



NEWS NOTES

Fall 2024

*Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and Foster Grandparent Program
...where volunteers make a difference*

2024 Volunteer Appreciation Event Wrap-Up

by Kate Seal, RSVP Assistant Director

This year's Annual RSVP Volunteer Recognition Luncheon was held on September 19th at Barnwood Events. Everyone was invited to wear a 'Mad Hat' for the Mad Hatter Tea Party theme. As always, it was a memorable experience gathering with volunteers and honoring them for their service (and it was an extra dose of fun seeing people in great 'Mad Hatter' hats!). John Stofflet was our Master of Ceremonies this year, and he did a phenomenal job! We were also wowed by Dr. Roopa Shah's inspiring keynote address, and we enjoyed jazz music by the Bob Kerwin & Doug Brown Duo. We are also grateful to Barnwood Events, for providing a terrific venue; Mike Plautz, for a great collection of raffle prizes; and Blue Plate Catering for the delicious food. Thank you, staff and Recognition Committee volunteers, for making this event so special!



Congratulations to all of the award recipients who were honored at this event!

A **President's Lifetime Achievement Award** (for volunteers who have reached over 4,000 recorded hours of service) was given to: Dorothy Beutel, Jeanne Edmunds, Barbara Finke, Betsey Rewey, Lynn Speidel, and Elaine Swenson.

An **RSVP Length of Service Award** (for volunteers who have volunteered for 20 consecutive years with RSVP) was given to: Phyllis Bacon, Stuart Baker, Robert Coffin, Judith French, Thomas Krauskopf, Sherry Lange, Berdella Lowenberg, Sally Ross, Bob Ruder, Doris Marie Schnabel, Jerry Schultz, Sue Sheets, Eugene Smith, Deborah Speckmann, Julie Sutter-Blair, and Connie Wall. **We LOVE our volunteers!**



RSVP Staff and Guests celebrate the 2024 Appreciation Event.



Guest Speaker Dr. Roopa Shah

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volunteer
opportunities?
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RSVP Board Notes

Hello. I trust you are enjoying the unusually warm Fall weather.



Since the last News Notes, the various board committees have been very busy. At our August 19, 2024 meeting, the Board started reviewing the Strategic Plan. Over the past few months, the various board committees have been reviewing individual sections of the plan. In January, the Diversity Committee will review the plan focusing on DEI: Diversity Equity, and Inclusion. The plan is scheduled for approval at the February 2025 board meeting.

The Finance Committee has been working with the Executive Director on the Budget for the calendar year 2025; it will be approved at the October 21st Board Meeting. (Editor's Note: The October 21st Board Meeting was cancelled; budget approval will occur at the meeting on December 16th).

The Development Committee, in conjunction with the Finance Committee, has been reviewing our various Levels of Giving. The Development Committee has also been preparing for Giving Tuesday (December 3rd) and the Annual Campaign.

On September 19, 2024, RSVP held its Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. The Recognition Committee hosted an Alice in Wonderland Tea Party. Beautiful teapots were door prizes. Again, thank you, volunteers, for all that you do to make RSVP an integral part of the Dane County community. The emcee was John Stofflet, a retired Channel 15 news anchor. The guest speaker was Dr. Roopa Shah, a board-certified family medicine physician, who offered some helpful advice for remaining healthy in later life, including moderate alcohol intake and only eating 80%.

Next year we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our Driver Services program.

Deborah Ann Speckmann
 President, RSVP Board of Directors



From the Desk of...

Diana Jost
Executive Director

You may have come across articles in our News Notes, participated in our Volunteer Zoom events, or heard from guest speakers at our Annual Recognition Lunches about the significant impact of increased physical activity on the mental health of older adults. Studies consistently show that regular exercise not only helps reduce the risk of depression and anxiety but also improves cognitive function. In an article from the *American College of*

Sports Medicine, **Cognitive Benefits of Physical Activity for Older Adults**, (<https://bit.ly/4e8aIh4>) Jean-Charles Lebeau, Ph.D., CMPC, states, "Physical activity improves both physical and cognitive health, especially among older adults. Cognitive health encompasses many aspects of our daily functioning: memory, maintaining attention and concentration, dealing with distractions, solving problems, and making decisions. Those cognitive

functions tend to decline as we age, and physical activity can greatly prevent cognitive decline." This week I found a fascinating article in the Fall/Winter Edition of *Aging News*, a UW Madison Institute on Aging newsletter. The article highlights a new study on the connection between light physical activity and improved cognitive function. I found this especially intriguing, as volunteering can be a great way to incorporate light physical activity. Excited to share



the study, I contacted Theresa Berrie, the creator of *Aging News*, and received permission to reprint the article in this quarter's News Notes.

(continued on page 17)

Middleton Glen Knitpickers: A Six-Inch Square

By RSVP Volunteer Jo Hersberger

How does a person who “used to knit” find a renewed passion for the craft? Here’s what happened to me.

When we were isolated during the pandemic, I noticed the vitality seeping out of my Middleton Glen Retirement Community friends like air from a leaky balloon. Their shoulders sagged, and there was no spring in their steps.

The Middleton Glen Director agreed when I mentioned we might form a group (later named the Middleton Glen Knitpickers) where residents could knit six-inch squares that would be collected and made into lap robes for patients fighting a variety of health issues.

A six-inch square. Sounds so simple, doesn’t it? It was to most of the 14 residents who’d signed on. Although I’d worn many labels in my life - Wife, Mother of Four, Journalist, Bank Officer - “Flawless Knitter” was not one of them. I struggled with my little square and often had to rip out spots where stitches had been dropped. Still, I felt a sense of pride when I saw my finished piece in the middle of the cheery quilt that would bring joy to someone I didn’t know.

When four lap robes were ready for distribution, a member of our group suggested that I contact RSVP, an arrangement that turned out like a blind date that led to a happy marriage. Kate Seal, RSVP’s Group Projects Coordinator at the time, attended a Knitpickers meeting and explained that RSVP has connections with area schools where children have no hats or mittens and health facilities whose residents would welcome the comfort of a hand-crafted lap robe. She invited us to “shop” for yarn at the RSVP storage room.

It doesn’t get much better than that. RSVP provides much of the yarn we use, and we convert it into items they need. RSVP has given us needed encouragement when we meet once a month to chat, knit, and share new patterns. We laugh a lot. And we’re humbled when we read aloud the notes of gratitude from groups that have received our gifts.

Knitting for others and working with RSVP is benevolent creativity at its best. The spring is back in our steps!



Triad's Car Check Free Vehicle Inspection

By Mike Thomsen, Triad Program Coordinator

Triad's big event of the 3rd Quarter was our annual "Car Check" free vehicle safety inspection event held thanks to the generous sponsorship of Smart Motors Toyota in Madison. For the third year in a row, twenty-four older adults were able to get their cars thoroughly inspected – free of charge – for safety issues, including brakes, signal lights, fluids, belts, tires, suspension, and more.

At the same time, we partnered with AARP Wisconsin's driver safety program to offer their Car Fit program. Drivers were able to speak with an occupational therapist and Car Fit technicians about how to adjust the steering column, seats, seat belts, and head rest to achieve a more comfortable, safer driving position.

Triad strives to form partnerships with organizations and businesses throughout our community to enable older adults to live safer, healthier lives. Without our partnership with Smart Motors Toyota and AARP Wisconsin, we would not be able to hold our Car Check event. A giant **Thank You** to Smart Toyota for welcoming us again to their wonderful facility, and especially to Peter Graper, the Service Director; Kenny Miller, the Express Service Manager; and the team of maintenance technicians who performed the safety inspections in a professional and efficient way.

On the newsletter front, Triad Volunteers and our professional partners just finished the Fall Issue of the Triad Newsletter. Be sure to download your copy at <https://bit.ly/407V8yB>. A special thanks to volunteers Pam Lewis and Rick Larson for contributing articles, and to our professional partners – Ashley Hillman at Safe Communities and Tiffany Schultz at the Better Business Bureau – for contributing articles.

Lastly, our new digital skills project, which seeks to help older adults improve their smartphone, computer, online, and electronic communication skills, continues to move forward. After exploring several paths, we applied to license the Senior Planet by AARP curriculum and materials. Four people are currently training to become Senior Tech Mentors. They will be leading training sessions and mentoring seniors one-on-one. On the fundraising side of things, the Rotary Club of Madison awarded us their Innovation Grant to help us get the digital skills project started. Many thanks to the Rotary Club for their confidence and generosity.

If you or your organization would like to learn more about how to be part of our digital skills project as a volunteer or as a donor, please email me at mthomsen@rsvpdane.org.



How Do Veterans Help Veterans? Stand Down!

By Lorrie Hylkema, Vets Helping Vets Program Coordinator

The 32nd annual **Wayne D. Horner Memorial Stand Down Madison Event** was held on Saturday, October 19, 2024, at the Salvation Army on Darbo Drive in Madison.

More than 90 volunteers and 61 community partners were present to help 70 Veterans in our community who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. RSVP Vets Helping Vets coordinator, Lorrie Hylkema, played a prominent role in organizing this event and particularly in recruiting and organizing community partners and transportation providers.

Lorrie noted that “seeing new volunteers and new Veterans organizations make this event grow is fantastic!”

Thank you to Rosecrance Peer Support from Rockford, Illinois, led by Retired Colonel Dave Draeger; Chaplain Gary Holmes, VFW State Chaplain for Illinois; and Team Rubicon from Dane County. Team Rubicon provided teams of Veterans on Friday and Saturday to set up and take down more than 60 tables and 120 chairs in the Salvation Army gym, and unload and load supplies such as boots, shoes, clothing, blankets, and city packs.

Country Sunshine, a Veteran-led music group, helped lift our spirits with some very special music.

As always, a delicious hot brunch meal was available to all. VA nurses administered flu and COVID vaccinations. Even the assistant director of the VA Hospital, Abe Rabinowitz, attended and volunteered as a “buddy” for Veterans needing guidance through the many aid options available.

Finally, and most importantly, RSVP Vets Helping Vets volunteer drivers Jim Vanevenhoven and Paul Halverson provided transportation and volunteered at the event as well. Picture of RSVP staff and volunteers below!

RSVP Vets Helping Vets program appreciates all the help given by the drivers and staff for these Veteran-focused events. If you are a Veteran, a family member of a Veteran, or a Veteran advocate, please sign up as a volunteer and join the fun! Your help will be greatly appreciated, and you will never regret giving of your time and talent. To start, contact Steve Jaeschke 608.441.7892 or Camela King 608.441.7896.



L to R: RSVP Staff Members Steve Jaeschke and Lorrie Hylkema and RSVP volunteer driver Jim Vanevenhoven

GIVING TUESDAY

December 3, 2024

We extend our sincerest gratitude to those who followed our #GivingTuesday campaign last year on Facebook and supported our program through financial contributions. We raised \$10,995 to support RSVP of Dane County's programming. An immense amount of volunteerism, coordination, programming, collaboration, and fundraising is needed for us to provide services that help keep seniors (and local community members) independent and thriving each day. We are honored to do our part in enhancing our community. Thank you for doing your part.

RSVP will again participate in #GivingTuesday on December 3rd, 2024. This year, we aim to raise \$20,000 to support growing programs and needs in the community. Your participation in this campaign is crucial to our success. Every donation, no matter the size, makes a difference. Donations for our annual Giving Tuesday Campaign can be made at any time. Donations can be made on our website at www.rsvpdane.org; when donating online, please designate your gift as Giving Tuesday under special instructions to the seller. Or you can send a check to RSVP for Dane County located at 6501 Watts Rd. Suite #250, Madison, WI 53719; please write GIVING TUESDAY in the memo part of the check.

Foster Grandparent Show and Tell

by Paula Reif, RSVP FGP Program Coordinator

If you had the opportunity to share something about yourself that not many people know about, what would it be?

Remember back in elementary school when it was your day to bring a show and tell item? I know it was an exciting time for me! Show & Tell was first documented in the 1940s. It was introduced as a way for children to practice their presentation and storytelling skills, and to connect with classmates. Show and Tell has been transformed from an elementary school activity into an effective tool for adults to connect and engage with one another. There is even a national Show and Tell at Work Day each year on January 8!

As participants in the Foster Grandparent Program were preparing to return to their classrooms, we thought it would be fun to incorporate Show and Tell into our back-to-school in-service as an opportunity for the Foster Grandparents to share an aspect of their life that most of the group didn't know. It turned into a wonderful combination of history lesson, craft and cooking lesson, and awesome connection generator - inspired by each Foster Grandparent describing something meaningful in their lives. The photos tell the story of the fun everyone had sharing a bit of their story.



Foster Grandparent Larry brought in his travel buddy, Bernie! Bernie was a gift from friends many years ago and is just the right size to accompany Larry on all of his travels near and far.

Foster Grandparent Canary explained that the coin she is holding has been passed through generations of her family. She shared that in this tradition people would frequently put a hole in the middle of the coin and wear it around their neck. The original rough edges are now smoothed.



Foster Grandparent Sue brought in a photo of her great grandparents, showing a rare point in time when the Hatfields and McCoys may have paused their feud. One grandparent was a Hatfield, and the other was a McCoy!



Foster Grandparent Nadina brought in her favorite ingredient for cooking the foods that are the centerpiece of family gatherings, Grandules Verdes (Green Pigeon Peas).

WELCOME New Volunteers

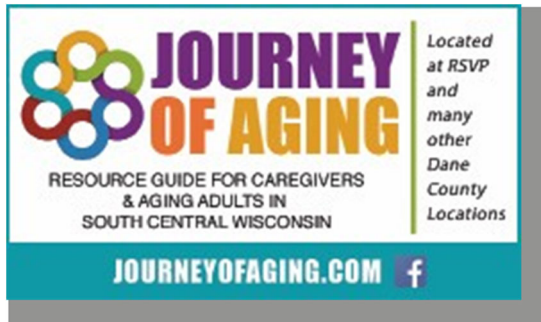
We enrolled 67 new volunteers from June 2024, through September 2024, serving in a wide variety of assignments throughout Dane County. Do you know someone who might like to volunteer? RSVP volunteers are our best recruiters as they spread the word about why they like volunteering and the need for more volunteers. Please pass this newsletter on to a friend or neighbor and tell them what RSVP means to you!

Gregg A. Amick
 Sarah M. Anderson
 Walter Balinski
 Richard Bartlett
 Howard Bixby
 Carole EL Brown
 Lynn Caravello
 Hayden T. Caskey
 Mercedes Cauffman
 Abraham G. Chavez
 Patricia Chevis
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 Sharon Vlack
 Elisia White
 Karen Zilhaber



DRIVE CHANGE, ONE RIDE AT A TIME
 Join the RSVP of Dane County Team of Volunteer Drivers!

- Take seniors & veterans to essential medical appointments
- Receive reimbursement at 67 cents/mile
- Set your own schedule, weekdays only
- Get covered with extra liability insurance

Visit www.rsvpdane.org
 or call 608-441-7896

committed to our
community

Invested in the growth, health and success of those we serve.

PARTNER OF
UWHealth

A Lifeline for the Community!

by *Steve Jaeschke, RSVP Driver Services Manager*

In 2024, the Driver Services program has been shining a spotlight on the crucial role of Driver Escorts – dedicated volunteers who transport seniors and veterans – as well as Home Delivered Meal Drivers, who deliver thousands of meals across Dane County.

Each year, RSVP distributes surveys to both drivers and their passengers. The results consistently show that the Driver Services Program has had a profoundly positive impact in Dane County. Drivers not only provide essential transportation but also serve as vital safety checks, offering valuable insights into their passengers' well-being, which helps agencies deliver necessary support.

Here are a few quotes from Dane County Senior Centers emphasizing the importance of these services:

- “Senior residents have few options outside of RSVP for getting to their destinations.”
- “Without Driver Escort, we would be lost!”
- “We receive a lot of feedback from clients who are grateful for rides to medical appointments and meal deliveries.”

Drivers themselves recognize the significance of their contributions and many experience a deep sense of fulfillment in their volunteer work. They leverage their skills to make a difference, enjoying both productivity and satisfaction. Here are some of their reflections:

- “It shows my children that no matter how busy life gets, we must help others.”
- “As a widow, driving and helping others has made a big difference for me.”
- “The gratitude from the people I help brightens my day!”
- “They call me ‘Mr. Friday.’ Many shut-ins say they lack visitors, even family.”

Passengers also play an essential role in this narrative. Many find taxi services unavailable or too expensive, and for some, driving has become difficult if not impossible. In addition, these seniors often need more than just transportation; they seek companionship and support. Knowing that there's a reliable person to turn to can be immensely comforting. For many, interactions with their drivers provide significant social connections, much like those who receive home-delivered meals.

Here are a few comments from passengers:

- “Thank you! I truly appreciate this service since I can no longer drive.”
- “I'm grateful for this service, as my family is seldom available.”
- “I enjoy my drivers; they're friendly and capable.”
- “My driver is kind and punctual; I appreciate her so much!”
- “We often tell others how lucky we are to receive such kindness and help.”
- “I couldn't see doctors or dentists without this service – thank you!”
- “The RSVP drivers are wonderful; I'm truly grateful for them.”

Over 200 drivers and 300 passengers shared their thoughts on the Driver Services Program Survey with many expressing a desire for more drivers and expanded options beyond medical appointments and meal deliveries. We look forward to the day we can provide additional trips, too ... as we continue to grow!

These surveys confirm that the Driver Services program truly is a Lifeline for the Community!

Want to get in Touch with Us?

Simply dial 608.238.RSVP (7787) or e-mail us at info@rsvpdane.org – or you can reach individual staff members directly at the phone numbers/e-mail addresses listed at right. In the event we're not available at the time you call, our 24-hour voice mail will ensure you receive a prompt response.

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Keep active to prevent falls.

Better balance is the key.



Fitness classes and home exercises are popular ways to maintain health and fitness—and your independence—as an older adult.

There are many fun activities that can improve balance and prevent falls, such as:

- Dancing
- Yoga
- Tai Chi



Find community classes with the Balance Stamp of Approval



Scan the QR code or visit safercommunity.net/falls-prevention/#classes

UW Health Adult Trauma Injury Prevention and Geriatrics is a proud partner of Safe Communities and member of the Falls Free Dane Coalition.



CN-1941800-24



Innovative Products to Help You Save Energy

From Madison Gas and Electric (MGE)

Smart technology continues to expand through the home, offering a variety of options to simplify and automate your routines, while helping you save energy. MGE has simple tips that can help set up your household to save time and energy all year long.

Consider Upgrading to a Smart Thermostat

These internet-connected thermostats automatically adjust your household's heating and cooling systems, lowering the temperature when you're away in the winter or raising it in the summer. Like other smart devices, smart thermostats can be controlled remotely and automatically adjust to your household routine. Our energy efficiency partner, FOCUS ON ENERGY[®], offers a rebate or instant savings on smart thermostats for eligible MGE customers. Visit focusonenergy.com for details.

Already own a smart thermostat? Consider joining MGE Connect[®], a program that rewards you for allowing MGE to make minor changes to your thermostat to help reduce our collective energy use. Participants may override the temperature adjustments at any time. Visit mge.com/mgeconnect for details.

Explore Smart Plugs, Lights and Power Strips

Did the kids turn off the TV? Did we leave the lamp on? Investing in smart plugs or smart lighting can help you remotely control almost anything from electronics to light bulbs and lamps with a smartphone or virtual assistant.

Help reduce phantom energy by plugging electronics into a smart power strip that shuts off electricity to devices when they aren't in use. These items are available in a variety of styles and prices in local stores and online, including the Focus on Energy Marketplace at focusonenergymarketplace.com.

Save with Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy also offers free energy-saving kits, which include products such as LED light bulbs or a high-efficiency showerhead. To learn more, visit focusonenergy.com/smart.

You can also find instant discounts on other energy-efficient products at the Focus on Energy Marketplace at focusonenergymarketplace.com.

Get Free Energy-Saving Advice

MGE's energy experts are available to provide tips and to answer your questions about energy-saving technologies. Call the MGE Home Energy Line at (608) 252-7117 or send an email to AskExperts@mge.com.

RSVP DONOR HONOR ROLL

We gratefully acknowledge donations received from the following individuals and organizations since our last newsletter, and extend our thanks to each for their generous support.

Leadership Circle-\$1000+

Anonymous: The Werner Family
Bernice Hughes
Susan Kernats
Thomas and Margie Krauskopf
Kit-Yin Ling
Harold and Donna Sabot
John Woodford
Keith and Margie Zutter

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Amanda Kimball
Connie Kraus
Peggy Kroll-Conner
Lands' End
Mad City Quilt Guild
Donna Spencer



MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES



Memorial and tribute gifts to RSVP are a meaningful way to honor someone special and to extend the services provided by volunteers. Every dollar contributed allows us to enrich the lives of many children, families, and older persons.

CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MADE TO RSVP IN MEMORY OF:

Jeffrey Bankes, Audrey Boushon, Grace and Bill Edmunds, Jim Enders, Barbara Palmer, Bob Skilton, Diane Szymanski, and Laura Werner

CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MADE TO RSVP IN HONOR OF:

The RSVP Driver Program



As the end of 2024 is rapidly approaching, we want to remind all drivers to please turn in your reports – Meal Site and Driver Escort – to RSVP no later than Friday, January 10, 2025.

We cannot mix funds from one year to the next! Last year a number of reports came in late, and we had to use general funds to pay drivers. Given RSVP's tight budget, it is very difficult to use funds from this source. Please, per policy, send your reports as soon as all driving for 2024 is done. Remember this date: Friday, January 10, 2025! Thank you for your cooperation and for all you do.

They're out there!
Watch for RSVP's
message on the
back of Madison
Metro busses!





RSVP VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

...where volunteers make a difference

“Life is never so busy that there is no time to serve.” - author unknown

WINTER OPPORTUNITIES

SOCIAL JUSTICE CENTER on Williamson Street connects people with needed resources like food, housing, and other essential living services. They need volunteers to help with their food pantry and information desk.

BRAILLE LIBRARY AND TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES is gearing up for their Fall training for volunteer transcribers who prepare and provide books in braille. You can learn to turn print into braille! All transcribers take a one-year braille transcription course that consists of weekly classes and culminates in certification by the Library of Congress.

WHEELS FOR WINNERS is an “earn-a-bike” program that rehabs used bicycles and offers them to participants who earn them through community service. You can help clean and fix bikes and see the smiles on kids’ faces when they earn a bike and helmet!

ALDO LEOPOLD NATURE CENTER needs dedicated volunteers at their reception desk to engage with visitors, assist community members in person and via phone and email, and perform administrative tasks. Weekday and weekend shifts are available!

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK needs help sorting, labeling and packing food into family friendly portions for distribution. Volunteer projects are well-organized, safe, and led by wonderful staff members! Shifts are flexible and easy to sign up for!

ST. VINCENT’S FOOD PANTRY needs more volunteers to help sort and shelve produce in the mornings from 8 am – 10 am. Help make food available for shoppers who need it.

MADISON STREET MEDICINE needs volunteers with medical backgrounds (Doctors, Nurses, EMTs, CNAs) to help provide medical attention to people in the Porchlight Men’s Shelter, The Beacon, and on the streets. They also provide a Foot Care Clinic. *There are also opportunities for volunteers without a medical background.*

OAKWOOD PREFERRED HOSPICE is looking for dedicated volunteers to help provide companionship to residents in Hospice Care. Spend an hour visiting with a resident offering love, compassion, and companionship.

NEWBRIDGE needs Volunteer Guardians and Representative Payees! A Guardian is someone appointed by the State of Wisconsin to make medical, housing, and other decisions for older adults who can no longer manage their finances. A Representative Payee is someone who works through the Social Security Administration to help manage the social security funds of an older adult, who can no longer manage their funds. All volunteers will go through training and supervision. Time is flexible and will require 2-6 hours a month.

NEWBRIDGE also needs volunteers to help combat social isolation and loneliness by being friendly visitors in the Madison and Monona areas. Spend a couple of hours just simply being present with an older adult at home as a Bridge Buddy.

(continued from page 16)

FRIENDS OF SCHUMACHER FARM PARK in Waunakee has volunteer opportunities available for those interested in gardening, prairie restoration, event planning, and educational tours of the historic farmhouse and buildings.

HABITAT RESTORE needs volunteers to help sort and shelve used and new building materials and supplies, assist shoppers, and work at the cash register with purchases. Morning and afternoon shifts are available Tuesday – Saturday. The most immediate need is at the Eastside store on Monona Drive.

Please contact Jan Karst, the RSVP Community Connections Coordinator, at jkarst@rsvpdane.org or 608.441.7891 for more information about these volunteer opportunities.



(continued from page 3)

The article, *Light Physical Activity May Be Just as Important to Thinking Skills as Vigorous Exercise for Older Adults* (Source: Hamm, J.M., Parker, K., Lachman, M.E., Mogle, J.A., Duggan, K. A., & McGrath, R. (2024); *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10865-024-00478-2>) explores how even light movement can support cognitive function in older adults.

"Light Physical Activity May be Just as Important to Thinking Skills as Vigorous Exercise for Older Adults"

Research has shown that moderate-to-vigorous physical activity reduces problems with thinking skills or cognitive decline as we age, but less is known about whether light physical activity, such as easy walking, sweeping, folding laundry, and washing dishes, has similar benefits. This might matter especially for older adults, who may not be physically capable of engaging in vigorous exercise.

Data from over 2000 MIDUS participants aged 33-83 was used to investigate whether light physical activity was associated with cognitive functioning. Researchers looked at changes over a 9 year period in:

- ◆ Physical activity: how often participants engaged in light activity (housework, fishing), moderate activity (low impact aerobics, brisk walking), and vigorous activity (jogging, heavy lifting).
- ◆ Cognitive function/thinking skills: Researchers looked at skills known to be sensitive to early age-related declines:
- ◆ Executive function - helps us manage our daily lives, and was measured by tasks such as counting backwards and completing the pattern in a series of numbers.
- ◆ Episodic memory - is our longterm memory that allows us to store information, measured by recalling a list of 15 words.

Results showed that:

- ◆ Declines in episodic memory were reduced by 50% and executive functioning by 55%, for those who increased their light physical activity over the 9 years (by 1 standard deviation), even when controlling for how much moderate or vigorous exercise they did.
- ◆ When analyzed by age, the benefits of increasing light physical activity for episodic memory were more pronounced for older adults, beginning at age 56 and becoming stronger with each passing year.

These results suggest that light physical activity, in addition to moderate and vigorous exercise, may diminish cognitive decline with aging, and that light physical activity may be even more helpful at older ages. Increasing light physical activity may be more feasible for older adults, as it is part of the everyday activities that most are still able to do. Promoting increases in light physical activity may be a viable target for interventions aiming to boost or maintain thinking skills as we age.

We Appreciate Your Support!

Your donations allow us to build capacity, grow our programs, and recruit and support the volunteers serving our neighbors in Madison and Dane County communities.

You may donate online at rsvpdane.org/donate or by sending a check payable to **RSVP of Dane County, 6501 Watts Road, Suite 250, Madison, WI 53719.**

Other Ways to give include:

- ◆ **Legacy Gifts** - To support RSVP's mission into the future, you may choose to designate a gift to RSVP in your will or list RSVP as a beneficiary under a financial account, a retirement plan, or a life insurance policy in estate documents. **Contact Diana Jost** at 608-441-1393 to make a legacy gift.
- ◆ **Qualified Charitable Distribution** - If you are 70 1/2 or older, you can make charitable gifts directly from your individual retirement account (IRA) to RSVP of Dane County or other qualifying charities to reduce your taxable income. If you are 73 or older, these gifts can help satisfy your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year while giving pretax dollars to charity.
- ◆ **Donating Stocks and Mutual Fund Shares** - RSVP of Dane County can accept gifts of securities and mutual fund shares. This allows you to avoid capital gains tax on any appreciation and take a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the donated assets.
- ◆ **Donor-Advised Funds** - A donor-advised fund (DAF) is a powerful way to build or continue a tradition of family philanthropy by establishing a charitable investment account, receiving an immediate tax deduction, and recommending grants to your charities of choice over time. The investment growth is tax-free. Please consult your financial advisor to learn more about setting up a DAF to benefit RSVP of Dane County.
- ◆ **Memorials and Tributes** - You can request that your donation recognize a volunteer, family member, or friend through a tribute or memorial published in our quarterly newsletter. If you request it, the honoree will be notified of your donation.
- ◆ **Matching Gifts** - Many companies offer a matching gift program to encourage charitable giving among their employees, including spouses and retirees. Contact your HR department to see if your company has a matching program that can increase the impact of your donation. Some companies also donate to RSVP of Dane County if they know you are a registered RSVP volunteer.
- ◆ **RSVP's Endowment** - The Tony Farina Endowment Fund was created in 1998 and is administered by the Madison Community Foundation. You may make your gift directly to RSVP of Dane County or to the Madison Community Foundation by noting your contribution is for the **Tony Farina Endowment Fund** for RSVP.

The Heideman Endowed Fund for Staff Compensation was created in 2007 to provide staff with a minimal salary and benefit increase during difficult economic times. You may make your gift directly to RSVP by noting your contribution is for the **Heideman Endowed Fund**.

Please call our office at 608.441.1393 for more information or visit our website www.rsvpdane.org.

Memorials and Tributes

Please use this form to make a contribution to RSVP in memory or honor of someone special.
Enclosed is my gift of \$

In honor of _____ In memory of _____
Personal tribute _____

Check payable to RSVP of Dane County Credit Card: MasterCard VISA

PayPal (Pay online with PayPal at www.rsvpdane.org/donateonline.html)

Card # _____ Exp. Date ____ / ____ 3 Digit Security Code _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Email Address _____ Signature _____

If you would like, we will send an acknowledgement of your contribution to the person(s) below
Address _____

Email Address _____ City/State/Zip _____



RSVP of Dane County, 6501 Watts Road, Suite 250, Madison, WI 53719-1397

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News Notes, (Fall, 2024, edition, Vol. 51, No. 4), is the official publication of RSVP of Dane County, Inc. It is published quarterly and sent to Volunteers and Friends of RSVP. **RSVP seeks to improve the quality of life for all Dane County citizens through significant volunteer service.** Membership is voluntary. We are located at 6501 Watts Road, Suite 250, Madison, WI 53719-1397, Telephone: 608.238.7787, Fax: 608.238.7931, Email: info@rsvpdane.org, Web site: www.rsvpdane.org. News Notes Editor – Diana Jost; Editorial Assistants – Karen Cunningham and Mike Thomsen. Creative design by Jack Guzman. Bulk mailing permit #2372.

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RSVP Calendar

November

November 8 and 15, Triad Virtual Conference, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

November 11, RSVP Vets Helping Vets VETERANS DAY (in-person and Zoom) program at the RSVP Office, 12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m.

November 28 and 29, RSVP Office CLOSED, Holiday

December

December 16, RSVP Board Meeting at RSVP, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

December 18, Zoom Event with Jess Lex, local real estate agent. Jess will be presenting a seminar about the home downsizing process, 1:00 p.m.

December 24, 25, 31, RSVP Office CLOSED, Holiday

January

January 1 and 20, RSVP Office CLOSED, Holiday