Making New Connections

Yard & Garden Partners

Here comes the sun . . .

After what does seem like years, the ice is melting, the pandemic is slowly waning, and with the new vaccines here, the smiles are returning to our faces. To celebrate this new season, this new appreciation of connection and community, Care Partners is bringing together volunteers and seniors for a Spring & Summer Chores Program.

Seniors, would you welcome help with spring cleanup, planting some flowers, or maintaining your garden? Volunteers, are you eager to get out and lend a hand or have a group that needs a project? Call us at 387-3788 or visit our website.

Nourishing Food Project

Care Partner’s Jennifer Trowbridge led an initiative to explore ways to bring nourishing foods, whole, sustainably-sourced, and local, to Cook County residents who are struggling with serious illness or other health challenges. Christina Hartley Conroy, Diane Booth, Carol Bennett, Judi Barsness, and Pat Campanaro joined her to help pilot the project. Although Care Partners is not in the meal business, we were pleased to access nutrition funding to help the group pilot a food box program and provide a little extra support to some of our clients during a difficult time.

Jennifer worked with local food growers Creaking Tree Farm, Kim Knutsen, Christina Ridlbauer, Diane Booth and the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op for all ingredients used in the food boxes. The Cook County Community Center donated the use of their kitchen for cooking, box assembly, and food storage.

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Cook County Aging Coalition

The Northland Foundation awarded a $65,000 grant to support the Cook County Aging Coalition and their plans for helping area older adults successfully age in place. The grant is part of Northland’s three-year Integrated Rural Community Aging Program.

The Northland Foundation led planning process included creating a vision statement: The Cook County Aging Coalition envisions a connected community which empowers citizens to age successfully throughout Cook County and Grand Portage. Access to a wide array of services enhances quality of life, health, and social engagement.

Creating a Community Access Point for Easy Access to Aging Services

The group’s two-year action plan includes creating a single access point with a variety of online, print and in-person ways for the public to learn about all available resources for older adults and the people who care for them. It will also establish a Care Navigator position to help manage the access point, provide in-person intake and referral, and facilitate improved communication and response by community partners to requests for their resources. Joint outreach will help build awareness for aging services.

Care Partners’ staff, Kay Grindland and Christie John, will help guide the project, with Christie serving as Care Navigator. “We are honored to be working with such dedicated local partners,” Kay shared. “We all help older adults and their families find services, but with all the many programs it is sometimes hard to know where to start. It is exciting to collaborate on a joint venture that will make it easier for everyone to access the information they need.”

The coalition also includes The Hub; Cook County Public Health and Human Services; Grand Portage Health Service, Grand Portage Human Services, and Grand Portage Elderly Nutrition Program; North Shore Health Care Foundation; North Shore Health, Sawtooth Mountain Clinic and other community leaders.
Making a Difference

Thanks to your generosity, Care Partners was able support 112 senior clients in 2020 in spite of the challenges of the pandemic. We appreciate the wonderful volunteers and staff who navigated infection control and remote work to continue to be there for our clients.

- 32 Senior Rides clients received 277 rides and logged 12,880 miles!
- 35 caregivers received coaching & support.
- 20 clients received care coordination/end-of-life care.
- 15 clients received over 270 hours of chore assistance.
- 23 clients received over 124 volunteer visits.
- 49 clients received 442 telephone reassurance calls.
- 50 volunteers donated over 1200 hours to make this possible

Programs included a Mindfulness-based Dementia workshop, Memory Café and virtual Dementia Friends, Aging Well introduction and Caregiver Cafes.

Vaccine Registration-a Joint Effort

Care Partners staff were pleased to help seniors get registered on line and be part of such a great cooperative effort. As one client wrote, “Thank you for setting up the appointments for me, I will be forever grateful. Was very impressed by the well organized set up they have and everyone is so friendly and dedicated and following good practices. Am crying tears of gratefulness as I write this.”

Nourishing Food Project from page 1

This food program aims to support physical and emotional health and make healthy meal preparation easier. Participants enjoyed the meals, support, and connection:

“My kids are overjoyed that I am getting such healthy food and enjoying it. Since my husband died, they have worried about me and have been concerned about my diet.”

“It’s really so helpful to have healthy food on hand while taking care of my husband, it saves time going to town and time cooking when he needs care- and the food is delicious.”

The Nourishing Food Project Pilot team did an amazing job on short notice and without volunteers due to COVID, putting together food boxes with prepared meal kits and meals that could be frozen. A total of 33 food boxes containing 664 meals were delivered to a group of 13 participants. The pilot ended in 2020. Care Partners wishes the team well as they evaluate the project and explore ways to support residents with nourishing food. If you are interested in volunteering or supporting their efforts, contact Jennifer Trowbridge at Care Partners.

Caregiver Coffee

Join other caregivers to discuss caregiving and share resources. Any one is welcome. We meet 2nd Fridays at 10 am on Zoom. Call 387-3788 to get connected.

Our Business Sponsors!

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Zoar Lutheran Church

Volunteer Opportunities

Care Partners depends on community volunteers to support clients through visits, calls, deliveries, rides, and chores. We provide training and let you choose your assignments according to your schedule and interest.

Volunteer Driver Training, Wed., April 21, 1-3 pm
Give rides locally or to Duluth and be reimbursed for mileage.

Chore/Delivery Training, Wed., May 19, 1-3 pm
Help with groceries, errands, or chores around the house & yard to keep seniors safe in their homes.

Companion Training, Wednesdays, June 16, 23, 30, 1-3 pm
Companion volunteers befriend elders through visits, calls and walks. Volunteers work within their availability and interest and receive training in safety, comfort measures, end-of-life, dementia, elder awareness, spirituality and communication.

Contact Christie at christie@carepartnersofcookcounty.org or call 387-3788 for more information or to register.
Thank You to all who Supported Care Partners in 2020!

Grants
Federal Older Americans Act grant from the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging
Live Well at Home Grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services
Cook County Community Foundation
Head of the Lakes United Way
Northland Foundation
Arrowhead Electrics’ Operation Round-up

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Karen Wilber
Boyd Truman
Wiseman

From a delivery client: I am not able to leave my husband for the time it takes to drive to Grand Marais and pick up groceries. Thank you! Care Partners has given me hope!
Leaning In
Many thanks to the staff and volunteers new and old who helped us adapt our services and programs during the pandemic including a wonderful Light Up a Life on line ceremony.

Looking Forward
Look for these programs late summer & fall:
- **Memory Café** (for those with memory loss & their caregivers)
- **Dementia Live** (simulation experience)
- **Aging Mastery Program** (a popular ten-week class covering topics like financial planning, balance, sleep, social engagement, relationships, and exercise.)

Care Partners Newsletter
Spring 2021

Care Partners Services
Staff answer calls & emails during office hours: M-F, 10 am to 3 pm. The Care Partners office remains closed to the public.

Trained Volunteers help with
- **Chores** around the house & garden.
- **Delivery of** groceries, mail & other needs.
- **Rides** for medical trips locally & to Duluth.
- **Friendly calls and visits**

Care Partners staff assist with
- **Care Coordination & Health Care Planning**
- **Caregiver support**
- **Information & Referral**
- **End of Life support**

Call 387-3788.
www.carepartnersofcookcounty.org
carepartners@boreal.org

Care Partners is slowly resuming more rides, in-person visits and indoor chores on a case by case basis as CDC recommendations allow.