

South Shore Regional Neighborhood Outreach

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Interfaith South Shore Regional Neighborhood Outreach Program

2015 Year-end Report

Interfaith Older Adult Programs - South Shore Regional is a non-profit organization connecting older adults to the community – to both volunteers and other resources to help them with their daily needs. South Shore Regional provides direct services, such as transportation to medical appointments, shopping and errands, friendly visits, minor home repairs, information and referrals, and advocacy to adults 60 and older living in southeastern Milwaukee County. All services are provided free of charge by a network of volunteers who share our passion for serving our clients. The program is supported by individuals' donations, area congregations, local businesses and community organizations.

Our mission is to help older adults remain in their homes, ensuring independence and community engagement, and reducing isolation. An important part of this program is the relationships that are built between the client and the staff or volunteer. Interactions with clients build over time to more meaningful, long term relationships – making a difference in their lives every day. In 2015, one goal was to increase client engagement, letting them know someone cares.

South Shore Regional 2015 Highlights:

- > number of clients receiving services increased by 40% from the previous year
- > 111 new clients were welcomed
- > 41 new volunteers were recruited and trained
- > 910 more rides were provided than last year, a 21% increase
- > 897 more cards, food and gifts were delivered than last year, a 58% increase
- > 107 more in-person or telephone visits were made than last year, a 7% increase
- > fun was had by all at our annual client Christmas party!



Client Profile:

South Shore Regional has more than 900 clients in southeast Milwaukee County. We serve older adults in Bay View, St. Francis, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek and southeast parts of Milwaukee.

- > 78% of our clients are female
- > 56% of our clients live alone
- > 41% of our clients are 85 years of age or older
- > 61% of our clients have annual household income of less than \$15,000

Services Provided:

In 2015, our volunteers put in nearly 14,000 hours of service for older adults in our community. With the generosity of our volunteers, we were able to provide:

- > 5,233 rides to medical appointments, shopping and errands
- > 2,456 greeting cards, food and gifts to our clients
- > 1,668 in-person or telephone visits
- > 518 trips to the grocery store for clients

See reverse side of this report to read personal stories from our clients and volunteers, and how you can help our program.

Making a difference in the lives of older adults...

Just Like A Kid

My husband loves to get mail from Interfaith. Every time I tell him he got a card, he's like a kid in a candy store. He's so excited for me to read it to him since he can't see to read any more. In fact, he still has the Veteran's Day card you sent him up on his bulletin board. Thank you for sending him cards, letting him know someone cares!

She Said Yes!

Cathi had been taking Lenore to sessions on preparing for and coping with Macular Degeneration. After their last session, Cathi took Lenore to the Mitchell Park Domes on their way home. Lenore enjoyed seeing the purple hydrangea flowers, her favorite. They toured all three domes. Before they left, they witnessed a young man propose to his girlfriend – and she said yes! Cathi and Lenore talked to the young couple afterward offering congratulations, hearing how the young man planned this venue to pop the question and viewing the engagement ring. It was a great time!

Caring is Truly Intergenerational

South Shore Regional teams up with school-aged children, who make holiday greeting cards for our clients. Jennifer, a seventh-grader, drew a card and included this holiday wish: "Dear Friend, If you are reading this, it's because I sent an Angel to look after you. I hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Sincerely, Your Friend Jennifer."

So Close At The End

Dear Tim: We just learned that Therese has passed away. You were the last volunteer to help her and I am certain your ability to pick up and deliver groceries helped make her last days better. She died a week after you visited with her. Sadness prevails in the work we do - and you do - but the sadness is replaced with joy when we find that we were able to do a bit of kindness.

Thank you, to all, in making a difference in the lives of our clients. It's amazing to think that we're so close to clients' last days, instead of someone who is alone in a hospital or nursing home before they die. What a simple success story...

Puppy Love

Sharon is the "Mom" of Lacey, a lovely canine who is our star volunteer. Lacey visits with isolated older adults who are homebound or who are sad and lonely. Lacey's visits make our clients smile and relax. Just petting Lacey's head gives the clients a sense of comfort and peace. Lacey has visited several of our clients and all have asked for her to return. Last year at our volunteer dinner, South Shore Regional presented Lacey with a special award - a box of Milk Bones!

Taking the Time

Recently, a doctor's appointment for one of South Shore Regional's clients only took 10 minutes. The volunteer driver asked our client if she would like to go some place on the way home, like the pharmacy, grocery store or other shopping since Christmas was only a few weeks away. They had both planned on a much longer appointment and now had some free time. Our client requested that she be driven to see her husband, who was in a nursing home because of his Alzheimer's disease. Given that she didn't drive anymore, she didn't get to visit him as often as she would like. And sometimes, he didn't recognize her when she came.

The couple had a wonderful visit; her husband was having a good day. He recognized his wife and they recounted many stories of their life together. Our client thanked her driver for taking the time to allow her to visit her husband.

In the day or two following the visit, although our client called her husband on the phone, he did not recognize who she was. Several days after the visit, he passed away. Our client was very thankful for that last visit she spent with her husband, and for the volunteer driver who took her to him.

How you can help us help others...

Give: Making a financial donation to South Shore Regional allows us to continue our program of providing rides and support to our clients, free of charge. We are committed to growing to meet the increasing needs of our older adults.

Stamp Out Loneliness: South Shore Regional sends out hundreds of Birthday, Christmas and other greeting cards every year, letting our clients know that someone cares. Consider contributing stamps or making a donation for us to buy stamps.

Volunteer: The beauty of our program is that we work with the volunteer's schedule. We have openings for drivers, grocery shoppers, friendly visitors and more! Call us now to get more information and sign up – 414-762-1998.