



VOLUNTEERS

February 2005

volunteer tip:

Guidelines for setting limits with the senior you're helping

- Be clear about what you can do and what you aren't willing or able to do.
- Offer support and acknowledge the situation the person is facing.
- Restate your role and relationship with the individual.
- Refer the individual's needs to DARTS staff for services and resources when appropriate.

Volunteer Opportunities

Let a friend, family member, or co-worker know about the following volunteer opportunities available.

DARTS Greeter. Be an official greeter in DARTS' administrative building by providing a warm welcome to visitors. Morning and afternoon times available.

Volunteer Driver. Give a ride to a senior who needs transportation assistance to medical appointments and can't use the DARTS bus.

Daytime Respite Volunteers. Provide a much-needed break to a caregiver once a week for 4 hours. You'll supervise and socialize with the senior needing care.

If you or someone you know is interested in any of these volunteer opportunities or others, call Barb Koenig at 651-455-1560 or visit www.darts1.org

Director's notes:

Are Endings or Beginnings More Exciting?

There's a lot of commotion in a nonprofit organization when a year comes to an end. It's an opportunity to look at what was accomplished during the year. Thanks to your efforts, we can see how many seniors were visited, how many were helped with their yard work or groceries, and how many were helped to sobriety in 2004. We can also see how many caregivers got a break because there was someone there for them and how many children were engaged by the efforts of DARTS volunteers in elementary schools throughout Dakota County. We appreciate all the hours put in by you in 2004 to make DARTS a better, more effective organization.

To represent the accomplishments of all DARTS volunteers in 2004, we selected "Volunteer of the Year" in four categories – direct service, administrative, intergenerational, and family volunteering. Donna Heir, Linda Dimmen, Jeanette Degenaar, and Sharon Wollin (and sons Justin and Jordan) are profiled in this newsletter. They were chosen because their experiences so well reflect the effort of all our volunteers.

In 2004, DARTS had 1,408 volunteers.

825
individuals and
family volunteers
583
individuals serving
as part of a group
or corporation

Thanks to you, DARTS' Volunteer Resources team met the challenges of 2004 and stands ready to face the challenges of 2005. The opportunity for continued good work lies before us, and I cannot wait to see what we will accomplish together!

On behalf of Barb, Megan, and me, please accept our thanks for all you do. Our best wishes for the new year.

Colleen Fritsch

Director of Volunteer Resources



Family Volunteering in Local Communities

Learn about the values and benefits of family volunteering in your community by hosting a DARTS presentation at your church, business, or organization. Contact Barb Koenig for more information at 651-455-1560.

DARTS Volunteers of the Year – 2004

Donna Heir: Direct Service Volunteer

During her 7 years as a direct service volunteer for DARTS, Donna has helped eight different seniors. She has assisted seniors with their shopping needs, brought them to doctor and dentist appointments, visited over coffee in their homes, and lunched with a senior who enjoys company over a meal. When Donna knows of a treat a senior likes, it's not unheard of for her to bake that treat!

Donna came to know DARTS at a time in her life when she needed some respite from caring for her husband. DARTS found a volunteer to spend time with her husband, giving her an occasional break from caregiving. From personal experience, Donna knew that DARTS was a great agency to help through volunteering. Presently she helps shop for one senior and spends time visiting a second one.

Donna believes that she receives as much as she gives when volunteering. She's always willing to help and be there for someone. We're grateful that Donna is part of the DARTS volunteer team!

Linda Dimmen: Administrative Volunteer

As a resident at the Nan McKay high-rise in South St. Paul, Linda provides a helping hand with many tasks that support DARTS' resident services. Since 2001, Linda has volunteered for DARTS between 10 and 15 hours a month. She helps coordinate information for the monthly newsletters; prepares flyers, notices, and sign-up sheets for educational events and transportation; and creates birthday and holiday cards for residents.

But Linda does even more for DARTS – in both 2003 and 2004, she volunteered to sell DARTS' quilt raffle tickets and enthusiastically sold as many as possible.

Linda is a great representative for DARTS, showing respect, compassion, and patience with all residents and staff. She approaches all her work with a sense of pride and conscientiousness, and her wonderful sense of humor helps relieve the stress of a demanding day. Our thanks to Linda for being both a valuable resource and a terrific representative of DARTS.

Jeanette Degenaar: Intergenerational Volunteer

Jeanette has been a Reading Buddies volunteer at Glacier Hills Elementary School in Eagan going on 4 years now. She works one-to-one with first graders in Mary Braun's classroom to help improve their reading and literacy skills.

All the children who come in touch with Jeanette show their special fondness for her by calling her Grandma Jeanette. Teacher Mary Braun has many wonderful things to say about Jeanette, such as "...she is a wonderful role model...Jeanette



Congratulations to (left to right) Linda Dimmen; Sharon, Jordan, and Justin Wollin; Jeanette Degenaar; and Donna Heir.

truly makes a difference in the achievements of my students...her commitment to children and the community should be applauded.”

Jeanette also helps out with other school activities. She attends all of the school plays during the year and enjoys helping with class projects. All in all, she has become a great asset to Glacier Hills Elementary. Thank you, Jeanette, for giving true meaning to “connecting all generations.”

Wollin Family: Family Volunteer of the Year

Sharon Wollin and her two sons, Justin and Jordan, have been helping seniors for over a year at DARTS. Their volunteer work began with visits to one senior. Then they took on another volunteer assignment and began helping a senior with her flower gardens.

One senior says this about Sharon and the boys, “Sharon is a prize of a friend; she gets an A+ from me.” She says that having the young boys come by for visits fills the void of few young people in her life.

The Wollin family adds those special touches by celebrating birthdays with the seniors, starting a photo album of their visits, and hugging the seniors after each visit. This young family feels enriched by touching the lives of these seniors. As Sharon says, “It's almost like having extra Grandmas in their lives.” Many thanks to the Wollin family for showing how the spirit of volunteerism can be passed from parent to child.

What's Happening?

Volunteer Orientation

Orientation for new direct service volunteers will be held February 22, February 23, March 29, and March 30.

For more information, contact Barb Koenig at 651-455-1560. Postcard reminders will be sent out.