

# 2024 Year in Review



## Cheers to 50 Years

Our 50th year in service proved to be a wonderful year of celebrating our past, embracing the present and looking to our future. In preparation for our 50th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser on November 7, 2024, we reconnected with old friends and made some new ones too. Keep reading for an in-depth article!



## Helping Our Community

It was another year of record-breaking numbers of those we served and volunteers who served them. Now more than ever, we need more volunteers to help with the service volume we are witnessing. We especially need volunteer drivers - if you know anyone that can help or would like a few volunteer flyers to distribute, please let us know.

It is a privilege and a joy to see how community-centric Eastside Senior Services is. Volunteers and clients live and engage in close proximity to one another. Local congregations, organizations, and other personal donors contribute financially and help us spread the word. We network with service providers, businesses, neighborhood associations, schools, and more. It truly takes a village to do what we do, and we are so deeply thankful for your involvement and support.

# About Us...



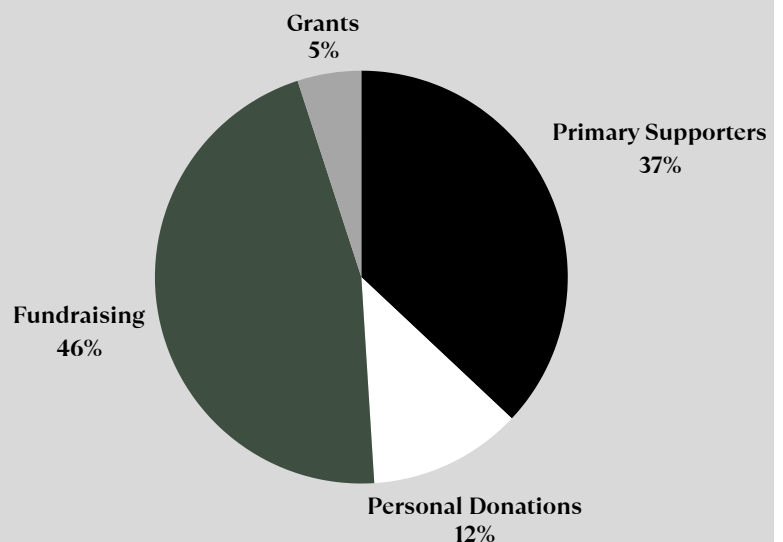
ESS Staff Kelly, Melissa, and Bill

Our mission is to “help adults aged 60 and older live independently and stay connected to their community on Milwaukee’s eastside, Riverwest and Shorewood.” With three part-time staff and 131 volunteers, we’ve served 292 clients in 2024. All services are FREE, but donations are always welcome. We operate on 100% donations, with 13 primary supporters listed at the end of this newsletter. The majority of tasks are provided by our volunteers. Staff help with advocacy, information/referral, and coordination of services. Our loan closet offers gently used medical equipment such as wheelchairs, shower chairs, and walkers for FREE to those who need it, either temporary or permanent. We are always looking for selected donated items that you may have around your home that you no longer use.

## In 2024 we provided...

- 3114 rides**
- 148 shopping runs**
- 307 chores & repairs**
- 450 calls & visits**
- 22254 miles**
- 6000+ hours**
- 500+ birthday greetings*
- 100+ medical equipment deliveries*
- 100+ information and advocacy services*

**131 Volunteers**  
**Served 292**  
**Clients**



**In 2024, we received \$113,222**



# A Perfect Pair

## “Cards and Convo” with Sheila and Kelsey



On some Thursdays, after a full day of working at her downtown office, volunteer Kelsey stops by Sheila's home for cards and conversation. Sheila lovingly prepares her apartment for Kelsey's arrival. She sets down an antique tablecloth designed for card playing and selects a few special card decks. She greets Kelsey with a lime spritzer, light snacks and music playing in the background. As Kelsey and Sheila sit down they decide what to play - should it be Gin or Gin Rummy today? The two of them share such vibrant conversation and updates on the week's activities, sometimes the card playing stalls. Both enjoy each other's company and look forward to the next time. While Sheila enjoys making special preparations for Kelsey's visits, these are certainly not required for clients to have a volunteer visitor!



## More Dynamic Duos



Left: Jennifer and Merribeth

Right: Jenny helping Emily with her yard





# Client Perspectives



## Susan's Story

Susan was so happy when she turned 60 because she knew "that's when I knew I could call Eastside Senior Services for help." Because of her bipolar and depression diagnosis, Susan is unable to drive. "Hauling groceries was becoming difficult for me" she explained. Volunteers now

drive Susan to the grocery store, help her pick out her groceries and bring them to her home. "Sometimes we make a game of it: I give the volunteer a list and we have fun with a Scavenger Hunt!" Susan also receives regular help with other types of rides and some other services. Recently, her very old computer no longer worked, and a volunteer helped her transition to a new computer and set everything up for her. When asked about her experience with our volunteers, she had only the highest compliments for them. They are "wonderful, thoughtful, considerate, punctual, and generous with their time."

We always hear from volunteers that they enjoy their interactions with Susan, that she is so very appreciative and sweet. Susan is a great advocate for Eastside Senior Services and has recently expressed interest in utilizing her professional experience and background in law to contribute to the ESS Board of Directors.

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## Dawn's Story

Dawn had some recent setbacks with an operation on her knee and a fractured ankle. "What would I do without the help of Eastside Senior Services?" she exclaimed when asked about our service impact. Initially, volunteers went shopping for her but as she improved, she went along for the experience. "I used to be able to walk a few blocks to the store, but now it's difficult just to walk through it." With the help of volunteers, she can still go to the store and pick out her groceries, and for that she is very thankful. Volunteers give Dawn other rides as well and help her a little in the home. "It's hard for me to vacuum when I have a walker to manage, so a kind volunteer comes to do that for me along with a few other odds and ends, like scrubbing my bathtub." "I am so thankful to have Eastside Senior Services."





# Volunteer Perspectives

## It's About Human Connections...



For the last two years, Jane has provided routine grocery carpooling rides for the same two clients. “We call ourselves the ‘dynamic trio’” Jane explains. “Both live close to each other, are very easy to work with and are positive, and they appreciate the help.” These regular rides give the “dynamic trio” the opportunity to check in with each other and see what is going on in each others’ lives. “It’s a positive experience for all of us. For me, it’s a structured weekly outing and I know I’m making a difference.” Jane has also helped Eastside Senior Services with the annual Boswell Books holiday wrapping fundraiser, assistance with mailers, and delivering holiday gifts to area seniors. “These opportunities are a great social activity for me, and it gives me a way to do what I really enjoy for such a great agency AND it’s positive for the community.”

Volunteer Rick also provides weekly grocery rides regularly for another two clients. “They have such different personalities but both are very chatty!” Rick also has helped other clients with medical rides as well. Years ago, Rick’s mom used a ride program like ours; then he needed rides himself a few years ago when he needed cataract surgery. “I was grateful for the help in both circumstances and wanted to give back” Rick mentioned.

“It’s about human connections - those who want an outlet for serving, and those who need help - it’s a wonderfully mutual thing,” says Jane.

***For as little as two hours monthly, you can volunteer with us -  
WE NEED YOU!***

*Driving  
Shopping  
Light Chores or Repairs  
Technology Assistance  
Companionship  
and more*

*Sign up today, [www.essmilw.org](http://www.essmilw.org)*

# Cheers to 50 Years!



## Something to Celebrate

On November 7, 2024 we celebrated 50 years as an agency with a gala event at Sprecher Brewery. With 140 in attendance, we raised nearly \$15,000 in profits! Guests were treated to music by the band Fashionably Late, brewery tours, a silent auction, and enjoyed food and drink including signature root beer floats.





Celebrating  
50  
YEARS





# Presenters



Executive Director Melissa Meier (2019-current)



Executive Director Marylou Parthum (1996-2005)



Client Testimony, Laverne Harmon



Father Tim Kitzke, Eastside Catholic Parishes



Bruce Schmidt, representing Executive Director JoAnn Schmidt (1979-1996)



# Thank You To All Who Made Our Fundraiser Successful!



## Gift Card & Cupcake Donors

Beans & Barley  
Classy Girl Cupcakes  
Glorioso's  
Heather Fortney  
Ian's  
Jimmy John's  
Julia Vosper  
Kaitlain Devine  
La Masa  
Pizza Man  
Saz's  
Scortino's Bakery  
Susan Koehne  
Sweet Joy Brazilian Cafe  
Twisted Plants  
Zaffiro's

## Table Donors

Bader Philanthropies  
Eastside Catholic Churches  
Julia Vosper  
John Jacobs  
Matthew Freeman

## Individual Donors

Carol Eschner  
Daniel McCarthy  
Gerri McNamara  
Joan McCracken  
Judith Young  
Margaret Wittig

## Photography

Patrick Davies

## MATC Video Presentation

Nathan Marrero  
Osiris Dagry

**Fundraising Committee Members:** Aleina McGettrick, Allyson Fry, Bill Florescu, Deanna Sinsky, Heather Fortney, Jennifer Kahn-Pettigrew, Julia Vosper, Kelly Glostott, Kelsey Lavinio, Kristina Emmons, Laura Molex, Margaret Wittig, Marita Stapleton, Matt Freeman, Melissa Meier

## SPONSORS

### PLATINUM LEVEL (\$1000+)

**SAINT JOHN'S**  
ON THE LAKE



**BADER**  
PHILANTHROPIES, INC.  
CELEBRATING COMPASSION

### GOLD LEVEL (\$500-\$999)



**HEIDI MARCELLE &  
ROBERT BARNARD**

### Carolyn and Tom Davies

### SILVER LEVEL (\$200-\$499)

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# It's About Community...



The Success Through Aging Research (STAR) program through UWM hosted a **Bingo** event for our clients in September, offering a wide array of refreshments, fun Bingo games and prizes.

The UWM STAR program is funded by the National Institute on Aging to support educational activities and mentored research experiences for undergraduate students interested in aging and health disparities.

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## \* \* \* \* \* Holiday Happenings \* \* \* \* \*

Eastside Senior Services is a flurry of activity throughout the holiday season. For some, it can be a challenging season to go through but we do our best to make it a little brighter. We invite the community to purchase general gifts for most clients we've served that year. We added another fresh way to help - donors were able to purchase gifts on Amazon which were delivered directly to our office! Special thanks to the Eastside Catholic Parishes, St Mark's Episcopal, ESS Volunteers and their friends, and to Girl Scout Troop 37840 for gift donations. Thanks to our generous donors, volunteers delivered 131 gifts in 2024! We also sent cards and called all our clients to check in and chat if they'd like.

Saint John's On The Lake hosted our annual Holiday luncheon for clients and volunteers. Saint John's Residents graciously served our guests a delicious meal prepared by the chef.

Volunteers gift wrapped books to help raise funds for ESS at Boswell Books. This event is such a great way to get into the holiday spirit and connect with the community for a good cause.

Lastly, we participated in Immanuel Presbyterian Church's Alternative Christmas event. Since 1995, members and friends have been offered "a different way to do Christmas," by providing opportunities to purchase gifts for family, friends and others, that support local and international programs and organizations. Specially designed gift cards describe the gift and the program it supports!

It's wonderful to see the community support us in such a loving, tangible way, especially over the holidays.



# Thank You To Our Supporters

We are so incredibly thankful for the ongoing, long-term and faithful support of our local congregations. Being a small agency, every dollar counts. Not only do these supporters help us monetarily, they are champions for our agency, helping us find volunteers and board members, providing space in church communications and buildings for our events, and extending our services out to their congregants. Congregations were how we started as an agency! Without their vision and momentum, we would not be here. We SO appreciate our other community partners, including Shorewood Senior Resource Center, Saint John's On The Lake, Suminski Family and 2024 new sponsor, St. Rita - A Capri Community.

We extend a very special thanks to Saint John's On The Lake for the free office space along with being an amazing host for our annual holiday party.

Thank you to our personal donors! Every donation matters: from \$5 to \$5000, it adds up in a major way, allowing us to continue serving the best way we can in our community. We are so thankful for you!

The following are our 2024 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  
St. Rita Square - A Capri Community  
Shorewood Senior Resource Center  
Suminski Family  
Three Holy Women Catholic Parish

Thank you to Wispect Foundation in providing us funding for Uber Health rides when we run short on volunteers, and for purchasing new medical equipment when needed

Thank you community members, for spreading the word on our needs, supporting our fundraisers, and being an avenue for us to share the good work with others who may be unaware of us.

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Special thanks to Andy Frahm from C2 Graphics for building our beautiful new website.

## 2024 Board Members & Staff

John Jacobs: President  
Three Holy Women Catholic Church

Deanna Sinsky: Vice President  
Medical College of Wisconsin

Pat Suminski: Treasurer  
Three Holy Women Catholic Church

Aleina McGettrick: Secretary  
Certus Legal Group

Bob Titley  
Cathedral of St. John The Evangelist

Margaret Wittig  
Old St. Mary Catholic Church

Sue Rohde  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Kristina Emmons  
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Matthew Freeman  
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Melissa Meier  
Executive Director

Kelly Glostott  
Program Coordinator

Bill Florescu  
Ride Coordinator