

# Breath of Life Newsletter - October 2020

## Breath of Life Adult Day Service Update

Greetings from Breath of Life-we are thankful to be writing this update. Breath of Life temporarily closed on March 16, 2020 and did not reopen again until August 5, 2020. Our participants were sad, they missed all of their friends at Breath of Life and their caregivers were exhausted from 24/7 caregiving duties. We were allowed to do wellness calls with 10 of our participants and every week for 26 weeks every one of our participants received a personal note mailed to them by Breath of Life volunteers. LaVonne Danzl generously supplied Jeanne, Suzanne and Judy with beautiful handmade cards and donated stamps to mail the cards.

We are now serving 6 participants per day, a recent increase from 4 per day. Three participants and a staff person are in both the Great Room and the Family Room. Paul or P.J. act as floaters to give breaks to our staff, answer the phones and complete necessary office work.

We were spending a lot of time outdoors while the weather is nice and our activities are customized to each participant's wants, abilities and interests. While it is a financial loss to only serve a limited number of participants, it is an abundant blessing to have one on one time with each participant. **Big smiles = Big rewards**



## COVID-19 protocol:

Each morning we take the body temperature and O<sup>2</sup> saturation levels of all of our participants and staff and ask a series of screening questions. Our staff and participants wear masks or face shields unless eating. We practice 6-foot social distancing. As we operate to ensure the health and safety of our participants, caregivers and staff, we face many challenges.

- We can only pick-up and take home one participant at a time which makes our transportation program very inefficient.
- We are going through “tons” of sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer and disposable masks each and every day.
- With God's help we continue to be patient and confident that the precautions in effect will keep us healthy as we continue to move forward with a safe and successful operation.

*We are confident that Breath of Life is serving our community and look forward to the opportunities God has for us to care for His beloved.*

## Prayer Requests:

- Please pray for health and safety for our participants, caregivers & staff during the COVID-19 pandemic and the upcoming influenza season.
- Please pray that we are able to hire additional staff that have kind and loving hearts so we can expand the number of participants we serve on a daily basis.
- Please pray that Our Lord brings new participants to our doors, as we reopen, so we can serve them and their caregivers. Please share with people your experience with Breath of Life & how we serve. “Word of Mouth” is the best way for those in need to learn about Breath of Life.
- Thank You, Lord... for all these beautiful smiles!

## Let's Celebrate!

**Breath of Life** is beginning our 20<sup>th</sup> year serving the dependent adults & their families in the Brainerd Lakes Area. None of us knew all the great opportunities, challenges, changes and beautiful people we would encounter when we opened our doors in October 2001 with one participant! We have been so blessed by all the participants (and their families) that we have met and loved over the years. Each one is special, unique and reflects their Creator in each and every smile that emerges as they come through our doors. Even those who are not excited when they first start make that amazing transformation that only fun and heartfelt social interaction can provide. We are made to be social creatures and every staff member goes above and beyond to ensure that the physical, mental, spiritual and social needs of each participant are met each time they spend a day with us. We love those Big Smiles!

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*Our gratitude overflows to our participants & their families – for their gratitude! Here is a sampling of the joy we receive from our “families.”*

*Bob – When you started Breath of Life, you could not of known what a beautiful thing you were doing! It’s impossible to tell you how happy you have made the people that take part in this program. “Thank You” doesn’t cover it, but until we come up with something better – it’ll have to do! The Breath of Life Family (Judy)*

*Paul, thank you for taking great care of Duane. I enjoyed talking with you & you would always cheer Duane up. It means the world to our family that you were there. Thank you so much for all you do. We are so happy knowing that he was well cared for by people who are professional & kind. Thank you, Virginia*

*Paul & Staff – We can never thank you enough for all you did for Jane these last 7 years - I think it’s been! You were a smile in her life! We are so thankful for your wonderful program & loving staff. Bruce & Linda*

*Thank you so much for the slide show for the Tea. There are not words to express how deeply I appreciate your care, concern & love for my Dad. Yalch family.*

*Thank you so much for all the special things you gave to us. It was so fun. We especially liked the things to color. When we did the coloring & had it on the wall, we went & bought more & sent them to my family in North Carolina. When my granddaughter came to visit, she brought a large book, so we continued & now we have 39 on our walls. Many of the other things were fun too. Thank you so much! With love, Ardella & Warren*

*Hello to all our Friends at Breath of Life! Jack & I miss our weekly visits to Breath of Life. We hope this finds you all happy & well. We are doing fine & continue to practice our social distancing. Hopefully we will see you all soon! Jack 🐕 & Jill*

## Finances:

Over the last six months, Breath of Life has been blessed by individual donations and grants to help cover many expenses that we incurred even while closed. We were even able to take “care” packages of goodies and games to our participants who were shut in. Covid did not stop our staff from reaching out in many ways to those who wanted to attend but couldn’t.

While temporarily closed from mid-March through early August with no revenue coming into our small non-profit, we still had expenses that had to be paid. We had fixed costs such as rent, automobile insurance, workers compensation insurance, liability and property insurance, telephone, internet, cell phones and some fuel expenses.

We were blessed when CTC donated 3 months of phone/internet services. Residex Software donated 3 months of participant software services and the Brainerd Lakes Community Foundation gave us a grant to cover our Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) expenses. Breath of Life also received grants from the Small Business Administration, LeadingAge Minnesota, the United States Department of Human Services, Crow Wing Power Operation Round-up Trust, State of Minnesota Retention Grant Program, the Crow Wing County CARES /Coronavirus Relief Funds Act and the Lakes Area United Way. We also received donations from the Lutheran Church of the Cross Rummage Sale, Riverwood Bank 50 Plus Club and Disabled American Veterans (Crow Wing County Chapter 22), Nisswa Lions Club and the Brainerd UPS employees. THANK YOU!!!

While we cancelled our 2020 Spring Tea Fundraiser for March 2020, we were blessed by the many who donated their ticket purchases. We also want to thank our generous donors for the silent auction items. We were able to auction them through social media outlets and raised \$1,500.00 from the sale of these items. We hope to hold our Tea again next Spring!

Thank you to our participants, their caregivers, our staff, our volunteers, our supporters and our Board of Directors for supporting Breath of Life Adult Day Service both emotionally and financially during these stressful and difficult times.



*Congratulations, LaVonne Danzl: 2020 Crow Wing County Volunteer of the Year! We appreciate all you do for so many non-profits – and especially for your support for Breath of Life! Thank you!*

