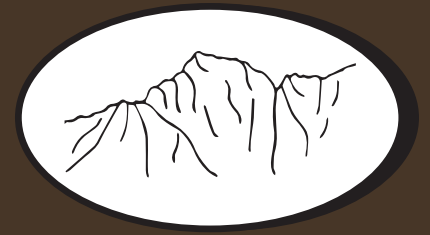


GRANITE HOUSE

DONOR NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020



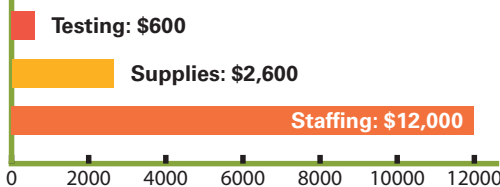
For our donors, volunteers, and partners on our journey



NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Granite House is nearing the close of a challenging second year. The board has met remotely since March, with COVID-19 being the primary focus. Our site managers Anna and Amber gave updates to the board and have received great encouragement and compliments for the extra effort required. COVID-19 arrived on the scene with added expenses for sanitizers, gloves, masks, and screening tools. Not only are these items hard to find, but prices have increased. The board approved temporary hourly bonuses for staff as well as incentives to pick up shifts during the first three months of the pandemic. We resumed it this month with more positive cases in the area. As a nonprofit we feel that supporting our greatest treasure—the staff—in this way is an important investment.

COVID-19 Costs: \$15,200



Despite the challenges, we have much to be thankful for, including our appreciative resident families. We look forward to being able to celebrate the holidays with the residents and staff. Our sincere thanks to all of you who have kept us in your thoughts and prayers and supported our mission.

FALL GREETINGS FROM GRANITE HOUSE



Staff and residents enjoyed a busy summer with many days outdoors. With fewer appointments and visitors to the house, many beautiful afternoons included time outside and outings in the van. See what we have been up to with our sensory program and meet some of our staff, our board members, and our “wild” neighbors on the property.

GRANITE HOUSE has built a 24-hour community residence in Stillwater, Minnesota, for the long-term care of younger adults with severe and permanent brain injury who might otherwise be in a nursing home.

FUN WITH PUMPKINS

The staff had a fun pumpkin carving day with the residents. The results are shown in the entry photo on the left, and this one with the logo looked great when lighted. Residents had their sensory touch time when they were assisted in putting their hands into a bowl of pumpkin seeds and pulp. Sounds a little messy but they all responded to it with great expressions.



Granite House is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation with a mission:

To provide support and hope to individuals and families living with severe and permanent brain injury.

OUR STAFF MAKES GRANITE HOUSE THE BEST PLACE TO BE



FEATURED BOARD MEMBERS KIRK & CARLA DAHL

The Board of Directors of Granite House meet throughout the year to work on policies, make decisions on financial expenditures, and address issues that are brought up by the site managers. Kirk Dahl joined our board in 2014 as we were just beginning the nonprofit business. Carla Dahl joined us in 2018 when Anna left the board to become the Nursing Director. Kirk has served in the capacity of Vice-Chair and Carla has been Secretary-Treasurer. Kirk earned his DDS degree from the University of MN, where he met Carla, an Elementary Education major. Kirk ran a successful dental practice in Lake Elmo for 32 years, with Carla helping in the office from time to time. The Dahls enjoy their active retired lives with hiking, visits to the North Shore, and traveling to warm areas. They maintain a large vegetable garden and enjoy cooking together. Reading, working out and exploring local restaurants also keeps them busy. Granite House, says Kirk, gives him purpose in retirement. Carla joined to become part of the decisions that would ensure the continuation of excellent care. Kirk and Carla have been active in all of our events, have been generous donors and have supported the building of the house from the early concept. We are fortunate to have their shared experiences in life and business to advise the board in decisions that make Granite House a success.



FEATURED CAREGIVER NICKEA

Granite House always has two staff members at night, one asleep and one awake. Nickea has been with us since we started, working full time on the awake shift. She came to Granite House as a Certified Nursing Assistant with 20 years' experience in assisted living care, most recently at White Pine Senior Living. She also provided foster care for adults with special needs, while learning administrative and planning skills on the job. Nickea works her overnight shift in a quiet environment, making frequent checks for comfort and safety, always listening carefully to see if anyone needs assistance. She also keeps an hourly log, finishes the daily laundry, and with the COVID-19 pandemic has been cleaning and sanitizing during the night. Nickea has two sons with her husband Ryan and they all enjoy camping and traveling together. In her spare time, she enjoys walking by the St. Croix River, reading nonfiction stories, and spending time with her friends and the family dog and cat. Nickea says she enjoys working at Granite House because she can provide 1:1 care for the residents. She likes the night shift because she has time to pay attention to detail and can provide a unique type of care while the residents are asleep. We are fortunate to have her expertise in this vital role.



FEATURED CAREGIVER PEGGY

Granite House depends on both full-time and part-time staff, and Peggy works a regular part-time evening shift. She is another of our charter staff members, coming to us with 30 years' experience as a Certified Nursing Assistant in nursing homes, residential homes, and transitional care. She has worked with people with physical and mental disabilities, including four years with Alzheimer's patients. "Caregiving has been my life," says Peggy, and it is "where my heart is." She tried an office job once and decided it wasn't for her. Peggy has a confident, calm voice which the residents respond to, in addition to her smile and laugh. She has two adult children and five grandsons. Granite House is fortunate to have a caregiver like Peggy who loves what she does.

GH STAFF THANKS OUR LOCAL HEROES

The staff signed thank-you cards and delivered yummy muffins from Bread Art Bakery in Bayport to our local heroes--Lakeview Hospital EMT's, Bayport Fire Department, and the Washington County Sheriffs—who have answered the occasional 911 call with haste, grace and expertise. We all appreciate their service to the community!

PROGRAMS FOR OUR RESIDENTS

MUSIC IS BACK AT GRANITE HOUSE

We welcomed back Julie from Singing Heart in July, having her meet with the residents outside, wearing a mask, and putting additional space between everyone. It worked out great, and with the gentle breezes the residents were even more alert and engaged. Anna brought in a guitar for staff use, and here is Julia using it for an impromptu singing time.



OUTINGS TO THE RIVER

Staff and residents enjoyed outings this summer in our Honda wheelchair van, visiting the beaches and parks along the St. Croix River in downtown Stillwater, MN and Hudson, WI. The residents enjoyed watching the boats on the river in Stillwater and all the people walking by or riding bikes. The best part of the day was having ice cream on the beach!



SENSORY ACTIVITIES

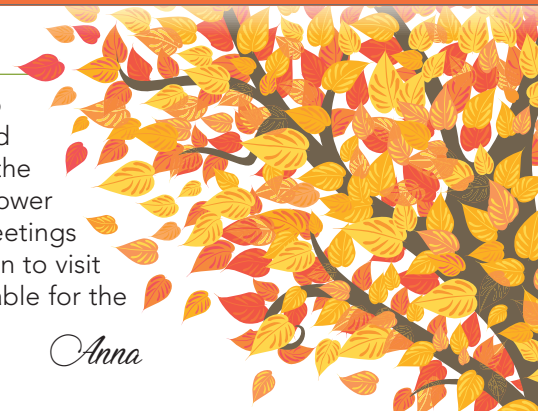
got a bit creative this summer during the COVID restrictions. The staff added some window decorations and did daily sessions to challenge the residents to use all their senses, including touch, taste, smell, hearing and visual stimulation. Anna took the lead on acquiring and preparing the activities and everyone enjoyed it. She shared photos of fun times with families who were not able to be there in person.



NOTE FROM THE STAFF

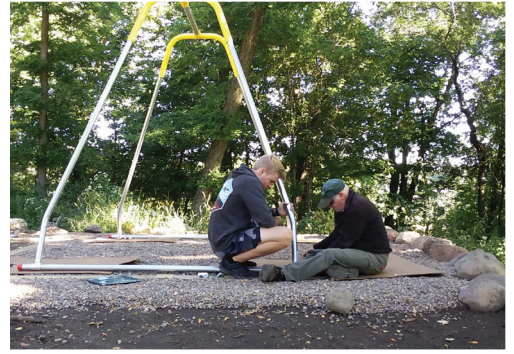
What a year it has been! The staff has been working closely together this summer to make the best of a difficult situation. Families have had to forego visits in their loved ones' bedrooms but joined us for music therapy on the porch once we resumed the sessions. With the cooler weather, music and massage therapists are coming to the lower level, with masks and social distancing. Bluestone Physicians had some virtual meetings but still visited the residents as needed. It's been quiet without the families coming in to visit upstairs but the staff is always busy and doing what we can to make the days enjoyable for the residents and each other. Thank you all for keeping us in your thoughts.

Anna



WHEELCHAIR SWING PROJECT IS A SUCCESS

Completed just in time for some beautiful late summer days, the wheelchair swing has been enjoyed by our residents. We thank Spencer Baker for his fundraising, organization and leadership in getting the platform prepared and the swing installed. With the help of Tom and his equipment, volunteer scouts worked to extend and build up the driveway. Spencer and Tom made concrete pads to support the swing and assembled it on site. Our congratulations to Spencer on the completion of his Eagle Scout award for this project, and many thanks to the donors who supported it.



NEW ON THE PROPERTY

As you drive up to the house, you'll notice the utility shed, completed this fall with a standing seam metal roof and the same red and brown siding to match the main house. Tom also installed an outdoor light and power outlets. The 20kW generator sits behind the shed, with the gas and electric meters on the side. This small building also has room for garden tools and storage for planting pots.



GRANITE HOUSE WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

With over 4 acres of property, Granite House is a great place for wildlife watching. A pair of spring fawns and their mothers were frequent visitors to the tomato beds, and there is a constant stream of wild turkeys all around the house. Other visitors include a nocturnal visit from a shy opossum, plus a hawk who has taken up residence in the lower field. The occasional bald eagle flies overhead.



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