



Among Volunteers



MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FROM LITTLE BROTHERS - FRIENDS OF THE ELDERLY

SEPTEMBER 2011



Join us at our open house on Sept. 22 Meet Greg Voss!

You are cordially invited to meet Greg Voss, the new executive director for Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly, at our Open House. Greg is anxious to meet all of LBFE's volunteers who are so dedicated to the mission of relieving isolation and loneliness among elders while promoting well-being and independence.



Greg Voss,
Executive Director

"I was raised to appreciate volunteering," said Greg. "My parents were very involved in the community, so volunteering was second nature for me. I want to express my appreciation to all of LBFE's volunteers and help foster an environment at LBFE where volunteers can say 'It was the best part of my day.'"

Come and share with Greg your vision for fulfilling the mission of LBFE.

When: September 22, 5-7 p.m.

Where: LBFE, 1845 East Lake Street, Minneapolis
Door Prizes – Refreshments – Displays – Demonstrations

Drive elders, enjoy student talent show!

Ten drivers are needed for this spirited intergenerational event. Students at All Saints Lutheran Church are presenting a lively and creative talent show exclusively for LBFE elders! The event takes place **Sunday, October 8, 1-3 p.m., at All Saints Lutheran Church, Minnetonka**. Healthy refreshments will be served. To sign up, please contact Dianne Feltham at dfeltham@littlebrothersmn.org or 612.746.0732.

Volunteer Time Reports for August Now Due

Take a moment to appreciate all that you do to bring companionship to elders! Please complete, then submit your monthly time report via email, fax, or mail to your LBFE staff contact. If you are unsure to whom you should submit your report, contact Dianne Feltham at 612.746.0732 or dfeltham@littlebrothersmn.org

Download a writable copy of the time report to fill out and e-mail back:

www.littlebrothersmn.org/volunteer/volunteer-forms.

Reporting of volunteer hours helps us to secure and maintain funding. *It's also a great way to recognize the value you bring to fulfilling LBFE's mission.* **Thank you** for your commitment to our elders.



VAN workshop: Learn how YOU can make a difference!

Would you like to make a greater impact in your community? Our upcoming workshop will give you the tools and the inspiration!

In collaboration with Vital Aging Network (VAN), LBFE is offering **“Be the Change: Making a Difference in Your Community.”** This FREE workshop will help you explore their current and potential roles in the community, the benefits of getting involved and action steps toward making a real difference. LBFE volunteers are especially welcome to attend!

The workshop will be offered twice:

- **Wednesday, Sept. 28, 6-8 p.m.**

- **Thursday, Oct. 6, 6-8 p.m.**

Location: Hazel Park Recreation Center, 945 Hazel St. N., St. Paul

To register online for either session, [click here](#). For questions or to register by phone or email, please contact LuAnne Speeter at lspeeter@littlebrothersmn.org or 612.746.0753.

[Click here to download flyer \(PDF\).](#)

Volunteer Spotlight

Phone companion Dawn Vassar

The phone is a basic communication tool for most people, but to Phone Companion Dawn Vassar it provides a critical social and emotional connection for her elder friends.

Dawn had originally joined LBFE as a Visiting Volunteer several years ago. When the needs of the elder she was matched to changed, LBFE's Sandy O'Donnell suggested Dawn consider becoming a Phone Companion.

“Being a Phone Companion works well for me and allows me to volunteer in areas that I can still do well,” Dawn said. Dawn was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1991, which essentially forced her to retire from teaching in 1997. She initially lost her vision to MS but it was restored “with prayer and prednisone.” Now she sees well enough to pass a driver's test.



Dawn Vassar,
Phone Companion

The MS didn't affect Dawn's body as much as it did her mind. “It impaired my thinking,” she said. “I took up volunteering to get my brain working again, as if I were recovering from a stroke.” LBFE was an important factor in helping Dawn get back on track. “I'm a solo person,” she said. “So I was drawn to volunteer with others who may feel alone.”

Dawn regularly calls two LBFE elders. “I call Mary on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, and then at 9 a.m. on Sunday, at Mary's request, as a wake-up call for church.” Mary's days are filled with visits from home care agencies and LBFE visitors, like Chelsea and Amanda, yet she still gets lonely and appreciates the friendship and support of the Phone Companion.

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Dawn Vassar from p. 2

Every Thursday evening, Dawn calls Pauline. “The calls help Pauline know that someone is interested and cares about her. She tells me everything that’s going on in her life and talks until she says, ‘I can’t think of anything else,’ and then we say goodbye.”

Dawn has also helped out LBFE by doing clerical work, as well as wrapping and delivering holiday gifts to elders. What’s more, she reads for persons who are visually impaired through Vision Loss Resources, does odd jobs at radio station KFAI and has been a reading tutor at two elementary schools, American Indian Magnet and World Cultures Magnet/Mounds Park.

While Dawn has some limitations due to MS, it has caused her to focus her volunteer activities on her strengths. “I can still listen and see and read – this is what I want to share in my volunteering,” she said. Those of us who are touched and inspired by Dawn agree that she is giving a lot of herself, but Dawn looks at it differently. “I’m getting a lot,” she says.

Lend a helping hand

By Verdella Ena, expressing the sentiments of Barbara Hutton

You know that times are so hard I wanna shout
And to ease the pressure we need to help each other out.

We as a group are living on the deep end of things
We need to embrace one another like birds on wings.

Understand that we all have fallen on hard times
So band together to talk about things to clear your minds.

You shall see that lending a help hand
Will strengthen your bond with your fellowman.

Because as a group you can pull yourselves up
To stand firm against those things in the world that corrupts.

Together as a group you can form a strong union of family and friends
And any negativity that comes your way you shall be able to handle it – it will be a win/win.

Nothing will be strong enough to stop you in your tracks
Especially if you’ve got family and friends who’ve got your back.

Therefore, always extend your hand to help someone out
And together you can stand to fight any bout.

Always remember: tell the truth in a positive way
You shall find that no one can have anything negative to say.

Orientation Sessions

Learn about LBFE's history, current programs and what the future holds in store for Minnesota's older adults. As a prospective LBFE volunteer, you'll gain valuable insights on working with older adults, handling various situations and LBFE practices and policies.

The session is FREE and essential for all volunteer companions - please join us!

Saturday, Sept. 10, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 21, 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 8, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 19, 5:30 p.m.

RSVP to LuAnne Speeter at lspeeter@littlebrothersmn.org or 612.746.0753.

Volunteer Department Information

For information about becoming a volunteer: contact LuAnne Speeter at 612.746.0753 or lspeeter@littlebrothersmn.org.

To volunteer for upcoming events (existing volunteers): contact Dianne Feltham at 612.746.0732 or dfeltham@littlebrothersmn.org.

Location: 1845 East Lake Street, Minneapolis, MN 55407

Office hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m, Monday-Friday.

Volunteer opportunities and events: September and October

BINGO AND LUNCH

Tuesday, Sept. 13, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 11, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Where: Minneapolis League of Catholic Women
207 S 9th St, Minneapolis

Need: 5 drivers

BIRTHDAY LUNCH

Thursday, Sept. 15, 12-2 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 19, 12-2 p.m.

Sponsorship available!

Where: LBFE, 1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis

Need: 3 drivers

FRIENDSHIP AND FLOWERS

Saturday, Sept. 17, 9-11 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 15, 9-11 a.m.

Where: Pick up at LBFE, 1845 East Lake St, Minneapolis, or
1295 Bandana Blvd, St. Paul

Ongoing need for volunteer deliverers/visitors

KNIT & CROCHET / CARD-PLAYING GROUP

Friday, Sept. 23, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 27, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Where: LBFE, 1845 E Lake St, Minneapolis

Need: 5 drivers

DAY OF REFLECTION

Thursday, Oct. 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Where: Benedictine Center, Maplewood

Need: 6 drivers (3 Mpls., 3 St. Paul)

DONATE

Support LBFE's mission of providing companionship
to isolated seniors in the Twin Cities.
www.littlebrothersmn.org/contribute

To sign up for opportunities, please
contact Dianne Feltham at
dfeltham@littlebrothersmn.org or
612.746.0732.

NEST NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

BAKING

Needs: 2 prolific bakers or 1 group
Ongoing need for a total of 6-8 dozen
treats per month (bars, cookies, etc.)
Where: Bake at home; deliver to LBFE
at 1845 East Lake Street, Minneapolis.
For alternate drop-off site, contact
Dianne Feltham, 612.746.0732, or
dfeltham@littlebrothersmn.org.

BIRTHDAY LUNCHEONS

Wed., Sept. 28, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Wed., Oct. 26, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Where: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
674 Johnson Parkway, St Paul
Need: 1-2 drivers (St. Paul)

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Monday, October 17, 4-5 p.m.

Where: LBFE, 1845 E Lake St, Mpls

We encourage anyone whose life has
been touched by an elder we served to
attend our memorial service. Each ser-
vice includes a time of sharing memo-
rable and touching moments, which we
have found to be especially helpful in
our healing process. Please contact
Josh Windham at **612.746.0746** or
jwindham@littlebrothersmn.org if
you would like to attend.