



# Southeast News

Southeast Seniors  
A Living at Home/  
Block Nurse Program

Winter 2014

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## **Staff**

Judy Houck, LGSW  
Service Coordinator  
  
Darla Wexler, PHN  
Outreach Nurse  
  
Marji Miller  
Executive Director

Dear Friends of Southeast Seniors:

We are reaching out to you because we believe you can make a difference. Each year at this time we ask for donations and we hope you will choose to join us in support of your senior neighbors. With the help of our donors, you have made it possible for hundreds of our neighbors 65 and older to continue to live well in the homes they love. We thank you for your recognition of Southeast Seniors as a vital support to the seniors of our community. We would like to share with you a story about one of the seniors we have helped:

*Living in a house at 85 years old can sometimes be a challenge, but it can be especially challenging when you are also suffering from blindness. With the help of Southeast Seniors, Ruth still manages to live independently with both of these obstacles in a house in the Como area that she has called home since 1960.*

*Ruth states, "Southeast Seniors has been my eyes in many ways." Some of the tasks volunteers assist Ruth with are reading her mail, paying her bills and corresponding with others. Ruth states, "I am not sure if I am going to send out Christmas cards again this year, but if I do, I know that I can get help from a volunteer to send them out."*

*Ruth will also be asking her Southeast Seniors' volunteer, Nancy, to help her with Christmas shopping again this year. In addition to Christmas shopping, Nancy shops for groceries with Ruth on a regular basis. Ruth states that Nancy really helps her to understand the products she is purchasing by not only describing each item that they put in the cart, but often letting her feel each item that she is considering purchasing. Ruth remarks, "Nancy even lets me feel of the laundry soap container, so I can understand the size of the container before I purchase it."*

*Since becoming a client of Southeast Seniors Ruth has been able to take advantage of many of the services that Southeast Seniors offers. Volunteers help her manage some of her yard maintenance and drive her to doctor appointments when her family is unavailable to take her. Recently she also started using a medical alert device arranged through Southeast Seniors that gives her added assurance as she makes the trek down her basement stairs to do her laundry. Other services that Ruth has received to help her stay living independently are: foot care, assistance with filling out paperwork and help finding someone to do home repairs.*

*When asked about how she heard about Southeast Seniors Ruth responded "I think I heard about it from a neighbor." That seems fitting, because neighbors helping neighbors is what Southeast Seniors is all about.*

Your contribution is needed. Because we offer services at little or no cost, we need to raise money to fill the gap between earned income and expenses. Our goal for this year is to raise \$35,000 from individuals, businesses and churches in the community. Our program is able to continue because of your loyal support. As a small neighborhood organization, each and every donation, no matter the size, really makes a difference. Thank you for being part of our vision: Seniors at home: comfortable, connected, empowered, safe.

If you would like more information on how to become a Southeast Seniors' volunteer or if you would like to take advantage of our services, please give us a call at 612-331-2302..

On behalf of the seniors in Southeast Minneapolis, we thank you and wish you a joyful holiday season!

Susan Anderson, Board Chair

Marji Miller, Executive Director

It is with some sadness but also with a full and grateful heart that I am retiring from my position as Outreach Nurse with SE Seniors. This is the season for my husband and me to enjoy life together and be able to come and go freely. But the memories of all the many, many people whom I have served, as well as their caregivers and all those with whom I have worked along the way will always bring a smile to my face. What a wonderful corner of nursing this has been for me personally. Thank you Southeast community for letting me serve you!



Because I am retiring, the program will be looking to hire a skilled nurse with a caring heart. We would prefer hiring someone who lives in the Southeast neighborhood but those who live elsewhere will be considered. The Outreach Nurse position is budgeted at 10 hours per week. It is modeled after the legal parameters under which a parish nurse functions which include: teaching, monitoring and medical intervention that does not require doctor's orders. The program partners with Fairview Home Care for all Medicare services that require doctor's orders.

My present role includes many and varied responsibilities. The office staff often ask me to do outreach assessment visits if the stated needs appear to be medically related. I describe what the full program can offer and help them decide the next best steps. I also visit some fragile seniors on a monthly basis aiming to help keep them safe, comfortable and stable in their own home. I do monthly blood pressure/ask-a-nurse clinics at various locations in the neighborhood. And I participate in many program development and enhancement activities by adding a nursing perspective.

I will continue to work until there is a new neighborhood nurse identified and she or he has been fully mentored into the outreach nurse position. I know the importance of a smooth transition based upon my own experience from twenty-five years ago when I began working with the newly formed Block Nurse Program. I was excited to serve in my own neighborhood but I also needed wise guidance from those who understood the nature of the work I was undertaking. That guidance came from many knowledgeable and caring people. Kay Jones, Nancy Miller and Wanyce Sandve stand out as amazing nurse mentors to me. Eddie Johnson, a retired social worker, gave of her time to oversee the volunteers and service coordination in the beginning years. She taught me the significant value of a full team approach. A few years later the position of executive director was created and filled by Mary Quirk who really helped shape and strengthen the program. Presently Marji Miller is executive director and Judy Houck is the social worker. Both of them are very dedicated, gifted and a delight to work beside. With the hard working and talented board added to the staff efforts the program has all the skill sets needed for our Southeast Seniors program to thrive for another 26 years and grow still stronger!

If you or someone you know would like more information about the Outreach Nurse position with Southeast Seniors, please call Marji Miller at 612-331-2302



University of Minnesota student nurse Nickolai assisting at a Blood Pressure Clinic

### Neighbor Helping Neighbor

Here are a few tips on how to provide informal assistance to your senior neighbors: Build friendships across generations on your block; start as a friend—see if you can start to build a friendship in the same way you would with a person of any age; go slowly—most of us appreciate help, but we do not like to be viewed as someone who needs help; watch for transitions when extra support may be needed such as giving up driving, or returning from the hospital; be prepared if you see changes in the person's condition or signs of concern—Southeast Seniors is just a phone call away at 612-331 2302.

### WE NEED YOU!!!

In January, the Celebrate Southeast Committee will begin planning our 4th Annual Celebrate Southeast Fundraising Event which will take place on April 25, 2015. We are in need of many volunteers to help with planning and publicizing the event; and securing donations of items for the silent auction and a variety of food for the Taste of Southeast. If you are interested in helping out with this great event, please give us a call at 612-331 2302. Thank you very much.

### Annual Meeting

Southeast Seniors held its Annual Meeting on September 11 at First Congregational Church. We celebrated a year of service to seniors in the Southeast community and recognized the many people who help make our program successful. Music was provided by Stu Anderson and Jody Ouradnik. Our Guest Speaker was 3rd Ward Council Member, Jacob Frey. We thanked the many visiting volunteers who make such a difference in the lives of seniors, and acknowledged the other agencies we collaborate with in providing services for seniors. Our Volunteers of the Year were: Board volunteer, Tom Weist, Community volunteer, Jan Morlock, U of M, and Visiting volunteer, Jim Parkin. We also honored our retiring board members: Berdine Littleghost, Jan Morse, Lois Schardin and Jane Hanger Seeley.



3rd Ward Council Member, Jacob Frey



Beautiful music provided by Jody and Stu



Wonderful dinner prepared by Southeast Seniors' Board Members



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**4th Annual Celebrate  
Southeast Fundraising  
Event will take place  
on April 25, 2015  
SAVE THE DATE!**

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

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### What is Southeast Seniors?

Many seniors prefer to live in their own homes. **Southeast Seniors is a non-profit organization of health care professionals and neighbors who help people 65 and older** remain independent and safe at home. Our service area includes the neighborhoods of Como, Marcy Holmes and Prospect Park in Southeast Minneapolis.

**Through a contract with Fairview Home Care, we provide nursing services:** care after hospitalization, care in chronic illness, management of medications, care of feet and nails, nutritional advice, blood pressure checks; and **home health aide services:** bathing, shampooing, skin care, changing bed linens, meal preparation, light housework, and laundry. **We work with Medicare and all insurance companies in providing these services. We also have a sliding fee scale available.**

**Other services provided at no charge include: visiting volunteers; services by our Outreach Nurse; connecting seniors with services** such as Lifeline, Vision Loss Resources, Meals on Wheels, support for hearing loss; and assistance with chore services and transportation. We also sponsor intergenerational activities, Ask a Nurse/BP Clinics, and health seminars in the community.

**Call or email us if you, a relative or a friend would like more information, 612-331-2302, [seseniors@mtn.org](mailto:seseniors@mtn.org).**

**Seniors at Home: Comfortable, Connected, Empowered, Safe**