

Give a Little Foundation

Spring Newsletter 2025

The Seniors Issue



Dear Friends and Supporters,

We normally begin our newsletters with photos and quotes that are positive or inspiring. But our message to you today is one of great concern.

In these past months, we've undeniably entered a period of turmoil and uncertainty, and each day can bring new anxieties and struggles.

Many, if not most, of us are being affected in serious ways. At the same time, there is no question that the elderly in our midst are especially vulnerable. We are personally aware of too many situations where seniors are experiencing alarming distress and hardship. Among many other concerns is what the previous Surgeon General Vivek H. Murth called an “epidemic of loneliness and isolation.” Dr. Vivek says,

Loneliness is far more than just a bad feeling—it harms both individual and societal health. It is associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death. Mortality impact is greater than that caused by smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day, and even greater than that caused by obesity and physical inactivity.

Also, according to the [Pew Research Center](#), 27% of Americans aged 60 and older live alone.

In this newsletter, we wish to focus on our increasing commitment to assist local seniors facing isolation and other difficulties. While certain grave or chronic problems are admittedly beyond our scope, there is so much we actually can do with the resources available to us, as you will see below in the message from Sandy Soohoo-Refaei and the testimonials from seniors we serve.

We wish to emphasize that none of these efforts could happen without the loyal, generous support of all of you in the Give a Little community.

Give a Little to Seniors

A Message from Sandy Soohoo-Refaei,
Director of Senior Programs

There are many seniors in our community who are doing their best to maintain an independent life and to age gracefully. Yet the problems can be formidable. Their budgets may be very restricted; they may be struggling with health problems or loneliness; they may be housebound. With your help, we can offer care and support.

As you may know, since 2008 we have assisted individual seniors with emergency or dire needs through community agencies and organizations that refer clients to us. These tend to be one-time applications for items or services that range from \$300-\$500 each. We fulfilled 30+ requests in the past year and expect that number to increase in 2025. Examples include: medical and dental bills, utility payments, rental assistance, and car repairs.

Additionally, we work directly, and on an ongoing basis, with more than 300 seniors in Yamhill County through our Outreach Program. We're gratified to say that we now have established a county-wide presence; we are active in McMinnville and Newberg as well as Amity, Carlton, Dayton, Sheridan, Willamina, and Yamhill.



*The strength of our Outreach Program is the **individual attention that seniors receive.** We establish contact with them by means of surveys, in-person visits, and phone calls to make sure they feel connected and supported, and we respond as quickly as possible to their requests.*

In our work with seniors, we hear again and again how much it means to them that their voices are heard and their needs are being met. Knowing that they are not alone can make all the difference.

Messages from Senior Recipients

Thank you very much for all the kind and thoughtful things you do for me all through the year. I really appreciate it. I am also grateful for your help with the eye care. I do need eyeglasses to see better. The hair salon is very special. Thank you again. You are wonderful.

We wanted to thank you all for the wonderful work and giving you do. It is a real blessing to us. The dog grooming came at a very needed time. I usually clip my little dog, but due to illness was unable to do so. He was so shaggy and hot when the hot weather hit.



Wilco got him right in and did a fantastic job. My dog is now a happy little fellow. We enjoy the News Register subscription, too.

I just want to thank you for the gift of a table magnifying reading lamp. This is much appreciated as I quilt a lot and it has been so nice to see better. I also would like to thank you for the gift card to Winco and the subscription to the News Register. It is so nice to be able to keep up with what's going on. Thank you!



I would like to thank the sponsors and anyone contributing their time and efforts to the Give a Little Foundation program in McMinnville. Receiving gift cards for groceries, gas, haircare and foot care is especially appreciated in this economy. The added

bonus of tickets to a performance at the Gallery Theater is the cherry on top! With appreciation and gratitude.

We can't thank you enough for the wonderful gifts you delivered yesterday. The excitement was too great to wait to see what such beautiful bags contained . . . Finances are tight this year so we decided not to give each other a gift. It makes yours extra special to look forward to opening.

A Letter from Village Quarter Senior Residents (McMinnville)

It is with a grateful heart that we are composing this special thank you to your organization. You have enhanced our lives in so many ways. Just the thought that there are such gracious and generous people in the world is a major benefit to us.

It is not easy, as you must realize, to live with disabilities, older age, low income, loss of family and friends, plus all the many things that affect our life. Your involvement has been a bright spot. You have given us the opportunity to enjoy events in our community, which were sometimes not something we felt we could afford, or even had never thought of trying. Tickets to the “Flower and Garden Walk,” the plays and music at Linfield University and Gallery Theatre, exercise with the park department, opportunities to learn to paint, pedicures, so many enrichments to our lives.

You have also been generous to help us enjoy our personal space. Donations of radios, lamps, fans, are a few of your wondrous gifts.

We are so grateful it is hard to express, so many things to be thankful for:

- A radio that is tuned so that our tinnitus does not make us want to scream.
- An opportunity to visit gardens that bring back memories of the ones we used to have.
- The beauty of our own flower gardens, enhanced by your group.
- The joy in attending a play with a guest where we are surrounded by laughter.
- The fun of learning to paint, when we haven’t held a brush since we were in school.
- The opportunity to enjoy activities and classes offered by the parks department.
- The ability to spend this past Thanksgiving as a “family” in our community room.

You have brought hope, community, and proof that we are not forgotten. For all this, we thank you.

With blessings and thanks,

Sincerely, the Residents of Village Quarter

Hillside Foundation Supports Seniors

We're extremely grateful to have received a major grant for 2025 from the Hillside Foundation to support the above efforts to help senior citizens experiencing crisis, hardship, or isolation.

For the past 10 years, grants from the Hillside Foundation have been instrumental in allowing us to assist individual seniors as well as to develop and expand an Outreach Program for the elderly in Yamhill County.

A special note: 99 GAL Friends of Yamhill County



As you may know, Give a Little is the founder and sponsor (sometimes called the umbrella) of the initiative called 99 GAL Friends, begun in late 2022. (See www.99galfriends.org.)

One of the group's primary objectives is to award grants to organizations that are doing essential work on behalf of seniors. For example, through one such innovative grant, Yamhill County Health and Human Services is connecting approximately 250 second-grade students in Yamhill County with 250 older adults as pen pals. Also, Meals on Wheels received a grant to deliver more than 200 holiday gift bags filled with special snacks, toiletries, and other treats to seniors in McMinnville, Newberg, and Sheridan. We are also funding classes in Tai Chi for Fall and Arthritis Prevention. Please see our website for further information on the 35 grants that have been awarded to benefit seniors and others to date.



Members of the 99 GAL Friends Senior Citizen Welfare Focus Team at the Third Annual Gala, April 5, 2025. Pictured left to right are: Sandy Soohoo-Refaei, Lynn Schwabenthal, Georgann Percival, Mary Lukehart, and Barbara Collins. Not present are Linda Behrens, Cheryl Hockaday, Linda May Taylor, and Ginny Upton.



With appreciation and warmest wishes as spring brings light and renewal,

*Lynne Barbatsis, Lynda Corbin, Michelle Golden, Jennie Gunness,
Elisabeth Leichter, Bonnie Mann, Patty O'Leary, Phillip Pirages,
Sandy Soohoo-Refaei, Rob Stephenson, Ellen Summerfield,
Ginny Upton, and Patti Webb, on behalf of everyone at Give a Little.*



www.givealittlefoundation.org