

# Companionship Times

Fall 2010

Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota

Volume 21, Issue 2

## STATION spotlight

### Western: Burleigh County Senior Adult Program

The Bismarck Senior Center, located at 315 N. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, is the site of the Burleigh County Senior Adults Program that organizes, develops and coordinates services and activities for adults age 60 and older. The Senior Center is a user-friendly source of information, services and activities for successful living.

Services and activities at the Senior Center began in 1978. Services include nutritional meals, outreach, information and referral, and health maintenance. These services, along with a variety of social, recreational, educational and volunteer activities, make the Center a place to gather, network and become involved in the community.

The Burleigh County Senior Adults Program is a non-profit organization overseen by a nine-member Board of Directors. An Executive Director supervises the daily operations of the program. Federal, state, county and city resources along with private donations support the program and help expand its capacity to build a better community for all.

Hours for the Senior Center are Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. There are staff and volunteers on hand to provide a tour and answer questions. Come join us!

*When we're in our nineties and we're looking back, it's not going to be how much money we made or how many awards we've won. It's really, "What did we stand for? Did we make a positive difference for people?"*

—Elizabeth Dole

### Eastern: Clay County Public Health

Clay County Public Health has been a volunteer station for Senior Companions for many years. Marlene Ochsner is the Senior Companions supervisor. The mission of Clay County Public Health is to assure optimal health of all Clay County residents through effective community planning, services and partnerships. They employ a staff of 52 people. Their services consist of nursing services, public health clinics, health promotion, a medical detoxification center and environmental health services.

Marlene states, "The Senior Companions program provides a wonderful service for both the person who is the companion and the one who is the client. The visits from a companion have helped clients remain in their home for a longer period of time. The positive relationships that develop between the companion and the client enhances their well being. They look forward to each visit and time that they spend together. The friendship that develops often continues even after the person is no longer a companion."



▲ See story on page 4.

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**Senior Companions**  
**Lutheran**  
Social Services  
of North Dakota

[www.lssnd.org](http://www.lssnd.org)



## Senior Companions

Lutheran Social Services  
of North Dakota

[www.lssnd.org](http://www.lssnd.org)

### Office Locations

#### Minot—Main Office

1905 2<sup>nd</sup> St. SE—Suite 1B  
Minot, ND 58701  
Phone: (701) 838-7800

#### Fargo Office

1325 11<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Fargo, ND 58103  
Phone: (701) 271-3247  
(800) 450-1510

## Senior Companion Program Staff

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### Our Mission:

*Guided by God's love and grace  
Lutheran Social Services  
of North Dakota  
brings healing, help and hope.*

# Many Thanks!

*YES! I would like to support  
Senior Companions*

*How many times have you said,  
"How can I help my community?"*

*By supporting the Senior Companions  
program, you ARE helping your community.*

*Because the program is funded by  
contributions and through state and federal  
grants, if you choose to make a tax-deductible  
contribution, your gift will be used to enhance  
and expand the services of Senior  
Companions in North Dakota and your area.  
Thank you for your consideration!*



*Thanks to these donors for your  
support of Senior Companions!*

### Financial Supporters:

Corporation for National Services  
ND Aging Services                      Bethel Lutheran Foundation

### United Ways across ND:

Barnes County United Way—Valley City •  
Richland/Wilkin United Way—Wahpeton • Missouri Slope  
United Way—Bismarck • Basin United Way—Williston •  
Souris Valley United Way—Minot • Cass/Clay United  
Way—Fargo/Moorhead • Jamestown United Way •  
Dickinson United Way • Grand Forks United Way

### Donations to the Senior Companion program during the past six months:

Burleigh County Senior Adults, Bismarck • Fargo Senior  
Commission • First United Methodist Church, Jamestown  
• Leona Fehr, Harvey • Albert and Anita Kessel, Fairfield •  
Andrew Hager, Rugby • Norris Nicholson, Bottineau



# Bits from Becky

by Senior Companions Director—Becky Telin

Hope everyone is enjoying summer! I have been golfing as much as time will allow. I have realized after a long winter and a rainy spring that I need to get my vitamin D by spending time outdoors.



The spring was busy with Annual Recognitions. We celebrated in Grand Forks, Minot, Williston, Fargo and Bismarck. It is nice to see those familiar faces along with new Senior Companions.

At the recognitions, we had flowers sitting on the tables. Flowers make you smile, feel good, lift your spirits. When you get flowers don't you think, "Oh how kind?" Our North Dakota Senior companions are just like flowers, they make people smile, they make people feel good, they lift spirits, and I think "You are so very kind." You the volunteers are truly the FLOWERS in your communities!

I am excited to share the statewide Senior Companions program statistics. We had 117 companions that volunteered 90,102 hours supporting 725 clients in a home based situation. Wow!

*Becky Telin*

# Sonja's Stuff

by Sonja Mickelson, Minot



Our senior volunteers once again show us how it's done. Every year I'm amazed by their resilience and giving spirit and think, this is it, they can't give or do more! And

every year, I am proven wrong. The Senior Companions give and give and then give some more.

One special volunteer, LaVonne, retired this year because her health dictated. According to LaVonne, Senior Companions "shaped her retired life." She had felt aimless after 40 years in the workforce. "What am I going to do now?" she wondered. Seventeen years later, she wishes she could write a book so she could tell about all the wonderful things that came to her through Senior Companions. We all can take a page from LaVonne's book of selflessness, and I know she represents our many volunteers.

I am honored to be part of a program that promotes ordinary seniors making an extraordinary difference in other seniors' lives. Thank you, LaVonne, and thank you to our Senior Companions!

# Bill's Corner by Bill Ragan, Fargo



We have just completed another year of recognition events. It is always a pleasure to see everyone at these events and to thank you in a small way for the great job you do. Whether this is your first year or your 20<sup>TH</sup> year, we at Senior Companions along with your community thank you for the wonderful work you do.

In 2011 the Senior Companions program along with its sponsor Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota will celebrate its 30th anniversary here in North Dakota. The backbone of this program is you, the Senior Companions, and the Supervisory Stations. Without you the program would not exist. The Senior Companion Program and Lutheran Social Services want to thank you for the great job you do.

# How to Plant your Garden with Kindness

## PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS:

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

## PLANT FOUR ROWS OF SQUASH:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

## PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

## NO GARDEN IS COMPLETE WITHOUT TURNIPS:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

## TO CONCLUDE OUR GARDEN WE MUST HAVE THYME:

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

**WATER FREELY WITH PATIENCE AND CULTIVATE WITH LOVE. THERE IS MUCH FRUIT IN YOUR GARDEN BECAUSE YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.**



# Statewide Annual Recognition Event

Volunteer Recognition Events were held in Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Williston and Bismarck with the theme “Planting the Seeds of Kindness.” Our kind “gardeners” included the volunteers from the Senior Companion Program, Foster Grandparent Program and RSVP+.

## Bismarck

The Bismarck area Volunteer Recognition event was held June 16 at Lord of Life Church. The theme was “Planting Seeds of Kindness.” Attending were volunteers and program supervisors from Kidder Emmons Senior Services, MedCenter One, South Central Adult Services, Burleigh County Senior Adult Program, Dakota Center for Independent Living, Edgewood Vista, Elder Care of Dickinson, Enable and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Bill Ragan, Senior Companions program Eastern Coordinator, was the guest speaker and read to the group from the book “When God Made the Dakotas” by Tim Kessler. This creation story is framed as a Native American legend that reminds readers to find beauty and joy in what surrounds them. The Lord of Life staff served a delicious and “fancy” meal of beef tips and gravy, vegetables, brownies and ice cream.



▲ Maggie and Evie at Bismarck Recognition 2010



▲ Bill Ragan, SCP coordinator with McIntosh-Kidder-Emmons Senior Companions at the Bismarck area recognition 2010



▲ Marv Zander, entertainment in Bismarck serenading Becky Telin, Director, SCP

*I have been given this day to use as I will. I can waste it or use it for good. What I do today is important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it.*

—Unknown

## Williston and Trenton

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church graciously offered their fellowship hall and provided a wonderful meal for Williston and Trenton volunteers on June 9. The Senior Companions Program was joined by the Foster Grandparent and RSVP+ programs. Entertainment was provided by the “Litfin Girls”—such a beautiful and talented family of singers. Mayor Ward Koeser attended and said a few words of encouragement and thanks to our great group of volunteers.



▲ Peggy Bearce, Williston, was instrumental in the great success of our recognition at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.

# nts: *Planting the Seeds of Kindness*



▲ Minot Recognition 2010

## Minot

The Grand International Inn was the site of the Minot area recognition on May 8 with Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents and the RSVP+ in attendance. “Our Volunteers Are Legendary” was the theme of this event.

Carla Dolan of the Minot Area Chamber of Commerce spoke about the many activities and day trips available to seniors around Western North Dakota. Miriam Smette, RSVP+ Project Director; Angie Richter, Foster Grandparent Program Director; Becky Telin, Director, and Sonja Mickelson, Coordinator for Senior Companions all recognized their respective programs and the most special of all of the guests—the Senior volunteers! Volunteers and program supervisors from the Minot Commission on Aging, Manorcare, St. Andrew’s, Pierce County Social Services, McHenry Social Services, St. Aloisius and Presentation Medical Center attended the event.

## Grand Forks and Fargo

Two Senior Companions Recognitions were held in the East, one April 23 in Grand Forks and the second on June 15 in Fargo. Both were held in conjunction with the Foster Grandparent Program.

The Fargo Recognition was held at the Red River Zoo in the Carousel Pavilion. The program consisted of an animal presentation which included a Chinchilla, Bearded Dragon, Corn Snake and a Blue Tongue Skink. Those present were not only able to see and hear about the animals but also able to touch them. (Some declined touching the snake!) There also were carousel rides available and a wolf presentation.



▲ Becky Telin with Penny Eberhardt and two Foster Grandparents at Grand Forks Recognition 2010



▲ Christine, Alma, and Marlene representing Presentation Medical Center, Rolla, Minot Recognition 2010



▲ Red River Zoo Carousel, Fargo Recognition 2010

The Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Recognition was held in Grand Forks on April 24 at the Clarion Inn and featured inspirational speaker Missy Ohe. Senior Companions from Devils Lake, Lakota, Petersburg and Grand Forks were in attendance to receive the accolades so deserved for their years of service to their respective programs. Libby Kathman, Outreach Worker from the Grand Forks Senior Center also attended. Entertainment was provided by “Randy and the Guys.”

# VOLUNTEER spotlight



## **Karen Anderson**

lives with her husband on a farmstead near Streeter. Karen heard about the Senior Companions program about

eight years ago. She asked her mother, who was going to be 90, if she would be interested in having a Senior Companion. Her mother's answer was, "I am not ready for that yet." Karen talked her into trying it for a couple of weeks and then felt, "It is one of the best things we have ever done for mom."

Karen has now become a Senior Companion herself and says, "Sometimes the things we do or say are so small, but yet are so huge in bringing some joy into someone's life."

As Karen states, "SHARING AND CARING—IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER!"



## **Marie Beachler**

According to Marie, having been a volunteer for the Senior Companions program for the past eight-plus

years has been a rewarding and pleasant experience.

"Each one of the clients that I worked with all were well pleased with the program. They were so grateful and appreciative of the visits and services provided for them," Marie notes.

Marie's supervisor, Nicole Livedalen from Pierce County Social Services, Rugby, has this to say: "The seniors that Marie is assigned to have nothing but good things to say about her and things that she does to help them out."



## **Sonja Olson**

lives in Lisbon with her husband Dennis. They have three children in addition to a son who passed away 23 years ago. The

Olsons also have four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Sonja has lived her whole life in Ransom County and Dennis came from Sargent County which is just to the south.

Karleen Wyum is Sonja's supervisor and she covers Ransom and Sargent Counties. Karleen was the one who encouraged Sonja to become a Senior Companion because Karleen felt Sonja was such a good fit for the program. Sonja says she truly enjoys being a Senior Companion and she wishes that more people knew about the program and could benefit from it by either being a companion or a client. Sonja serves 13 clients.



## **Maggie Jorgan**

"What Senior Companions means to me is friendship and fun," says Maggie. "I really enjoy all my senior friends.

I try to look out for them and they do the same for me. It gets me out of the house and it provides company for them. They really look forward to my visits."

Maggie says she had a heart attack in April, and while recuperating, most of the people she visits called to see how she was doing and one even visited her and prayed for her recovery.

According to Anita Kessel, SCP supervisor from Elder Care in Dickinson, "Maggie is very concerned about her clients and they love her."



## **Karen Woessner**

heard about the Senior Companion Program through one of the social workers at Valley Senior Services,

Fargo, which is her supervisory station with Laura Maeyaert as her supervisor. Karen is an LPN and says she is a people person. Karen has one daughter, one son and three grandsons.

Karen likes the flexibility of the program as she has MS. This has not limited Karen in what she does because she has a positive attitude.

Karen states, "I get more from the Senior Companions program than I give."

Valley Senior Services would like to have more Senior Companions like Karen as they have a waiting list for people who would like to have a companion.



## **Char Ovitt**

According to Carrie Cote, Senior Companions supervisor from St. Andrew's, Bottineau, Charlotte Ovitt has been a senior companion for six

years and has been a great asset to the Bottineau Senior Companions program.

"Char has gone above and beyond what is expected of her when working with her clients, Carrie says. "I recall one time when Char found one of her ladies lying in her apartment very ill. Char immediately took action to get her medical treatment. When her client returned home after a long stay in the hospital, Char made sure she had all the medical resources possible so she remained as healthy as possible."

*Welcome!*

**13 new Senior Companions joined the program in the past six months:**

Loretta Birdeno  
Jamestown

Charles Booke  
Williston

Deanna Dagen  
Jud

Carmen Delvalle  
Grand Forks

L. Scott Donaldson  
Jamestown

Deanna Hardtke  
Jamestown

Beverly Haugen  
Jamestown

Janet Heckman  
Valley City

Janice Hewitt  
Minot

Leonard Marine  
Moorhead

Ruth Miller  
Moorhead

Toni Plante  
Cannon Ball

Thelma Wall  
Tappen

**We need you!**

To become a  
Senior Companion  
contact:

Becky Telin,  
Program Director,  
by phone at  
(701) 838-7800 or by  
e-mail at [btelin@lssnd.org](mailto:btelin@lssnd.org)  
[www.lssnd.org/](http://www.lssnd.org/)  
**SeniorCompanions**

*Companionship Times, Fall 2010*

# **National Conference on Volunteering and Service**

by *Becky Telin*



▲ Becky Telin, right, Director, Senior Companions of North Dakota, with Karen Hillman, FGP Director and Kristin Fox, Director, Senior Companions of South Dakota, attended the National Conference on Volunteering and Service

Becky Telin, director of the Senior Companions program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, attended the National Conference on Volunteering and Service in New York City, June 28–30.

The conference provided information on empowering people to make positive change through community service (volunteering). It showcased how volunteers have the opportunity to inspire, equip and mobilize everyone to make a difference.

## **September 11 National Day of Service: The Power of 9/11 to Build New Volunteers**

The conference offered a four-hour tour to the Tribute World Trade Center Visitor Center and Ground Zero, site of the 9/11 twin towers terrorist attack. It was a very moving experience. Volunteers that were impacted by that day were our guides.

Becky was touched by the presentation by the Founders of *My Good Deed*. Their message was that we as a nation need not give the terrorists the satisfaction that we dwell on the tragedy, but appreciate the scope and impact of the disaster and mark the event on the day after. That was the day people joined together to help with the recovery, marking true volunteering of oneself. President Obama has marked September 11 as National Day of Remembrance and Service, a day we all are asked to volunteer in some way big or small and help a neighbor or make difference in someone's life. See [www.MyGoodDeed.org](http://www.MyGoodDeed.org).

## **Target "Party for Good"**

The Senior Companions directors along with other Senior Corp project staff from North Dakota and South Dakota joined Target Stores to celebrate the conference guests. Target engaged us in the ultimate volunteer experience—a service project in a party atmosphere filled with unexpected surprises and the chance to make a difference in the local community. During the *Party for Good* at Pier 36 off the Hudson River, attendees packaged much needed meals for New York City children and families. Throughout the evening, kit-packing milestones were celebrated with celebrity performances, greetings and refreshments for the 5,000 conference guests/volunteers. The goal was reached of 150,000 care packages. It was a great time!

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# Senior Companions

**Lutheran**  
Social Services  
of North Dakota

[www.lssnd.org](http://www.lssnd.org)

1325 11<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Fargo, ND 58107

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
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Fargo, ND

**YES...** the Senior Companions program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota is important to me, my family and my community.

I'd like to give my support in the following ways:

- \$10 to fuel a month of travel for a Senior Companion.
- \$25 to provide ten hours of visits & assistance from a Senior Companion
- \$45 to support three hours of training for Senior Companions volunteers

**\$5 a Month Giving Plan** is a convenient way to fit support of Senior Companions and Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota into your monthly budget

- Please enroll me in the Monthly Giving Plan with my gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month
  - I would like you to charge my credit card each month. I have completed the attached credit card information
  - I would like you to make a monthly withdrawal from my checking account. Please send me information.

I authorize this monthly transaction and understand that it will remain in effect until I contact Lutheran Social Services/Senior Companions to cancel or change the amount of my monthly contribution.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Information

- My check is enclosed
- Please charge my:  Visa  Mastercard

Credit Card Number

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Expiration Date

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- I am a Thrivent member. Please send me a matching gift form.