

From the Heart



of Voluntary Action Center of Northern Illinois

Summer 2023

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A Note from our CEO:

Transition is the word that keeps coming to my mind as we flip the calendar to September.

The kiddos head back to school, it seems the world gets back to following more of a schedule, and living in the Midwest we see the harvest season just around the corner.



VAC is not immune to transitions. We operate in a changing environment every day. When you are in the business of serving people, we must be flexible and particularly sensitive to the needs of our clients.

Each day our kitchen crews transition from food production, to packaging, to delivery. Our transportation drivers must deal with fluctuation in schedules with client doctor appointments and other health services for clients that are out of their control.

We are so grateful for our staff that pull this off every day doing it with a large portion of dedication, patience and care for our clients.

Sincerely,

Nate Kloster
Chief Executive Officer

Six area legislators' offices represented at Voluntary Action Center luncheon



Legislators and staff representing the Voluntary Action Center of Northern Illinois (VAC) service area gathered this week to learn about programs and facilities that address the basic needs of older adults.

VAC Chief Executive Officer Nate Kloster welcomed the legislators to a tour of VAC facilities at 1606 Bethany Road in Sycamore, and then offered a presentation on the challenges and opportunities facing the non-profit agency.

The luncheon was the result of strategic planning by VAC administration. In October of 2022, VAC CEO Nate Kloster met with Representative Jeff Keicher and DeKalb County Administrator, Brian Gregory to discuss needs specific to our DeKalb County Transportation Program. Representative Keicher suggested that VAC management personally contact all appropriate state representatives to share the agency's needs and opportunities. "After sharing this recommendation with the VAC Board, the idea of a luncheon seemed like a good way to share our story and unify the message," Kloster commented.

VAC currently receives funding from a variety of sources to manage the operation of the two complementary programs of nutrition and transportation.

The legislative luncheon gave legislators the opportunity to tour the VAC kitchen which prepares 228,000 meals each year, and the transit garage which is the hub for more than 58,000 rides yearly. The Sycamore kitchen facility is just one of five kitchens, and the transit garage is one of two operated by this multicounty agency.

After a tour and lunch, Kloster shared a 20-minute presentation to outline the scope of services offered by VAC and the unique funding challenges and opportunities in each program.

"The services we provide at VAC are dependent on legislation that occurs at the state and federal level. Today is my goal to plant seeds with you," Kloster said. "We are a non-profit organization that will be celebrating our 50th anniversary next year. We provide transportation and nutrition services primarily to seniors and those with disabilities," he continued.

"There is a non-financial value that money can't buy that VAC brings to the table," Kloster said. "It is one thing to award services to the lowest bidder when you are talking about roads, bridges, and vehicles. It is another thing when you are serving people, and particularly people whose mental health need is as equally important as their physical need. What differentiates us from the pack is that we lead with our heart."

During the presentation, Kloster outlined the gaps that are occurring with the loss of CARES funding, the increase in costs due to inflation, particularly for labor and vehicle expenses, supply chain issues in replacing vehicles and working through the complex federal and state procurement process.

Guests included, 74th District State Representative Brad Fritts, 76th District State Representative Lance Yednock, and representatives from the offices of 38th District State Senator Sue Rezin, 70th District State Representative Jeff Keicher, 75th District State Representative Jed Davis, and 45th District State Senator Andrew Chesney. Also attending were several local municipal leaders, including Brian Gregory, DeKalb County Administrator; Suzanne Willis, DeKalb County Board Chair; Robert Miller, DeKalb County Comptroller; Steve Braser, Mayor of Sycamore; and Cohen Barnes, Mayor of the City of DeKalb. "I am humbled at the outpouring of support at the state and local level that is represented in this room today," said Kloster as he began the presentation. Guests were seated with Board members and management staff of VAC.

At the end of the program, several attendees stayed to discuss the issues affecting VAC. Representative Yednock commented, "I see that other non-profit agencies working alongside you in social services are also looking for funding for space and are addressing similar issues. I would suggest we try to work together to find solutions." Yednock also identified some opportunities that would specifically assist in the LaSalle County portion of VAC's service region, adding, "I hope we can all work together to improve access to these services for the people we serve."

Cohen Barnes, Mayor of DeKalb Illinois, also commented that he hopes that VAC will continue to bring their needs to the attention of lawmakers at a more frequent level. "I would recommend a summary of needs coming to the City of DeKalb more often. We need to see this and know your funding needs, having this information in front of us often as we are making decisions for our communities. We really do not want to miss important details like this when we are voting on issues that affect our communities," he added.

Kloster concluded his presentation to the legislators asking for continued discussions into building efficiencies in the governmental grant requests and continued support for funding to support programs for older adults. "I anticipate that this will be a journey of conversations beyond today, and I am open to any and all ideas for dealing with funding imbalances."





THOMAS F. ZUCKER Memorial Golf Outing

Join us for a delightful event of friendly competition on the golf course. Have a great time while raising funds and awareness for our nutrition and transportation programs.

Mark your calendars and get ready to tee off with us!

Friday, September 8, 2023

River Heights Golf Course - DeKalb

Grab your golf clubs and far-out fashion and be ready to be groovy all day long!



11 - 11:45 am: Check-In/Lunch
12 pm: Shotgun Start
4:30 - 5:30 pm: Buffet Dinner and Cash Bar
5:30 pm: Awards and Raffles

REGISTER

<https://tinyurl.com/VACGolf>



Contact: Cami Loving
815-758-3932 x244
cloving@vacdk.org



Foursome- \$400
Single Golfer- \$120
After Golf Reception -\$30

LaSalle program receives new vehicle for meal deliveries!

Check out this sweet ride! Please be considerate of volunteers and staff members delivering meals to those at home in your neighborhoods.

This vehicle was made possible through the generosity of United Way of Eastern LaSalle County and the Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging. Also, a shout-out to Banner Up Signs of Sycamore for the fantastic wrap!



We sincerely thank Sycamore Elks Lodge #1392 for their incredibly generous contribution of \$1,000 towards our Meals on Wheels program.

The Sycamore Elks Club hosts a golf outing each year and chooses to use the proceeds to support local non-profit agencies. Their event is very well supported and the monies raised this year were split between Voluntary Action Center of Northern Illinois and three other local agencies!

The invaluable support of community champions like the Elks helps us further extend our services to numerous Meals on Wheels beneficiaries who might otherwise struggle.

Pictured here are VAC CEO Nate Kloster, Meals on Wheels Manager Nancy Hicks, Meals on Wheels Coordinator Amber Godinsky, and Bonnie Roliardi of the Sycamore Elks.

VAC CEO Nate Kloster
and Community Engagement Coordinator Cami Loving
at the recent Senior Health Fair at DeKalb High School.



**Full-Time & Part-Time: Vehicle Operators
Part-time Kitchen Assistant in LaSalle**

**Positions are posted at
<https://vacdk.com/careers/>**



Our thanks to Jen Maxwell, and her daughters Lucy and Eva, for volunteering with VAC to deliver Meals on Wheels to senior citizens in their homes.

Jen encourages other parents to teach their children about service to others and the joys of volunteering through delivering Meals on Wheels.

THANK YOU!



Our sincere thanks to the family of Lydia Johnson.

Lydia Johnson, former Cortland Township Supervisor, was a Meals on Wheels Volunteer and employee for several years.

We offer our thanks to her family and friends for the many donations to our Meals on Wheels program given in her memory.

On July 25th, meals were delivered in Linda's honor to all our Meals on Wheels recipients.



Flowers have been found to evoke positive emotions and contribute to a sense of well-being.

Thank you, Dolce Vita, Opportunity House, Inc, Bob and Mary, and Todd, for helping to brighten everyone's day!

Donated flowers were delivered to the homes of Meals on Wheels clients.



**Congratulations LaSalle, Putnam & Bureau County Nutrition Program
for a fantastic Spaghetti Dinner & Bake Sale Fundraiser!**

\$8,874.80 raised to support our Meals on Wheels program!

Our thanks to these great supporters:

Cosgrove Foods
Sp. Valley Market
Tee Group
Oglesby Elks Lodge
Manny Mendoza
Village Green House
Hy-Vee
Steak & Shake
Gordon Foods
TPC
WAJK Radio
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WCMY Radio
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Grasser's Plumbing & Heating
Hennepin Boat Store
North Central Bank
Christ Family Church of the Four Square
RO Pro's Water System
Knights of Columbus Starved Rock Council
Loyal Order of the Moose
Bill Walsh
Wedron Silica
Shell
Village Green House
Ellen Rogers



Thank you Sycamore Township!



We are thrilled and honored to extend our appreciation to the Sycamore Township Board of Trustees for the Social Services Grant provided to us.

We are inspired by your trust in our mission and dedication to the community.

Your commitment to enhancing the lives of our fellow residents is truly commendable, and we are immensely grateful for this opportunity to partner with you in making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Thank you, Land of Learning!

Thank you Land of Learning, child care service in Sycamore Illinois, for offered your talents to decorate bags for meals on Wheels recipients on the Fourth of July Holiday!



Thank you, Lifescope Community Services, Inc.!

Our thanks to Lifescope Community Services, Inc. for attending our congregate site in Sandwich Illinois on August 10th and providing the lunch for seniors attending that day.

Lifescope gave a presentation on volunteering through the nationally recognized AmeriCorps Senior Program.





Board of Directors

- Joel Maurer, President
- Keith Foster, Vice President
- Tasha Sims, Secretary
- Cindy Green-Deutsch, Treasurer
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- Kate Noreiko
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- Linda Linden
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- Dawn Roznowski
- Steve DeVlieger
- Marcy Billington

Administrative Staff

- Nate Kloster, CEO
- Ellen Rogers CDO
- Tracy Smith, COO
- Justin Dooley, Finance Director

Memorial Gifts

Remembering our dear ones through the kindness of your donations.

Honor Your Loved One.	Donate a Memorial or honor an important milestone.
	Return this form with a donation to see your memorial printed in our newsletter.
	Please send check to Voluntary Action Center, 1606 Bethany Road, Sycamore IL 60178, or pay with credit card at our website link https://vacdk.networkforgood.com/projects/101300-main-giving-page
Name of Deceased person:	
Name of Person's event to be honored:	
Donor's Name:	
Donor's Address:	
Phone Number	
Who should receive notification of your donation?	
Address:	

Our sincere thanks to the family of Rita Hammett.

Rita held a special place within the Voluntary Action Center. She rode our buses, generously contributed to our agency, and actively served her local Sycamore community.

Following her passing, Rita's daughter sought a meaningful way to honor her mother's memory, and she selected Meals on Wheels as the beneficiary of memorial donations.

This choice reflects Rita's commitment to helping others, as Meals on Wheels provides vital support by delivering nutritious meals to those in need.

Through this heartfelt decision, Rita's daughter ensured that her mother's legacy would live on, nourishing and assisting individuals and families in the community.



You can support VAC through



Did you know when you donate items through our Voluntary Action Center of Northern Illinois Meals on Wheels Wish List, you are making a big difference in the lives of people in need in your community.

Honors and Memorials

In Memory of Lydia Johnston

By James & Dave Wayman

By Susan Wiley

By Jan & Don Benson

By John & Cynthia Lambert

By Cheryl Maness

By Eric & Joni Leffelman

By John & Felicia Owens

By Robert & Betty Nordman

By Theodore & Tammy Skelton

By Beth Bollinger

By Bonnie & Ray Birbilas

By Marvin & Lorrie Wildenradt

By Patricia McAdams

By Larry & Stephanie Forsberg

By Sandra Shramer

By Mark Johnson

By Cathleen Scarbrough

By Richard & Barbara Young

By Colette Theurer

By Ellen Rogers

In Memory of Mildred Kaszmarek

By Claude & Jill Kirby

In Memory of Richard Korleski

By Bob & Norma Wildenradt

In Memory of Hazel Hilliard

By Steven Hilliard

In Memory of Anna Pinkowski

By Carrie Williams

In Honor of Jane Meisel

By Joe Meisel

In appreciation for Transportation

By Eileen Bosshart

*Thank you for your gift to VAC in honor of others,
remembering lives well lived, and our clients in need.*





Voluntary action Center
of Northern Illinois
1606 Bethany Road
Sycamore IL 60178

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**Providing high-quality services that
address the basic transportation and
nutrition needs of the community.**

Voluntary Action Center receives Title III Older Americans Act and State of Illinois General Revenue Funds in support of its senior programs through the Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging and the Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Voluntary Action Center receives DeKalb Township funding and is a United Way Partner Agency.

The Fine Print:

VAC newsletters are published by Voluntary Action Center of DeKalb County. The opinions, findings, and recommendations expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the VAC or the counties served.

**Sandwich Satellite
Location**

1406 Suydam Road
Sandwich IL 60548
815-787-6219



Voluntary Action Center

1606 Bethany Road
Sycamore IL 60178
815-758-3932



Voluntary Action Center

Kendall Area Transit

109 W Ridge Street
Room 002
Yorkville IL 60560
630-882-6970



**Voluntary Action Center
LaSalle-Bureau-Putnam**

1840 Saint Vincent Avenue
La Salle IL 61301
815-883-3630

