

# Stepping Up

"People helping people strengthen the Dunn County community by providing food, shelter and support."



## Change is Necessary

There is a lot going on at Stepping Stones of Dunn County! Our main pantry has converted back to an in-person shopping format, while still allowing the convenience of a curbside option. We have expanded our pantry offerings to better meet the needs of the whole community—especially our underserved Hmong and Hispanic/Latino community members. Our shelter program will offer higher levels of service during these warmer months than in past years—a response to the increased needs of those facing homelessness. And, Community Connections now has a program vehicle and will begin delivering food commodities, caring check-ins, and volunteer services to low-income seniors throughout Dunn County.

While much is changing, there are things about Stepping Stones that are consistent to our core. First, the efforts and resources of these changes will always focus on service to those in need. We also take very seriously the trust that advocates, volunteers and donors put into this organization and work to honor the legacies of service of those who came before us. The last thing that will never change is how important you are to Stepping Stones.

We are the place where the community of Dunn County comes together to take care of its own.

If you can contribute, please do.

If you are in need, please let us know.

Padraig Gallagher, Executive Director



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*Shelter Program Manager*

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Mai Nou Hang  
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Hannah Dvorak  
*Outreach Coordinator*

Katlynn Pichler  
*Shelter Program Coordinator*

Rochelle Weber  
*Part-time Shelter Program Assistant*

Autumn Cernohous  
*Part-time social work intern*

Henry Amberson  
*Maintenance Manager*

Mackenzie Henthorne, Patty Wright,  
 Mike Racette  
*Part-time Warehouse Managers*

# Program Statistics January 2022 - April 2022

**183,000**

pounds of food  
was distributed, including  
6,600  
client visits

**4,493**

shelter nights provided,  
including shelter for  
30 children

**3,460**

volunteer service  
hours from community  
members like you,  
equivalent to 5 full-time  
employees

## Back into the groove

After 2 years of curbside pick-up only, the pantry unlocked its doors to welcome clients back.



As I sit here in my office drafting this article about the reopening of Stepping Stones' food pantry, I overhear our intake volunteer Patty giving instructions over the telecom to a patron in their car to "come on in to finish check-in."

*Come on in* – that's a phrase that hasn't been heard in more than two years at the food pantry. When the pandemic started, everyone was quick to adapt to curbside pickup of pre-packed bags of groceries. Today, they all seem eager to come inside again to choose their food for themselves and interact with staff and volunteers.

"It was great to see familiar faces, but most faces were brand new," said Kris Pawlowski, Food Pantry Manager. "Their first experience of our pantry was curbside only, so they never knew how in-person shopping went."

There are still a few hiccups in trying to find the most effective way to accommodate the most people. But from my perspective, it seems like everyone has fallen back into the groove.



4x4 produce tables graciously donated by:



Dana Neil, Assistant Director,  
Development & Public Relations



# Come into the garden (s)



## *Woodland Setting | Candy & Darwin Anderson*

Amid the trees, the Anderson's collector garden near Cedar Falls features a touch of the formal intermingled with antique country accents. Take a stroll around the woods path or down to Tainter Lake while exploring beds of lilies, 383 living cultivars of Hosta and a fairy garden. "We love how the garden constantly changes. In the spring, different plants come up every day, and the bulbs bloom at different times. In the summer, each plant takes its turn blooming, so it is something new every day.

"Year to year, we love watching how the garden changes as the plants grow and mature – and it is never dull because some plants have to be moved if they get too big, or a spot has to be filled in if something doesn't grow."



## *Labor of Love | Kris Winter*

When her farm south of Menomonie was purchased back in 1992, Kris said, "There were cows by the barn and three clumps of hostas near the house. My garden has been a 30-year labor of love ... renovating buildings, fussing with plants, and falling in love with my brother's (Bruce Radle's) metal art."

Winter's projects included unearthing a 1907 cistern and surrounding it with fieldstone walls and flowers. "Visitors are invited to tour the cistern, my 1905 granary studio, and my 1916 dairy barn, the Paper Cow Theater."

## *Prickly Ash Hill | Laurel & Fred Bird*

Twenty years ago, the Birds bought a semiwooded lot with several unmanaged hayfields west of Menomonie. Over the years, they added a house, sheep barn, feed shed, chicken coop, About the gardens workshop, solar array, and gardens, starting with a hosta bed followed by a sunny strip garden along the front pasture and vegetable patch.

"As the years went by, we added more gardens: a native grass garden, wildflowers along a section of driveway and lots more hosta gardens ... and continue adding gardens to this day," Laurel reflects.



## *M's Garden | Dick Lamers*

Even before they started building their house on Tainter Lake near Colfax, Dick Lamers said his late wife Marilyn was storing hostas on the property. It's the memories that he loves best about the garden they created together, where the lake view is enhanced by natural vegetation sprinkled with blooms of various origins: "It's a nice quiet place to take a leisurely stroll and enjoy life. A rain garden that makes you feel like you're in a remote place, cool to the summer heat with a moss-covered walkway to enjoy over 40 varieties of hostas and other native plants."

## *Birds, bees, butterflies & blooms | Susan & Ted Hoyt*

Located in the rolling hills north of Menomonie, the Hoyt's garden includes many features starting with the waterfall pond the Hoyts installed 20 years ago. "Who knew it would trigger a 20-year infatuation with an eclectic hodgepodge of perennials, annuals, container plants, pear trees, scattered garden art created by Ted and various natural wood accents that would provide a habitat to entice birds, bees and butterflies," Susan said.

The couple has also found inventive ways to overcome the challenge of heavy clay soil: "Flowers in large variety of pots. Compost, compost, compost. Mulch, mulch, mulch. Sturdy shovels, small garden tiller, sturdy boots and garden shows – and lots of muscle!"



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Or Current Resident

*Look Inside to See How We're Stepping Up Together!*

## Welcome to the 21st Annual Stepping Stones Garden Tour!

### Here's what you need to know

**When:** 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, June 25

**Where:** Five garden sites in and around Menomonie

**Cost:** Advance tickets are \$15 and available online at [www.steppingstonesdc.org](http://www.steppingstonesdc.org), Stepping Stones of Dunn County's Facebook and Instagram pages as well as at the following local businesses: MarketPlace Foods; Dick's Fresh Market; Bookends on Main; Hive & Hollow; Season's Harvest; Bobolink Nursery LLC.

**Same-day tickets are \$17** and can be purchased at any garden on the tour or at the Garden Market. *There is no charge for children under 16.*

The ticket booklets include each garden's address and directions. There's a suggested route (including signage), but participants can start at any garden and tour at their leisure.

**Information:** 715-235-2920, [www.steppingstonesdc.org](http://www.steppingstonesdc.org), Facebook and Instagram.



This glorious example of Bruce Radle's outdoor metal artwork "lives" in his sister Kris Winter's garden, one of the stops on this year's tour.



Saturday, Sept 17th, 2022

5-8pm

*Free Admission*

*Live Music*

*Food Trucks*

*Opportunities to Give Back*

**Watch for more details  
closer to the event!**

Keep up-to date on everything Stepping Stones



Stepping Stones of Dunn County

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