

SAMARITAN'S CHRONICLE



Director Sara Buchholz and a guest from St. Ann's Home at Countryside Greenhouse.

Board Members

Bill Botts – President
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 Sara Buchholz – Executive Director
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“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Samaritan's Carriage continues to enjoy fabulous outings filled with joy. We are grateful for every volunteer. Each outing the volunteers show up ready to greet the guests and to spend quality time with them. How is it that every outing is filled with blessings and JOY? **Prayer!** We start every Carriage Adventure with **prayer—a founding pillar of this ministry.** We share memories, stories, sorrows, and the realities that we are all bound together by the embracing arms of Christ.

God sends us many joyful surprises on our adventures which humble and enrich us. On an outing to a greenhouse, we had a guest join us who is now blind. Her Life Enrichment Coordinator told us she would benefit from an influx of stimulation to her surroundings. There was a little concern about her not being able to see the flowers. It was her other senses that worked so well. She heard the sounds of traffic riding the bus. A tremendous rain storm thundered by as we walked through the greenhouse. She felt the mist coming through the roof. Her volunteer described the vivid colors, the sizes of the plants, the rows and rows of flowers and when it wasn't raining music could be heard throughout the greenhouse. She picked out a plant for her room, one she could feel growing by the length of the ivy. She enjoyed every minute of the adventure. Over lunch she shared with us the latest book she was listening to. We all saw in a new way that day. God opened all of our senses.

In a similar experience. Another guest who has been blind since birth, came on an outing to Rockford Dam. This gentleman has some notoriety for having ridden every street and road in Kent County on a tandem bicycle with his sighted father. Our volunteer tried to carefully describe all there was to see as they traversed the Rockford Dam and Nature Trail. With his other heightened senses, he was able to feel the sunshine and shadows, the cool breezes off the water, the fragrance of the flowers, and the tastes of a picnic lunch. He shared with the volunteer that he thoroughly enjoyed the outing and looks forward to a future in heaven when he will be able to see God's creation with his own eyes! Spending time with Loren was a blessing and highlight of the volunteer's day! **Samaritan's Carriage volunteers are blessed on every outing they go on.** Your support of these outings is what sustains this mission.

Vision Statement: Samaritan's Carriage creates experiences that enable guests with limited mobility and their volunteer hosts to be fully present with each other. We celebrate life through stories, laughter and a sense of wonder, understanding that Christian caring and fellowship can heal, encourage and ease the effects of loneliness. We believe this ministry blesses individuals and the community.

Prayer Partners

On a beautiful afternoon in May I met with two of



Samaritan's Carriage early volunteers, Alida Terpstra and Kathy Pasma. They were not only volunteers but also board members, and they have been praying for Samaritan's Carriage for the past 20 years. They took it upon themselves to be part of the prayer foundation. There are others too who have been praying for Samaritan's Carriage over the years. Some of them pray for specific teams or for the individual homes we visit. As a supporter of Samaritan's Carriage, an organization founded on prayer, I wonder if you or your church would also be interested in being prayer partners? If you are interested in praying for a specific home and the volunteers who go there, please send me an email at sarabuchholz50@gmail.com. I will send you the list of volunteers for that home and the day of the month they go on their outing and you can support them in this very tangible way.

The current homes that Samaritan's Carriage supports are:

- Heritage Nursing and Rehabilitation – Zeeland
- Georgetown and Cambridge Manor – Grandville
- Rest Haven Home – Grand Rapids NE
- Bishop Hills Assisted Living – Rockford
- Sheldon Meadows Assisted Living – Hudsonville
- Mission Point – Lamont
- Laurels – Hudsonville
- St. Ann's Home – Grand Rapids NW
- Stonebridge Yorkshire Manor – Grand Rapids NW
- Railside Assisted Living – Byron Center

Are you looking for an opportunity to **bring joy** and **experience joy** yourself? Please call Sara Buchholz, 616-633-9548. There are other homes wanting to join. **You too can be a volunteer!**

In May many of the teams visited a greenhouse and saw a huge variety of gorgeous flowers. The volunteers assisted the guests in picking out the perfect color of a favorite flowering plant.



Everyone loved bringing home a plant for their room. The colors found in God's creation are amazing. Walking under the rows and rows of hanging baskets was a bit like walking under a rainbow.

The team from Heritage in Zeeland, checked out the Holland Bowl Mill. They



watched as large chunks of wood were turned into four different sized bowls. They learned a lot about

the process of drying wood and creating beautiful pieces of art for everyday use.

Another highlight was a trip to VerHage Car Museum in Holland. The Sheldon Meadows team had a great morning looking over old cars. A whole lot of teenage memories were tossed around that morning.



The reality of answered prayer

As an organization we have witnessed God's protection in our physical safety. Last year at the very end of an outing, a driver noticed the brakes were not performing as they should. He drove the carriage straight to our mechanic and indeed it needed immediate attention. The brakes were replaced and the bus was ready for the next outing. This May the bus experienced a bump on the bumper, the tail pipe was shoved in a bit. No real damage was seen. However, a week or so later another driver heard a metallic sound coming from under the bus. She immediately notified the director and that situation resulted in having to replace the entire exhaust system.



We are grateful these instances happened while only the driver and volunteers were on the bus and they were able to be corrected in a timely manner and not a single outing was canceled. Thank you to Accurate Alignment for quick and excellent work!

We are so grateful to be in the position of having already ordered a new bus.

Now some great news!

A recent phone call to Hoekstra Transportation revealed that the new bus is going into production very soon. This is ahead of schedule and very exciting. If all goes well the bus will be available for September outings. Hallelujah!!

What will happen to the current Carriage? If you know of a person or an organization that might be interested in purchasing the current bus, please let me or someone on the board know. Once the new bus is secured, we will put the original bus up for sale. It runs well and has 119,000 miles on it. The bus received new brakes last year, and a whole new exhaust system a month ago. It could be used by a church or a rehabilitation home for transporting residents or it could be retrofitted as a camping vehicle.

Please call Sara Buchholz at 616-633-9548 if you are interested in exploring the idea of purchasing the bus.

Summer Outings

Samaritan's Carriage visits a lot of different locations all with their own excitement and experiences. The reality is that the location doesn't really matter. What is most important is that our guests know they are loved and are appreciated for who they are. Each person comes from a different perspective depending on their life experience. Our joy as volunteers is to greet, connect and listen to their stories. When they see old cars at the museums and tell



us they used to ride in the rumble seat, we know they have memories of that experience. Part of the enjoyment for the volunteers, is to bring back those memories to our guests.



So, when we visit Kollen Park in Holland or Chinook Pier in Grand Haven and see people fishing on the dock, the smells and sounds of the birds conjure up thoughts of childhood.



A visit to the Grand Rapids Public Museum reminds them of old games they used to play. Rockford Dam provides a lot of fun as we walk along the White Pine Trail and stop to watch the water run over the dam and see the turtles, geese and swans swimming in the river. We'll venture out to Anema



Family Friesian Horse Farm and feed the horses and pet the dogs. In truth it doesn't matter where we go, our mission is to bring joy into the lives of lonely people. Just being together enjoying each other's company is what makes Samaritan's Carriage the gift that it is to our guests.



We loved the opportunity to provide an outing for a husband, his wife and his sister.



This lovely couple in yellow was able to go on an outing together. The gentleman lives in a home and his wife joined the outing to Kollen Park.

Prayer Requests:

- **Carriage Production** – Lord, surround the production of the new bus as it is being assembled this summer. Pray that each part will be placed correctly and it will serve our community for many years.
- **Facilities we serve** – Lord bless the homes we serve and each one of their residents that go on Samaritan's Carriage outings. May they witness your love in each of the volunteers.
- **Volunteers** – Lord, some of our volunteers or their family members have specific health situations. We pray for healing both emotionally and physically for them and for each of the volunteers.