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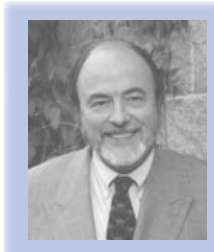
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## DARTS' Partnership with Government

By Dick Graham, President



*"Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got till it's gone"* is a line from a Joni Mitchell song as she laments the changes in her life because her "old man" walked out on "their arrangement." These words keep coming to mind as something we may be humming in years to come if government services change dramatically.

At DARTS, we are staying tuned to any and all news from the state budget discussions, and we're meeting with legislators to remind them of DARTS' value to the community. Did you know that 65 percent of our revenues come from contracts with the state, county, and federal governments? Rides for seniors and adults with disabilities; chemical dependency services; some chore and homemaking services; and caregiver respite services are the kinds of programs supported by these contracts.

Community-based, mission-driven nonprofits are unique to our democracy. And DARTS is an excellent example of how government and nonprofits work together. Government determines there is a reason to provide services that help keep people independent, and they hire us to do the necessary work. DARTS brings along a passion and vision of how people should be served and then mobilizes community volunteers and other partners. Here's another way to look at it – the government wants food available to all people, so it plants seeds in a garden. DARTS waters and feeds the growing plants; creates new, higher quality varieties; and then harvests and delivers the produce to meet someone's needs.

People are often surprised to learn DARTS is government funded. "But, your service is so personal," they say. That's where we're fortunate. Our individual, business, community, and government supporters have made it possible for DARTS to pioneer and deliver the kind of services

*continued on page 3* ◀

## Will State Budget Cuts Be Bad News for DARTS?

"Unintended consequences" (not always readily evident to lawmakers or the general public) start to become reality with the mid-February release of Governor Pawlenty's state budget. This was highlighted by Jon Pratt, Executive Director of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, when he spoke to the DARTS board on January 29. DARTS is one of 1,300 nonprofits the Council supports through their lobbying efforts with lawmakers. Mr. Pratt reminded listeners of some facts about Minnesota nonprofits:

- Minnesota has seen 15 years of growth in nonprofit organizations, fostering the notion of more public services without government growth.
- Minnesota nonprofits are a "good buy" [for gov't] because they leverage other resources.

But Mr. Pratt also spoke to some tough funding crunches facing local nonprofits:

- Minnesota nonprofits operate on far more state than federal dollars, so the current budget crisis can dramatically affect local nonprofits in the short and long term.
- Nonprofits will also be hurt by a 10 to 15 percent decrease in foundation grants in the next couple years due to reduced foundation assets.

DARTS is in a listening mode, monitoring activities at the capital, hearing from people we serve, and readying ourselves to show lawmakers and funders the importance of DARTS services to the Dakota County community and beyond. We'd welcome your thoughts and suggestions. E-mail us at [info@darts1.org](mailto:info@darts1.org) and we'll keep you posted on developments as they unfold.

For updates about the lobbying and communication efforts of the Council of Nonprofits, visit



[www.mncn.org](http://www.mncn.org)

## Apply On-Line for DARTS Employment

DARTS' Human Resources area has joined ranks with the world of high-tech recruiting by launching DARTS' first on-line application. The Society for Human Resource Management's 2002 Recruiting Budget/Cost Survey shows that 82 percent of HR respondents use on-line recruiting resources.\* Not only will DARTS' on-line application make the process more accessible to on-line job seekers, but it will also save time and money.

To check out the on-line application, log onto DARTS' web site at [www.darts1.org](http://www.darts1.org). Then select "Get Involved" and "Employment Application." Follow the download instructions and fill out the form. Print, sign, and fax or mail the form to DARTS (Attn: Cathleen Harris), 1645 Marthaler Lane, West St. Paul, MN 55118. Fax: **651-234-2280**.

*\*Source: December 2002 issue of SHRM's HR News*

## Health Insurance Counseling at DARTS

Medicare is complicated, but don't let it complicate your life. Meet with a State Health Insurance Counselor who can help you with:

- Medicare
- Supplemental insurance/HMO
- Prescription drugs
- Medicare-savings programs
- Long-term care insurance
- Medicare fraud and abuse

A counselor will be available at DARTS the 1st Thursday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to noon to provide confidential, free health insurance counseling. If interested, you need to set up an appointment by calling Beth Woods at **651-917-4624**.

## MOVING?

Please let us know if there's been a change in your mailing address, so you can receive DARTS mailings in a timely fashion.

If you no longer want to receive the DARTS Journal, please send us an e-mail at [info@darts1.org](mailto:info@darts1.org) or call

Joelene Evenson at 651-234-2221.

## DARTS Giving Opportunities

- Annual Appeals
  - Spring Campaign
  - Year-End Campaign
- Special Events
  - Golf Tournament
  - Phone-A-Thon
  - Community-Hosted Fundraisers
- Memorials/Tribute Gifts
  - Honor someone special with a memorial gift to DARTS
  - Celebrate a special occasion or show your appreciation for someone with a tribute gift in their name
- Planned Giving
  - Leave your legacy...remember DARTS in your will
  - Give a gift that brings a return – consider a gift annuity with DARTS
  - Appreciated assets (such as life insurance, real estate, stock)
- Business/Corporate Sponsorships
  - Golf Tournament
  - DARTS Bus
  - Annual Report Printing
- Matching Gifts
  - Many businesses match the gifts made by their employee
  - Matches may be made for gifts of money or volunteer time

For more information on how you can support DARTS year round, please contact DARTS' development department at 651-455-1560 or visit [www.darts1.org](http://www.darts1.org).

### The DARTS Journal

1645 Marthaler Lane  
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[www.caregiverMN.org](http://www.caregiverMN.org)

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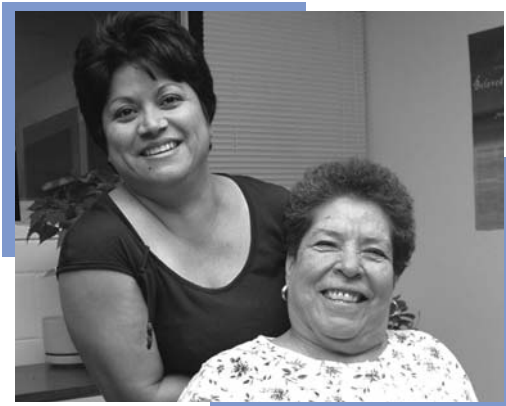
that are so well received. A large part of that support may now be in jeopardy.

Our elected officials are facing the toughest of questions – which services do we eliminate? cut back? invest more money in? All levels of government are facing these questions. As citizens, what's our responsibility for being a part of discussions that will affect our lives and those of generations to come?

I haven't yet met an office holder who isn't taking their work and their decisions seriously right now. They want to know both the value and impact of government spending on people's lives. They want and deserve our attention, input, and support in getting through this difficult time. Policies made today can open or close doors for our grandchildren. Now is the time to have your voice heard. We at DARTS thank you.

*Dick Graham*

## Culturally Focused Collaboration Aids Learning, Serving



DARTS is known for its innovative, service-oriented collaborations. A new multicultural collaborative venture is underway in DARTS' Community Services area.

Over the years, DARTS has enhanced its outreach toward diverse ethnic groups in our primary service areas. Efforts have included language-sensitive phone lines, diversity in our driver workforce, and a DARTS presence at health and informational fairs aimed at people from various ethnic backgrounds. DARTS' goal has been to better serve all cultures represented in Dakota County.

In late 2002, DARTS teamed with Neighborhood House, a multipurpose, multicultural community center, to provide outreach and support services to Spanish-speaking and Hmong caregivers. This project springs from a 2002 Title III-E Older Americans Act National Family Caregiver Support Program grant received by the Strategic Alliance for Senior Services, a group of nonprofit community-based organizations (of which DARTS is a member). Neighborhood House is part of an expanded collaborative partnership of community-based organizations that currently provide either formal or informal services to seniors in four counties targeted by the project.

Together, DARTS and Neighborhood House are developing materials and identifying and modeling practices that support Spanish-speaking and Hmong caregivers in a culturally appropriate and meaningful way. Both agencies examined the best approaches to support these caregivers, including conducting interviews with professionals as well as Hmong and Latino clients and families. The products of this collaboration are being shared with a broad network of minority-serving agencies, both culturally specific and mainstream. Some caregiving resources are being produced in Spanish and culturally specific information will be available for Hmong and Spanish-speaking caregivers. Staff from both agencies have begun providing caregiver-related training to outreach workers and other professional staff and more training sessions will be offered. Additionally, training and materials will be made available to other mainstream providers serving these ethnic communities so they can more effectively serve the caregiver population.

Neighborhood House is using knowledge gained in the research and development phase of this collaborative project and is now providing direct services to caregivers and families residing in West St. Paul and South St. Paul. DARTS is currently upgrading its caregiver web site to include culturally sensitive information that will be helpful to Hmong and Spanish-speaking caregivers. Check it out in March at [www.caregiverMN.org](http://www.caregiverMN.org).



## Congratulations to DARTS Volunteers of the Year for 2002

Three DARTS volunteers have been named 2002 Volunteer of the Year. We're pleased to honor these women for their commitment to helping others.

**Nancy Gountanis** has volunteered in Human Resources at DARTS since April 2002. As luck would have it, Nancy had spent 12 years working in HR at Unisys before retiring in 1999. In no time, she found her rhythm in DARTS' HR office. Like a train chugging down the tracks, Nancy forged full steam ahead, tackling new projects and lots of paperwork with a fearless attitude. She's also in her fourth year as a DARTS Reading Buddies volunteer. Caring, generous, dependable, intelligent, and dedicated – these are just a few of Nancy's many wonderful qualities.



*Nancy, Millie and Patti*

**Millie Newbauer** is a longtimer at DARTS – she has been volunteering in the DARTS Reading Buddies program since it began in 1997. Currently, Millie is a buddy to students at Garlough Elementary and Moreland Elementary schools in West St. Paul. But Millie wears many other volunteer hats for DARTS. Since 1994, she's been visiting the same client and

she grocery shops for three others. Millie's also an on-call volunteer greeter at the DARTS office. Without Millie, DARTS would need at least four other volunteers to do what she does – she's a one-woman volunteering queen!

Every week for the past 5 years, **Patti Nolan** has been shopping for, and spending time with, her senior client. The senior depends on Patti for her grocery needs, but more importantly, she knows Patti cares about her and her well being. They regularly stay in touch by phone and often share dinner after Patti has completed the shopping. Besides keeping her client's pantry well stocked, Patti also brings along her dog to visit and brighten the day. Patti is respectful and compassionate toward her client – she is truly an "angel on her shoulder."

If you'd like to learn about volunteer opportunities at DARTS, call Jason Sanders or Barb Koenig at **651-455-1560** or visit [www.darts1.org](http://www.darts1.org).

**DARTS**   
*Volunteers Matter*

## Family Volunteering is Win-Win for Families and DARTS

The rewards are many when families try volunteering together. Families can spend time together, help children learn the value of giving their time, help a senior remain independent, and create great memories to share for a lifetime. Family volunteering also keeps you clued into your community and its needs.

For DARTS, family volunteers can fill some gaps in helping seniors in the community and even help the seniors' families. Family volunteers help fulfill DARTS' mission of bringing all generations together to participate in community life.

Families can help a senior with seasonal yard work, assist with shopping needs, or brighten up a senior's day by visiting.

Families can get together with other families and provide an activity for seniors living in high rises or even share a holiday tradition with a senior.

Some families volunteering at DARTS have offered these comments:

*"It was great to see my children's enthusiasm in working to help someone." "Great to commit time as a family to a worthy cause." "Great family experience. Lots of positive energy."*



To sign up for family volunteering or to learn more, contact Barb Koenig at **651-455-1560** or visit [www.darts1.org](http://www.darts1.org).

## Workplace Eldercare Seminars to Expand in 2003

Because of Title III funding in late 2002, DARTS is expanding its outreach for workplace eldercare seminars to Dakota County corporations with fewer than 500 employees.

Community-based service organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions clubs and others) will be “gateway” groups in helping DARTS reach companies with members in these service clubs. The underlying goal is to reach a larger audience of family caregivers.

Workplace eldercare seminar topics include *Critical Conversations: Making Decisions as a Family*, *Understanding Memory Loss and Dementia*, *Choices for the Sandwich Generation: A Hero or a Sub*, and *Finding Community Resources for Your Older Family Member*. Six new topics will be developed throughout 2003 and made available in 2004.

DARTS will continue to make seminars available to larger companies (more than 500 employees). Corporations that have requested on-site seminars since late 2001 include Unisys and Cenex. Together, they have requested a total of 7 on-site presentations, reaching almost 400 employees.



## Community Services Tidbits

DARTS **homemakers** are now serving a record 205 clients. They provide housekeeping, laundry, meal preparation and, if needed, grocery shopping for their clients. Thirteen of these clients are in their 90's and able to maintain their life at home thanks in part to DARTS homemakers.

Colleen, DARTS' **information and assistance specialist**, has received some challenging calls that have stretched her skills in finding answers for Dakota County elders and their caregivers. Through DARTS' web site, one senior sent an e-mail wanting to know where to go to get classes to learn how to read lips. Colleen tried several sources to get an answer, including local universities and the United Way help line. She was able to e-mail the woman and tell her that although there were no local classes in lip reading, the Dakota County library has books and videotapes that teach the

technique. Colleen also received a call from a local man who is the long-distance caregiver for his father in Michigan. Colleen gave him the phone number for the Area Agency on Aging in his father's county so he could find local services and get them involved in his father's care.

DARTS' **caregiver coaching and counseling** service (through Eldercare Partners) includes a kit for caregivers. Each kit contains tips, tools, and words of encouragement to ease the caregiving journey. Call Colleen at 651-234-2262 to request your free kit.

DARTS **direct service volunteers** reported over 2,500 hours of service to Dakota County seniors from October through December. These volunteers served as visitors to isolated seniors, grocery shoppers to those no longer able to shop alone, respite relief for caregivers who need someone trained to supervise their loved one, and daily volunteers to assist in the Independent Living Program at a South St. Paul high rise.

Over the past 6 months, DARTS' entire **community services staff** completed the arduous task of transitioning to a new database that will give them better access to clients' records and improve reporting of data. The CTK database was made possible through a grant from the United Way.

## Upcoming Education Programs for Caregivers



Check out [www.darts1.org/annual.htm](http://www.darts1.org/annual.htm) to see the current brochure on DARTS' caregiver education offerings through June or call Colleen at **651-455-1560** to receive a copy. One new offering, "Housing Options for Seniors: Where Should I Live?", is being held in Burnsville in March and West St. Paul in April.



**Seniors and Their Buddies Surf the Web - Check out [www.darts1.org/burnsville](http://www.darts1.org/burnsville)**

"What has the CyberNeighborhood project meant to you?" asked the interviewer. "Well, I've been to Norway and visited the village where my dad was born and saw the old stave church there," answered Harvey Urness, a participant in DARTS' Burnsville CyberNeighborhood project. It took the interviewer a moment to realize Harvey was talking about a "virtual" trip via the Internet. Harvey, along with his "Cyber Buddy," volunteer Hugh McColl, were being taped for a feature on Burnsville's cable channel 16 *Community Journal* program. The feature ran throughout the month of December.

Harvey's "trip" to Norway is just one of many opportunities senior residents of Burnsville have had since DARTS started the project in October, 2002. With the help of his volunteer, Harvey is also looking up some old WWII army buddies. Participant Lee Drawert saved some money by purchasing airline tickets on-line. Sue Smith has been able to follow the cancer treatment and recovery of a friend's young son by reading the journal his family maintains on a web site provided by Children's Hospital. Marie Hedges nurtures her southern roots by keeping in touch with friends "back home" in Tennessee. Dorothy Starkey has re-connected with distant family members (see below).

The 13 Burnsville seniors participating in the project's computer training and coaching are beginning to join on-line conversations on the new web site connected to the project. At [www.darts1.org/burnsville](http://www.darts1.org/burnsville) they, along with all Burnsville-ites, have a chance to discuss topics such as "What makes a business elder-friendly?" and "Who is your aging hero and why?" Future topics may include: "Retirement: community involvement in the golden years"; "Neighborhoods: What makes them work?" and "Grandparenting: Bridging the generation gap with wisdom and humor."

DARTS launched the CyberNeighborhood project to test some new ideas about helping seniors become, or stay, actively involved in their community. The hope is to learn how new technology can identify needs of seniors and recruit neighborhood volunteers to help fill those needs. Some studies have shown that access to e-mail and the Internet can help relieve isolation for seniors who are confined to home. DARTS' project is unique in that it provides volunteer computer coaching in seniors' homes rather than at an outside technology center. To learn more, visit the site or call Kristen Lund at **651-455-1560**.

Getting a computer through the CyberNeighborhood project has "changed my life," says Dorothy Starkey. Through e-mail, she can easily communicate with her hearing-disabled daughter who lives out West. Cyber buddy Catie has worked with Dorothy to get familiar with using a mouse,



*Dorothy and Catie*

navigating the computer screen, and doing online searches for information. Like all of us learning the computer for the first time, Dorothy says, "It's fun. All of a sudden I look up and realize I've been sitting at the computer for a long time!" Catie enjoys helping her new senior friend learn the computer as much as she enjoys helping kids learn new things in her job at a YMCA daycare. What a good example of "connecting all generations"!

Burnsville CyberNeighborhood  
**DARTS** Connecting Generations



Burnsville seniors who have basic computer skills and would enjoy having a computer coach can contact DARTS about being matched with a Cyber Buddy. Cyber Buddies can work with people on computers at public sites, such as libraries or the Burnsville Senior Center, or on home computers. Contact Jason Sanders at **651-234-2222** or e-mail [jason.sanders@darts1.org](mailto:jason.sanders@darts1.org).



### It's Time for the Annual DARTS Quilt Raffle!

Once again, the quilters from Clark Memorial Church are creating a handmade quilt just for DARTS. Called "Mary's Garden," the quilt features beautiful flower appliques. Raffle tickets are on sale now – \$1 per ticket or \$5 for six tickets. Your donation will support DARTS' Volunteer Resources – enriching the lives of seniors and families throughout Dakota County. Drawing for the quilt will be at DARTS' annual meeting on Wed., May 21, 2003. Come visit DARTS to take a look at this year's quilt and purchase your chance to win. Or, contact Connie Brewer at **651-234-2225** for information on how you can get raffle tickets.



## Transportation Tidbits

- *2002 was another record year for rides.* DARTS buses provided 165,100 one-way rides, a 6% increase over 2001. 22,825 of the riders used a wheelchair or scooter and 1,117 were new or first-time riders with DARTS. When surveyed, 100% of the new riders said they had a very positive experience riding with DARTS. 66% learned about DARTS' good service through a friend or family member, and a number of riders said "I should have ridden DARTS sooner." All of the riders said the drivers were courteous and provided a safe and on-time ride.

- *A big thank-you* to all the riders who responded to the call to help DARTS by submitting an application for ADA certification. As of January, almost 70% of the monthly rides provided are now eligible for full ADA reimbursement to DARTS. Credit also goes to staff, especially drivers, and to Barb McAdams in the transportation office. Riders and their family members helped by sending in applications and getting the required photos taken.

- *New \$20.00 ride cards are now out.* The cards include \$2.00 punches as well as \$.50 punches for peak-time rides at the new \$2.50 fare. This card helps DARTS conform to the new regional fare policy and makes it easier for peak-time riders to pay the correct fare. Any senior experiencing a hardship in paying the new fare should call the DARTS transportation office, **651-455-1339**, and ask about the reduced rate ride card.

- *The annual 2003 Rider's Survey* is now being distributed. If you have not received one, please tell your driver. The information you provide helps DARTS when talking to our funders and help us learn how and where we can improve the ride service. The survey also asks whether the new fare policy is affecting you as riders. Please take the time to fill out the survey, so we can serve you better. Thank you.

- *12 new DARTS buses will be hitting the roads soon* and they'll be sporting a new look! The buses were purchased with 2001-2002 Metropolitan Council Regional Transit Capital funds. This funding helps regional providers under contract to the Council (like DARTS) maintain a safe and efficient fleet of vehicles throughout the metropolitan area. Many DARTS buses have exceeded the average lifespan, so this funding helps complete a 2-year plan to replace 24 of DARTS' 35 buses. The new buses will be on the road by early March.

The new buses have the latest in wheelchair tie-downs, making it easier for the drivers to secure riders safely; improved suspension for a smoother ride; new hydraulic lifts that allow a quieter ride; and smart DARTS mobile data computers, so drivers can receive information in the bus without using the radio/phone.

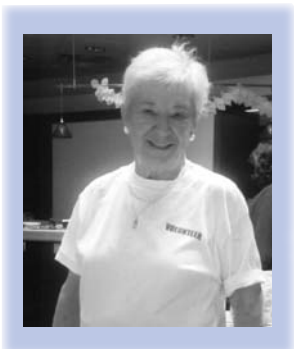
The "new look" of the buses is the result of a joint project with students from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD). Over several months, the students rode DARTS buses, talked to drivers and passengers, and had design activities with staff before going to the drawing board to create a design suited to DARTS and the needs of our riders. Now their efforts are hitting the roads. After the 12 new buses are marked with the new design, 12 of the remaining 23 buses will be re-lettered. Let us know what you think of the new buses – call us at **651-455-1339** or e-mail us at [info@darts1.org](mailto:info@darts1.org).

# DARTS

Dakota Area Resources and Transportation for Seniors

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*Delores Relf  
Resident at Realife Cooperative*

***“It is not length  
of life,  
but depth of life.”***

***Ralph Waldo Emerson***

## Residents Honor their Fellow Neighbors

Each year, hundreds of people individually and collectively honor the memory of loved ones who have passed on by making memorial gifts to DARTS (see recent memorial honorees on insert page inside). DARTS is privileged to celebrate the lives of these people and to dedicate such gifts to our permanent endowment funds. These funds are left untouched – only their earnings are used to support DARTS’ operations. By building our endowment fund, DARTS establishes an ongoing base of support for the future. Gifts made in memoriam give life to the memories of those we love – those memories are with us for years to come.

Residents of Realife Cooperative in West St. Paul make a contribution to DARTS in lieu of flowers when a fellow resident passes away. Delores Relf, resident at Realife Co-op and a DARTS volunteer, says “The DARTS bus is always at our building...DARTS does a lot for us here.”

If you’d like to make a gift in someone’s memory, see the memorial page insert in this *Journal* or call Connie Brewer at **651-234-2225**. To learn about other ways to support DARTS, see page 2 or visit [www.darts1.org](http://www.darts1.org).