



Among Volunteers

November 4, 2010

LBFE Facebook contest winning entry!

Thanks to those who posted and voted on their favorite LBFE story during the month of October. For receiving the most "likes" on his story, volunteer Michael Walsh wins a \$50 gift card for either Target or Barnes and Noble. Here is Michael's winning post:

"I took my Big Brother Doug fishing for the first time in ages this summer. To watch him put that worm on the hook, raise his head to the sun and smile was magical. It was like he was no longer a 90+ year old man, but a little boy with a rod and reel at his favorite fishin' hole. Cast after cast, the smile didn't leave his face all day".

See all the inspiring posts at [LBFE Facebook page](#) and be sure to stay tuned for future Facebook contests.

Holiday volunteer update: Drivers urgently needed

Thanksgiving is rapidly approaching and we need your help to make it a success. **17 drivers** are still needed to provide rides and companionship to elder participants on Thanksgiving Day. The Thanksgiving meal will be held at the Prom Center at 484 Inwood Avenue on Thursday, November 25 from 12-2 p.m. Including drive time, drivers can expect their total time commitment to extend from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Christmas dinner plans are also underway for **Saturday, December 25** from 12-2 p.m. Location for the Christmas dinner is still to be determined. Volunteer drivers and meal deliverers are most critically needed, but on-site roles are available as well.

If you are a Visiting Volunteer, we invite you to escort the elder you visit to the holiday dinner. If you are interested in doing this, please let us know so that we do not double-book a ride for the elder.

Please consider brightening the holidays for our elders this season! For more information or to sign up for either holiday, please contact Carolyn Swenson at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org

Volunteer opportunities - November and December

BINGO - Please note location and time change

Needs: **1 driver**
Where: LBFE office
1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis
When: Tuesday, November 9
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

BINGO

Needs: **5 drivers**
Where: Minneapolis League of Catholic Women
207 S 9th St, Minneapolis
When: Tuesday, December 14 (**5 drivers**)
Drop off 9:30 a.m./pick up 12:30 p.m.

BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

Needs: **20 drivers**
5 set up/serve/clean up
Where: LBFE office
1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis
When: Wednesday, November 17 (**5 Minneapolis; 5 St Paul**)
Wednesday, December 15 (**5 Minneapolis; 5 St Paul**)
12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON - NEST NEIGHBORHOOD

Needs: **2 drivers (St Paul)**
Where: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
674 Johnson Parkway, St Paul
When: Wednesday, November 17
Wednesday, December 15
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

DECORATE THE LAKE STREET OFFICE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Needs: ***4-5 holiday decorators**
*some heavy lifting may be needed
Where: LBFE office
1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis
When: Last week of November
Date and time can be flexible

FRIENDSHIP AND FLOWERS

Needs: **20 deliverers**
Where: Pick up at either LBFE office
When: **Saturday, November 20** from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
(5 Minneapolis; 5 St Paul)
Saturday, December 18 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
(5 Minneapolis; 5 St Paul)

KNIT & CROCHET/CARD-PLAYING GROUP

Needs: **16 drivers**
Where: Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly
1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis
When: **Thursday, November 18** from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
(3 Minneapolis; 3 St Paul)
Thursday, December 23 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
(5 Minneapolis; 5 St Paul)

MCGOUGH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SPONSORED HOLIDAY TEA

Needs: **10 drivers**
Where: Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly
1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis
When: **Wednesday, December 8** from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

RECREATION GROUPS - ASSORTED OUTINGS

Needs: **1 driver per group (4 groups per month)**
Where: Varies. Recreation groups bring a small group of LBFE elders to community outings such as malls, movies, parks, zoos, etc.
When: **Every Tuesday (usually)** from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

For more information on these opportunities, please contact
Carolyn Swenson at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org

Event Sponsors Needed!

Are you connected with a corporate, civic, church, school, or social group that would enjoy a fun activity together? If so, please consider hosting a birthday luncheon or another special celebration for our elders. Event sponsors provide the food, entertainment, volunteers, and more that help make our events possible. To learn more about sponsoring an event, please contact Carolyn Swenson at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org

Your Participation Matters

Next week, you will be receiving a fundraising appeal from us. While we are greatly appreciative of your gifts of time and talent, we hope you will join with

fellow volunteers who also make a financial commitment to LBFE. As a small not-for-profit organization, our ability to increase the number of elders we serve is totally dependent on the amount of donations that we receive throughout the year (LBFE does not receive funding from any other source than our individual and organizational donors).

Currently, less than 20 percent of our active volunteers make financial gifts to LBFE. If 500 of our volunteers who have not previously donated each made a \$25 commitment, we would raise an additional \$12,500 for our annual fund. A \$50 gift would raise an additional \$25,000! As an example of what this could mean, the cost per elder in our Friendship and Flowers program per year is just over \$55; these new gifts would allow us to provide companionship to-and improve the lives of-many more elders in the Twin Cities.

Thank you for your consideration and for all of your gifts in support of our mission. Every gift matters!

Introducing Josh Windham, LBFE Community Life Coordinator

Josh Windham has recently joined the staff of Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly as Community Life Coordinator. Josh's role will be to coordinate group social activities for the elder participants of LBFE. Josh will be interfacing with a variety of volunteers, most especially our volunteer drivers and on-site event assistants. Josh is a graduate of North Central University and is currently working toward a Master's Degree in Global and Contextual Studies through Bethel University. Welcome, Josh!

Training opportunities

There are no in-service training opportunities during the months of November and December.

Orientation sessions

You are cordially invited to attend our upcoming Orientation and Basic Training session. New and experienced LBFE volunteers will learn more about the organization's history, current programs, and the future of older adults in Minnesota. Discussions on working with older adults, handling difficult situations, and current agency policies are included.

Saturday, November 13, 9 to 11:30 a.m., 1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis
Wednesday, November 17, 5 to 7:30 p.m., 1295 Bandana Blvd, Ste 165, St Paul
Saturday, December 11, 9 to 11:30 a.m., 1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis

Wednesday, December 15, 5 to 7:30 p.m., 1295 Bandana Blvd, Ste 165, St Paul

Contact Carolyn Swenson at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org to RSVP.

Volunteer spotlight: Friendship and Flowers Volunteer Julee Williams

Julee Williams has been a steadfast volunteer with LBFE for over seven years. In that time she has enjoyed many roles, including Visiting Volunteer, Driver, and Meal Deliverer. For the last five years, Julee has regularly volunteered with Friendship and Flowers, delivering flowers, treats, and a visit to LBFE elder participants one Saturday morning each month. Julee's "gang" includes a half dozen elder participants who live in a nursing home and nearby high rise in South Minneapolis. Each month, Julee spends a bit of time with each person, helping to arrange the fresh flowers in their vase, getting updates about the various people and pets that make up each person's world, and sharing stories from her own life. "It's easy because it's fun", says Julee. "You look forward to seeing them each month as you would a family member".

Julee's enthusiasm for the mission of LBFE has spread to others in her life, most especially individuals involved in Richfield Women of Today, another organization close to her heart. Julee has involved group members in food shelf drives, cookie baking, and parade marching - all to benefit LBFE. One of her friends, having heard Julee speak about the work she is doing, has now gotten involved as a Friendship and Flowers volunteer in her own right. The pair make a day of the event, meeting up to carpool to LBFE and then taking time after their visits to go out for lunch together.

When asked what she tells others to inspire involvement, Julee remarks, "Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly is a great organization that fulfills a need in society, so that people don't get forgotten. It's so rewarding to see the change in people after you've visited them. For some people, these are the only visits they have".

This year, Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly plans to double the number of elder participants receiving Friendship and Flowers. In order to accomplish that goal, many more volunteers like Julee are needed. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in getting involved as a Friendship and Flowers volunteer, please contact Carolyn Swenson at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org

Companionship Corner: Understanding Chronic Sorrow

Ted Bowman, noted educator, author, and consultant specializing in change and transition, presented at the October LBFE in-service. "Understanding Chronic

Sorrow" addressed how to define chronic sorrow and how to help someone that has chronic sorrow in his or her life. Bowman explained that grief is a whole body response to loss and that loss is not necessarily always associated with "death" or "dying." He defined loss as "being deprived of or ceasing to have something that one formerly possessed or to which one was attached." This loss can be attached to the loss of a loved one, the estrangement of family members, loss of one's capabilities or even the loss of one's dreams.

Chronic sorrow is defined as "a set of pervasive, profound, continuing and recurring grief responses resulting from a significant loss or losses or absence of crucial aspects of oneself (self-loss). The way in which the loss or losses is perceived determines the existence of chronic sorrow. The loss is ongoing since the source of the loss continues to be present." Bowman explained that chronic sorrow is different from clinical depression in that "the key difference [in chronic sorrow] is the ability to grow life, experience joy and fullness regularly, even while also grieving." Elders at risk for chronic sorrow include: those who lost their childhoods due to the early death of parents, those who killed many people in war, those who experience a child's death, those whose dreams were lost, those whose children are "lost"--missing, estranged or rarely show up, those who have begun to bury their peers without an end, and those who have been care giving for "too long."

A person's chronic sorrow is exasperated by the "no talk rule" that some societies and cultures encourage when dealing with issues of death, dying, and loss. Today, in our culture of speed and efficiency, people are expected to overcome their grief within a short period of time. Bowman explained that volunteers need to be willing to listen to their elder's story in order to help them cope. A person suffering from chronic sorrow needs to express their grief but also needs to experience joy and it is important to move between both. He suggested that volunteers help their elders explore how they "enlarge their circle or their world" and find out what brings joy to their elder's life. By "growing their world," their grief will still exist but it will not continue to consume their life or continue to be the dominant story. Volunteers can help an elder with chronic sorrow by listening, encouraging activities that "grow" their elder's world, and by affirming hope through their "attitudes, behaviors and ways of communicating."

Survey Monkey results available

If you are interested in viewing comments from the volunteer satisfaction survey that was conducted in September 2010, you can view all the anonymous responses here: [Volunteer Satisfaction Survey Results](#)

Volunteer time reports

Time reports are now due for your **October** volunteer hours.

Time reports can be submitted via email, fax, or mail directly to your staff contact with LBFE. If you are unsure to whom you should be submitting your reports, please contact **Carolyn Swenson** at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org

A writable copy of the time report is attached to this newsletter so that you can easily fill it out and email it back.

Complete reporting of volunteer hours helps us to secure and maintain funding, as volunteer hours and activities are included in our fundraising proposals to corporations and foundations. Thank you for your support and commitment to our elders.

Volunteer Department Information

For questions, inquiries or referrals, please contact **Carolyn Swenson**, Director of Volunteer Services, at (612) 746-0753 or cswenson@littlebrothersmn.org. Office hours are Monday-Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.