



NEUSE NEIGHBORS NEWS

MAY 2023

Helping Our Members Age in Place

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Daily, I am reminded that Neuse Neighbors Network is making a real difference in our community.

Sometimes, little things can be huge. A friendly phone call can brighten the day of someone who lives alone. A ride to a doctor's appointment may be the only way a member can keep a critical medical appointment. And as we all know, life can change on a dime. Age, illness, or a sudden accident can alter our lives without warning. At times like these, the services NNN provides can be lifesavers, fulfilling our mission to help our members continue to live independently in their own home for as long as possible. These thoughts reinforce my understanding of how vital this organization is for so many of our neighbors and it deepens my appreciation for the volunteers who make it all possible. As an all-volunteer organization, these dedicated men and women also allow us to keep our membership fees among the lowest in the nation.

In closing, I wish you all a safe and happy summer, knowing that the help you give today could be help you need tomorrow.

• David Tikkala, President

"We're Here To Help" NNN's Help Line is a 'Go-To' Resource



Call 252-665-8807 Monday-Friday, 9 AM - 1 PM, and you'll speak with one of NNN's friendly Help Line volunteers. Vicki Rasmussen, Help Line Coordinator, along with Paula Beattie, Donna Creech, Olga Herman, Suzanne Jantzen, Claudia McClean, Alice Petree, Paula Rozov, Mary Scott, Carol Small, and Judy Smith, are the volunteers who take turns answering members' calls. Using Google Voicemail, calls to the Help Line's 'official' number are forwarded to the cell number of the volunteer on duty. "It's great because volunteers can be anywhere there's a cell signal and still be helping members," Vicki explains. Volunteers serve according to their availability. Some are on duty once a week, others may take calls once a month. It's totally flexible. Typically, members call if they need help scheduling a service and aren't familiar with placing their request online, so a Help Line volunteer places the request for them. Her team also shifts into high gear when medical transportation is needed, working overtime to find solutions. "Our volunteers enjoy the people contact," Vicki says. "We're a caring voice when someone calls, and we get to know our members' needs. We're here to help."

*If YOU are interested in becoming a Help Line volunteer
Call 252 665-8807!*

VOLUNTEER CONNECTIONS



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Every day, NNN volunteers go above and beyond the call of duty. This was clearly expressed in a letter NNN received from member, Anne Siren. Anne's daughter, Cathy, was born in Florida with a pre-natal case of Rubella. Although pediatric neurologists urged that Cathy be placed in a special home, Anne refused. Years of intensive therapies followed, and by age three, Cathy was able to walk and her training transitioned from physical to academic exercises. Therapists used pennies to help Cathy learn to count, and as a result, Cathy loves pennies to this day. Shortly after Anne moved to Oriental from Florida, her ex-husband became terminally ill. Despite having been divorced for 30 years, Anne took him in. Her life became an overwhelming cycle of doctors' appointments, medications, meals, and housekeeping, all while managing Cathy's continuing needs. That's when NNN came into her life. Denise Meng, NNN's Community Outreach Coordinator, asked how NNN could help, and when Anne couldn't imagine what could be done to help her husband, Denise asked, "What does Cathy like to do"? Suddenly, Anne recalls "a beautiful light opened on our family." Anne explained about Cathy's passion for pennies, so twice a week, Denise and fellow volunteer, Susan Fletcher, take Cathy to Wells Fargo, where she trades paper money for pennies. Anne recounts how Cathy carefully washes the coins and rolls them in wrappers. Denise also takes Cathy to Village Fitness to swim and Susan takes her shopping or to lunch. "Their help lifted my heart," Anne says. "I was always behind with everything. It freed me to take better care of her father, share memories, and even have a few laughs." For Cathy, too, the change was significant. "I knew she was sad," Anne says, "but her adventures with Susan and Denise always ended on a high note." Anne loves living in a community that has given her family so much support, and her son Christopher, agrees. "Mom, you landed in a great place. These people are for real, and will be there for you when you need them."

*To all of NNN's wonderful and generous volunteers
you ARE making a difference!*



WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS

Over the past several months, Neuse Neighbors Network gained new volunteers and we want to welcome them to our team!

Cathy Cresswell has lived in Pamlico County for 18 years. Like so many others, Cathy and her husband were drawn to the water and the people in equal measure. This year Cathy became NNN's Membership Coordinator.

Gail Vergato moved to Oriental in 2007 from Pittsburg, PA to enjoy the warm weather and the beaches! Gail is currently the Pamlico County Veterans Service Officer.

Anne Siren came to Oriental 3 years ago and formerly owned a small newspaper in Broward County, Fla. Grateful for the help she has received from NNN, she became a volunteer in order to help others.

Karen Thomas is an independent realtor who was attracted to Oriental for "the lifestyle and the water." Becoming a volunteer is her way of giving back to her adopted community.