

Elder Network Quarterly

October, November & December 2015

Alexandria, MN

VOLUNTEERS:

After completing the first of our 4 training sessions for this fall a quote from Booker T. Washington came to mind. "Those who are the happiest are those who do the most for others." When I joined Elder Network last year I knew that our volunteers provided wonderful friendship to their clients. What I underestimated was the huge impact our clients have on the lives of the volunteer and the volunteer coordinator. I frequently have the opportunity to share "the Elder Network story" with groups in our community. I find that there is an interest in how we are organized, the training we provide but people seem to listen more intently when I am able to share stories of our clients. Our simple visits with those that are lonely, depressed and dealing with change makes such a difference in the lives of seniors in our community. One of the first new clients that I met had moved to Alexandria from a small Minnesota community and knew no one. Her family hoped that a volunteer could help her assimilate in her senior housing apartment and help her get to know a few of her neighbors. What a joyful celebration was held several months later as we partied with her many new friends and celebrated her 97th birthday. Success not only for the client but a joyful volunteer that knew she had been a big part of this success. If you know of anyone that would enjoy helping another and becoming one of the "happiest" that Booker T. Washington talks about, please give us a call. [763-9084](tel:763-9084)

Jean Bristow, RN & Peer Volunteer Coordinator

"I CAN THINK OF NO BETTER WAY OF REDEEMING THIS TRAGIC WORLD THAN LOVE AND LAUGHTER. TOO MANY OF THE YOUNG HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW TO LAUGH AND TOO MANY OF THE ELDERS HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW TO LOVE. WOULD NOT OUR LIVES BE LIGHTENED IF WE COULD ALL LEARN TO LAUGH MORE EASILY AT OURSELVES AND TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

Author Unknown



Do You Remember 70 years ago 1945:

October 5th Meet the Press premiers on the radio, hosted by Martha Rountree on the Mutual Broadcasting System.

November 20th 24 Nazi leaders put on trial at Nuremberg, Germany.

December 28th Congress officially recognizes the "Pledge of Allegiance."

FILL YOUR TIME LOG OUT ON LINE

We now have a way for you to submit your time logs on line:

Go to our web site www.alexandriaeldernetwork.com

Click on the either the **Peer Support** or the **Respite Care/The Gathering Tab** in the green box on the right hand side of the page.

Scroll down until you see **Peer Volunteer Time Log**

In the appropriate boxes:

Enter your name

Your phone number as ###-###-####.

Clients initials.

Enter any questions or comments you may have regarding the client.

Enter the date.

The amount of time spent.

Enter personal or phone depending on what type of visit it was.

If there was travel involved how many miles round trip.

Enter the topic numbers that apply, preferably three if you feel they fit your visit.

enter them as #-#-# if you don't feel there are three that fit enter those that do.

After each entry hit your tab key and it will take you to the next entry box.

Once you have entered the information click on the **submit** button and I will receive your time log in my email in box.

You can enter each time you visit or you can enter up to 4 visits at one time.

If you are have any question or are experiencing any problems please call the office. (320) 763-9084

All volunteers are invited to our Volunteer appreciation and Christmas get together:

The Carolers of Alexandria, formerly known as the Jefferson Carolers will be performing at our Volunteer Appreciation and Christmas Party December 7, 2015 at Calvary Lutheran Church. They are directed by Steve Deitz the Alexandria High School Vocal Music Director.



The 2015-16 Carolers have been officially chosen. They are (back row, left to right) , Henri Santelman, Benjamin Long, Matt Roers, Jackson Grove, (middle) Rachel Meyer, Laura Dahlquist, Nora Merk, Emily Erickson, Sydney Jordahl, Ian Heseltine, Jackson Chell, (front) Kylee Johnson, Paige Mackedanz and Josie Nelson. Not pictured: Jack Wieberdink.

Formed in 1962, this group has performed in 19th Century Victorian caroling costumes for thousands of people in and around the community of Alexandria. They recently changed their name to the Carolers of Alexandria in conjunction with the opening of the new Alexandria High School.

Please join us on December 7, 2015 at 1:00pm at Calvary Lutheran Church to hear this fantastic group of young people.

WELCOME:

We want to welcome Holly Jerzak our new Respite Coordinator. Holly replaces Julie Sterk who decided to concentrate on retirement. Holly grew up in Canby, Minnesota, received her LPN education at Fergus Falls Community College and her RN certification from Alexandria Technical & Community College. She brings a wealth of experience working with seniors having spent 30 years as first an LPN and then an RN at Bethany Ecumen Home.

Holly and her husband Gary are long time Alexandria residents having worked and raised their three children here.

While we welcome Holly, we want to thank Julie for her service to not only the elder Network but to the seniors of Douglas County.

We also want to welcome 6 new volunteers who are currently participating in our training sessions: Bruce Jordan, Steve Nelson, Grace Lambert, Rosalie Rey, Jerry Kalinowski and Larry Zilliox.

Nip Depression in the Bud: Warning Signs to Look For

Courtesy Caregiver Newsletter
by: Mary Damiano

While caregivers are defined as the people taking care of those needing help, they sometimes overlook the fact that caregiving responsibilities can take a toll on their own health.

In addition to physical ailments, caregivers are at risk for depression. Depression can strike anyone, at any age. Caregivers need to be especially aware of depression because of the great load they carry. Many caregivers work at a full-time job and take care of a family in addition to their caregiving responsibilities. They often sacrifice their own health, well-being and social life in order to do everything that needs to be done.

One common denominator among caregivers is the desire and the belief that they must do everything themselves. Often, caregivers do not ask for help, opting instead to inadvertently play the part of the martyr. This leads the caregiver to become overwhelmed and an overwhelmed person is fertile ground for depression to dig in and take root.

The great strain caregivers face on a daily basis can lead to depression. One way to stop depression before it strikes is to be aware of the warning signs. According to the Administration on Aging, here are some red flags that depression might be creeping in:

- Sad, discouraged mood
- Persistent pessimism about the present, future and the past
- Loss of interest in work, hobbies, social life and sex
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Lack of energy and feeling slowed down
- Restlessness and irritability
- Loss of appetite and loss of weight
- Disturbed sleep, especially early morning waking
- Depressive, gloomy or desolate dreams
- Suicidal thoughts

If you feel yourself exhibiting these behaviors, do not discount them. They should be taken as seriously as you might treat a fever that won't go away or a persistent cough.

Below are some expert tips on what caregivers in particular can do to stop depression before it gets out of control:

Talk regularly with family, friends, or mental health professionals— it is very important that you do not isolate yourself. Join a local support group, or find one online. Share your feelings so they don't build up and escalate into problems.

Set limits— this can be hard for caregivers, because they are used to taking on everything that needs to be done. It's okay to say no to taking on more than you can handle.

Eat nutritiously, exercise regularly and get enough sleep— this can be difficult because of the irregular schedules caregivers must keep. But think of it this way: your body and mind are machines, and they must be properly maintained in order to function at their best. Nutritious food, exercise and sleep are the things that fuel these machines. Just as you would not let your car run out of gas, don't let your body run out of its fuel.

Let go of unrealistic expectations— caregivers often have unrealistic expectations of themselves and therefore push themselves to meet these goals. Accept the fact that you can't do everything. Ask for and accept help, from friends, family and local agencies. Whatever you do don't be a martyr.

Keep a sense of humor, we all know that laughter is the best medicine, so go ahead and take a few spoonfuls daily. Relax with a funny movie or TV show. Put on a comedy tape to listen to while you do your chores. Find the humor in everyday things.



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Make a difference in the lives that follow.

In-service (1:00-2:00 p.m.) & **Supervisory Meetings** (2:00-3:00 p.m.) are held at Calvary Lutheran, 605 Douglas Street, Alexandria. The next one will be December 7, 2015 and will be our Volunteer Appreciation get together and Christmas Party with The Carolers of Alexandria, formerly known as the Jefferson Carolers performing. January 4, 2016 we will go over how to file your time logs on line with a live demonstration.

These in-service trainings and supervisory meetings are all held at Calvary Lutheran on the first Monday of each month. If there is any change to this you will be notified.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send an e-mail to eldernet@embarqmail.com or call us at 320-763-9084.

Elder Network Journal is printed quarterly to support and promote Elder Network. You can contact us at our office in the Knute Nelson Admin Bldg., 420 12th Avenue E, #32, Alexandria, or call 763-9084, email: eldernet@embarqmail.com mailing address is PO Box 232, Alexandria.

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