

Neighbors, Inc.

2006 Annual Report

Emergency Assistance Programs

Food Shelf

Neighbors operates the food shelf for Northern Dakota County. It is perhaps the largest and most widely known of any Neighbors program. The generous support of people, churches, companies and organizations of all kinds provide food for individuals and families in need of short-term assistance. Each family served through the food shelf receives sufficient food for three meals a day for a week. In 2006 we distributed 290,900 pounds of food to 3,273 families (9,638 people). Auxiliary food shelves are maintained at Augustana Lutheran Church in West St. Paul and at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Inver Grove Heights. Eight volunteers on a regular schedule and twenty on-call volunteers keep the food shelf running smoothly.

Emergency Grants

This program is funded by Dakota County and the Federal Emergency Management Act. These grants allow us to provide assistance to persons who qualify and who are at risk of eviction or utility shutoff. In addition, a limited number of persons who need car repairs to get to work or to deal with a crisis, or who need financial assistance dealing with a medical need such as a co-payment for necessary medicine are assisted each year. In 2006, 166 families received \$39,180 in grants to alleviate the immediate need and help them regain self sufficiency.

Holiday Programs

Neighbors operates three interrelated programs that serve families through the Christmas holiday and which allow families that otherwise might not have the resources to provide for each member of the family to be able to celebrate the holiday. Our Adopt-A-Family program served 273 families in 2006, providing toys, gifts and food for each member of the family, while our Adopt-A-Senior program did the same for 81 persons over the age of 65. Our Love Your Neighbor program served an additional 440 households with toys, gifts and food. A total of 2,665 individuals were served through our holiday programs in 2006.

Mothers and Children (MAC)

Nutritional Assistance Program for Seniors (NAPS)

Neighbors serves as the distribution point in Northern Dakota County for these federally sponsored supplemental food programs. Based on income eligibility, persons receive a monthly food package with approximately 60 pounds of food. In 2006, 216 pregnant women, new mothers and their children received boxes of food and 1,039 boxes were distributed to eligible seniors. A total of 75,300 pounds of food were distributed in 2006.

School Supplies

“Back to School” is a busy time of the year for families. The need for help with school supplies continues to grow, in part because the supplies that are required for children returning to school continue to increase. Neighbors serves the children attending school in Districts 197 (West St. Paul/Mendota Heights) and District 199 (Inver Grove Heights). We depend entirely on the community’s support for school supply donations, purchasing what additional supplies are needed, including backpacks, for each child needing assistance. In 2006, we provided everything needed to return to school for 181 children.

Bakery Products

Each day, Monday through Friday, volunteers stop at the local Cub and Rainbow stores in West St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights and pick up day-old bakery product. In addition, volunteers collect from the Target store in West St. Paul twice a week. This bakery product is made available to anyone who wishes to stop in and pick up what they need on a first-come, first-served basis. Nobody is asked to register in this program, so no records are kept, but by observation, during 2006, an average of approximately 35 people a day took advantage of this service to supplement their food supply.

The Clothes Closet

The Neighbors’ Clothes Closet, selling high-quality, low-priced clothing, has been operated solely by volunteers since 1972. Open 39 hours a week, the Clothes Closet makes it possible to provide no-cost clothing to those individuals and families who are unable to pay. In 2006, 1,285 individuals received vouchers to shop for free in the Clothes Closet. The Clothes Closet is open to the public, and income generated by the sale of clothing is used to support other Neighbors’ programs.

Furniture

Unfortunately, there is no space available at Neighbors to store furniture, so we are unable to take delivery of used furniture or appliances. However, our furniture match program allows us to connect those who have furniture or appliances to donate with those in need of furniture or appliances. During 2006, arrangements were made to provide persons in need with living room furniture, television sets and stereo systems, bedroom furniture, kitchen and dining room furniture and kitchen appliances, with 168 matches being arranged during the year.

Supportive Assistance Programs

Transportation

Neighbors’ transportation program provides rides to persons who have no other readily available way of keeping medical or dental appointments, counseling appointments or similar necessary appointments. Volunteer drivers, using their

own vehicles, pick up passengers at their homes, take them to their appointments, wait for them to finish their appointment, and then take them home again. In 2006, Neighbors volunteers transported 1,776 people a total of 24,142 miles. More people could have been accommodated if additional drivers were available.

Tele-care

The Tele-care program provides a daily reassurance call to people living alone who might otherwise have no contact with anyone outside their home or who are in need of some daily contact. Some people may need a reminder to take their medications while others may just need an opportunity to chat with a friend. Volunteer callers place calls to everyone on the list 365 days of the year (366 in leap years!). If the person doesn't answer, and they have not notified us that they will not be available to take a call, the volunteer caller calls an assigned neighbor, relative or friend or other emergency contact that will then check on the person. Persons served in this program range in age from 40 to over 100. In 2006, volunteer callers placed 8,653 calls.

Come As You Are

This program which meets twice a month from September through June provides support and friendship from persons with developmental disabilities. Each gathering involves some kind of organized activity, from Santa's arrival at the annual Christmas Party, to a talent show that allows anyone who wishes to participate to show off their particular talent. Musical groups provide entertainment and dancing at most gatherings and the year always ends with a highly popular picnic. Attendance ranges from 90 to 160, depending on the time of year and the schedules of those who participate.

Grief and Loss Support Group

This support group began meeting in 2005 and provides an opportunity for persons who are struggling with some kind of loss in their lives to be supported and validated in their feelings, as they struggle to move through the grieving process. The group meets twice a month and is facilitated by two volunteer facilitators. At any given meeting, 6 to 10 persons attend.

Type II Diabetes Support Group

According to the Minnesota Chapter of the American Diabetes Association, this is the only support group in the area focused on issues that affect adults with Type II Diabetes. The Group meets twice each month and is facilitated by knowledgeable volunteers. Between four and 10 persons attend any given session and on those occasions when a speaker is brought in to address a specific issue, up to 20 people attend.

2006 Financial Results

Income

United Way Contributions	\$136,850
Individuals, Business, Churches	\$238,712
In-Kind Contributions	\$932,573
Foundation Grants	\$39,226
Government Grants	\$70,376
Sales to the Public	\$62,815
Investment Income	\$36,078
Miscellaneous	<u>\$1,235</u>
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,517,865

Expense

Program Services	\$1,457,354
Management and General	\$74,723
Fund Raising	<u>\$26,687</u>
Total Expenses	\$1,558,764

Change in Net Assets \$40,899

Note: Program Services expenses include \$932,573 in non-cash assistance to families.

Members of the Board of Directors, 2006-2007

Bob Adams

Neighbors, Inc.
Executive Director, Retired

Gus Briguet - Treasurer

Mainstreet Bank
President

Darcy M. Erickson, J.D. – Secretary

LeVander, Gillen, & Miller, P.A.
Attorney

Rev. Paul Erickson - Vice President

Augustana Lutheran Church
Pastor

Rev. Charlene Johnson

Clark Memorial UCC
Pastor

Greg Kuntz

Re/Max Realty 100
President

Rev. Ken O'Hotto

St. Michael's Church
Priest
Retired

Christine Paton - President

Inver Hills Community College
Professor and Human Services Chair,

Pam Schultz
Inver Grove Good Samaritan Church
Administrator

Ken Swanson, CPA
Certified Private Accountant, Retired

Carla Taurinskas
First United Methodist Church
Parish Nurse

Mike Thomason
Retired

David Waller
Group Home Owner, Retired

Jim Weyendt
Anamax Corp.
Marketing Executive

History and Background

Neighbors began in January of 1972 when concerned leaders from six congregations in South St. Paul gathered to discuss how they might work together to help meet the basic needs of people in the area who were struggling financially. The leaders of each of these congregations had experienced an increase in the number of persons seeking assistance and felt powerless to provide the assistance that was needed. In 1972, the Swift and Armour companies were in the process of permanently closing their meat packing operations in South St. Paul and 9,000 jobs would disappear from the local economy.

From that meeting in January 1972 came Neighbors, Inc., a private, non-profit organization with the mission "To provide neighborly assistance, in an organized fashion, primarily through the use of volunteers." Quickly other congregations in Northern Dakota County signed on as supportive congregations and within a few years Neighbors was working with 32 faith communities in the area.

The first projects undertaken were to open a food shelf to serve persons in Northern Dakota County, and The Clothes Closet, gently used, quality clothing store with very low prices. Food and clothing would be donated, and Neighbors would organize the distribution of these items to those who sought assistance. Labor would be donated by members of the supportive congregations. Gradually, as the community expressed the need, additional programs were added.

Volunteers are Key to Neighbors' Success

From the beginning, the Neighbors mission directed the organization to provide services "...primarily through the use of volunteers." This model is still in place today, as over 350 volunteers, each year, serve their community by volunteering through Neighbors. The food shelf is managed and staffed primarily by volunteers. The Clothes Closet is run entirely by volunteers. Volunteers drive people to and from medical appointments and make daily reassurance calls to

persons confined to the home. Volunteers organize Christmas programs that serve approximately 700 families each year, and they facilitate support groups that help people cope with the issues in their lives that are causing them difficulties. Volunteers prepare for and conduct a half a dozen, regularly scheduled rummage sales each year that provide an important stream of income that can then be used to support other programs. Volunteers answer the phone, greet visitors as they walk through the door, copy and file. And volunteers stop at local grocery stores every morning to collect day-old bread products to stock the Neighbors' bakery shelves.

In short, Neighbors is volunteers. The organization could not exist without its volunteers; could not serve the community without its volunteers. At the same time, Neighbors volunteers derive a great deal of satisfaction from the opportunity to serve their community through Neighbors. They are able to set a schedule to volunteer that meets their personal needs; work at something they enjoy and that interests them; meet and develop friendships with other similarly minded individuals; and know when they go home that they have made an important contribution to others in their community.