



neighborsnews

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

Board Members

Juliette Francis, Chair
 David Paton, Vice Chair
 Greg Kuntz, Secretary
 Jodee Paape, Treasurer
 Brian Counihan, Past Chair
 Gloria Contreras Edin
 Holly Ekwochi
 Deborah Engfer
 Katie Estes
 Marlene Kazmierczak
 Gwendolyn Labovitch
 Tom Leonard
 Jacob Niewinski
 Leesa Soderlind
 Dan Warner

Phone: 651.455.5000

Fax: 651.455.1319

www.neighborsmn.org



Greater Twin Cities
 United Way

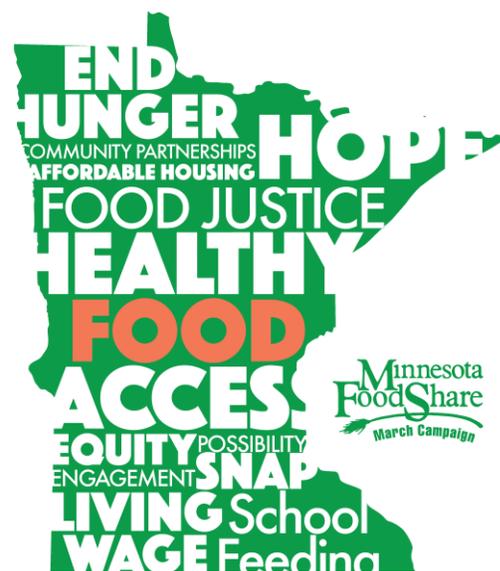
March Matters

From the start of spring to daylight saving time, holidays and spring breaks to winter sports tournaments, there's a lot going on in March. March also happens to be a big month at Neighbors and for food shelves across the state.

The annual Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign serves as our biggest food and fund drive of the year. Not only does it help us stock the shelves for the busy summer months ahead, but it also helps us secure funding that is distributed later in the year – meaning a donation between February 26 and April 8 goes even further.

We're once again hoping to collect a combined 350,000 pounds/dollars to help feed our neighbors in need, but to do so we need your help! Check below for a list of ways you can make

March matter for our community, along with a list of items Neighbors can provide to help with your efforts. If you have any questions or need supplies, contact Darcy at 651.306.2149 or darcy@neighborsmn.org.



Ways to Help

- Attend a community event supporting Neighbors. An updated list can be found on our website at www.neighborsmn.org/community-events.
- Shop at Cub in Inver Grove Heights (7850 Cahill Road) on March 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Neighbors' staff and volunteers will be there collecting donations for the food shelf, and everything donated will count toward our March Campaign total!
- Organize a food and/or fund drive, or donate to drives that are already planned in the community, at your office, through your church, etc.
- Host a speaker from Neighbors at an upcoming meeting or event.
- Drop off a food or fund donation at Neighbors during regular business hours (weekdays from 8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.).

continued on page 6

2018 Food Fight: Burgers are Back!

This year's Great Neighbors' Food Fight has begun, but it's not too late to get in on the action! Seven local restaurants are vying for the title of best burger, and you can help choose the winner.

Each restaurant has designated one burger to compete in this event, and each \$35 Food Fight card can be redeemed for the selected burger at each location through March 31. Once you've tried them all, vote online for your favorite. This year's restaurants and selections include:

- B-52 Burgers & Brew: Santa Fe Burger
- BLVD Bar + Grille: Swiss on Sourdough
- Cherokee Tavern: Saint Joe's Burger
- Concord Lanes Bar & Grill: Jersey Burger
- Jersey's Bar & Grill: Jersey Burger
- Mississippi Pub: Bacon Mac and Cheeseburger
- Perkins West St. Paul: Classic Cheeseburger

Get your card today by visiting www.neighborsmn.org or the Neighbors office.



Recent Grants

We are grateful to have received grants from the following foundations in recent months:

- Enterprise Holdings Foundation
- Peace Shalom Foundation
- Richard M Schulze Foundation
- SpartanNash Foundation
- Stevens Square Foundation
- Target Foundation

These funds will help us provide food, clothing and support to thousands of people in 2018.

We also received funding from Open Your Heart for the Hungry and Homeless to purchase a new refrigerator for the lobby. This will provide a more efficient way for us to distribute items that need to remain cold to those using the bakery and fresh foods shelf.

Help for the Holidays

When one mother saw the gifts for her children arrive on not one, but two carts – including a guitar for her son – she started crying. In the winter, her family's income drops due to the weather and she, like many low-income parents, faced a heartbreaking choice – pay rent or buy presents. However, because of our incredibly generous adopters and donors, this mother – and many others – didn't have to worry.

As we helped her take the gifts outside and load them into the car, she continued to cry. "It's OK," a staff member told her. "There's good in the world."

You are that good. With your help, 734 families received gifts through Neighbors this year.

We – and the families we serve – are so very grateful for your support. Whether you gave a single toy or item of clothing, adopted a family or senior, helped in intake, organized and put together gift packs, or assisted with gift distribution, your time, energy and donations are so very appreciated.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors:

Mary Jeanne

Until Mary Jeanne was diagnosed with a hereditary eye disorder at the age of 32, she loved to drive. Not only did it allow her to visit her family that lived three hours away, but it also gave her the freedom to explore the world around her. Unfortunately, her license was taken away when her eyesight became increasingly impaired, though she hasn't let that slow her down for a second.

Growing up on a dairy farm in Iowa, she learned how to work hard. She has gone from living in her car, to completely renovating a trailer, to owning two more homes in her lifetime. Her house is her castle, where she lives with her sixth service dog, Chelsey, along with amazing décor (much of which she has either painted or built herself).

After years of working hard for everything she has, Mary Jeanne understands and appreciates the true value of things. She values the antiques she inherited from her mother and father because of their beauty and the memories they carry, her guide dog that allows her to move around without a cane, and her quiet and safe neighborhood. For the past 40 years, Mary Jeanne has also especially appreciated the value of transportation to medical appointments she receives through the Neighbors, Inc. Dial A Ride program.

"Neighbors is always there with open arms. The drivers are all fantastic and I like that we can share stories together!"

As a way to give back and say thanks for all the rides she has received, Mary Jeanne is a financial and food donor to Neighbors. "I believe that when you give to others, the Lord will return it 100 fold. I am hoping that maybe someday, the Lord will give me my sight and a Mercedes Benz!" she joked with a contagious belly laugh.

So when a friend invited her to an estate planning seminar through her church, she jumped at the opportunity.

"At that point, I couldn't decide who to give things to because I am not married and have no children. After talking with my friend, I decided to help those that have helped me!" Working with an attorney, she put together a trust designating Neighbors and her church as partial beneficiaries when she passes away.

"I'd rather make that decision now, when I get to choose, than have someone else try and guess what I would want after I'm gone." Now Mary Jeanne's gift will be a lasting tribute to her love of her community, while helping to guarantee Neighbors' long-term future of service.

The "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" column features members of the community who give of their resources in a variety of ways. If you'd like to learn more about different giving options, please contact Beth Skwira, director of development, at 651.306.2148.

Plan, Protect and Share

Making the most of your money for yourself and others

You are invited to a free information session on Thursday, March 8, from 12 to 1 p.m. in the Neighbors conference room.

Paul Hassing from Edward Jones and Beth Skwira from Neighbors will be on-hand to present details and answer questions on donor advised funds, charitable beneficiary designations and more.

They will also address the new tax laws and how they impact charitable giving. Lunch will be provided.

To register, please contact Beth at 651.306.2148 or beth@neighborsmn.org by March 6.

Volunteer Recognition Awards: Nomination Deadline Approaching

Do you know a volunteer that lives out Neighbors' core values of respect, fairness, compassion and empowerment? Nominate them for one of Neighbors' Volunteer Recognition Awards, which recognize individuals and groups who go above and beyond during each shift.

Anyone who has given their time to Neighbors in 2017 is eligible (except staff), and anyone can submit a nomination! Forms are available at the office and online at www.neighborsmn.org. This year's award categories include:

- Respect
- Empowerment
- Compassion
- Fairness
- Rookie of the Year
- Outstanding Youth
- Community Partner
- Program of the Year
- Neighbors Legacy Award

Additional information, along with descriptions of each category, can be found on the nomination form.

Completed forms can be returned to the Volunteer Department or emailed to volunteer@neighborsmn.org by February 28.

A committee of volunteers and staff will review all nominations and select the award recipients. Winners will be notified in advance and recognized at the annual volunteer appreciation luncheon in April.



Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for a hands-on way to help your community? Neighbors has a wide range of volunteer opportunities. From ongoing shifts in the Clothes Closet to group projects in the food shelf, flexible options through the Dial A Ride program and donation pick up from local businesses, there's a little something for everyone.

Currently, we are especially in need of people who want to join the team in the Clothes Closet thrift store. Tasks include donation processing, merchandising, customer service and cashiering.

For more information, contact the Volunteer Department at 651.306.2145 or volunteer@neighborsmn.org.

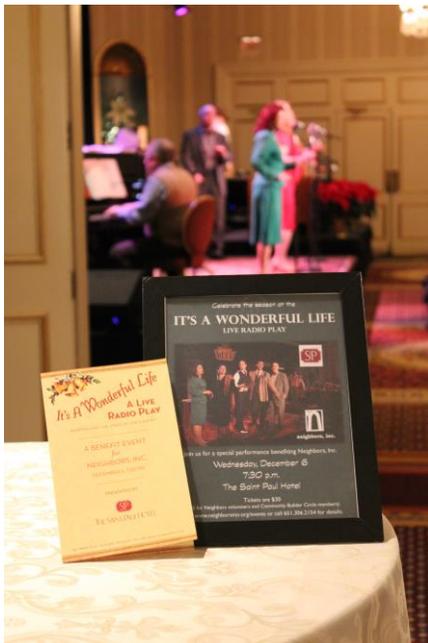


To all who donated to Neighbors on Give to the Max Day—thank you! We were humbled by the support. Your generosity maxed out both matching gifts and raised more than \$40,000 to help our northern Dakota County neighbors in need.

Welcome to our New Volunteers

A big thank you to the following individuals who have started as ongoing volunteers in the past few months:

- Patti Weber – food shelf
- Debra Kammerer – food shelf
- Meghan DuPont – food shelf
- Michelle Davis – donation pickup
- Gabe Grundter – donation pickup
- Liz Huffman – food shelf and Clothes Closet
- Debra and Ken Schult – food shelf
- Pooja Kapoor – food shelf
- Ron Nelson – Dial A Ride
- Jeff Kuntz – food shelf
- Sara Owens – Clothes Closet
- Colleen Poechmann – front desk
- Greg Malecha – Dial A Ride
- Judy Gangl – Clothes Closet
- Belkys Merlos – Clothes Closet
- John Gogala – food shelf and Clothes Closet
- Kathy Waldron – food shelf



We had another amazing night at the annual It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play in early December. Thank you to all who attended, as well as the cast, crew and The Saint Paul Hotel. We raised more than \$13,000 for Neighbors' emergency and supportive services programs!

Volunteer Spotlight: Kathy K.

When she retired 11 years ago, Kathy K. began looking for a place where she could volunteer.

"I like to help people," she notes. "It makes me feel good and I get to continue to grow."

She learned about Neighbors, Inc. at a speed-volunteering event and quickly became an integral member of the team. From her weekly shift working in the Clothes Closet, to providing tours, staffing open houses and assisting with farmer's markets, she has been an important advocate for the organization and the work that it does.

On Friday afternoons, you can find Kathy in the store helping customers and enjoying the time spent with her fellow volunteers. And while she's experienced in every facet of the store's operations, she continues to learn each and every shift.

One of her favorite lessons involves a personal goal:

"I had always wanted to learn Spanish," she notes. "Since we have a lot of Spanish-speaking customers, I got some CDs from the library to teach me the basics and then practice whenever I can. Customers have been so helpful, and I've gotten a lot better!"

Regardless of what you're hoping to get out of the experience, Kathy encourages people to consider volunteering at Neighbors.

"It's nice to have a place to come and leave whatever else is going on at the door," she said. "The more you're here, the more you feel a part of everything. It's fun and rewarding, and there are so many different opportunities that you can try out a variety of things to find out what works best for you."

continued from page 1

Available Resources

- Collection bins and barrels
- Posters (digital versions: www.neighborsmn.org/partner-resources)
- Stickers
- Brochures
- Statistics

Planning a Drive

Want to help, but not sure where to begin? Here are five simple steps to consider as you plan a food and/or fund drive:

1. Set a goal
2. Promote your drive
3. Collect food and/or funds
4. Get the donations to Neighbors
5. Celebrate your success

Brackets for Good

Here's another way you can make March matter for Neighbors! We are excited to be part of the Brackets for Good tournament in 2018. The tournament tips off on Friday, March 2, so keep an eye on our website, Facebook page ([/NeighborsInc](https://www.facebook.com/NeighborsInc)) and Twitter feed ([@NeighborsInc](https://twitter.com/NeighborsInc)) for details.



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](https://www.facebook.com/NeighborsInc)) and follow us on Twitter ([@NeighborsInc](https://twitter.com/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](https://twitter.com/NBClothesCloset) on Twitter.



Partnering with the Royal Family

Hail Boreas!

Neighbors, Inc. is honored to have been selected by the newly crowned King Boreas (and Neighbors board member), Tom Leonard, as the official non-profit partner of the 2018 St. Paul Winter Carnival Royal Family.

After working together on a winter clothing drive at the Ecolab Ice Palace and participating in a variety of activities during the Winter Carnival, we are excited to continue the partnership through the coming year.



Upcoming Holiday Schedule

The Neighbors, Inc. office will be closed on the following dates:

- February 19 – Presidents' Day
- March 30 – Good Friday

The Clothes Closet Thrift Store will be closed on:

- February 19 – Presidents' Day
- March 30 – Good Friday
- March 31 – Easter Saturday

Neighbors' Furniture Match Program

Did you know that Neighbors operates a furniture match program for clients in need of larger items such as couches, dressers, tables and even beds?

While we don't have room to store these items at our office, we keep a list of available donations and when a client has a need, we work to connect them with the donor to arrange pick up.

If you are planning to get rid of some furniture that's still in good condition, we'd love to help ensure it goes to a good home. To donate, just call Jenny at 651.306.2143.



New Year, New Look

Notice anything new? We're in the process of refreshing the design of our materials!

While the changes aren't drastic, they are a little different. Rest assured, however, our commitment to serving our neighbors in need and helping the community remain the same.

Throughout the coming months, we'll be updating our print and electronic communications to reflect the changes. The font on our logo has changed; the colors are a bit different; our brochures, newsletters and letterhead will have a new look.

This will take a bit of time, however, and we appreciate your understanding as we move forward.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Keis, director of marketing & communications, at 651.306.2153 or sara@neighborsmn.org.

Mailing List Updates

Neighbors News is a quarterly publication of Neighbors, Inc.

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.

Note that Neighbors does not sell our mailing list to anyone or any organizations.



neighborsinc.

NEIGHBORS, INC.

222 Grand Ave. W
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Recipient Name

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code