1130 1/2 7th St. NW, Suite 205
Rochester, MN 55901-1732
Website: www.elder-network.org

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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Drivers Wanted

Safe drivers are wanted to transport older adults in Olmsted County. Flexible scheduling during days!

Friendly Visitors

Spend 1-2 hours on the phone or in-person, per week, to help an older adult feel less isolated.
Volunteers needed in Winona, Wabasha and Olmsted Counties.

Event Volunteers

Assist Elder Network with planning and hosting our 13th Annual Fall Fling Gala September 19th, 2026.
Volunteers are needed for a variety of roles: planning, publicity, and event-day helpers.

Technology Assistance Volunteers

Many of Elder Network's clients are learning to use technology to maintain social connections and access telehealth appointments. *Volunteers needed in Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona Counties.* No experience needed just a willingness to learn!

Caregiver Respite Volunteers

Volunteers devote 2-3 hours to supporting a caregiver in completion of daily living activities. Volunteers offer active conversation, play games, make a favorite treat, or go for a ride. Interested volunteers can work out arrangements according to their schedule to accommodate the needs of clients on an individual basis.

Respite Companions

We are seeking individuals who are passionate about working with older adults to assist with light housekeeping, errands, meal preparation, etc. *Paid Companions are needed in Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona Counties.* Call 507-285-5272, today!