## **NEIGHBORS CUW** welcomes Sage



CUW's new comfort dog, Sage, right, got a chance to meet students, staff and comfort dog Zoey recently.

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**WAGON....LONG, LONG, TIME.** 

MEQUON — Students and faculty at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon got a chance to meet their second service dog, Sage, this week. The golden retriever will fall, according to CUW Director of University Communications Kali Thiel.

"Eleven Concordia students are already signed up to serve as the dog's handlers that is, the rotation of 'staff' who will be on hand with the dog during its working hours," Thiel said. "The 11 students – three physical therapy and seven occupational therapy students – make up Concordia's inaugural animal-assisted therapy cohort."

Sage joins Zoey, CUW's first Lutheran Church Charities comfort dog. Zoey interacts with students, faculty, staff and the entire CUW community who may have had last fall. Three anonymous donors pledged trauma in their past or are currently dealing with depression, anxiety or other stresses in their lives.

circumstances around the country, com- between 35 to 40 hours in an average forting everyone from the survivors of the week.

Sandy Hook School shooting in Newtown, Conn., to those who lived through the Pulse Night Club shooting in Orlando, Fla.

"Comfort dogs differ from service dogs in primarily serve the School of Health Pro-that they are trained to address the needs of fessions and will help launch an animal-assisted therapy certificate program this ual. In addition to her role with the School of Health Professions, the new dog and Zoey will devote their working hours to serving in community and educational settings; deploying to national tragedies; and being at large in the university to serve as a calming presence to students, faculty and staff in passing," Thiel said.

Some 130 donors, including students, employees, alumni and parents, donated nearly \$30,000 to help purchase Sage and pay for her training fees and related care expenses, Thiel said. That was about \$10,000 more than the fundraising goal set matching gifts, one at \$2,500 and the other two at \$7,500.

Like Zoey, the new comfort dog is owned She has also been deployed to traumatic by the university and will work full time,

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## Neighbors helping neighbors

Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee marking 25 years of serving the public

Special to the News Graphic

GRAFTON — Without friends or family nearby, Bob was leading a fairly isolated life in his Grafton apartment.

He had little communication or interaction during the week and felt frustrated at his limited options for getting to medical appointments or going on errands such as grocery shopping. Then he heard about Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County.

Now, with the help and concern of Interfaith Ozaukee's staff and volunteers,

Bob has a new outlook. "I'm not sure that you understand how your organization has changed my life," he told Megan Beine, program manager for Interfaith Ozaukee, who related teer appreciation reception. "Things are easier with the help of the volunteers I've worked with. And sometimes the only card I receive at my birthday is from you." Bob's story is not that

unusual. As Interfaith Ozaukee celebrates its 25th year in 2018, the organization takes pride in helping seniors like Bob remain independent in their own homes. That help continues to be provided by a loyal group of volunteers who live ICO's credo of "neighbors helping neighbors."

"Often we forget how "Our volunteers provide conship as they transport our appointments and on essen- phone.' tial errands. But what's more seniors and their families."

one of hundreds of Interfaith organizations around ICO now partners with 30 ported by the Robert Wood local beginnings were humchurch basements. But in ment Center in Grafton. the intervening years, the



Photos and an old News Graphic story reflect the 25-year history of Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County.

could make a real difference walkers and canes to those for the seniors in the community.'

Prom, a tax accountant. took on the treasurer's role. "I was the numbers perhis story at a recent volun- son," she said. "We started

with \$100!' grown significantly, its mission has remained the same.

"The main focus was picking up people who couldn't drive on their own and taking them to appointments and to do their shopping,"

Prom said.

Not long after its inception, Interfaith Ozaukee's base of operations moved to a church further south in the town of Grafton, closer to where the county's population was showing the most growth.

"We were expanding, important the little things mainly by word of mouth are," said Maureen Squire, and by friends telling ICO's executive director. friends about it," Prom said. "That was before the versation and companion- widespread use of home computers and email. senior clients to medical Everything was done by

Interfaith Ozaukee still important is that they are enjoys loyal support from providing peace of mind for area congregations and their members, but its bud-Interfaith Ozaukee was get and funding are much

the country started and sup- community organizations and 50 congregations In Johnson Foundation. The 2017, a significant milestone was reached: 25,000 transble, with just a handful of ports. Its headquarters are volunteers working out of now at the Family Enrich-

In the past two years, organization grew as the Interfaith Ozaukee has need for services increased. launched a wheelchair-"A handful of us got accessible van fleet so that together in a church base-volunteers no longer are ment in Saukville," said required to drive their own Eleanor Prom, who was one cars when transporting of the original organizers. clients. ICO also launched nificant need and that we which lends wheelchairs,

in need. Dementia training also is offered, incorporating art and music therapy.

Ozaukee County has the highest percentage seniors out of all counties in southeast Wisconsin. Accord-While the organization has ing to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 29.7 percent of households in Ozaukee County have a member who is 65 or older and almost 28 percent of seniors in our community live alone. Whereas Ozaukee County's senior population was 13 percent in 2000, that number is expected to almost double, to 25 percent, by 2035.

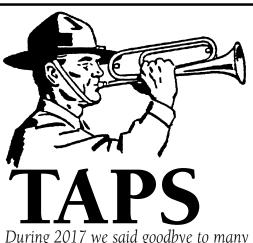
"While we have grown to play an important role in the community, in many ways I feel as if our work is just beginning," Squire said. "There is plenty more to be done so that seniors can continue to age in place where they feel most comfortable in their own homes.'

She is quick to commend the hard-working volunteers who provide rides, companionship and respite care to Interfaith Ozaukee clients. But the baby boomer generation is a huge one, and the organization has a big challenge ahead to keep up with senior needs as that genera-

"I have one overwhelming goal as I look to the nex years and it sometimes keeps me awake at night,' Squire said. "It's not enough to look back at our success. We need to keep moving ahead and encourage more members of the community to embrace our mission and come forward to serve as volunteers.

For more information on Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County, go to "We thought there was a sig-the Ozaukee h.e.l.p. Corner, www.interfaithozaukee.org or call 262-376-5362.





During 2017 we said goodbye to many old friends and comrade Legionnaires. We would Robert Langnes like to thank each of you for your service to your country and your dedication to Peter Wollner Post 288 and the American Legion. We will miss you. May you rest in peace.

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