

neighborsnews



With the help of its volunteers, Neighbors, Inc. will strive to reduce poverty, promote self-sufficiency and build community.

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Neighbors' Community Builders Circle



One year ago this month, we launched the Neighbors' Community Builders Circle for recurring donors (monthly, quarterly, etc.). What started as a small group has grown to an incredible 137 participants! These donors give in a variety of ways including: workplace payroll deductions, United Way, online giving and cash or check.

We hear from people in the Community Builders Circle that recurring donations are

convenient and easier for them to budget and that it also fosters a sense of community engagement. One donor recently told us that, "It makes me feel like I'm really a part of what you are doing at Neighbors because I'm helping every month."

Recurring giving also provides a steady stream of support for Neighbors' programs that can lead to better organizational budgeting and more stability for our year-round programming. We know that people come to us when they need help the most and it is important that we have the resources available to be here for them.

Please know that all online donations are secure and flexible. You choose the amount you wish to give each month or quarter and you can change or cancel your pledge at any time.

We are so excited that this program continues to grow and are looking into ways to further engage with this group as well. And, as a Community Builder, you will also receive a discount to all of our ticketed events! Can you say, party?!

Be sure to keep an eye out for our next newsletter where we will highlight our Spirit of Neighbors Circle. And to all of our donors, whether you donate once a month or once every few years, thank you so much for your generosity and for making a difference to a family or senior in need. If you have any questions please contact Beth Skwira at 651-306-2148 or beth@neighborsmn.org for more information.



Meet Susan Schroeder, AFC®



We are pleased to introduce our newest staff member, Susan Schroeder. Susan is taking on a brand new role at Neighbors, the Director of Mission Fulfillment, in which she will oversee our emergency and supportive programs, supervise and promote volunteer engagement and represent Neighbors on several committees. She comes to us from Dakota County Community Services where she worked since 2007. Susan is a proud graduate of Concordia University in St. Paul with a degree in Management and Communication and is an Accredited Financial Counselor through AFCPE®. Her main focus is on financial access and inclusion and she believes that everyone should have the opportunity to rise to their highest personal level of self-sufficiency. She looks forward to bringing her many years of experience in program development, volunteer recruitment and person-centered programming to Neighbors.

Susan is a lifelong resident of Dakota County and is thrilled to be working in South St. Paul where she and her husband raised their three children. Be sure to stop by and say hi to Susan the next time you are at Neighbors. And please feel free to call 651-306-2141 or email her at susan@neighborsmn.org if you have any questions regarding one of our programs or volunteering.

Duck Races Heading to WSP

Quack, quack! The annual Great Neighbors' Duck Races are back with **big news** for 2018. Due to the construction project on Southview Blvd in South St. Paul (the location of the annual On The Road Again community festival), the date and location of this year's event is changing. The organizers of West St. Paul's annual Touch A Truck™ event have invited us to hold our Duck Races during their community event. We think this is a great alternative option for us this year. The new date and times are as follows:

Saturday, September 29, 2018
Harmon Park in West St. Paul
2 p.m. – 6 p.m.



Be sure to stick around for the fireworks! They will commence just after 7 p.m. to conclude the event!



Although the date and location have changed for this year, don't worry – the Duck Races will be the same. If you are interested in volunteering or would like to donate a prize, please contact Heidi at 651-306-2154 or heidi@neighborsmn.org.

Welcome New Volunteers

There are a lot of new faces around Neighbors these days, and we could not be more thrilled they are joining the Neighbors family!

Clothes Closet Thrift Store

Paula Boe, Carolina Corado, Catherine Gent, Terry Halgrimson, Esha Katare, Ashley Kim, Karen Kube, Mary Matthews, Jillian Mitchell, Mary Thompson

Donation Pick-up

Larry Jensen, Michael Nietz

Food Shelf

Dianne Tourville

Groups

Rasmussen College – Eagan Campus, Enterprise Leasing Company of Minnesota, LLC

Marketing & Development

Rebecca Ross

Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities



Dial-A-Ride Drivers

Enjoy flexible scheduling options while transporting residents of northern Dakota County to medical and dental appointments. Hours are flexible and they are determined by you, the volunteer.

Clothes Closet Thrift Store

Receive and sort incoming donations, help families shop with free clothing vouchers and raise money

for Neighbors' emergency services. Times needed are Tuesday mornings or afternoons; Wednesday mornings or afternoons.

For more information, contact our Volunteer Programs Coordinator at 651-272-1133 or dylan@neighborsmn.org.

Clothes Closet Announcements

Big changes are coming to the Clothes Closet Thrift Store! In an effort to better serve our customers, we will be changing our hours of operation starting in September. *These changes will not affect the office or food shelf hours.* Our new Clothes Closet hours will be:

Sunday – Monday

CLOSED

Tuesday

9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Wednesday – Thursday

9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Friday – Saturday

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

To prepare ourselves for this new schedule, **we will be closing the store for one week** from Monday, August 27th – Saturday, September 1st in order to reorganize and make sure we are effectively utilizing all of our space and donations. We ask that people refrain from bringing in donations during this week. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for additional details and updates.

We also have a new Clothes Closet website! Visit neighborsclothescloset.org to learn more about the Clothes Closet and what we have to offer.



Lettuce Celebrate!



If you stop by our office during the Summer months, you're likely to be greeted by overflowing boxes of fresh produce in our lobby. This food has been generously donated by local farmers and gardeners, and our clients are always thrilled when they have access to fresh and healthy food. Over the past two months, we have collected 5,430 pounds of produce from farmer's markets, community gardens and individual gardens. That is roughly the equivalent weight of an adult hippopotamus! Wow!

Thank you to everyone who has donated food and to our wonderful volunteers who have picked up donations. Together we can really make a difference in our community.

Stamp Out Hunger

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 26th annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive! With the help of our amazing volunteers and local letter carriers, we collected 24,458 pounds of food! We are so grateful for your generosity.



Three Cheers for Taps & Apps



We had a great night at the Taps & Apps Happy Hour Benefit! Thank you to all who sponsored, donated, participated and supported it. With your help and generosity, we raised over \$7,800 for the emergency and supportive services programs at Neighbors.

Neighbors

A poem by Nils Boberg

Neighbors, those people next door that you treat with respect, that maybe come over and grill on your deck.

Those neighbors are close but most neighbors are far, the kind you must reach with a car.

So I headed over to South Saint Paul, and found a community of neighbors I had not known at all.

I watched and I learned and I took it all in, then proceeded to start work throwing clothes in a bin.

For hours I labeled clothes, stocked shelves and drove to get food, all while maintaining a positive mood.

People in need come to the shelf, humbled and happy to receive the food that is dealt.

Volunteers are happy to serve what they have saved, with the help of community, giving, what others gave.

I am lucky to experience this community first hand and will be surely returning another day again.

Come As You Are

All of the programs at Neighbors, from the food shelf to the holiday program, are designed with one goal in mind; to reduce poverty, promote self-sufficiency, and build community. Each program is an important piece of the puzzle that allows us to reach different populations in the hopes of assisting as many people in our community as possible. One program that you may not be as familiar with is called Come As You Are which is a **FREE** social program for adults with developmental disabilities. On the first and third Tuesday of each month, from September - June, this group gets together at the First Presbyterian Church is South St. Paul from 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. for a night of fun activities, live entertainment, snacks and more! Upcoming events include:

September 4

Beach Party with Bob the Beachcomber



September 18

Magic Night with the Amazing Jeffo

October 2

Fall Spectacular with games and live music

October 16

Halloween Party (Costumes welcomed!)

November 20

Thanksgiving Party and BINGO!

For a full schedule of events or to download a Come As You Are registration form, please visit neighborsmn.org/services/CAYA.

Looking Good!

Thanks to a donation made by an anonymous group, you may have noticed that some of our volunteers have been rocking the Neighbors t-shirt the past few weeks! This group wanted our ongoing volunteers to receive a t-shirt as a small sign of appreciation for all that they do for us. So wear those shirts with pride, volunteers! You've certainly earned it 😊

If you are an ongoing volunteer and you have not received a t-shirt, please contact Dylan at 651-272-1133 or dylan@neighborsmn.org.



Volunteer Spotlight

Phil N. is a transportation driver for Neighbors' Dial-A-Ride program who is known for his compassion towards others. Initially recruited by a Neighbors' staff member for the role while he was volunteering in the food shelf, he transitioned into volunteer driving to transport residents of northern Dakota County to medical and dental appointments. He

currently provides 2-3 rides each week to residents of South St. Paul, West St. Paul, Inver Grove Heights, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake and Lilydale.



During the interview for this story, Phil spoke about being a “people person” and emphasized that this trait is necessary for a successful transportation driver. He likes people and is a good listener. In addition to meeting new people in the community, Phil realizes that his interactions with riders may be just as important as the ride itself. “Sometimes you take the same person multiple times, so you really get a chance to know them,” Phil said.

Making connections with others is rewarding for Phil in his volunteer driving position. Phil is among 10 volunteer drivers who, using their own vehicles, transport people to and from medical and dental appointments. He is grateful to be reimbursed for mileage. He also likes having the flexibility of being allowed a few weeks off when he needs it.

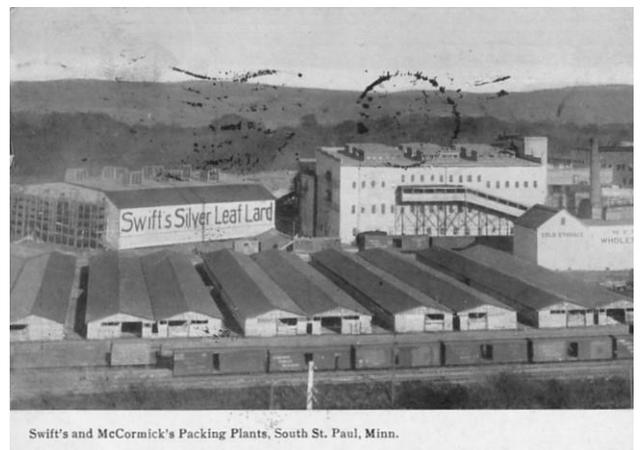
Acquiring more volunteer drivers for Neighbors is one of his goals. “I try to recruit who I can. There’s always room for more drivers”, Phil said. Jenny Saunier, Dial-A-Ride Program Coordinator, stated that there is currently a big need for more volunteer drivers to ensure we can continue to provide this vital service. If you are interested in becoming a driver or if you have any questions, please call Jenny at 651-306-2143 or email her at jenny@neighborsmn.org.

From the Archives

Back in 2002, a group of Neighbors employees and volunteers got together to compile a history of Neighbors in honor of our 30th Anniversary. The following article is from that publication and looks at the cultural, political and economic factors which ultimately led to the creation of Neighbors. While we must always be willing to grow and change in order to make sure we are serving our community in the most effective way possible, it is also important to remember where we came from. Keep an eye on our blog for more stories about the early days of Neighbors including the expansion into Inver Grove Heights, West St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Mendota, Sunfish Lake and Lilydale.

Like most towns in America, South St. Paul was home to many churches of varied denominations by the early years of the 1900s. Some were established by the pioneer farmers who brought their faith and denominational loyalty when they ventured west. Others were founded by European immigrants who arrived in vast numbers between 1890 and 1910. By 1972, the city had 15 active churches within its boundaries.

American society revolved around the church in those years and when a family was in need, they turned to their church for assistance. This informal system worked well until South St. Paul faced the most severe economic crisis of its history, the closing of the Swift & Company meatpacking plant in 1969. Swift’s and its neighbor in the vast stockyards, Armour & Company, were the two largest employers in the city with over 6,000 workers in the mid-1960s.



Swift's and McCormick's Packing Plants, South St. Paul, Minn.

The first shock wave of unemployment hit the city early in 1970 as families of longtime Swift's employees found themselves struggling to make ends meet. More and more individuals began calling and stopping by local churches to ask for help. For many of those congregations, it was the first time that they were asked to assist people who were not directly connected to their own parish or church family. Pastors and priests were unsure how to provide effective assistance when their own church's resources were limited.



At the same time, the church in America was being challenged by a generation of young people who were seeking more from their faith than traditional Sunday worship alone would provide. The country was torn in two over the Vietnam War, there were demonstrations on college campuses across the nation, and news of the Watergate break-in had brought a sense of uncertainty to many Americans.

It was at this time in America's development that the members of the South St. Paul Ministerial Association began to share their experiences of trying to help the families who called them or showed up on the steps of their churches in need of assistance.

Paul Truran, who was serving as co-pastor of First Presbyterian Church with Dave Kachel, recently recalled that in addition to a desire to help others, many of the pastors in the early 1970s were seeking a way to make ministry and service come alive for

their parishioners. He remembered that the Jesus Movement was spreading across the nation and was attracting young followers who sought a way to spread peace and love, not war. Providing avenues from people to make a difference in the lives of others was an important objective of the church in this era.

With that goal in mind the members of the Ministerial Association went back to their churches and asked specific individuals to serve on a task force to talk about uniting their efforts to provide food, clothing and other assistance to families in need.

For many of the church members involved in those early days, the concept of Catholics and Protestants working together on the same committee was a totally new idea. Guided by the example of their own clergy, the group soon realized that their differences were far less important than their similarities. They all had a desire to help their neighbors in whatever way they could and that willingness led to the birth of a remarkably ecumenical partnership.

Reverend Richard Keene Smith from St. Andrew's Episcopal Church became one of the most visible promoters of the Neighbors concept. Many recall his cheerful enthusiasm as he talked about how people working together were going to have a wonderful impact on the community in ways that they could not yet imagine, but which would one day come to fruition.

Neighbors represented something meaningful and positive that the people of South St. Paul could do for their community. The massive meatpacking plants were closing and over one hundred buildings were soon to be demolished on the city's historic Concord Street strip. Everything was changing and people from all walks of life were looking for something that reminded them of the way things used to be – the way it was when you knew your neighbors and everybody was there for each other.

Mailing List Updates

If you are receiving duplicate copies of our newsletter, would like more copies or would like to be removed from the list, please call 651-306-2155 or email brigid@neighborsmn.org. Due to an issue with our phones when the last newsletter went out, we were not able to access voicemails requesting mailing list updates. The issue has been resolved, so please give us a call back if any requested changes have not been made. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Note that Neighbors does not sell our mailing list to anyone or any organizations. Neighbors News is a quarterly publication of Neighbors, Inc.

Connect with Neighbors

Want to stay up-to-date with everything that's going on at Neighbors? If you're on social media, like us on Facebook ([/NeighborsInc](#)) and follow us on Twitter ([@NeighborsInc](#)).

Curious about what's going on in the Clothes Closet? The store posts sale and merchandise information on its social sites, too. Just visit the Neighbors Clothes Closet – Thrift Store on Facebook or follow [@NBClothesCloset](#) on Twitter.

