



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

Monday, November 3rd Kinship volunteers gathered for a “Thank You” evening out. The crisp late fall outing took place at Cary’s on the Course; the newly remodeled facility located on the site of the Little Falls golf course. The facility and friendly, helpful staff did not disappoint. Volunteers were comfortable in the fireplace room and enjoyed dinner selections that were impressive and delicious.

Once or twice a year Kinship hosts Mentor Nights Out (MNO) which are similar gatherings in that they are open to volunteers who are encouraged to invite prospective new mentors to learn a little more about what Kinship does and who we serve. The MNO’s also have discussions and an educational component in efforts to help equip mentors to better meet the changing needs of the boy or girl they mentor.

This evening was simply a Thank You to our volunteers. In today’s climate of insane busyness, many of our volunteers hold more than one job in or outside of the home. Some are primary caretakers for young or aging family members. Regardless of other commitments and full plates, Kinship mentors are a unique breed of caring individuals who make time for a kid; or make the choice to share time with a kid.

Volunteers were treated to hearing from a kinkid’s mom, Stephanie, who credits Kinship mentors Collin and Kayla Backowski for helping her keep her son Keahi not only on the straight and narrow, but keeping him engaged in his education (and graduating!). Hard to keep a dry eye when you hear directly from a parent the effect that a positive role model has had on her son, and in turn, her family. This mentoring relationship help set a strong foundation for values like a decent work ethic, sacrificing for others, and being motivated to try to be and do better.



Shannon shares about the Kinship experience from the perspective as a foster mom.



A group of Kinship volunteers and guests are shown.

Foster mom of three kinkids Shannon also shared how invaluable Kinship mentors have been for her ‘kids’. Her perspective was unique in that she too is meeting the needs of kids who don’t live with both parents, but hers is a much more involved commitment.

To listen to Shannon talk about how Kinship mentors have affected the lives of the kids she’s opened her home to was to see the magic of mentoring come to life. Like in other home situations, foster families benefit from their kids having other involved, invested adults who care about their kids.

Part-time staff member and mentor Becky shared a big “Thank You” from yet another perspective; one from someone who grew up in a single parent home where there was no Kinship program or mentor who stepped up to the plate. She reminded volunteers that it is an unfair and incorrect stereotype to think kids who come from broken, abusive, or single parent homes will turn out to be broken adults. On the contrary, many kids from wounded childhoods become the very people they wished they would have had in their own young lives. She reminded Kinship volunteers that the influence and impressions they make with their kinkid are invaluable and will outlive them as a volunteer.

Craig Miller from Kinship, Inc. closed the evening up with additional words of appreciation, a little insight into Kinship beyond Morrison County, and an invitation for potentially interested individuals to consider serving on the board of directors for Kinship, Inc.

Volunteers left with a special Thank You gift and hopefully a reminder of how vital and valuable they are.

Happy
THANKSGIVING

Enjoy these great photos Kinship's trip to Triple S Pumpkins and also the Sporting
Clays night



Enjoy these great photos from the Soup & Chili Cook-off and recent match outings.



SANTA'S WORKSHOP



**Monday, December 1st
6 pm - 8 pm
Historic Courthouse**

Kinship will be hosting a Santa's Workshop on Monday, December 1st, from 6-8 pm in the Historic Courthouse. Attendees will rotate from station to station learning about and creating hand-made "from the heart" gifts. We are in need of volunteers to plan & host stations - get creative and contact the office with your idea. (You will be reimbursed for expenses.)

Refreshments will be provided. Because we need to order a variety of supplies, please RSVP ASAP (by Nov 24th).

SNOW TUBING



**Sunday, December 28th
3 pm - 7 pm
Bus from Kinship**

Kinship youth & volunteers are invited to an evening of snow tubing on Sunday, December 28th from 3 - 7 pm. We will take a bus from the Historic Courthouse to Mount Ski Gull (on Gull Lake), enjoy the tubing hill for 2 hours then return to Little Falls. We did this for the first time last winter and youth & adults said it was a blast!

A pizza dinner will be served on the bus ride home. Transportation, tubing & supper are provided. You must dress in full winter attire with layers... Please RSVP ASAP (by December 12th.)

GAME NIGHT



**Monday, January 19th
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Historic Courthouse**

Kinship youth & volunteers are invited to an evening of board games & card playing on Monday, January 19th from 6-8 pm in the Historic Courthouse. We will have a variety of games ranging from shorter card games to more involved strategy games. The evening will end with Bingo for prizes.

Please let me know if you are interested to lead a game. Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP ASAP (by January 10th)

ICE FISHING



**Sunday, February 1st
Afternoon - Evening
Transportation TBD**

Kinship youth & volunteers are invited to an afternoon / evening of ice fishing on a local lake on February 1st. The lake will be picked in mid January depending on ice / snow conditions and the "bite." No experience or equipment is necessary, just warm clothes (think layers) and a fishing license for those over 16 years of age.

We are in need of volunteers to bring ice houses / shelters, so we can hold the event comfortably & safely in any weather (other than a huge blizzard:) Please let Kinship know if you can bring a house / shelter or fishing equipment to share.

We will plan to eat on the lake, with a menu TBD. Please RSVP ASAP (by January 15th).

BOWLING



**Monday, March 16th
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Benningtons (LF)**

Mark it down! Kinship youth & volunteering are invited for an evening of bowling at Bennington's Entertainment Center on Monday, March 16th from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm. Bowling, shoes and pizza dinner are provided!

Please RSPV ASAP (by March 10th).

FISH FRY FUNDRAISER



**Friday, February 27th
Serving from 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Little Falls VFW**

Kinship is hosting its annual Fish Fry Fundraiser at the Little Falls VFW on Friday, February 27th. Please mark down the date and watch for details on selling tickets ahead of time, volunteering, sponsoring and helping make it a great success!



Kinship's Website



Kinship of Morrison County
107 2nd St SE - Little Falls, MN 56345
Phone/Text: (320) 632-8806



Facebook Page