

LOCALNEWS

Senior volunteers recognized for service to community

BY VALERIE CROMELL
ElderCircle RSVP Director

The ElderCircle Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Koochiching County recently hosted its 32nd annual RSVP Volunteer Recognition event in International Falls.

Koochiching County RSVP members were recognized for outstanding volunteer service from July 2012 to June 2013.

A total of 191 RSVP members were engaged in volunteer service throughout Koochiching County, contributing 24,968 service hours for 29 nonprofit partner organizations during the year.

RSVP members are encouraged to meet a “healthy volunteering threshold” of serving one to two hours per week, or 50 to 100 hours per year, to maximize the health benefits of volunteer service. RSVP reports that 121 (63 percent) of its active Koochiching County members met this threshold during the reporting period.

This year’s recognition event was funded in part by a grant through the Blandin Foundation and was staged at Lenard’s. Members were treated to a buffet luncheon, RSVP video presentation, special guest speaker and RSVP member Lloyd Adams (Minnesota’s 2013 Outstanding Senior Volunteer award winner), RSVP service awards, prize drawings, and a special gift for each volunteer.

The following Koochiching County members were presented with RSVP Service Awards in recognition of volunteer service:

300+ Annual Service Hours: – Annette Vollrath — 765, Dan Burgess — 752, Betty Ericson — 611, Josephine Johnson — 561, Betty J. Olson — 554, Mary Roche — 539, Helen Bilig — 518, Alyce Reinartz — 470, Punky Stadium — 459, Mary Ann Lien — 455, Mary Estabrooks — 454, Janet Tufvander — 412, Marguerite Davison — 389, Phyllis Karsnia — 359, Carol Lagoo — 359, Felicidad Bruers — 355, Kay Arnold — 352, Bernice Brown — 346, Margarete Kostiuk — 342, Sadie Darvell — 333, Carolyn McDougall — 329, Elaine Beach — 322, and Bette

Simon — 317. 22+ Years of Membership and Service – Margarete Kostiuk — 31 years; Lillian Flovick and Alma Bigler — 28 years; Marjorie White — 26 years; Jane Barthell, Mildred Bloomquist, Alfred M. Boquist, Helene Chisholm, Sadie Darvell, Marguerite Davison, Edna Doris, Helen Duvos, Faye Estabrooks, Patricia Ettestad, John Frederickson, Joan Frick, Lorraine Hopke, Norma Krats, Jacqueline Olson, Bette Simon, Marlys Tveit, and Gladys Wimmer — 23 years.

3,000+ Lifetime Service Hours – Dan Burgess — 10,247; Margarete Kostiuk — 7,075; Mary Roche — 6,531; Mary Thydean — 5,855; Mary Estabrooks — 5,682; Marguerite Davison — 5,109; Annette Vollrath — 5,079; Betty Ericson — 4,915; Sadie Darvell — 4,905; Carol Lagoo — 4,692; Shirley Wagner — 4,653; Genevieve Ziembra — 4,294; Barbara Eckels — 3,924; Rose Ann Morin — 3,787; Alma Bigler — 3,747; Lillian Flovick — 3,681; John Frederickson — 3,643; Janet Turban — 3,642; Beverly Beck — 3,536; Bette Simon — 3,492; Les Gooler — 3,490; Pam Hanson — 3,312; Charlotte Saari — 3,282; Helene Chisholm — 3,252; and Betty J. Olson — 3,189.

The primary sites where RSVP members served during the year include: Rainy Lake Medical Center — 4,589 hours; AARP Tax Aide Program — 3,088 hours; Citizens for Backus Community Center — 1,860 hours; Falls Hunger Coalition — 1,704 hours; Arrowhead Transit — 1,617 hours; Kootasca Senior Center (Northome) — 1,615 hours; Meals On Wheels (International Falls) — 1,613 hours; RSVP Bone Builders (International Falls and Northome) — 1,539 hours; Koochiching County Senior Center (International Falls) — 1,123 hours; and Northome City Library — 1,120 hours.

A breakdown of the Service Categories for which RSVP members provided assistance during the year include: Health Care – 26 percent; Community and Economic Development — 20 percent; Social Services/Human Needs – 16 percent; Food Distribution/Nutri-

tion — 14 percent; Education — 5 percent; and Other — 17 percent (Senior Centers, Thrift Shops, Animal Shelters and Parks/Recreation).

RSVP is a national Senior Corps program www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/rsvp administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service www.nationalservice.gov, an independent federal agency created to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to give back to their communities and their nation. RSVP engages the skills, talents, and experience of approximately 300,000 volunteers age 55 and older to meet a wide range of community needs. Volunteers serve in community organizations to help them deliver critical services and fulfill their missions.

While serving their community, RSVP volunteers also improve their own lives by staying active and civically engaged, and experiencing physical and mental health benefits. RSVP is a flexible volunteer service model, with no set service schedules or compensation for the volunteers when they are on assignment, with the exception of insurance coverage and mileage reimbursement for those who qualify. The mission of ElderCircle RSVP is “to engage adults age 55+ in volunteer service to support the independence and well-being of seniors, and to experience the health benefits of volunteering.”

The ElderCircle RSVP project www.eldercircle.org/rsvp.html engages members age 55 and over in a variety of volunteer activities and placements that directly impact the people in their local communities. For example, RSV’s (Retired and Senior Volunteers) prepare annual tax returns for low-to-moderate income clients in Koochiching County. This free tax aide service saves clients the cost of income tax preparation fees, allowing them to use these savings for other basic needs.

RSV’s who serve at area food shelves and food distribution sites contribute greatly to the economic well-being of Koochiching



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Members of Koochiching County RSVP were recently recognized for their service to the community from July 2012 through June 2013. Recipients of RSVP Service Awards include, back row, from left, Rose Ann Morin, Mary Ann Lien, Alma Bigler, Betty Ericson, Annette Vollrath, Bernice Brown, Norma Krats, Marguerite Davison, John Frederickson, Les Gooler and Alfred Boquist; middle row, Patricia Ettestad, Carol Lagoo, Mary Thydean, Lillian Flovick, Lorraine Hopke, Janet Turban, Helen Duvos, Phyllis Karsnia, Josephine Jackson, Jackie Olson and Betty J. Olson; front row, Carolyn McDougall, Charlotte Saari, Margarete Kostiuk, Sadie Darvell, Barb Eckels, Bette Simon and Shirley Wagner.



RSVP member Lloyd Adams received the Minnesota Outstanding Male Senior Volunteer award at the Minnesota State Fair in September 2013. Adams spoke to Koochiching County RSVP volunteers about his views on volunteerism, and his life commitment to service at the 32nd Annual RSVP Volunteer Recognition Event Oct. 23 in International Falls.

County clients who are food insecure. In a March 2013 survey of area food shelf clients, 92 percent reported that using their local food shelf enabled them to receive enough food to feed themselves and to reduce the risk of food insecurity; and 91 percent agreed that because of this, they are better able to stretch their resources for other basic needs such as rent, heat, transportation or medication.

Koochiching County Meals On Wheels volunteers

prepare, pack or deliver nutritious hot, cold or frozen meals to homebound clients on a daily or weekly basis. These local individuals are able to maintain their independence due in part to the daily or weekly services provided by RSVP volunteers. In a recent survey, 98 percent of the clients stated that MOW helps them to maintain good nutritional health by eating healthy balanced meals; and 99 percent reported that MOW helps them to remain independent in their homes.


Trained RSVP Bone Builders volunteers lead osteoporosis prevention and reversal exercise classes in both Northome and International Falls. In a recent survey, 81 percent of the community members who participate in the Bone Builders program reported that they experience better balance and improved health and fitness by attending class on a regular basis.

ElderCircle is the 501 © (3) organization www.eldercircle.org that sponsors the RSVP program in Itasca and Koochiching Counties. By promoting volunteerism and civic engagement in our local communities, ElderCircle RSVP taps into the time, talent and experience of the senior population living in the two-county area. In addition to providing direct benefits to the community, volunteerism increases an older adult’s physical health and agility, as well as his/her cognitive and mental well-being.

RSVP Community Advisory Group members representing Koochiching County are JoeAnn Powell of Northome, and Jane Barthell and Karen Tveit of International Falls. The RSVP program of Itasca and Koochiching Counties is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Minnesota Board on Aging, and the United Way of 1000 Lakes. Koochiching County residents who are age 55 or over and are interested in improving their lives and health through volunteering may contact ElderCircle RSVP at 218-999-5441 or deb@eldercircle.org for more information.

Twenty years ago, December 20th, we lost a loving father, grandfather, great grandfather.

In loving memory of
Earl Stevenson.



*God saw you were getting tired,
And a cure was not to be;
So He put His arms around you,
And He whispered, "Come with Me."
With tearful eyes we watched you suffer,
And saw you fade away;
Although we loved you dearly,
We could not make you stay.
A golden heart stopped beating,
Hard working hands put to rest;
God broke our hearts to prove,
He only takes the best.
We think about you every day and
we miss you being with us.
Sadly missed and never forgotten
We all love you very much
Your Loving Family.*



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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is upon us and we at Renaissance Hearing Centers wish you a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

We have been proud to be able to provide the Borderland with professional hearing services and quality hearing aids for the last 15 years and we look forward to serving your hearing needs in the coming year.

We also have hope that the New Year will bring new opportunities to the unemployed, continued business to mainstreet and a better life for all.

Our holiday schedule is as follows:

January 9, 16, 23 & 30



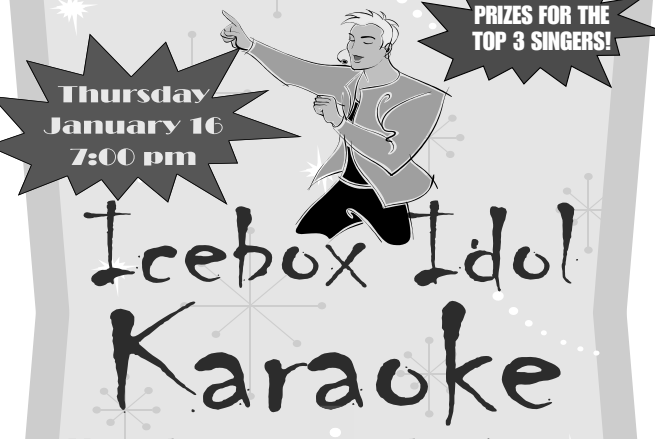
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NOTICE


Koochiching County Highway Department is hosting an informal open house meeting on Tuesday, January 14, 2014 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm to discuss reconstruction of CSAH 332 (formerly TH 332) from TH 11/71 to TH 53. The open house meeting will be held in the Third Floor of the Koochiching County Courthouse. Questions please call the County Engineer's Office at 218-283-1184

Thursday
January 16
7:00 pm



Icebox Idol Karaoke

No age limit, everyone welcome!
Call Backus to register (218) 285-7225



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Community Center

Five Buck Night!

- \$5 per song to perform
- \$5 per person admission

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www.backusab.org | Facebook: Backus AB

Backus Community Center is fully accessible to persons with disabilities. Please call our main office for specific accommodations.