

We Make a Life By What We Give
-- Winston Churchill

It's here!

Interfaith Ozaukee's van opens up a world of possibilities

Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee is excited to announce the arrival of our first-ever wheelchair-accessible vehicle.

The new Dodge Caravan minivan arrived in March. It was made possible through transportation grants and community support.

It is equipped to safely provide transportation for seniors with limited mobility. Using the van's gently inclining ramp, volunteers may push clients in wheelchairs up and into the van with ease and then secure them in place.

The new van not only will help Interfaith Ozaukee provide transportation to many clients we have not been able to assist in the past, but it also will have a positive impact on how we fulfill our mission of keeping seniors independent in their homes.

Since approval of the van was announced, the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Volunteers and clients alike have been contacting us to put them on the list awaiting the service. And now the van is in service.

"We are thrilled to provide this option to seniors who use wheelchairs and are in need of transportation," says Maureen Squire,

executive director of Interfaith Ozaukee.

"Serving more seniors throughout the county by providing access to their essential needs – such as medical appointments, the pharmacy, and grocery shopping – provides for a healthier community all around."

In the past, Interfaith Ozaukee volunteers used their own vehicles to transport clients. The new van allows for volunteers not wishing to use their vehicle to still be able to assist clients.

Volunteers are being trained on proper procedures, safety and maintenance policies. Training is ongoing.

As the senior population increases in Ozaukee County, so, too, does the need for Interfaith Ozaukee's services. The Ozaukee County population, in fact, has the largest percentage of seniors in southeastern Wisconsin.

"In order to meet the increasing demands for our transportation services, more volunteers are needed – especially now that we have the new van," says Squire.

"We welcome people interested in becoming a volunteer driver to contact Interfaith Ozaukee. We appreciate our volunteers, and so do our clients."



Interfaith Ozaukee's wheelchair accessible van has arrived and is in service.

Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday, June 28, 2017

Volunteer Appreciation event and annual meeting will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Family Enrichment Center, 885 Badger Circle, Grafton.

Late fall

Planning is under way for Interfaith Ozaukee's annual fundraiser in late fall. Details coming soon.

Interfaith now staffed 5 days a week

It's 10:30 on a Friday morning as the phone rings at the Interfaith Ozaukee office. On the line is an 80-year-old client who hopes to schedule a ride to a doctor's appointment 10 days away. She expects her call to go to voice mail, because that has been her experience when calling on a Friday.

But, no. Instead, Megan Beine, program coordinator, answers the phone just as she does the other four days of the week: "Interfaith Caregivers Ozaukee, may I help you?"

For the first time since Interfaith Ozaukee started serving clients' needs 24 years ago, the office is staffed five days a week. That means there is someone on hand every weekday to better serve clients' needs.

"As the need for our services grows, it's important to do all we can to be responsive," says Maureen Squire, executive director for Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County. "Since the beginning of the year our hours have expanded to include Fridays."

• **How to reach us**

For the record, Interfaith Caregivers can be reached at (262) 376-5362. Listen to the prompts to be directed to the person you wish to speak to.

• **When to reach us**

Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. If staff members are out of the office doing a client assessment, call back or leave a message.

Executive Director's Message

We're rolling along in a new direction

It is with pride and dedication that I announce that Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County has taken a major step forward in fulfilling our mission to help seniors in our community remain independent in their homes.



With the arrival of our first wheelchair-accessible van, we now are equipped to serve even more of our neighbors in Ozaukee County with mobility issues.

You can read the details in the cover story of this newsletter, but suffice it to say that the van's arrival is a game changer. In the past our loyal group of volunteers had been using their own cars exclusively. It was not uncommon for them to pick up clients in their homes and help them to the car with the aid of their walkers, and then stow the walker in the trunk or back seat of the car. But we would have to turn down requests from Ozaukee County residents who get around with the aid of a wheelchair.

There also were some prospective volun-

teers who preferred not to transport people in their own cars, and so they either decided to wait until the van arrived or would limit their service to our clients to providing respite care or conducting friendly visits. So you can see the new van – with another on the way – is a BIG step forward, opening up new worlds for clients and volunteers alike.

Most people who are familiar with Interfaith Ozaukee appreciate our efforts, but might not be able to truly understand the impact of what we do on our clients' day-to-day lives.

Consider for a moment how your life would change if you gave up the keys to your car for just one week. How would you get to the dentist? The doctor? Physical therapy for your shoulder or knee? Now imagine needing to get to the grocery store to do your weekly shopping. How would you get the heavy bags home? Think about the extensive planning ahead you would have to do to make arrangements for the simple errands that most of us take for granted every day. And how would you feel about the loss of independence?

Now let's take this one step further. Imagine how you would accomplish all of the

above if you were in a wheelchair?

For so many of our clients, we are a lifeline. Interfaith Ozaukee, quite simply, allows them to live life in their own home and on their own terms.

That's why we hear time and time again that Interfaith Ozaukee is making a huge difference in our clients' lives. And while as an organization we do our part, it is our volunteers who are the real heroes in someone's life.

We have a slogan here at Interfaith Ozaukee: Got an hour? Give an hour.

If you have time to give by becoming an Interfaith Ozaukee volunteer, I can promise you that any service you provide – big or small, in our van or your car, transporting clients or spending a little time visiting and breaking up the loneliness in their lives – makes a difference.

The need is immediate and the need is critical. Please help us continue to serve our community and fulfill our mission. Tell any friends and family members, too. After all, who doesn't want to be a hero?

-- Maureen Squire

Interfaith gets by with a little help from our friends

A crafty project helps brighten our clients' days

Volunteers from Milwaukee Area Technical College decided to spend part of Kindness Week at the Interfaith Ozaukee offices, and many of our clients were happy they did.

Kindness Week, Feb. 12-17 (this year), is a way to extend our hands and open our hearts to others.

Eighteen instructors and staff members at MATC embraced that effort and spent several hours on Feb. 14 making and delivering cards to Interfaith Ozaukee clients.

The event was coordinated through United Way Northern Ozaukee.

The day began as Program Coordinator Megan Beine welcomed the volunteers and offered a bit of instruction. Lots of camaraderie followed as the creative juices began to flow.

Some of the cards were be-dazzled, others were subdued,



MATC volunteers donated their time to make cards to brighten the day of Interfaith Ozaukee clients.

but each card contained a heartfelt message from the volunteers.

"Happiness is contagious," wrote one volunteer.

"Thanks for sharing your

smile," wrote another.

Yet another included a quote from Audrey Hepburn: "The best thing to hold on to in life is each other."

After the cards were complete,

the volunteers delivered them to Interfaith Ozaukee clients.

In all, it was a positive experience for everyone involved -- one Interfaith Ozaukee hopes will become an annual tradition.

Got an hour? Think about giving an hour

Each year Interfaith Ozaukee provides thousands of trips to medical, rehab and therapy appointments for clients who have mobility issues but seek to remain as independent as possible in their homes.

We also help with grocery shopping and picking up prescriptions, make friendly visits and provide respite for family caregivers so they can have a brief break from their responsibilities.

How do we do it?

Through a devoted and caring core of volunteers who give their time to help others.

But as the population ages, we are at a crossroads. As we experience an increasing demand for our services, we are averaging seven new clients for every one new volunteer. This is a marked change from the two-to-one new client-new volunteer ratio just four years ago.

Simply put, we need more volunteers so that we can continue our important mission.

That's why we ask that if you've "got an hour, give an hour."

You can offer your time on your terms: once a month, once a week, once a day; mornings or afternoons; weekdays or weekends. You can drive your own vehicle or transport clients in the new wheelchair accessible van. We're as flexible as can be.

Having more volunteers to count on obviously benefits our clients. It enables interfaith Ozaukee to continue to meet their needs and ease their worries about whether they will be able to get to their appointments.

But there are distinct benefits for volunteers, too.

Kathy Saeger recently retired from her job.

"I wanted something outside the house to do," she says. She decided to devote some of her free time to volunteering with Interfaith Ozaukee.

"I have met some wonderful people," she says. "We sometimes just visit for 15 minutes and it makes me feel good that they are happy someone is there for them. I feel like I am making a small difference in someone's life."

Longtime volunteer Judith Golding made



Volunteer Marty Hake sits behind the wheel of Interfaith Ozaukee's new van.

a special connection that had a real impact. Judith would go to the home of a client and spend time with the husband who had dementia so that his wife could get out and do errands. While there, Judith would play his favorite hymns on their Hammond organ.

"I would play first with one hand and then with both until I could do it without mistakes," she says. "I asked him 'how am I doing,' and he said 'you are getting better.'"

What's amazing is that he hadn't been verbal for months. "But he connected with music," she says.

Rewards like that have kept her as a volunteer for more than 15 years.

Kathy and Judith's experiences are consistent with findings by United Health Group and Harris Interactive. Their research found service to others actually is good for volunteers' well-being. For example:

- 96% of those surveyed said volunteering enriched their sense of purpose in life.
- 94% said volunteering improved their mood.
- 76% said volunteering made them feel healthier.
- 78% said volunteering lowered their stress levels.

- 87% of respondents who are employed said volunteering helped their people skills and teamwork skills.

If you have an hour to give, please consider volunteering with Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County. We have a wide range of needs, including driving clients to medical appointments, helping them with grocery shopping, sitting and talking with them to make their day a bit less lonely or providing respite care so family members and caregivers can take a break.

If you already volunteer your time, please take a moment to tell your friends or family members about the rewards of volunteering through Interfaith Ozaukee and ask them to sign up.

And if you are a member of a club or organization, consider speaking to the group about the need we have for more volunteers.

Our clients will appreciate your efforts and you'll feel better, too!

To learn more about volunteering, reach Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County at (262) 376-5362 or go to www.interfaithozaukee.org.

Won't you consider supporting Interfaith Ozaukee's mission?

Interfaith Caregivers Ozaukee offers services free-of-charge to clients to support our mission of enabling seniors and adults with limited mobility to remain independent in their homes. Therefore we rely on generous contributions to support our programs.

Since 2012, Interfaith Ozaukee has experienced a 110% increase in requests for services. This increase directly relates to the increasing aging population and the

many challenges seniors face as they seek to maintain their independence.

Interfaith Ozaukee is grateful for the support received from generous contributions from individuals, congregations, community organizations, foundations and grants. Won't you consider donating?

You can provide a monetary gift in support of a specific program or you can donate to our general operations.

Gifts are welcome in many forms including both lifetime gifts and bequests after death. Tribute gifts can be made any time in memory of a special person in your life. It is a generous and thoughtful way to acknowledge a person's life events.

To donate, simply send a donation through the mail using the enclosed envelope, or make a donation securely on our website at www.interfaithozaukee.org.

Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County

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(262) 376-5362

www.interfaithozaukee.org
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Serving Saukville, Port Washington, Belgium,
Fredonia, Mequon, Thiensville, Cedarburg,
Grafton and surrounding counties.

Contact Us

Call (262) 376-5362. Here are the
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Ext. 102

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Our Mission

Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee
County's mission is to provide vol-
untary support services to seniors
and adults with limited mobility in
Ozaukee County.

Interfaith Ozaukee Board of Directors

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We're on Facebook!

If you're on Facebook, do a search
for Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee
County. Then when you find us, "LIKE"
us. It's a good way to keep up with
what's new at Interfaith Ozaukee.

Your Mobility Management Resource



Interfaith Ozaukee's Mobility
Management Program provides
travel coordination assistance
for seniors and adults with limited
mobility throughout Ozaukee
County.

Interfaith Ozaukee is the primary
door-through-door provider in
the area, including out-of-county
transports.

A Transportation Service Pro-
viders information sheet is in-
cluded with this newsletter.

Thank you to our transportation partners who are
supporting our vehicle program.



This program is funded in part by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as authorized under 49 U.S.C &
5310 Mobility Options of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. (CFDA 20.521)