



Endings & Beginnings

I will be retiring in early September, after a brief overlap with the new director for orientation. I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as executive director at Stepping Stones for the past twelve years.

So Much Good

We've accomplished so much together! We have a fine 'newish' building and food pantry use has more than tripled from under 500 visits per month in 2008 to ~1,500 on average now. Families can come as often as needed as opposed to only twice a month.

There's been a lot of expansion of pantry programs including Project SAM (week-end meals for children and youth) and, more recently, the 'pop-up' pantries offered semi-monthly in four rural Dunn Co. communities.

We added a second shelter and ran the Winter Haven program for many years. We've had tremendous growth in our volunteer program and staff size has doubled.

It's great to look back on these and other accomplishments but now is also a time to look forward. There is still so much

need and the pandemic is magnifying it many times over. There is unmet food insecurity in our community and the 'new' building could already benefit from expansion. We've known for some time that Dunn County could use even more shelter space. More and more people look to Stepping Stones for help when they feel they have nowhere else to turn.

Looking Forward

2021 will be Stepping Stones 35th anniversary of serving the community. There's a solid foundation to build upon in order to meet even more of the needs.

I've been privileged to work with such fine boards and staff over the years and know that those currently serving, along with the new director, will help the organization step into its future with strong leadership and vision. I'm thankful for them as well as for our generous donors and volunteers for your incredible support through the years.

I wish you all the best as you continue Stepping Stone's mission of strengthening the Dunn County community by providing food, shelter, and support.

—Katherine Dutton

Welcome Padraig!

The Stepping Stones' board voted unanimously to hire Padraig Gallagher as the new executive director, beginning September 1st. He writes of himself:

"I grew up in Minturn, a small mountain town in Colorado, the son of a special needs school bus driver and the town's first police officer.

We moved from Colorado seven years ago for Kate's prior position with the Eau Claire Health Department. There

Summer 2020

weren't many states we were considering moving to. Wisconsin, with its natural beauty and strong communities, was a good fit for our family."

Padraig and his wife Kate, who also goes by KT and is now the director of the Dunn Co. Health Dept., have two teenage sons. He enjoys being outside with his two adventure-hounds as well as hiking, biking, kayaking and backpack camping.

Padraig has been an instructor and lecturer in Ethics, Logic, and Philosophy first in Colorado, and more recently, at UW-Stout and UW-Eau Claire, and also served in the operations at Feed My People Food Bank in Eau Claire. He has many years of service as a volunteer fire fighter, and most recently has been working in a supervisory role with a local food manufacturer.

In reflecting on his new role, Padraig said:

"I look forward to doing meaningful work with the wonderful volunteers and staff of Stepping Stones. It is a great organization and I am excited to contribute to its continued service to the communities of Dunn County."



Watch the Stepping Stones' 19th Annual Garden Tour

This year's Garden Tour was virtual. The great thing about that is that if you missed the debut, you can still see it!

Walk through each of the five beautiful Dunn County gardens from the comfort of your couch or lawn chair and listen to the gardeners talk about plants, landscaping, and ambience.

Donations are appreciated, but no tickets are needed — and you can watch over and over again!

Go to: www.steppingstonesdc.org

Click on the links on the home page to view the tour on either Facebook or Vimeo.

BONUS: Go to Stepping Stones' Facebook page to find links to view each garden individually, and to see albums of photographs and aerial views!



Thanks SO MUCH to this year's gardeners:

Amy & Don Gjeston
Teresa Jorgensen,
Cottage Winery & Vineyard
Jeanne Kussrow- & Harlyn Larson
Karen & Joel Levandoski
Chuck & Kathy Weber

Thank you to our 2020 Garden Tour Sponsors!

GARDEN BOUQUET



Anonymous
Jane Redig & John Williams

— in memory of Patricia Colloton Walsh



IRIS

Sherry & John Cole
Roger & Sue Jenrich
The Smolarek Family
Bill & Jennie Stewart
 — in memory of Shirley K. Stewart
Dave & Amy Whelan



— in honor of Stepping Stones' staff & volunteers

Dave & Karen Williams

LILY

Susan & Pinckney Hall
Jan Harvey
Hybben Photography
Knights of Columbus
Ted & Lisa Ludwig
Diane Morehouse
Lynn & Dick Nehring
 — in memory of Ellen Isakson

New Life Lutheran Church
Northern Wisconsin
Hosta Society
Ron & Luanne Prochnow
Skinner Law Firm, LLC
Martha Stewart



Anonymous

Dave & Joy Bergstrand
Conagra Brands
Katherine Dutton & Jeanne Foley
 — in honor of Jane Redig & Cyndi Greening
Dick & Pat Edwards
Toby & Marian Ellison
Greg & Colleen Lentz
Mary Jean & Leland Nicholls

TRILLIUM



Ross Olson-Bremer Investments
Dave & Tammy Pellet
Red Cedar Landscape
Mary Riordan
Jo Ann Rucker
Gene & Mary Schlosser
Dale & Carol Seppa
Tangles Hair Studio
Chuck & Kathy Weber

VIOLET

Bookends on Main
Cedar Corporation
Jacq & Lynn Collins
Grace Episcopal Church
Hoof & Paw Veterinary Clinic
Leslie Koepke — in memory of Russell Lasocki
Ruth Morey
Helen & Bob Redlich
Sharon Tripp — in memory of Judith Wagner



SWEET PEA

Marion & Warren Lang
 — in honor of Hmong Gardeners
M & J Barn Quilts
Greg & Kathy Weber
Marie Young

*"Where flowers bloom,
 so does hope."
 Lady Bird Johnson*

News & Notes

Covid Changes

Stepping Stones has made a number of changes due to Covid in order to keep clients, volunteers and staff safe. One of the primary changes was the move to curbside pantry distribution of pre-packed bags and boxes back in March.

Some of the food we distribute is government commodity food from TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program). In order to be a TEFAP pantry we have to follow their requirements, one of which is currently curbside pick-up. We receive about a semi-trailer full of food from TEFAP monthly and, although we distribute a lot of food in addition to this, a semi's worth is not insignificant (!) so we're happy to comply.

We made the change to curbside even before TEFAP instructed us to do so because the pantry shopping area isn't large enough to allow many people to shop at once with safe social distancing. Our TEFAP contact shared this wisdom:

"As a network of public and charitable resources, we share a public trust—an equal duty to serve *and protect*. Our 'no contact' adaptation has maintained high levels of expanded service while protecting volunteers and participants. Our network is both inspiring and successful in guarding the safety of the vulnerable populations we serve, and in some cases, volunteers who work in food pantries."

We're seeing almost twice as many new families as usual since the pandemic began and the drive-up distribution goes very smoothly and quickly. So many people have commented on how grateful they are to be able to receive food and feel safe.



Office Modifications

Another change has been to close the Stepping Stones' office and pantry building to all but staff and volunteers. The office entrance (the door facing Stout Rd.) is open 8 am-5 pm but the inside door is locked; however, it's glass so we can both see and speak to people. There's a doorbell in the entryway to get our attention, a bin for food donations, a locked box for monetary donations, and a box for clients to pick up mail or leave paperwork.

Shelters & Winter Haven Program

Both the Stout Rd. and Broadway shelters remain open and full. We're so fortunate to have apartment style shelters right now. Due to Covid concerns, this year we will **not** be operating the Winter Haven program. The Stout Rd. shelter will still be open and sheltering people who are homeless, but will continue as apartment style year-round rather than changing to dormitory style for the winter months. Because the Winter Haven program requires overnight volunteers, the Stepping Stones' board made the decision not to offer the program this coming season for the safety of shelter residents as well as volunteers.

Stepping Stones Board of Directors

Sara Carstens, President
Tim Eiden, Vice President
Mark Kalscheur, Treasurer
Heather Wigdahl, Secretary
Kamsey Keyes Cleveland
Bev Deyo-Svendsen
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Jerry Porter
Wendy Slaback

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Katherine Dutton
Executive Director
Kris Pawlowski
Assistant Director &
Food Pantry Coordinator
Heidi Hooten
Stepping Stones Shelter
Program Coordinator
Jill Seichter
Community Connections
Program Coordinator
Barbara Lyon
Development &
Communications Specialist
Mai Nou Hang
Administrative Assistant
Henry Amberson
Gary Barnett
Maintenance & Warehouse
Managers

Zucchini Welcome!

We're happy to accept fresh produce for distribution through the pantry—any kind!

If it's a bag or two, please bring it to the office door. If it's a larger quantity, you can drive up to the garage door and we'll help you unload. **Thank you!**



Your Gift Today Can go Twice As Far!

Everyone knows \$2 is better than \$1 !

So we are holding a Match Challenge to Honor Katherine Dutton's Retirement



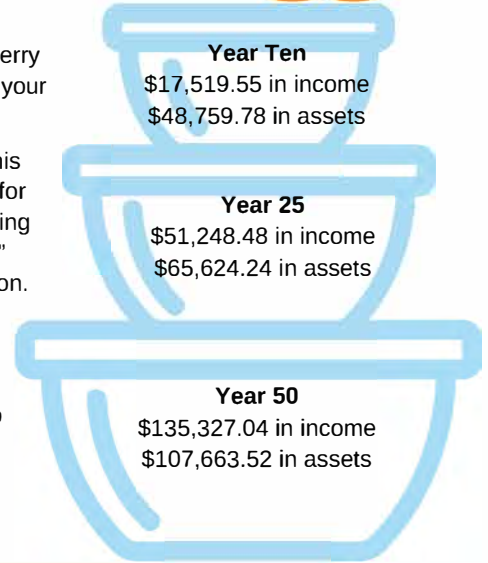
Katherine Dutton's vision, compassion and ability to set and achieve goals has steadily increased our capacity to provide food, shelter and support in Dunn County.

In honor of her retirement and to salute her legacy a group of generous donors including Jerry and Kim Porter, Don Salisbury, Diane Morehouse, and Kurt Larson have offered to match your gifts into our Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation of Dunn County.

The goal of this match challenge is to double our current endowment to \$40,000. Earlier this year, Stepping Stones received a match challenge grant from the Community Foundation for \$5,000. The board generously contributed in order to meet that challenge. Now we're asking other supporters to help meet this new goal. Our Endowment is a source of "forever funds" that generate spendable income which can be counted on every year to support our mission.

Double your gift today!

You, too, can honor Katherine for her service and dedication. To take advantage of this matching opportunity, simply mark "Endowment Fund" on the memo line of your check. To donate online, go to www.steppingstonesdc.org. and indicate that Katherine is the person being honored in the online form. **Remember, our generous sponsors will match, on a 1:1 basis, each of the first \$10,000 in gifts we receive!**



**How an
Endowment
Gives and Grows**

There is no better way to thank Katherine for all her efforts to prevent hunger, homelessness and isolation throughout Dunn County!

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



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Or Current Resident