

Seeking options, finding solutions

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Koochiching Aging Options is dedicated to promoting the independence, dignity and health of all of Koochiching County's aging residents.



Making a donation

Thank you for your support of



Please use my gift for: Memory Café Groceries to You!
 Senior Wheels Where it's most needed

Your generous support helps older adults and families throughout Koochiching County!

Enclosed is my gift of: \$150; \$100; \$50; \$25; Other

Donations are tax-deductible within IRS regulations.
Please make checks payable to Koochiching Aging Options.

Donor Name _____ This gift is in honor of _____
Address _____ This gift is in memory of _____
City _____ I wish to remain anonymous
State/Zip _____ I am interested in volunteering
Email Address _____ I am interested in receiving notices
Phone _____ and mailings

1000 Fifth Street International Falls, MN 56649 (Second floor Forestland Annex)



What's

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Kari Miggins
Program Specialist

Kristy Wagner-Werner
Caregiver Consultant/
Dementia Support Specialist; Memory Café

Kooch Connect

A Newsletter from Koochiching Aging Options

Volume 11, Issue 1

Winter 2018

Strong Support from Generous Funders

Koochiching Aging Options was incorporated in 2009 as an independent not-for-profit organization. Since its inception, we have raised funds from a variety of sources. A long-term relationship with some funders has enabled us to get our feet on the ground, maintain our programming and set the stage for growth.

Koochiching County

A primary funder has been Koochiching County which has provided not only financial help but also in-kind contributions of office space and communication support. We have leveraged that contribution to realize other funding support.

Northland Foundation

Created in 1986 by the McKnight Foundation, the Northland Foundation is a regional foundation serving seven counties, including Koochiching. Under the foundation's "self reliance" category of grant making, Koochiching Aging Options was in December awarded \$20,000 to use for general operating support to provide services to older adults in Koochiching County.

In addition, Koochiching Aging Options is currently one of 18 regional nonprofit organizations participating in the Northland Foundation's Rural Aging Initiative which is dedicated to building capacity in organizations serving older adults and provides financial support and training.

Otto Bremer Trust

Also in December, Koochiching Aging Options was provided general operating support from another long-time funder, the Otto Bremer Trust. Based in St. Paul, it is a private charitable trust established in 1944 by founder Otto Bremer. Its mission is to invest in people, places and opportunities in the Upper Midwest.

Older Americans Act

A federal Older Americans Act grant from the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging, a division of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, helps us to support caregivers. For 2018, we have been granted \$11,000.

Minnesota Board on Aging

Koochiching Aging Options is also one of ten entities in the state to receive a Minnesota Board on Aging Dementia Grant. With the help of a

\$30,000 grant, we are providing the services of a dementia support specialist, a Memory Café, public education around the topic of dementia and promotion of early screening and referral protocols by local medical providers.

Others

The United Way has annually supported our Senior Wheels Program. This year we received \$3,000. Additional recent funders include the Marshall N. Knudson Family Community Fund, Boise White Paper, North Star Electric Cooperative, and Ruby's Pantry Benevolent Fund.

In addition, we receive important contributions from individuals. All of these together help us to



Karina McLellan presents Ruby's Pantry benevolent funds to Executive Director Douglas Skrief.

meet needs of older adults in the county.

New Staff at Koochiching Aging Options

Kristy Wagner-Werner has taken on the dual role of **Caregiver Consultant and Dementia Support Specialist**.

As a caregiver consultant, Kristy works to support individuals and families who are providing care to an older adult or someone with dementia. She can help a stressed caregiver find resources, learn coping skills and find time for self-care. Kristy also helps persons with dementia and their care partners, helping to locate resources, learn about the disease and plan for the future.

Kristy was born and raised in International Falls. After graduation from Falls High School she attended Bemidji State University where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration and Management. She brings with her a strong background in nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

Kristy and her husband Steven have two young daughters, Ava and Liv. They enjoy the outdoors and spending time on Rainy Lake. Kristy also volunteers in her children's classrooms and at related school activities.



The new Program Specialist at Koochiching Aging Options is **Kari Miggins**.



Kari is responsible for administering a number of programs, including Senior Wheels, Senior Companion Program, Groceries to You!, RSVP and the Koochiching Good Visit Program. The job includes recruiting and managing volunteers.

Kari is a graduate of Falls High School and is pursuing her Bachelor of Arts in psychology. She has extensive nonprofit experience, including 16 years as a teacher and administrator at St. Thomas School. She has provided private service care for area youth. She has been involved with Community Education, KIDS Plus, Bronco Basketball Boosters and STRIVE . Her daughter Libby is a Bronco basketball player and her son Cole is attending the U of M Duluth.

"I'm honored and excited to be working with an amazing community asset such as Koochiching Aging Options," Kari reports. "Whether you are requesting a service or wanting to learn about volunteer opportunities, I welcome your call!"

And one retirement... Harmony Lennox has decided to take on full-time retirement and let go her duties as Memory Café Coordinator for Koochiching Aging Options. Harmony led the groundbreaking program for two years. We are pleased she will continue as a volunteer, that is, when she and her husband Larry are not traveling or taking advantage of Borderland outdoor activities. Kristy Wagner-Werner will be taking on the Coordinator duties for now.



Logging Camp Again a Success

For the past seven years a kind of miracle has occurred in anticipation of the holidays. We call it the Logging Camp Christmas fundraising event. It's a miracle of sorts as it brings together so many people for a such a good cause – supporting the programming of Koochiching Aging Options.

And people have fun! As one of the attendees at the first event in 2011 said afterwards, "I've never seen so many people have such a good time for such a long period."

This year we sold out our 140 tickets well ahead of the December 1 event. Ticket holders mostly wore lumberjack plaids. They arrived early to look over silent and live auction items and to distribute raffle tickets for the many donated items. We had over eighty donors. All the while, the Sloughgrass Band of

Birchdale or Jessie Laurion's ensemble played tunes.

An authentic logging camp horn called guests to their tables. A three-course family-style meal was served by waitstaff that included members of the Rainy River Community College baseball team who showed off their talents at pitching rolls. Multi-generational entertainments led by "chefs" Dean Piekarski and Mark Gier-



szewski included the Lucky Dogs duo of Big Falls. An eleven-year-old Elf sang a solo, as did ninety-eight-year-old Mrs. Santa Claus.

Over seventy volunteers pitched in to make the event happen. The proceeds of the evening go towards general operating costs of Koochiching Aging Options. We invite you all to the November 30 event for 2018!

SOCIALIZING, INFORMATION, EDUCATION, FUN A SAFE GATHERING FOR THOSE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARE PARTNERS



2nd and 4th Wednesdays 1-3 p.m.

Fireside Room / Faith United Church

1001 Fifth Street International Falls

Made Possible with a grant from the Minnesota Board on Aging

— **Contact our Dementia Support Specialist at 218-283-7030 with questions** —

Groceries to You!/Memory Café Calendar



February 2018

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28		

March 2018

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

April 2018

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

Groceries to You! 218-283-7057

Order on Tuesdays 9 a.m. to Noon **Delivery** on Wednesdays

Koochiching Memory Café every second and fourth Wednesday;

Seeds of Good Visit Program Ready to Grow!

In 2017 we piloted a new program – the **Koochiching Good Visit Program**. We are now ready to mark its official start. **We need participants and volunteers!**

Our goal for the program is to link isolated older adults of the county with a caring neighbor. Weekly positive interaction at home or by phone can lead to participants feeling less isolated knowing that someone is thinking of them. We see this as a means for the participant to stay independent longer.

And, visits can help to relieve caregivers who are providing more substantial ongoing support. Volunteers also benefit through



making new friends—all while making a positive contribution to the community.

Participants need to be 55 or older and in need of social support. For volunteers, it's a once-a-week commitment of an hour or so. Volunteer qualifications include being 21 years-old and, for those who may provide transportation, having a safe working vehicle. The program will train volunteers, who will need to pass a background check.

Call us: (218) 283-7057.

More Online Resources—*this time for Caregivers*

No matter where you are on your caregiving journey, there is on-line support. "Caregivers" are those friends and family members who regularly help an older adult or someone with a disability or a dementia.

Minnesota Help is an online directory of social services with an emphasis on aging, disability and caregiving issues. It helps consumers locate services and programs in their communities. Helpful are suggested search categories, including recom-

mended caregiver resources. Go to www.minnesotahelp.info

The **Family Caregiver Alliance** (FCA) has been around since the 1970s. Go to www.caregiver.org to find them. FCA is a nonprofit organization that addresses the needs of families and friends who are providing long-term care for loved ones at home. The website reflects the alliance's focus on education, services and advocacy. The site offers a range of helpful resources on meeting the complex day-to-day challenges of caregiving.

New to the site is CareJour-

ney, a secure online service for information, support and resources for caregivers.

A very reliable and wide-ranging asset for those on the caregiver journey is the website of the **Alzheimer's Association**. As well as education on the disease, 24/7 support lines and links to resources, the association offers a "Caregivers Center" at www.alz.org/care.

The Caregivers Center provides support, makes recommendations for day-to-day help and leads site visitors in planning for the future. Caregivers can take a stress check and avail themselves of on-line trainings.

... Call us if you need help in searching out these resources.