



# Sharing the Health

**NOKOMIS HEALTHY SENIORS**

**4120 17th Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407**

**Winter/Spring 2011**

**Volume 15, Number 1**

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## Mayor Rybak Visits Nokomis Healthy Seniors

On the 18th of November, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak paid a visit to Nokomis Healthy Seniors.

As it was a Thursday morning, he was able to see (and take part in!) the exercise class, the Nurse Is In clinic and chat with our seniors. The Mayor was most interested in what the seniors liked about the NHS program, what the city's programs may be lacking and what our community's seniors want to see for the future.

Mayor Rybak spoke in depth with NHS Executive Director Kristen Whittenbaugh about the needs Nokomis Healthy Seniors is filling for the seniors of our community. He listened with interest as Kristen highlighted our unique Exercise and Arts classes, and the growth of our blood pressure clinics throughout the 14 neighborhoods served by NHS.

The Mayor asked for Kristen's thoughts on what it would take to have more programs like NHS in other parts of the city. Kristen shared her strong belief that as long as there are volunteers to support the program, and there are seniors participating, anything is possible. Volunteers are the backbone of NHS' success in



supporting the seniors of our community and Kristen told the Mayor that NHS could not be the successful program it is today without them.

The Mayor enjoyed his time with NHS and came away with a new understanding and appreciation of what a program such as Nokomis Healthy Seniors can do for the individuals and communities of Minneapolis.

Nokomis Healthy Seniors receives annual support from the city of Minneapolis. In 2010 NHS received \$22,000 through Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds held by the city. Each year NHS and other local social services programs apply for the limited funds available, making it important that city officials such as the Mayor see the benefits of their funding.

# News From the Board Chair

Greetings,

I'd like to start by offering a special thank you to Colleen Connolly Swope, Vice Chair of the Nokomis Healthy Seniors Board, for stepping in to take the helm during my recent absence. I appreciate her help!

Now is the time to pause and reflect on 2010 and to look ahead to 2011.

Highlights from 2010:

- Generous donations and volunteers: The financial response to the annual letter, year-end letter and each event was wonderful! Volunteers who serve as drivers, visitors, grocery shoppers and handymen are the heart of Nokomis Healthy Seniors. Thank you!
- The spring Clean-A-Thon: Cleaning teams not only washed windows, scrubbed stoves, vacuumed floors and raked leaves but also developed relationships with area seniors. It is not unusual to learn through these conversations that the senior and clean team members know someone in common.
- The public media: The July Star Tribune front page article, "Helping Seniors Stay at Home" highlighted two seniors who receive services through Nokomis Healthy Seniors. During a second media event in October, Fox 9 News told the Nokomis Healthy Seniors story and promoted the Fall Frolic. With each media event the NHS phones rang with people asking how they can receive services or inquiring about volunteer opportunities.
- The Fall Frolic was successful with a book sale, bingo, silent auction, meal and music. There was something for everyone!

Looking ahead:

- The strategic plan is still in process and will be completed in early 2011. The State of Minnesota and housing contractors are studying the current and future needs of our senior population. In this current climate, the Board continues to assess our collected data and determine a plan that fits senior needs for the next 3-5 years.
- In January, the board will welcome new board members who will bring their skills and interest in seniors. They will be introduced in the next newsletter.
- Saturday, April 30, is the Clean-A-Thon. It is not too early to circle the date on your 2011 calendar and start planning your cleaning team!

Gratefully,  
Sharon Rodi  
Board Chair

## House Cleaners Needed!

If you're a house cleaner in need of clients, we can help! We often get calls from seniors looking for this type of assistance. Please call the NHS office (612.729.5499) to be added to the referral list.

# Spring Clean-A-Thon Is Just Around the Corner

Although winter has tightened its icy grip on the state, it's not too early to start thinking about warmer days ahead – and, in particular, Nokomis Healthy Seniors' 2011 Clean-A-Thon! This year's Clean-A-Thon, the program's 9th, will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2011.



The annual Clean-A-Thon is one of Nokomis Healthy Seniors' main fundraising events. Each spring "clean teams" made up of three to five volunteers spend a Saturday morning cleaning the home of a senior in the community who has requested cleaning assistance. Team members raise money for NHS by collecting pledges from sponsors. Seniors benefit by receiving a thorough cleaning of hard-to-reach places in their homes. Some seniors have team members do yard work or other household chores that would be difficult for them to do.

Since its inception in 2003 when two teams, the "Dust Bunnies" and "Clean Sweep," cleaned the first two homes, the Clean-A-Thon has grown every year, both in the number of volunteers on the clean teams and in the number of seniors assisted. In 2010, 14 teams cleaned 19 houses and raised more than \$2,500 for Nokomis Healthy Seniors programs. Each year, teams engage in a friendly competition for the prestigious trophies: the Bronze Broom, the Silver Dustpan, and the coveted Golden Plunger, an ordinary toilet bowl plunger that has been transformed with the help of

gold spray paint into a trophy worthy of the Oscars! In addition to breakfast treats before the event and pizza afterwards, team



members enjoy the camaraderie of working together, the satisfaction of helping others, and the privilege of getting to know some of our neighborhood's seniors, many of whom share stories (or even delicious home-baked goodies!) with the teams.

The Clean-A-Thon is truly a community event. Teams have been made up of NHS board members, staff, and volunteers, their friends and family members, members of church youth groups, and even local political figures. Local businesses support the event through monetary sponsorships and by donating cleaning supplies and food for hungry team members.

If you are a senior who would like assistance with a cleaning project this spring, or a volunteer for the event, please contact the Nokomis Healthy Seniors office at 612.729.5499.



## Senior Profile: Delila Cotton

By Judy Grimes

This five-foot-five wisp of a woman recalls fond memories of driving a semi-trailer truck over the road in the 48 states, running a general store with her husband, and visiting Graceland. Delila Cotton has had a full and diverse life from working as a secretary and studying medical technology, to helping to unload a truck full of watermelons (one of her favorite memories).

Delila has had her share of sadness and loss including the death of her only daughter at 24 years of age and the loss of vision in one eye after a surgery that didn't go as planned, yet she comes across as a woman who enjoys the people she encounters. She's an avid Elvis Presley fan and has some wonderful wedding photos of him and Priscilla and of Graceland. She also has a picture of her with George Burns at his 90th birthday celebration at Caesar's Palace. She has rubbed elbows with many celebrities in her life and has fond memories of those encounters.

Delila is a devoted animal lover who has rescued dogs more than once. Years ago, when she was on an over-the-road trip, she came across a rain-soaked and starving year-old pup who was wandering in a parking lot in Oklahoma. She checked on him after going out for dinner, then again after a movie. As no one had rescued him yet she took him to the police station, and was told there wasn't much they could do for him; he just didn't look good enough to be adopted. Delila didn't agree with that and nursed him back to health, giving her a faithful companion in



Okie for the next 18 years. She enjoys the companionship of a dog and after Okie adopted an adorable Bichon Frise named Briana. Briana was recently hit by a car and Delila misses her dearly.

Delila has a sincere affection for her "family" at Nokomis Healthy Seniors. She speaks lovingly of Wally, a volunteer driver who patiently waited with her at doctor appointments and graciously offered his services when she was in need. Her gratitude for NHS was almost palpable during our interview. She truly loves this organization which has helped her many, many times and continues to do so even though she recently moved a short way outside the NHS service area, as she was unable to remain in her home due to health issues.

Despite the difficulties, Delila carries on. She has a strong faith that helps her through the trials and values the support of the devoted staff at Nokomis Healthy Seniors. She sings the praises of this dedicated organization to all who will listen.

## Volunteers: We Need You!

Nokomis Healthy Seniors is looking for a little help for our seniors in the community. Perhaps you or someone you know, (a son or daughter, grandchild or friend) would like to get involved. Any help would be appreciated, opportunities include:

- Respite volunteers: Give a caregiver a little time off. This is non-medical and training is provided.
- Drivers: Help a senior in your community get to their medical appointments. Training is provided.
- House cleaners: Help a senior keep their home in order.

We are looking for people to volunteer even just a couple of hours a month. Every little bit helps! Please call the NHS office at 612.729.5499 or stop by for more information.

# Volunteer Profile: Sandi Finke

By Jean Gotfredson

If you call the office of Nokomis Healthy Seniors, chances are you may be greeted by the friendly voice of Sandi Finke who has been a volunteer in the office for about three years.

Sandi retired from her position as an accountant at Honeywell after 30 years of employment. She then worked part time at Barnes and Noble for 3 years. After retiring, she felt she needed to be involved in her community and just happened to see the sign on the door of the office on 42nd and Cedar. She filled out an application and soon began helping out in the office, working two days per week. Her duties include answering phones and composing and mailing donation acknowledgement letters. She has single-handedly revised and organized the tracking of the resource system the NHS staff uses to put seniors in touch with the services they need. The NHS staff have found her help to be invaluable.

Because she found her volunteer experience very rewarding, she recruited her sister Marci to help out in the office. Both Sandi and Marci provide rides to seniors when the need arises, and the NHS staff can't say



enough about their willingness to go the extra mile to help seniors and all those involved with NHS.

In addition to her many activities, Sandi enjoys watching the Minnesota Gophers basketball games. She is an avid reader and loves to garden.

Thank you, Sandi, for being so willing to donate your time and talent to the seniors in the Nokomis community!

## Join Us!

Happy New Year from the NHS Program Committee!

We are pleased to report that we will continue to provide all you healthy seniors with opportunities to stay that way: exercise, health information and chances to socialize.

Our Thursday "Nurse Is In" is a great way to keep track of that blood pressure and an equally important chance to meet with other seniors over treats and coffee. The conversations are lively and lots of fun! We are going to be

adding a jigsaw puzzle table shortly so stop by and help us find the pieces that fit. The puzzle will be rolled-up and brought out each week so it will be a work in progress. You can also stop by and play cards each week during game-time Thursdays at 11am.

The exercise classes are going great and we still have room for more of you. Improving your flexibility and balance are keys to keeping fit and avoiding falls (especially at this time of year). The exercises are done sitting or standing – no exercises

require getting down on the floor, so everyone can participate. Men and women are welcome so come join us every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 to 10:45am at Bethel Church.

We will also be offering a lunch and movie on the 5th Thursday of each quarter. Watch for further information at "Nurse Is In" or call the office for more details.

All the NHS offerings are great fun but we need you to join in the programs for them to be successful. We're counting on you!

# Kristen's Korner

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season.

Fall of 2010 was a busy one for Nokomis Healthy Seniors! In November Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak paid NHS a visit on a Thursday morning to see the programs in action. A special thank you goes to Herb Nelson who worked tirelessly with the Mayor's office to get him to come see what NHS has done for the community for over 16 years. Please see the article on page 1 for more information about the Mayor's visit.

Fox 9 interviewed NHS staff and seniors and got the word out to the larger Minneapolis community about what NHS has to offer in a story that ran on the Fox 9 Morning News in October. I'd like to say a special thank you to Padma Hadjmadi, Herb Nelson and especially to Lee and Jo Jacobs for helping NHS to put the terrific story together.

Nokomis Healthy Seniors' Fall Frolic in October was a hit! I'd like to thank everyone who attended and contributed to our 3rd annual event to make it such a success. It was great fun and a wonderful fundraiser for Nokomis Healthy Seniors. Please see our article on page \_\_\_ for more details.

Lastly, I want to send out a special thank you to the Allianz Life Insurance Company and Home Instead for providing holiday gift bags to seniors in the Nokomis area. The gifts are greatly appreciated.

A special welcome back to our Board Chair Sharon Rodi. Sharon has been away from us recuperating from an automobile accident but she is slowly making her return! While Sharon was away, our Vice Chair, Colleen Swope stepped up to lead NHS. Thank you, Colleen, and welcome back, Sharon!

Have a wonderful and winter and get ready for spring. It can't get here soon enough for me!

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## DO YOU KNOW THE SERVICES WE OFFER?

### Home Care by RNs and Home Health Aides

- Assessments and health teaching
- Personal care --bathing assistance and light housekeeping
- Medication management

### Blood Pressure Clinics/ Health Education

- Nurse Is In* blood pressure clinic every Thursday morning with pedicures
- Congregate Dining
- Blood pressure clinics at Standish Green Apartments (open to residents and nonresidents)

### Senior Helpline

- Referrals and resources for almost any need (e.g., snow removal)
- Handyman help

### Support Groups and Education

- Caregiver support group
- Low vision support group
- Monthly health programs

### Transportation

- Medical/dental appointments
- Flu shots
- Prescription pick-up
- Voting
- Food shelves

### Volunteer Matches

- Friendly visiting
- Grocery shopping

**For information on any of these services, please call the NHS office at 612.729.5499**

## Health Programs and Other Notes

**January 26** 1:30 p.m.

Memory Loss & Dementia  
Dr. Abby Holley

**February 23** 1:30 p.m.

Caregivers & Respite Care  
Marge Spagl, Catholic Charities

**March 30** 1:30 p.m.

Music  
Mary Hall, Musician

**April 27** 1:30 p.m.

Medication Safety Tips  
Peggy Kaproth, Pharmacist

**Meetings are held at Faith Lutheran Church,  
3430 East 51st Street**

*These programs are free and open to the public.  
Beverages and treats will be provided. If you need  
a ride to any activities please call the NHS office.*

### **Nurse Is In**

**What is Nurse Is In?** You can get your blood pressure checked, consult with a nurse or schedule a pedicure. You can also just stop in to chat over a cup of coffee and baked goods. The clinic is free, but there is a \$28 charge for a pedicure.

**When:** Every Thursday morning from 9 a.m. to noon at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South.

### **Exercise Program**

Every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 to 11 a.m., NHS offers exercise classes at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church.

All classes are tailored to each participant's abilities. A donation of \$1 per class is appreciated.

### **Blood Pressure Clinics**

*These blood pressure checks are free and open to the public.*

#### **Standish Green Apartments**

2210 East 40th Street

The fourth Thursday of every month at 12:30 p.m.  
Open to all community members

#### **Holy Cross Lutheran Church**

1720 East Minnehaha Parkway

The first Thursday of every month at 12:30 p.m.  
The church has Congregate Dining every weekday.  
If you would like to make a meal reservation, call Evelyn at 612.729.6668. The cost of the meal is \$3.

### **Support Groups**

These groups are free and open to the public.

#### **Low Vision Group**

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South

The second Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m.  
Julie Rindelaub from Vision Loss Resources facilitates.

#### **Caregiver Support Group**

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South

The last Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The group will meet on Nov. 18 and Dec. 16 due to the holidays. This group is open to anyone who is a caregiver for a loved one. Aggie Sorenson, parish nurse, is the group facilitator.

#### **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 East 46th Street

The fourth Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Child care is available, please call NHS to arrange.



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## Fall Frolic Recap

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported Nokomis Healthy Seniors' 3rd annual Fall Frolic fundraising event. More than 200 people attended the event held Saturday, Oct. 16th at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church. Games, fun and fellowship were had by all. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful choral music provided by the Choralaires and the Southside Singers. Fat Lorenzo's provided delicious pasta, salad and bread for lunch and the NHS Board of Directors provided sweet treats for dessert.

Through everyone's generous support, the event raised more than \$4,500 to support the mission of Nokomis Healthy Seniors: helping seniors remain safely in their homes.

**Platinum Sponsor**

Fat Lorenzo's

**Silver Sponsors**

APA Medical  
Cedar QuickStop  
Gentle Transitions  
Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin  
County Commissioner  
Wells Fargo –  
Chicago Ave Branch

**Bronze Sponsor**

Classic Theaters Corp

Thank you to the area businesses and volunteers for their silent auction contributions, and a special heartfelt thanks goes to all the volunteers who made this event a success!