



The BRICK Ministries

Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 27, 2020

From the Director —

A new phrase has been added to the lexicon. Have you heard it? More importantly, have you felt it? “Pandemic Fatigue” is setting in all around us. Even at The BRICK, we’re wondering “How long can this last?” Staffers think longingly of a time when we could work with consumers face to face. Volunteers wonder how we’ll provide parking lot pantry services in snow and ice.

This is a tough time for all of us, yet a recurring theme I see in self-care articles is to get out of my own head. Yoga, outside time, staying connected with friends and family all help.

Gratitude is another. While it might not seem like there’s much to be grateful for (California wildfires, systemic racism, a derecho, double-digit unemployment, hurricanes, *AND* a pandemic), we can be thankful. In fact, The BRICK is experiencing one of its most financially stable years, due to the extreme generosity of our supporters! We’ve also had an influx of new volunteers who have stepped up to fill the gaps in our schedule due to COVID-19. Read more about some of our donors and how *you* can support our work in the pages to come.

One more way to overcome the stress is to model kindness. By choosing to behave kindly, we combat negativity. We give others hope, and in doing so we increase our own hopefulness. Kindness can be simple – like wearing my mask. Sometimes kindness can be more difficult. It can be hard to be kind to people who don’t share my . . . insert your own obstacle here.

Kindness is exactly what The BRICK is all about. When someone comes for help, we provide it – without judgment. We make a conscious choice to not lay blame. We don’t lecture about what they did wrong and what they should have done instead. We meet them where they’re at. We are kind.

That kindness is what sets The BRICK apart. That kindness feeds our souls; for when we chose to share that kindness, we are a reflection of the all-powerful Love that gives hope – and relief from Pandemic Fatigue!



Liz Seefeldt, Executive Director



From the Office
Cheyenne Reeves



Summer is certainly the season of abundance! I have been getting my hands in the dirt as much as possible this season—including at the garden plot organized by our very own Bill Polencheck in Mellen. The Mellen community garden is positively THRIVING and brimming to the top with fresh produce! As the harvest season continues, we will be partnering with CORE Community Resources to glean at local farms. Folks who are interested in helping out with any garden or harvesting work are encouraged to reach out to me about upcoming opportunities!

This Fall, we are partnering with Liz Lexau from UW-Extension’s Bayfield County office on a four-part in-service series called “Taking Care of You.” This is a research-based program designed to aid participants in developing self-care practices that promote greater overall wellbeing. Part 1 of the series was recently held in August, yet you can attend whichever works for you. Keep an eye out on your inbox for more details on these events!

As we ease into a new school year, I look forward to introducing new interns from both Northland College and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College for the fall semester. It is always exciting to provide a platform to students to delve deep into their learning experience while also catalyzing exciting projects for the organization!

Earlier this year, the Volunteer Program received an award of \$2,000 from the Duluth Superior Area Community to help support the additional time I have been able to contribute around the office and work to bolster up the volunteers that provide us with so much.



I would like to finish out by giving a big thank you to each and every volunteer that contributes their hard work and energy to help us stay afloat day to day. So far in 2020, 158 volunteers have contributed a total of 4,131 volunteer hours across each of our locations. This translates to a monthly average of 587 volunteer hours—incredible! We truly couldn’t do this work without you! If you are interested in learning more about our volunteer program, please contact me at: (715) 682-7425 | officemanager.thebrick@centurytel.net.

Meet Our Intern: James Ogilvie!

Hello. I chose The BRICK to do my internship with because it is different than other organizations I have volunteered at or worked for. I am going to school for Human Services and I plan on working with underprivileged youth in a treatment facility. I have volunteered my time as a coach, firefighter, EMT and various other organizations since my early 20s. Nothing brings me more satisfaction than doing something for others.



Thank You for Making a Difference!

The BRICK's Benevolence Program is as busy as ever! Even though many programs extended benefits this spring and summer due to COVID-19, some of those vital programs came to an end well before folks got back on their feet. We see that firsthand when our Benevolence Manger gets a call asking for help.



Our Make A Difference Fund is what we use to help consumers catch up on their rent and utility bills. Our donors' generosity keeps our programs running strong. Business and grant partners make sizeable donations throughout the year, and we raise an equal amount from the community. Those matching funds help The BRICK make double the impact! Usually, Northwoods Community Credit Union hosts Grilling for The BRICK; that didn't happen this year. But their team didn't forget about our work. Instead, when NCCU obtained a COVID-19 Relief Grant through the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago they passed on a portion of that to The BRICK. The Chequama-care COVID-19 Response Fund, sponsored by Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, also awarded \$5,000 to our Benevolence Program. Additional supporters include the ABC Thrift Store, Washburn Iron Works, and the Kimberly-Clark Foundation, as well as Northwoods Paving and Northern State Bank (recognized in our June 2020 edition).

But how do we cover the program overhead? Since 2018, The BRICK has had the support of Head of the Lakes United Way. Their team recognizes that in order for our program to be successful, we need someone with the training and experience to work with people who reach out for help. Those landlord checks don't write themselves! HLUW's ongoing grant helps keep this program strong!

THANK YOU to all the individuals, businesses, churches, and fraternal organizations who have made donations to help keep our community members in their homes!



Food Shelf Locations and Hours



Ashland, 420 Ellis Ave., Mondays-Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.



Cable Area Food Shelf, 13380 Spruce St., 4th Thursday Jan.-Oct., 3rd Thursdays, Nov.-Dec., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



South Shore Food Shelf, Cornucopia, Bell Community Ctr., 22615 Co. Hwy. C, 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Helping Hands Food Shelf, Mellen, Mellen City Hall, 102 Bennett St., 3rd Thursday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.





Tony Erba

Tony is genuinely one of the coolest people I have had the pleasure of chatting with recently.

Originally from California, he graduated from Humboldt State University before pursuing a 35-year career with the US Forest Service. Over the years, Tony led a team that supported the decision to restore critical bull trout habitat in the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, supported the completion of the Maah Daah Hey Trail across the Badlands geography, and worked at the National Headquarters in Washington, DC to complete an important planning and decision-making policy. Tony and his wife, Vikki, cite the Dixie National Forest in Utah as the most aesthetically pleasing environment they've lived in. Tony's career eventually brought him to the Northwoods as he worked with the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and Eastern Region Regional Office.

After retiring in May 2019, Tony and Vikki made the decision to retire in Cable, where they would be able to enjoy the natural landscape and community activities. Since then, Tony has become involved in an array of charitable organizations, including our very own Cable Area Food Shelf! There, Tony helps unload deliveries from the Ashland home site as well as prepares food boxes for participants. Tony has been known to go above and beyond to help out each month. In addition to working with our pantry, Tony delivers for Meals on Wheels and sits on the boards of the Cable Community Farm and the Lincoln Community Forest.

Tony's interest in volunteering stemmed from a desire to become familiar with the local area and fellow community members, but it has ultimately become a grounding experience to counter the many concerning current events that are plaguing the world at large. Outside of volunteering, Tony and Vikki spend a lot of time outdoors enjoying snowshoeing, hiking, camping, canoeing, biking, and fishing. Tony is especially looking forward to ice fishing and has particularly enjoyed becoming reacquainted with cycling since getting a mountain bike. If you have the chance to meet Tony, be sure to let him know we appreciate all he does for the community!

Cheyenne Reeves, Office Manager



Outlet Buzz

South Shore Food Shelf : Cornucopia, WI

No doubt this year has been unlike any other and has presented challenges to everyone. Who has not been touched by COVID-19 and its effects on the economy and society in general? Here in the Northwoods of Wisconsin we may not see or feel the effects of the virus like the more urban southern part of our state, but it is here and the food shelf can be a big help to households struggling because of it.

People here have opened their hearts to help those in need with increased donations of food and cash. Volunteers have stepped up also reaching out to lend a hand wherever needed.

Thanks to staff at the homesite for giving us the tools to keep everyone safe with masks, gloves, and sanitizer, also, for the guidelines we need to practice safe procedures with our clients and our new curbside pick-up. We will continue to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 to keep our clients and volunteers safe and healthy.

John Hall, South Shore Food Shelf



Emma Calaway

Food Shelf Manager

A little note from inside the Food Shelf...

This is one of my favorite times of the year with so much fresh produce. It's such a blessing to our consumers to receive all the wonderful locally grown food, especially cucumbers, zucchini, basil, and tomatoes! As we transition into the fall much is still unknown about what the winter will look like with curb-side service, but we will be open and doing whatever is needed to serve our area.

I just want to say thank you to all our volunteers who have stepped up to help us during these uncertain times; no work goes unnoticed.





Photos



Many thanks to the O'Brien family & everyone who made the 11th Annual Jack O'Brien Memorial Charity Golf Tournament possible!

We are so excited to partner with the Chequamegon Food Co-Op as the August "Round Up for Partners" recipient!



Our Mellen Community Garden is really beginning to flourish! We love offering the freshest produce we can during the harvest season!

Covenant Churches

Ashland Seventh-day Adventist Church

622 10th Ave. W — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-5877

Cable Congregational United Church of Christ

13445 County Hwy. M — Cable WI 54821
(715) 798-3066

Chequamegon Community Church of Assemblies of God

1451 County Hwy. C — Washburn, WI 54891
(715) 373-2939

Congregational United Church of Christ

117 West St. — Mellen, WI 54546-0019
(715) 274-2203

First Assembly of God

315 10th St. W — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 274-2203

First Lutheran Church

83105 Washington Ave. — Port Wing WI 54865
(715) 774-3576

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

311 13th St. W — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-4510

Grace Bible Fellowship

73605 State Hwy. 13 — Washburn WI 54891
(715) 373-1175

Grand View United Methodist Church

22180 US Hwy. 63 — Grand View WI 54839
(715) 763-3340

Immanuel Lutheran Church

22555 Elm St. — Cornucopia WI 54827
(715) 742-3440

Messiah Lutheran Church

231 5th St. W — Washburn WI 54891
(715) 373-5378

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

106 North 2nd Ave. E — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-7620

St. Mary's Catholic Church

c/o 106 North 2nd Ave. E — Ashland WI 54806
(Odanah, WI 54861)
(715) 682-7620

Salem Baptist Church

118 2nd Ave. E — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-3934

Sanborn United Methodist Church

42745 County Hwy. E — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 278-3955

Saron Lutheran Church

517 9th Ave. W — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-2376

United Presbyterian and First Congregational Church

214 Vaughn Ave. — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-3093

Washburn United Methodist Church

326 Washington Ave. — Washburn WI 54891
PO Box 27
(715) 373-2696

Zion Lutheran Church

1111 11th Ave. W — Ashland WI 54806
(715) 682-6075

From the Board Room

Julie Stipetich



New normal, social distancing, global pandemic, unprecedented and uncertain times – these are phrases that have become very familiar during the last six months. And while our nation and community fight a viral pandemic there are some things that remain constant, namely, The BRICK, which remains consistent in providing food and emergency services for individuals and families in our community.

My name is Julie Stipetich and I have been a member of The BRICK Board of Directors for four years. For three of those four years I served as the Secretary of the Board. Skills, such as communication, organization, and multitasking, were valuable in my role as Secretary. Those skills will continue to be of value in my new role as the President of the Board of Directors.

As President of the Board I look forward to working in closer partnership with the passionate and enthusiastic Executive Director and staff members. Together we will continue to build on the successes of the past and to plan for the future of our organization. I realize the importance and value of our dedicated volunteers who assist in providing the services offered by The BRICK. I appreciate our generous donors who continue to support our organization financially and with fresh food. I value each of the members of our Board who are responsible for being good stewards of our organization's resources. I realize the work and services provided by The BRICK are a team effort. Each of these vital groups – our staff, our volunteers, our donors, and our Board - has responded to Jesus' call to compassionately love and serve our neighbors. With humility, patience, kindness, and sincere resolve, I look forward to serving as President of The BRICK Ministries.



09/10/20: Virtual Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

09/25/20: Virtual Volunteer In-Service: Taking Care of You – Part 2, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

10/08/20: Virtual Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

10/23/20: Virtual Volunteer In-Service: Taking Care of You – Part 3, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

11/12/20: Virtual Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

11/27/20: Virtual Volunteer In-Service: Taking Care of You – Part 4, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

TBD: Volunteer Civil Rights Training, locations and times TBD



The BRICK Goes Solar!

A few years ago, The BRICK included solar energy in its long-term improvement plan. It's a smart move to reduce utility expenses and to generate clean energy. But with the purchase of its facility, cash was tight. The solar would have to wait. That was until Eric Udelhofen called from OneEnergy Renewables, a solar project developer.



The OneEnergy Renewables Team

OneEnergy had high-quality, modern solar modules to donate to a worthy Ashland nonprofit. OneEnergy was the solar developer on the recently constructed Xcel Energy community solar garden in Ashland. The modules were extra parts, and OneEnergy wanted something good to come from their surplus.

Solar modules represent roughly 15% of the cost of a small solar project. The other 85% is additional materials and labor. Jolma Electric of Ashland agreed to perform its installation services at cost, and the total project expense was reduced by 22%. Then C&S Design & Engineering reduced their cost by 50%, further lowering the total price. These three businesses are demonstrating an alternative approach about the role of companies in society and a commitment to be the change that they wish to see in the world.

Now The BRICK has begun its fundraising campaign. An awning style installation was designed and the modules will fill the south façade of the facility. The full project would cost \$31,990 of which 75% has already been raised. A GoFundMe site has been set up to fund the remaining amount, and we only have \$8,060 to go! If you can help go to:

<https://bit.ly/3k0IeLm> to donate. If you'd rather make a donation with a check, simply write "solar" on the memo line and mail it to The BRICK.

During this time of COVID-19, it is encouraging to see that community-building defeats fear, love overcomes hatred, and clean energy offsets fossil fuels. With the support of this community, The BRICK is choosing the alternative path, the culture of service.

-from an article by Bill Bailey, Chequamegon Bay Renewables



Sam Ray
Benevolence Manager



Gabe and Ariel have managed their money well throughout their marriage. Then came a pandemic and like many other families has turned their world upside down. Gabe's work requires going into people's homes, and those opportunities are limited right now. Ariel made the difficult decision to leave her job because she worked with the public, and her son, Gavin, has an autoimmune disease. All this has caused their income to decrease significantly.

As the bills began to pile up, Gabe and Ariel made the hard choice to ask for help. They came to The BRICK to get food and realized we also help with bills and referrals. I encouraged them to request an application for the Wisconsin Rental Assistance Program through the Northwest Wisconsin Community Services Agency (NWCSA) in Superior. These are the funds the government set aside to help specifically with those affected by the virus. I also told them about the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program through County Human Services for help with their Xcel Energy bill. The BRICK was able to help with a portion of the water bill. When they left The BRICK, all their problems were not solved, but they had hope for some financial relief.

Right now, we are all experiencing challenges surrounding COVID-19. While we are all in this together, some of us have more challenges than others. As we continue to navigate this new normal, I hope you will prayerfully consider how you can support those with more challenges. Whether it be a monetary contribution, volunteering, your sincere prayers, or all three, they are all much needed during this difficult time. Please do what you can to limit the spread of this virus.

If you know of anyone who needs these resources, please refer them directly:

- NWCSA – Superior Office: 715-392-5127
- Ashland County Human Services: 715-682-7004
- Bad River Department of Social and Family Services: 715-682-7127
- Bayfield County Human Services: 715-373-6144
- Red Cliff Social Services: 715-779-3706



Donation for The BRICK Ministries, Inc.

The BRICK welcomes your support in fulfilling its vision "To provide services and build relationships to change people's circumstances and lives through Christ." The BRICK Ministries, Inc. is 501(c)(3) tax exempt status as determined by the IRS. 100% of your donation is tax deductible.

Enclosed is my gift of (circle one):

\$30 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other \$ _____

Designate my gift to (circle one):

Make a Difference Fund Food Shelf General

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Make checks payable to:

The BRICK Ministries

420 Elis Ave.

Ashland, WI 54806

THE BRICK MINISTRIES, INC.

420 ELLIS AVENUE

ASHLAND, WI 54806

Phone 715-682-7425

Fax 715-682-7427

 @TheBRICKministries

www.thebrickministries.com

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The BRICK

Ministries Inc.

Believers Reaching Individuals for Christ's Kingdom



Our Mission: The BRICK lives Christ's message to compassionately love and respect those in need.

Our Vision: To provide services and build relationships to change people's circumstances and lives through Christ.

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