



# The Illuminator

Sharing What We Do with What We've Been Given

Quarterly Donor Newsletter

Vol. 15, No. 2

Spring 2024

YOU are making the lives of older adults in our community better and brighter. THANK YOU!

## COUNTRY STRONG: Enhancing Senior Services in Rural Areas



People living in rural communities tend to be very self-sufficient. They also have a lot of pride, rightfully so, about living on the land and making do without the many conveniences those who live in an urban area experience. But sometimes we all need a little help.

Some rural communities provide more services for older adults than others, such as a food pantry or café that delivers hot meals at noon, but many parts of Grand Forks and Nelson Counties lack such services. This makes it difficult for older adults to get the nutrition they need to stay healthy and remain in their homes...that's where Bethany comes in.



*Volunteers, Brad and Roger took selfies with some of our rural clients.*

Bethany, a social worker at the GF Senior Center, works one-on-one with older adults living in rural Grand Forks and Nelson Counties. She is a resource for them when they need assistance.

"A lot of what I do is make seniors aware of what is available," reveals Bethany. "The most common help we provide is access to nutritious meals and transportation options." Bethany works with 40-50 rural seniors at any given time, with ages ranging from 62-98.

In rural communities, friends are like family and they help one another out. That might be picking up groceries and supplies when they travel to Grand Forks or providing a ride to medical appointments in Grand Forks or Fargo. Unfortunately, as rural residents age, there are fewer friends to lean on.

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“I would say about 25% of the seniors I work with are quite isolated, meaning they have very little support,” shares Bethany. “Isolation is also age dependent; the older a client is, the more isolated they likely are.”

“My goal is to help a senior stay in the home of their choice as long as it’s safe,” states Bethany. “The GF Senior Center, thanks to amazing volunteers, delivers frozen meals to clients in rural communities. Deliveries are once a month and clients typically get 20-30 meals at a time.”

“It is fun to hear and see how our frozen meals have helped rural clients,” admits Bethany. “The meals allow them to stay in their home. Many clients express that they don’t know where they would be without the meals.” The GF Senior Center creates meals that take a senior back to their childhood, such as salmon loaf, tator-tot hotdish and liver & onions. “One client said, ‘oh, you have liver & onions? Send them all!’” chuckles Bethany.



Many rural clients are farm wives who prepared homecooked meals for 60 plus years. Truthfully, they can sometimes be hard to please with meals. However, clients have raved about the quality and many are ‘just tickled’ to get them. “The seniors really enjoy when we stop by,” reveals Bethany. “They graciously open their homes and the coffee pot is always on. Seniors really look forward to a social visit with the volunteers or myself.”

Recently, a rural client actually prepared one of his frozen meals so it would be ready when the volunteers stopped by with his monthly meal delivery. “He wanted the volunteers to try it so they would know how great the food is!” explains Bethany.

Some clients require more assistance than just meals. Virginia, 98 years old, grew up in rural North Dakota, but cannot continue living on her own. She recently moved in with her friend, Margy, in the same town. Margy is also a caregiver for her husband.

“Margy is such a gem,” admits Bethany. “She opened her home to a friend in need. Her generosity allows Virginia to remain in the community she loves, rather than moving to a facility. The genuine hospitality of people is amazing.” As a caregiver for her husband and being a senior herself, the GF Senior Center is also able to offer frozen meal delivery to Margy and her husband. That takes some of the caregiving burden off her, if ever needed.

Regardless of a client’s situation, Bethany treats each individual with dignity. “Many people are very private and have a hard time asking for help. But, when we build trust and get them the services they need, it’s wonderful to see them happy and content.”

The GF Senior Center receives client referrals from many sources, including rural cafes, banks, and neighbors. But still the biggest challenge Bethany faces is getting the word out about how she can help. Do you know someone in rural Grand Forks or Nelson County that could use some assistance? Please reach out! You can contact Bethany at [bethanym@gfseniorcenter.org](mailto:bethanym@gfseniorcenter.org) or call her at 701-757-4872. ■

Thank you to our volunteers, Dave Britton, Roger Johnson, and Brad Westrum, for your dedication in delivering frozen meals to our rural clients. That commitment helps seniors remain in their homes as long as possible!

# Giving Hearts Day 2024

## You Provided Many Plates for Seniors!

Thank you to the **426** Giving Hearts Day donors for your generosity! **YOU** provided **\$54,986.25** towards the purchase of new kitchen equipment. You are all **amazing!**



### \$5,000-\$9,999

Nelson, Duane



### \$1,000-\$4,999

South Forks Lions Club

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Burkholder, Frank



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Cockerham, Dianna

Collings, John and Sherri

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Cox, Diane

Cox, Dione

Cronquist, Yvonne

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Deitz, Marijo

Demmers, Deb

Denney, Duane

Derouin, Dolores

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Dunham, Ray and Anita

Dvorak, Jacob

Egstad, Elsie

Elbert, Dennis and Dora

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Erdmann, Ashleigh  
Erdmann, Rod and Michelle  
Erickson, Dennis and Cheri  
Evanson, Daniel and Sharon  
Fagerholt, James  
Feilen, Mary  
Feist, Dennis  
Foss, Virgil  
Garske, John  
GFSC Chair Yoga and Healthy  
Bones PM Classes  
Greendahl, Kim  
Gregory, Michael  
Grimes, Ed and Bonnie  
Hansen, James  
Hartsough, Ross and Brenda  
Hass, Brad  
Hegg, Kelly  
Heidmann, Ron and Joyce  
Helgersen, Donna  
Herbst, Jami  
Hilde, Wayne  
Hoeger, Gordon and Dorothy  
Hoffert, Rodger and Alice  
Holm, Jane  
Horner, Herb and Judy  
Hursh, Ken and Walton, Karin  
Huss, Rex  
Iverson, Avis  
Jablon, Michael  
Jacobi, Ellen  
Jacobson, Corinne  
Jarombek, Raymond and Joyce  
Johnson, Robert and Judy  
Johnson, Tim and Mary  
Joyce, Gerry and Mary  
Just, Melvin and Mary  
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Kjellberg, Rodney and Marlys  
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Korfhage, Mary Lou  
Krom, Sandy  
Kuhn, Peter and Eunice




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LaMoine, Connie  
Larson, Mark and Nina  
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Lehn, Rich and Faye  
Lopez, Evonne  
Lundberg, Marilyn  
MacGregor, Fred and Lois  
Mattern, Alice  
McKenna, Mary Ann  
Medd, Joel and Amy  
Melicher, Barbara  
Mills, Faye  
Monsebroten, Margaret  
Murdock, Lee and June  
Murphy, Spud  
Nielsen, Forrest and Emily  
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Olson, Robert  
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Welsh, Lloyd and Shirley  
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Westrum, Brad and Yvonne  
Wilkening, Betty  
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Ye Ol Painters  
Youshefski, Jean  
Zick, Roberta


**Up to \$100**



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Barrett, Mary  
Bauste, Robert and Ange  
Beach, Barb   
Belcher, Ida  
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Boettner, Scott and Jodi  
Bohm, Lisa  
Bollman, Ginny  
Bossart, Stacy  
Boyd, Bob and Dawn  
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Bryan, Rebecca and Joe  
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Carlson, Bruce and Judy  
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Clemens, John and Lorraine  
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Connell, Jennifer  
Connell, JoAnn  
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Ditullio, Jerry and Kjemhus, Barb  
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Ericson, Jerry and Cherylyn  
Feist, Gloria  
Ferguson, John and Maura  
Finck, James and Rosemary  
Finney, Jane  
Flannery, Kathy  
Fredrickson, Mercy  
Garman, Kim

Geiszler, Carol  
Gillespie, Paul and Lois  
Glessner, Mary  
Goeke, Jennifer  
Gonzales, Nicolas and Stevens,  
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Groseth, Joyce   
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Kurtyka, Bobbie  
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 Swanson, Del  
 Sweetland, Mary and Tibbitts,  
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 Torblaa-Multhaupt, Randy and  
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 Wilson, Amanda  
 Wilson, Neil and Ann  
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 Wolf, Christopher  
 Yoshida, Glen  
 Young, Patty  
 Zirnheld, Clair and Ronda

## 2023 Numbers (Continued from Back)

### FUNDRAISING

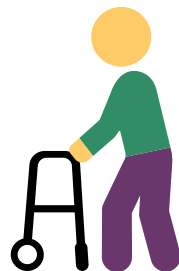


- 794 Donors in 2023
- 147 New Donors
- 18 Brighter Side Society Members (Monthly Donors)
- \$34,225 Raised on Giving Hearts Day (2023)
- \$148,714 Raised during the Silver Campaign
- \$70,952.79 Awarded in Grants

### RESOURCES

**5,387**

Hours of service provided to older adults in Grand Forks and Nelson counties.



- Resource service hours were up 6% in 2023

### TRANSPORTATION



- 7,563 rides were subsidized through Transportation Fare Assistance
- This service was up 40%


# Thank You to Our Donors!

*The following is a list of donors and their **cumulative giving from Jan 8, 2024 to April 5, 2024 (except Giving Hearts Day)**. Gift designations, including memorials, are listed in the monthly Silver Express newsletter. Brighter Side Society members are designated by \* symbol.*

## **Donations of \$5,000-\$9,999**

Citizens Assistance Program  
Ryan, Jerry

## **Donations of \$1,000-\$4,999**

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Alvis Amble Charitable Trust  
Calvary Lutheran Church  
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## **Donations of \$500-\$999**

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## **Donations of \$250-\$499**


Benson, Ray and Mary  
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Sansburn, Charles  
Westacott, Richard


## **Donations of \$100-\$249**

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Gate City Bank  
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Konze, Warren and Gerri  
Landis, Evelyn  
Lofberg, Janice  
Luney, Daniel  
Midland National Life Insurance  
Peterson Farms  
Rebsch, Al and Connie  
Schiele, Kathy\*  
Schubert, George  
Spong, Dale and Susan  
Steinke, John and Susan  
Thompson, Barb  
Vein, Jerry and Mary\*  
Wagner, Lou  
Westrum, Brad and Yvonne\*  
Xcel Energy Foundation  
Zirnhelt, Clair and Ronda\*

## **Donations up to \$100**

Altendorf, Diane and Hoselton,  
George  
Austin, Kevin and Joyce  
Bakke, Marilyn  
Broadwell, Ray and Becky\*  
Buckley, Ann\*  
Burns, Lemonte  
Connell, JoAnn  
Cox, Roberta  
Culkins, Thelma  
Deraney, Pat   
Dunnigan, Faye  
Dvorak, Marlene\*

Feist, Dennis  
Fettig, Carol  
Hanson, Carrie  
Harkness, Shirley  
Heffern, Hank and Sandy  
Helgerson, Donna\*  
Hogan, Shirley  
Horner, Richard and Dixie  
Iseminger, Carl and Colette\*  
Jerik, Dorothy  
Kaml, Judy  
Knain, Carol  
Laager, Bernice  
Lund, Jacki   
Lunde, Beverly  
Martin, Tom and Laurel  
Mattern, Alice\*  
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McGurran, MaryBeth and Jay  
Mills, Faye  
Mutcher, Katherine  
Network For Good  
Norgard, Phyllis  
Otremba, Sheryl  
Oversen, Kylie  
Puffe, Lyle and Jeanne  
Roos, Leslie and Patricia  
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Sandberg, Curt and Ione\*  
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Schnell, Ellie  
Schumacher, Matt and Jami\*  
Sondrol, Leroy and Judy  
Sorlie, Richard  
St Germain, Bob and Sharon  
Sulland, Steve and Linda\*  
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Thorson, Ruth  
Torrey, Dianne  
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Spring 2024 Illuminator

# 2023 Numbers

## MEALS



- Total GF Kitchen meals dished up were up 7% over 2022
- In 2023 we cooked up 53% more meals than 2019 (that's 35,000 more meals!)

## SIT-DOWN DINING



- 1,269 people received sit-down meals
- Sit-down meals were up 16%

## MEALS ON WHEELS

1,438 people received meals on wheels



## ACTIVITIES



- 16,879 people participated in activities in 2023
- Activity participation was up 13%

(continued on page 6)