



Hello!

The purpose of this newsletter is to share what the past year has looked like, to give a better picture of what we do here at Eastside Senior Services (you may be surprised at all that we do!), and to provide insight into our intended direction for 2020. We hope you enjoy.

It has been a year of change for Eastside Senior Services (ESS). Kelly Glostott (right) and I, Melissa Meier (left) joined the agency in April 2019 with part time roles. Kelly coordinates all things with clients and volunteers, while I manage overall administration, marketing, and vision. Together, we make a good team! Prior to us joining, Mardi Charnitz helped as interim Executive Director, ensuring seamless service - thank you Mardi for all the support you provided.



Kelly was previously employed full time at Ascension Columbia St Mary's as a Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner, while I was the full time Senior Services Director at Kenosha Area Family and Aging Services. We have extensive education and experience in working with older adults and we each bring unique insight to ESS. We both were seeking a change to part time employment and landed here - we are very excited to be part of ESS and have been enjoying getting to know you all.

In May, we hosted a Volunteer Appreciation and Training session as a way to get to know our volunteers and reestablish a solid foundation of process and procedure. We also hosted two client/volunteer gatherings, one in October and one in December, to get to know more of you and to provide a fun social gathering. We conducted our usual annual fundraisers - selling flower baskets in May, and gift wrapping books at Boswell's during the holiday season. We partnered with UW-Milwaukee for Make a Difference Day to help with yard fall cleanup in early November. We coordinated a present donation drive and delivered gifts to those we served in 2019. We met with our financial supporters, with area partners, and with other groups and individuals interested in learning more about what we do. It's been a busy and fun year.

We look forward to 2020, continuing to build our community partnerships, telling more people about what we do, building our volunteer force and serving our neighbors to fulfill our mission of keeping folks independent in their own homes and to stay connected to their community.

## **Eastside Senior Services 101**

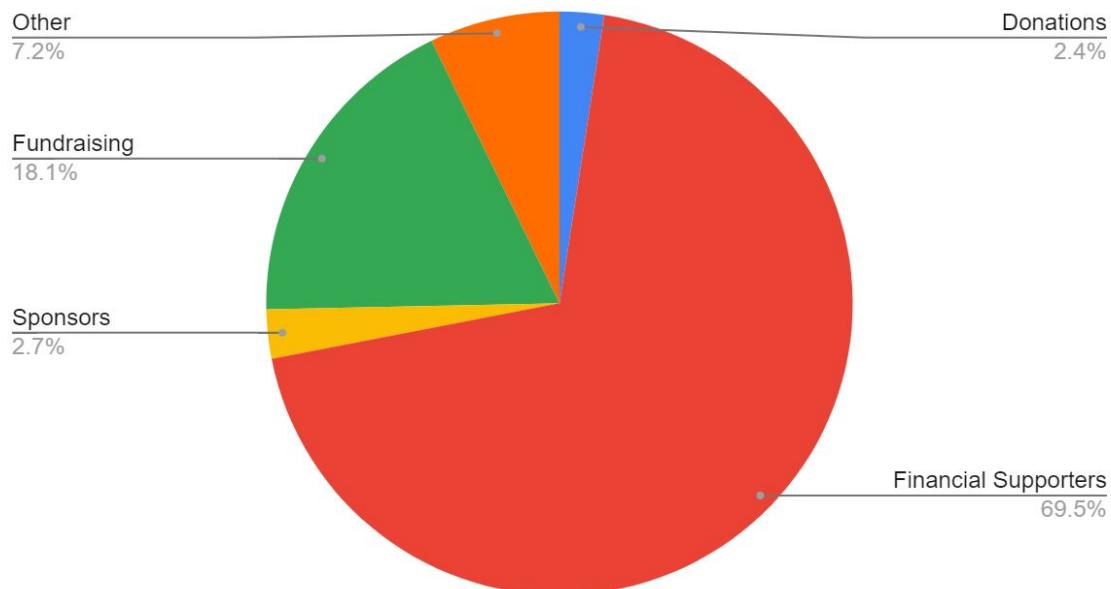
Our mission is to “*help adults aged 60 and older live independently and stay connected to their community on the east side.*” With two part-time staff and 45 volunteers, we’ve served 126 clients in 2019. All services are FREE, but donations are always welcome. We operate on 100% donations, with 11 primary supporters listed at the end of this newsletter. We keep our expenses at minimum, operating on a shoestring budget, and are very judicious with our money, ensuring that donated dollars are spent on only what is absolutely necessary. Most of what we assist with are rides, but we also offer a number of other services such as shopping, visits, minor home repairs, chores, and errands. The majority of these tasks are provided by our volunteers. Staff help with advocacy, information/referral, and coordination of services.

In 2019, we have provided over:

- 1500 rides to appointments and errands
- 250 shopping trips
- 200 light home chores, repairs, and outdoor cleaning
- 1000 home and telephone visits
- Hundreds of information, assistance and advocacy services
- 250 birthday cards sent to area older adults
- Dozens of medical equipment loan closet items

In 2019, we received \$55,152 of income the following ways:

**ESS Income**



## **What is the Eastside Senior Services Loan Closet?**

Gently used medical equipment is available for FREE to those who need it, either temporary or permanent. We also are always looking for donated items that you may have around your home that you no longer use. Please consider giving to someone in need.

Some examples of what we currently have in stock are:

- Wheelchairs
- Walkers
- Shower chairs
- Commodes
- Toilet raisers
- Adult disposable underwear
- Arm braces
- Bed rails
- Gait belts



We've provided equipment to clients who only needed these items while recuperating from surgery, and it's been such a blessing for them to avoid investing in something needed so short-term. Other clients need the items long-term and receive peace of mind knowing it's one less thing to purchase.

## **Odds and Ends - Volunteers Assist with Random Requests**

Do you or someone you know need help with random things?

If you are seeking volunteer opportunities, would you consider helping with random requests?

One time requests or short-term projects are provided through ESS if we find a volunteer who is equipped and willing! Some of the more recent requests include minor home repairs, helping reduce clutter, preparing for a move, setting up a new apartment, assistance with computer online listings, taking a cat to the vet, deep cleaning a bathroom, picking up food or prescriptions, taking out trash, and finding/delivering donated furniture items. The list goes on!

## **Rides are Meaningful to Area Residents - Arlene and Barb's Story**

Eastside Senior Services volunteers help with more than just a ride, it's a way of personally connecting with others. Ride recipient Arlene especially appreciates the personal relationships she's developed along the way. She's enjoyed the company of every volunteer that has helped her, learning from the pleasant exchanges during her rides. Arlene mentioned volunteer Barbara specifically because Arlene was able to share her Slovakian background with someone

who was familiar with it. Barbara and Arlene chatted and reminisced about Slovakia, even sharing words learned such as Pivo (beer) and Vino - some of Arlene's first words!

Barbara has been providing rides with ESS for over 30 years, and before that she helped other similar agencies. She doesn't remember the exact year she started, but she does remember having her toddler son in the backseat with her while providing rides - and he's now 53 years old! Barbara loves to make that personal connection with others. She also enjoys her time waiting for clients during their appointments, fitting in some reading or embroidery work.

Many other clients have expressed gratitude similar to Arlene's, bonding with volunteers. The companionship during a ride can help reduce the stress felt in anticipation of an appointment. Rides are free, helping those with limited incomes to go where they need to go. Some riders may take the bus typically, but have no means of transportation outside the bus line. Other riders may have difficulty with public transportation and need that extra little help. It's comforting for our clients to know that this service is available and that they will have the ability to go to appointments when needed. It is more than just a ride, it's a relationship.

**Italian Organ Music, Featuring Karen Beaumont**  
Sunday, February 9 at 2 pm

St Hedwig Three Holy Women Catholic Church  
1702 N Humboldt Avenue, Milwaukee

Event is free; however a free will offering will be collected for  
Eastside Senior Services

### **Joan Sinclair - Connecting Clients to Volunteers**



For most volunteers and clients, Joan is a familiar name. Joan has been volunteering countless hours for Eastside Senior Services since 2012. She initially started as a client, seeing our ad in the Riverwest Currents paper. She appreciated our ride service so much, and she was so personable that she was offered a volunteer office position. Joan helps now from her own home, linking clients who have ride requests to volunteers who are able to help.

Joan's personal touch and warm demeanor are appreciated by all the clients and volunteers she talks with. Her years of employment in social work, crisis intervention, and behavioral health have helped her become a perfect fit for the volunteer work she does. When asked what Joan appreciates most about volunteering at ESS, she says it's

providing support to others and being a listening ear. For Joan, this experience has provided more purpose and fulfillment in her life.

## Ron and Jamie's Story - Volunteering Together

Ron began volunteering with ESS about six years ago when the rector at St. Mark's Episcopal asked him to be a representative on the ESS board. Soon after, Ron started helping with rides. Ron had so many positive experiences, talking with clients about whatever they chose and learning about them. Eventually, Ron's wife Jamie retired after 40 years as a dental hygienist and was craving people interaction - so she began joining Ron in helping ESS! They both provide rides and shopping trips, sometimes they even volunteer together. Ron helps with light home repairs, and Jamie visits clients in their home.

Ron feels good about truly achieving the ESS mission - keeping people independent in their own homes, providing that extra little support. Aside from the services, Ron and Jamie both appreciate hearing others' stories, providing our clients a whole new audience they can share their story with. Ron and Jamie have learned much from the folks they've served, lending a non-judgmental ear.

When Jamie was asked what she would say to someone on the fence about volunteering - she said "Give it a try once or twice! If you don't like it, there is no commitment to stay." Jamie also finds it appealing that she gets to decide when she is able to help. She doesn't have a set schedule, and she can say yes or no to whatever request comes her way. Ron and Jamie also find it appealing that they don't need to worry about scheduling around vacations or short term absences, they just help when it is convenient.

Ron and Jamie are such an inspiration, and so are the many other volunteers we have helping us! Most of our volunteers have helped for a long time, and we have received much positive feedback from those served. We hear from our volunteers that they feel equally rewarded as well, helping others in need. Eastside Senior Services staff are so incredibly thankful for the volunteers that serve.

### Volunteers Needed!

*Hours are flexible, you decide on the frequency and commitment level*

Opportunities include:

Help with light chores

Grocery shop

Assist with minor home repairs/outdoor chores

Provide transportation to appointments

Be a companion to the homebound

And more!



## **Presenting - The Eastside Senior Services Board**

We are privileged to have an outstanding board, supporting us with their wealth of knowledge and background. Because there is minimal staff office support, we rely on our board to provide assistance with such things as payroll, marketing, and fundraising. Most of our board members represent a supporting congregation, while some are considered members at large. Board members' backgrounds include everything from finance, to legal, to education, to administration and more. All board members volunteer their time - but some of our members even help in the trenches, providing rides and other day to day assistance. Other board members spearhead the primary fundraisers.

Long-term president Carolyn Davies spent 14 years advocating, promoting, and leading our agency through much transition, ensuring that Eastside Senior Services always provided the community seamless service. Her dedication to ESS has been immeasurable and immense - we are so entirely appreciative of her efforts. This summer, Carolyn stepped down as president but left the agency in good hands with her friend Carol Eschner, retired Executive Director of Interfaith. Carol will be interim President for one year while we find a new President to assist.

We are always looking for individuals who want to invest in ESS by dedicating their time to our board. If you or someone you know would be a good fit, please contact us today. The work is very gratifying, knowing that you are helping provide the community this much needed service.



(Board top left to right: Ron Zingler (St. Mark's Episcopal rep); Chris Hanks (member at large); Lorna Dilley (SS Peter and Paul rep); Bob Titley (Cathedral of St John rep); bottom left to right: Dan Ryan (member at large); Carol Eschner (Interim President); Connie Goggins (Immanuel Presbyterian rep); Pat Suminski (Treasurer; Three Holy Women/Suminski Funeral Homes rep.). Not pictured: Luci Klebar, (Plymouth UCC rep/St. John's on the Lake); Margaret Wittig (Old St. Mary rep).

## **Community Support for Eastside Senior Services**

We had some amazing community support this year! Here are a few statistics:

- 363 flower baskets were purchased in May, primarily from congregation supporters
- Over \$1200 received in Boswell's holiday book gift wrapping tips
- Over 140 gifts were donated to provide to area older adults
- 134 cards were made courtesy of Catholic East Elementary students

THANK YOU for all your support! Funders like YOU help us keep providing the good work that is done for our community.



## **THANK YOU to Financial Supporters**

Eastside Senior Services wouldn't be able to do what we do without the incredible support of our partnering supporters. Because we are 100% donation based, every dollar counts. Aside from monetary donations, these partners champion us, help us find volunteers, allow us to represent ESS in ministry events, provide space in church communications, and more. Our office space at St. Mark's Episcopal is generously donated through the church as well. We are so abundantly blessed by community organizations that believe in our mission, and for that we cannot say thank you enough. The following are our primary supporters:

Cathedral of St John the Evangelist  
Immanuel Presbyterian Church  
Lake Park Lutheran Church  
Old St. Mary Catholic Church  
Our Lady of Divine Providence Catholic Parish  
Plymouth United Church of Christ  
Saint John's on the Lake  
St Mark's Episcopal Church  
SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church  
Suminski Family Funeral Homes  
Three Holy Women Catholic Parish

## **VOLUNTEERS DESPERATELY NEEDED -**

I couldn't write a newsletter without placing our common plea of needing volunteers. As we expand our reach and tell others in different avenues of what we do, the number of people we serve increases. We cannot fully serve the demand unless more volunteers help. The good news about volunteering is - YOU are in control of your schedule. You can tell us your availability, how often you want to volunteer, and have the ability to say "yes" or "no" to any requests that come your way. Volunteer for as little as one hour per month. It's my hope that this newsletter inspires you to tell others about our agency and for you to volunteer (if you don't already) or to tell others you know who may be interested in helping. If you decide at any point that this isn't for you - there's no commitment! I have a feeling though that you will be hooked. Looking at our current volunteer force, most of them have helped us for years and truly enjoy what they do. It is greatly rewarding, and most say that they get just as much or even more out of the experience than the clients do.

### ***An Incentive for Referrals***

Word of mouth referrals are the BEST way to recruit volunteers. With that, we will be offering a \$50 gift card drawing to anyone who refers another volunteer to us! In order to qualify for your name to be placed in this drawing, the volunteer must apply and go through an initial orientation. Names will be placed in the drawing through April 30, 2020. A winner will be drawn on Friday, May 1.

## **Looking for Ways to Connect in the Community?**

On the eastside of Milwaukee, there's so much opportunity to connect with area older adults in social gatherings. If you haven't already, please consider connecting with some of these amazing area partners:

- **Shorewood Senior Resource Center** provides a variety of activities throughout the week to assist with your health/wellness and recreational goals. They even have a weekly tech hour to assist you will all your burning computer/iPad/phone questions! These activities are available even for those who live outside of the Shorewood area.
- **Riverwest Elders** meets throughout the month. The second Tuesday of every month at noon they meet for a potluck, socialize, and have a special guest speaker. Eastside Senior Services would like to invite clients to these monthly gatherings and will assist with finding a ride for anyone who would like to attend.
- **Lake Park Lutheran Seniors** have a monthly luncheon, speakers, and outings on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.

- **SPARC** offers a gathering at St John Cathedral the third Wednesday of every month with a luncheon and special guest speaker.
- **OWL** (Older, Wiser, Local) meets several times a week at the Jazz Gallery Center for the Arts in Riverwest. Various topics, artists, and events are provided to enrich, enlighten and entertain!

If you would like more information about these groups, please feel free to contact us on how to connect with them!

### Clients Beyond Our Service Area

Eastside Senior Services serves within these boundary areas:

- North to Capitol Drive (between Holton St. and the Milwaukee River) and Edgewood (east of the river)
- South to Wisconsin Avenue
- East to Lake Michigan
- West to Holton Street and the Milwaukee River

If you know someone in need beyond these borders - never fear! ERAS is now the new service provider for the remainder of Milwaukee County outside of our boundaries. Call 414-488-6500. For those of you who may be familiar with Interfaith, ERAS is the agency that has taken over some of Interfaith's programs.

Of course - we will take volunteers residing anywhere!!

### Facebook and Other Technical Advances



Like us on Facebook! *We need friends.* There, we provide the latest on agency and area interests for older adults. Also - if you shop on Amazon, consider linking us to Amazon Smile - for every purchase you make, a small donation will be made to ESS!

Thanks to our partnership with UW-Milwaukee and their student group called Nonprof-IT, our website has improved dramatically and will continue to do so throughout 2020. Things to come soon include online volunteer reporting and other fun updates!

## **2020 Upcoming Events**

Sunday, February 9, 2:00 pm @ Three Holy Women Church - St Hedwig: Karen Beaumont, Italian Organ Music Benefit for Eastside Senior Services

March/April (Date TBD): Volunteer Training

Saturday, April 18: Make a Difference Day yard cleanup, organized by UW-Milwaukee

April 2020: Annual Flower Basket Sale

### **Lastly, a Final Request...**

If Eastside Senior Services has resonated with you in some way and you would like to be considered a partner with us, please consider offering a donation. No offering is too small. We appreciate all your support!

May you have a beautiful New Year, full of joy and peace.

Sincerely,

Melissa Meier and Kelly Glostott

***Looking for a regular social gathering but have no ride to get there?***

Consider attending Riverwest Elder's monthly Wisdom Gathering Potluck Lunch for a lunch/social and presenter

2nd Tuesdays of every month @ Noon

Call Eastside Senior Services to coordinate a free ride