

Monday, September 16th

Connie Cardinal – Foley

9am - Re: CARE Volunteer Driver Program

Background of organization ~

C.A.R.E. Community Action Respecting Elders... They have been around since 2002. Connie has been part of the organization 11 years. They provide about 125 rides a month with roughly 40 drivers. They started within a 10-mile radius of Foley and now serve in Benton and parts of Sherburne. They are a 501c3 with 4 staff.

You must get out and ASK the community to Volunteer!

See who is volunteering at other events and ask them if you can call to set up a time to discuss this opportunity with them. Listen to them to see what they are interested in doing.

They need a very clear message of who they're helping and how.

City, County, Lions, Chamber, Council, Businesses.

CARE does more than volunteer driving, though that is their biggest need. They also do a Food Drive (where people come and pick up Fresh Produce) – this is a really huge event in the community – lines of people come for food. They are also involved with fitness classes, art classes, and luncheons.

She does a huge fundraiser – a 1-hour luncheon, with a speaker. She discusses the CARE program inviting city, county, businesses, parishioners, etc. She asks for donations (after a story) and will get over \$10K in that short time. Every year she has a different message. This last year was about just asking them to drive 1 trip per month... just one.

They utilize many other fundraisers as well. (Pork chop dinner, silent auction, touching tables for seniors, food truck, etc.)

Connie consistently asks businesses to help out –

From this: A local insurance company is allowing their employees to do volunteer driving one day/week. They use the insurance company car. They take the woman to get her hair done and then to another appt. and then back home.

The city of Foley allows 10 hours of community volunteer time per year.

ALL Volunteers are:

Screened

Trained (basic interaction, confidentiality, etc.)

Background Check (BCA, DPS)

Car is checked (Benton County Sheriffs does this yearly)

Dr's note stating medically fit to drive (Important)

Insured by CARE

Currently in Rice, Benton, Sauk Rapids, St. Cloud

} MUST FILL OUT FORMS!

Volunteers work in tiers. She acknowledges everyone may wish to volunteer in a different capacity and welcomes all volunteers any level of involvement they wish to have.

“What kind of driver do you want to be?”

Find the volunteer that will fit your need.

Drivers are not paid – they are given a \$30 gas card for 20 rides into St. Cloud. They still submit mileage and time card. Many drivers choose not to accept the gas card.

The riders meet with Connie one on one before receiving their first ride. Riders are not billed for their rides. People who can afford to make a donation do.

No medical rides (no waiver use).

She recommends working with Pastors in the regions. Get onto the Ministerial Meetings Agenda would be a great first step.

They have their own newsletter. They do 12 roughly presentations every year. PowerPoint video of their program is used. Other local well known business people are part of the video. They use word of mouth and newspaper to advertise. It's a lot of outreach.

Most of the drivers are retirees. They are starting to have success with younger people volunteer including several stay-at-home moms.

How do people know of CARE?

Newsletter

Meets with Volunteers

She does at least 12 presentations every year

Testimonials (in the newsletter)

Newspaper

She uses Elderberry software provided by the Living at Home Network – gets her reports through them, works with them.

Why is it harder to get volunteers?

Grandparents taking care of grandchildren

People are working later into life

Driver Appreciation?

Staff grills burgers, do skits, etc.

STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER DRIVER INSURANCE POOL NEEDED!

Tips for drivers are definitely allowed!