



VOLUNTEERS

September 2003

Volunteer tip:**Spread the word to teens about volunteering****Teen volunteers can:**

- Make a better community
- Develop new skills
- Explore career paths
- Have fun working with friends
- Feel good about themselves

Teens can help the senior community by:

- Being assigned to a senior to rake their lawn*
- Helping a senior with snow shoveling*
- Teaching a senior computer skills
- Assisting a senior with grocery shopping
- Befriending a senior

**Form a group of friends to help with outdoor chores*

Volunteer Opportunities

Before you know it, cold weather will be upon us. Seniors tend to be more isolated and get out of their homes less when the weather is cold. Talk to your friends, neighbors, and organizations about helping a senior this fall and winter by **visiting** or helping with **shopping errands**.

Do you like to do **data entry** on a computer and are familiar with Microsoft Windows/Microsoft Office? DARTS' administrative staff would like a volunteer 4 to 6 hours a week to help clean up and correct current database entries.

Contact **Barb Koenig** at **651-455-1560** if you're interested in the volunteer opportunities above or want more information on other ways to be involved at DARTS.

Get to know Colleen

Hello! As the new Director of Volunteer Resources at DARTS, I can't tell you how glad I am to be here. I so look forward to meeting all of you and being a part of the good work you do.

Back in the early 70s, my father and mother were supposed to be taking it easy and enjoying their retirement years. They had fed, clothed, and nurtured seven children and deserved to just kick back and "smell the roses." But something was amiss. When we called to check in on them, they were never home. There was always something going on at some place called DARTS, or a fundraiser they were part of for DARTS (my dad was the guy who sold night crawlers at a garage sale once to raise dollars for DARTS). It was hard to see how their "relaxing" was going because they were never around!

My parents were part of a group known as the "Inver Grove Heights volunteers" who worked on the annual Phon-a-thon fundraiser to ensure

"DARTS volunteers serve not only the senior community, but the community as a whole."

DARTS survival. They even lobbied their city and county representatives on DARTS behalf. Being the youngest child and sure of myself, I asked my father "what had come over them?" "Why the sudden interest in civic organizations?" His response was that this community had sustained his family while he and his wife were earning a living and raising children, and now it was their turn to give something back.

Mom and Dad are both gone now, but the lesson he taught me that day and the work they did here at DARTS live on. DARTS volunteers serve not only the senior community, but the community as a whole. In so doing, they help keep us all connected to those who came before, to the future generations of Dakota County, and to each other.

I can't wait to see the good things we will do together tomorrow and the next day and the day after that. Thank you for being a part of DARTS' vision and for letting me work with you to support the full participation of seniors and all generations in community life.

Colleen Fritsch

Director of Volunteer Resources

Volunteering knows no age boundaries

Retirement can be the perfect time to do volunteer work, but many younger folks get into the act too. Hope Hegmen is a perfect example. As a volunteer visitor and grocery shopper at DARTS the last 2 years, Hope is committed to contributing to



Hope Hegmen

her community in a positive way. She's always been involved in company-sponsored volunteer activities, and she connected with DARTS as a way to spend time with elders who might not have family nearby. Hope soon experienced what many volunteers find – that they gain personal rewards and insights from volunteering. Hope says, “[These ladies] are fun to talk to. They have lived through a lot of things I’ve only read about in history books, and it’s very interesting to get firsthand accounts of many historical events.” Hope has learned that listening is a valuable skill and that it’s important to slow down and not take things too seriously. “Life is too short to work all the time and be under stress. Now I take more time for the more important things, like my family.”

As a volunteer, Hope knows that she’s making a difference in someone’s life – “maybe taking their worries away for a brief time, so they can just enjoy themselves.” Fitting volunteering in daily life can be difficult, but Hope finds a way. “I work full time, go to school at night, and also want plenty of time to spend with family and friends. But volunteering is important to me, so I make the time.”

And Hope plans to volunteer even more once her degree is finished. “Volunteering is very rewarding for me, and I plan on continuing the experience.” As she ages, Hope realizes that someday there could be a volunteer in her life – someone who could help her with tasks and allow her to continue being independent. What a terrific way to imagine the full-circle possibilities of volunteering!

If you’d like to learn more about being a volunteer visitor or grocery shopper at DARTS, call **Barb Koenig** at **651-455-1560** or visit www.darts1.org.

What's Happening?


September

23, 24 **Volunteer Orientation** for new volunteers. Call Barb Koenig for more information and to register at 651-455-1560.

October

9 **Volunteer Gathering** at DARTS, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., with presentation on “**Keeping Your Memory Strong.**” Register to attend by calling Barb Koenig at 651-455-1560.

28, 29 **Volunteer Orientation** for new volunteers. Call Barb Koenig for more information and to register at 651-455-1560.



DARTS promotes volunteerism on other websites too. If you have access to the Internet, visit www.volunteermatch.org and look up DARTS. You can also find other ways to get involved in the community by comparing opportunities with your interests.

Volunteering: Good for the Mind, Body, and Community

The key to living longer is living “better.” Volunteering is an excellent way to be involved in making a better community. Share your volunteer experience with a friend and tell them what volunteering does for you!



Great news
for
senior
volunteers!

If you need assistance with leaf raking, washing windows, or general fall cleanup, DARTS has volunteer groups in October who are willing to help you! Call Barb Koenig at 651-455-1560 and we will get you on the schedule.