

FAMILY PATHWAYS CONNECTIONS



Family Pathways Staff Newsletter

APRIL 2022

Connecting with Leadership:

I recently had the opportunity to revisit the Sandstone Food Shelf. I call this an opportunity because it gave me the chance to interact with staff and volunteers and to see the meaningful work they do first hand. An added bonus this visit was Board member Kathy George joined us. What a wonderful visit, after speaking with volunteers I learned volunteer Rose is 87 years young and has volunteered for over a decade and Dillan is a newer volunteer and currently a senior in High School. Where else are there people 70 years apart in age working side by side to help others, what a great and unique experience. Rose bragged about Dillan and having him as part of the team and Dillan liked being there and helping out. Donna Wichner(?) (Food Shelf Coordinator) then walked me around the building and right away I noticed the incredible amount of work she and team have done with organizing, cleaning, and improving the food shelf and making it a welcoming experience. I also learned of some building material donations Donna was hopeful for and how her family planned to recruit additional volunteers to do any install of the items.

The visit to Sandstone Food Shelf provided great examples of the diversity in our volunteers; staff's hard work; and the level of personal investment people have at Family Pathways. Thank you!

Tony B.

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Staff Spotlight

Donna Wichner is our amazing Sandstone Food Shelf Coordinator. Born in New York, Donna now lives on 200 acres just outside of Sandstone. Before becoming our food shelf coordinator, Donna volunteered with Family Pathways and worked as a para at East Central for 24 years. Donna works closely with the community and volunteers to keep the food shelf stocked and make sure our clients get the support they need. Her favorite thing about working at Family Pathways is the people she gets to work with and the people she gets to help. If she could do one thing for our community, it would be to provide housing for those experiencing homelessness.

Mission Moment

Our Annual Impact Report is up on our website, and guess what? We did some amazing things in 2021.

Like distributing 1,916,687 meals. Helping over 3,000 people find shelter and advocacy through our DVSA programs. Awarding \$8000 in scholarship funds to local students starting college. Keeping 2.63 million pounds out of landfills through our Thrift Stores and recycling programs. You all did some incredible work last year. To see the full report, go to FamilyPathways.org/2021annualimpactreport/

Connecting with Staff Updates and Information

New hires: Welcome to Eric Sazo (Forest Lake Thrift Store), Morgan Steffens, Denise Priem (Community Advocate), Jeanne Olson, Jessica Scanlon (Aging Care Associate), Hunter McKusick (Cambridge Thrift Store), Michelle Risland (Food Shelf Coordinator), and Meg Ashling (Onamia Food Shelf/Thrift Store.) We're glad you're here!

Work Anniversaries: Congratulations to Elizabeth Gleason, Enita Jeske, Christopher Lenzen, Isabella Olson, Lori Quist, Shawnda Schelinder, Charlotte Stresemann, Elizabeth Tolzmann Damm, and Wendy Willert (5 years) on their April work anniversaries!

Connecting with Community

SAVE THE DATES:

- **Barn Bash**—May 25th 5-8pm @ Erickson Farmstead in Isanti
Our biggest fundraising event of the year! We're back in person for 2022 with an amazing event planned. Check out the website for more details
- **Women's Empowerment Luncheon**— October 22, 2022 11:30 AM @ Maranatha Church, Forest Lake
Also back in person this year is this inspiring event to benefit our Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services
- **Learn about Legacy Giving Event**—Wednesday, April 27, 2022 10am-11am @ Chisago Lakes Area Library
A new event in partnership with the Initiative Foundation to share the benefits of legacy giving. Free to attend, spread the word!

Thrift Store Updates

Western Roundup at the Hinckley Thrift Store

Giddy up! It's time for Hinckley's annual Western Roundup. The store will have a great selection of cowboy boots, western-themed apparel, collectibles, toys and home décor. Western Roundup kicks off April 22.

Grandma's Attic at the Princeton Thrift Store

Princeton Thrift Store manager Emily is excited to launch a new event at the Princeton location. Grandma's Attic will feature a variety of vintage toys, jewelry, accessories, kitchenware and home décor - all the treasures you'd find in your grandma's attic. Start exploring Grandma's Attic on May 6.

ReSupply Pickups Now Available

Family Pathways' partnership with ReSupply is now live! Donors can have large donations, such as furniture, picked up and delivered to their neighborhood Family Pathways Donation Center. The cost is often lower than furniture movers and junk hauler fees, and all items are picked up. Items that are not accepted for donation by Family Pathways is disposed of ethically. Book your pick up today by clicking on the "Donation Pickup" button on <https://www.familypathways.org/donate/goods/>

Gift cards available

Family Pathways Thrift Stores now offers reloadable gift cards in our stores. Cards can be purchased at any dollar amount between \$5-\$100. Stop in a store for more details.

Pathways Perks update

Our new loyalty program, Pathways Perks, has exceeded our expectations! As of mid-March, we have close to 15,500 active Pathways Perks members. Perks members spend an average of \$18.67 per visit, which is well above the average \$15/visit spent across the chain. Pathways Perks members get double Perks Points every Monday, as well as bonus points and offers throughout the year. It's free to become a Pathways Perks member. Pick up your card today at any of our 10 Family Pathways Thrift Store locations.

Open Positions: Please Share!

Aging Care Associate - Homemaking - Mille Lacs County
Family Support Advocate - Shelter-Cambridge, MN
Food Distribution Driver - North Branch, MN
Full Time Shelter Advocate - Cambridge, MN
Full-Time Assistant Manager - Forest Lake
Full-Time Community Advocate-Pine City, MN
Full-Time Community Advocate-Cambridge, MN
Full-Time Community Advocate-Chisago City, MN
Full-Time Sales Associate - Forest Lake MN
Full-Time Sales Associate - Hinckley MN
Full-Time Sales Associate - St. Croix Falls WI
Full-Time Sales Associate- Princeton, MN
Part Time Shelter Advocate Cambridge, MN
Part-Time Assistant Manager - Forest Lake MN
Part-Time Sales Associate - St. Croix Falls, WI
Part-Time Sales Associate- Princeton, MN
Part-Time Sales Associate-Ham Lake,
Part-Time Sales Associate-Pine City, MN
Part-Time Visitation Monitors - Isanti, Chisago, & Kanabec Counties

Connecting with Volunteers

- April 17-23 is National Volunteer Week! This is an opportunity to recognize the impact of volunteer service. Each year, we shine a light on the people and causes that inspire us to serve. Check out our Facebook page that week to learn more about our amazing volunteers.
- We need doorstep delivery volunteers! If you or anyone you know would like to help deliver food to our homebound clients, email BrookeZ@familypathways.org



Connecting with Yourself: Wellness

5 ways to bring play back into your life

Think play is just for kids? Think again. In fact, it can have serious benefits for adults. Maintaining a sense of creativity and fun is linked with greater happiness across the life span. Plus, it is thought to contribute to resilience and healthy aging.

There are different ways to be playful and have fun. Researchers who study the benefits of play point out that it has more to do with your attitude than what you're actually doing. And while some people are naturally inclined toward playfulness, this skill can also be practiced and learned - just as a person can learn to be more grateful over time.

Ready to play and have fun? Here are some ways to get started:

- Schedule time for a hobby. Make a point to find joy in the process, and not just focus on the end product.
- Enlist social support. Doing fun things with others is a key aspect of playfulness.
- Play games. Try racing people on the escalator while taking the stairs. Or pass the time on a car trip by playing a game of I spy.
- Visit a park or playground. Getting out in nature can improve your mood and can be a fun social activity.
- Stop and smell the roses. Playful people tend to be those who take the time to appreciate beauty in the world. Practice mindfulness and catch a snowflake on your tongue, notice the changing leaves and how they look, feel or smell this fall, or allow yourself to jump in a puddle during the next rain shower (rain boots optional).

Put simply, play is finding amusement, humor, joy and even entertainment in your daily life. And anyone can do it by setting a goal to become more engaged in fun and enjoyable activities.

Do you have a **mission moment**, photo, announcement, wellness tip, staff person or volunteer you want to celebrate? Email **jeniferb@familypathways.org** to have it included in the next Connections Newsletter!



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