

# Stepping Up

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



## Farmers Feed

Farm Fresh Bags from LTD Farm have been arriving weekly at Stepping Stones since mid-June. Filled with a delicious mix of fresh vegetables and topped off with a note packed with prep and cooking tips, it's easy to see why they've become a popular item at pantry distribution time. Khaiti Hallstein and Ben Hopper of LTD Farm near Clayton have been generous donors of their extra produce for several years. What's new this year is they are being paid for their produce through a WI-LFPA grant.

The Wisconsin Local Foods Purchase Assistance Program (WI-LFPA) is funded by the USDA and administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Consumer and Trade Protection, Marble Seed, the Wisconsin Food Hub, and the Wisconsin Farmers Union. Its goal is to strengthen local food systems, support farmers, and distribute fresh, nutritious food to communities that lack access to healthy food. Other recipients of the LFPA grant that are working with Stepping Stones include Jeremiah's Bullfrog Fish Farm (trout), Hay Creek Honey Bees (honey), Mary Dirty Face Farm (apples) and Will Be Farm (fresh produce).

The LFPA grant coordination is just one part of Stepping Stones' ongoing Farmers Feed Dunn County program. Farmers Feed begins with a belief that we all need and deserve access to healthy food and that we can accomplish this best when we work together. From that base, we seek partnerships with farmers and agricultural enterprises. We are grateful to our generous and committed partners and to all the volunteers who are part of making this happen.

*A note from one of our Farmers Feed coordinators, Patty Wright*



## 2023 Partners



<b>Buckley Sweet Corn</b>	<b>Mary Dirty Face Farm</b>
<b>Chippewa Valley Bean</b>	<b>Menomonie Farmers Market</b>
<b>Chippewa Valley Produce</b>	<b>Menomonie Community Garden</b>
<b>Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery</b>	<b>Racing Heart Farm</b>
<b>Green Acres of Menomonie</b>	<b>Spring Hill Community Farm</b>
<b>Hay Creek Honey Bees</b>	<b>Webb, Bonnie &amp; Terry</b>
<b>Jail Garden</b>	<b>Will Be Farm</b>
<b>Jeremiah's Bullfrog Fish Farm</b>	<b>Xiong Family Farm</b>
<b>LTD Farm</b>	<b>Community donations</b>

## Board of Directors

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## Staff

Padraig Gallagher  
*Executive Director*

Dana Neil  
*Assistant Director*

Kris Pawlowski  
*Food Pantry Manager*

Heidi Hooten  
*Shelter Program Manager*

Autumn Metoxen  
*Community Connections Manager*

Mai Nou Hang  
*Program Assistant*

Katlynn Pichler  
*Shelter Program Coordinator*

Rochelle Weber  
*Part-time Shelter Program Assistant*

Amanda Davis  
*Pantry Assistant*

Henry Amberson  
*Maintenance Manager*

Jon Oakland, Angela Wolf  
*Part-time Warehouse Managers*

*Patty Wright, Mike Racette*  
*Farmers Feed Coordinators*

*"Our onsite and pop-up pantry volunteers are all real troopers! They show up through rain, snow, wind, extreme heat and cold, and even storm warnings. We could not do this without them!"*

# Pantry

Kris Pawlowski,  
Pantry Manager



To say the pantry program has been busy would be an understatement. In March, we had a successful Empty Bowls event at the Menomonie High School with a variety of soups and breads enjoyed by more than 200 people. A week later, the pantry switched to curbside-only distribution in response to losing much of our parking lot due to the construction of the new emergency shelter. As always, our wonderful volunteers stepped up to the challenge and quickly adjusted and readjusted to the new process. We hope to be able to open back up to in-person shopping by the end of 2023!



**400**  
**Households**  
signed up for pantry  
(in-person and pop-up)



**83,446**  
**pounds**  
of "rescued" food from local  
grocers and retailers



**95,661**  
**pounds**  
of food donated from  
community members and  
organizations



**8,045**  
**Visits**  
to pantry and  
pop-ups

\*all statistics reflect Jan - June 2023



# Shelter

Heidi Hooten,  
Shelter Manager

*"I've really enjoyed seeing the progress of the new shelter and being part of the design committee. This shelter won't feel like an institution - it'll be home-like. Plus, I'll finally have a pink office!"*

The shelter program has been busy, not only with clients, but with our community partners as well. The shelter team has been working closely with the Behavioral Health Team of the Menomonie Police Department to assist homeless people living outside and getting them into shelter. Unfortunately, the need for shelter is much higher than the amount of rooms available. The emergency shelter will address the need in our area, but by no means will solve it. With the addition of a community resource room, partner agencies can come on-site to assist our clients, expanding our offered services and classes.



**90**  
**Households**  
sheltered  
(apartments & hotels)



**23**  
**Children**  
sheltered  
(apartments & hotels)



**377**  
**Households**  
seeking shelter



**457**  
**Referrals**  
looking for services (Shelter,  
Rental Assistance, Permanent  
Housing)



**850**  
**calls**  
Case Management for non-  
residents

\*all statistics reflect Jan - June 2023



Autumn Metoxen joins us as our new Community Connections Manager! She is a University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire Social Work graduate, with a minor in psychology. Her work experience includes working with the homeless as the on-site coordinator at Community Haven House and an internship with the EC County Department of Human Services.



The Community Connections program will be introducing a new initiative this October. Our *Homelessness Prevention* initiative will focus on lower-income households who need assistance stabilizing themselves in their existing home, reducing the demand on shelters. This may include a rent/mortgage payment or utility bill backpay. This program will aim to address and mitigate the issue of homelessness before it occurs.

**5,803**  
**Volunteer Hours**



**2.8**  
**Full-Time Employees**

*"My first month here has flown by! I've really enjoyed getting to know all our volunteers and am ready to grow my program to find more opportunities to serve those in need."*

# Community Connections

Autumn Metoxen,  
Community Connections Manager



# New Emergency Shelter: Construction Update



September 2022  
**Construction Manager Hired**  
Cedar Falls Building Systems, Inc

February 2023  
**Ground Breaking**



Late February 2023  
**Demolition**



March 2023  
**Site Prep/Excavation**



May 2023  
**Foundation Poured**



June 2023  
**Framing**



July 2023  
**Roofing**



Late July 2023  
**Windows**



August 2023  
**Plumbing/Electric**





Nonprofit  
Postage Paid  
Permit #327  
Menomonie, WI  
54751

1602 Stout Rd | Menomonie, WI 54751  
715.235.2920 | www.steppingstonesdc.org  
development@steppingstonesdc.org

Or Current Resident

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



For event information  
or sponsorship  
opportunities,  
contact Dana Neil.

Dana Neil, Assistant Director

Scan to donate today  
www.steppingstonesdc.org



Keep up-to-date on everything Stepping Stones and our events.

Stepping Stones of Dunn County  
@steppingstonesdc

# The Beat

## Concert

**Saturday, Sept 9**  
5pm - 8pm | Wilson Park,  
Menomonie

Join us for a free concert in celebration of  
all the good work being done thanks to the  
support of our community.

Music by  
**The Cutaways**

Food Trucks  
Nene's Tacos  
Big Papa BBQ  
Smackdaddy's

Beer  
Wine  
Soda

Bring non-perishable items to  
"Stuff the Truck" a one exclusive  
sponsor will match \$1/per pound up  
to \$2,500!

Thank you to our current BEAT sponsors:

Find our event on Facebook!