

Heartland Reopens!

Closing Heartland Senior Services a year ago was the only responsible option. But that decision came with the knowledge that many clients in the Adult Day Center program would struggle with physical and mental setbacks. Caregivers had fewer options for respite from the constant responsibility of monitoring a loved one with memory issues.

For families caring for a loved one with memory issues, ensuring a regular routine, building social connections, and maintaining an exercise regimen often helps offset symptoms like anxiety, restlessness, and confusion. Unfortunately, those were exactly the types of activities interrupted by the more than year-long pandemic.

“Pausing our in-person services was heart-wrenching for staff because we knew the difficulties that it would create for our clients and their families,” said Heartland Executive Director Nancy Carroll.

“From the day Heartland shut its doors, the staff diligently began following health and safety recommendations to prepare for reopening; all signs indicate that day has arrived,” said Carroll. With more seniors vaccinated and COVID-19 hospitalizations dropping, Heartland will welcome back clients in June. That’s good news for families who have weathered the pandemic and all its challenges like the Karl and Barbara Gwiasda family.

The Gwiasdas have lived in Ames more than 50 years and started to use Heartland’s Adult Day Center program when the pandemic hit. For the past few years, Barbara had been experiencing short-term memory problems caused by a series of small strokes. As routine tasks became increasingly difficult, Barbara became more anxious, depressed, and withdrawn. The programs at Heartland were helping Barbara, but the pandemic changed everything.

“Mom was already struggling with tracking time, but without a routine, it got worse,” said Susan Gwiasda, the couple’s daughter. “The pandemic curtailed a lot of activities that helped her know the days of the week like attending church services, having weekly dinner with grandkids, or going to the grocery store. We hoped going to Heartland would become one of the things that helped Mom focus.”

After more than a year, Heartland is looking forward to welcoming back old friends and encouraging new faces to join in the activities and programs Heartland has to offer. Heartland Executive Director Nancy Carroll knows there may be some trepidation with coming back, and she understands the lingering distress of the past year.

“It’s been a long journey to get to where we are today, and we are going to exercise safe practices and procedures

when reopening Heartland,” Carroll said. “We are following CDC guidelines to best ensure a safe environment for our participants. We are excited to welcome everyone back - we have missed our seniors terribly!”



You Look So Familiar!

Barbara Gwiasda holds her “mini me” Christmas ornament purchased because of its uncanny resemblance.

If Barbara Gwiasda looks like a familiar face, it’s very possible you have crossed paths. After years working at JC Penney, First National Bank, and as a member of the support staff at the Iowa State University’s International Office, Barbara remained busy in retirement by volunteering through Good Neighbor, St. Cecilia’s Church, the League of Women Voters, and Friends of International Women.

Always organizing behind the scenes, she arranged social outings for newcomers to Ames, helped vulnerable populations get access to services, and stayed up to date on local issues. Coming to Heartland helps Barbara connect with others, participate in activities, get physical exercise, and engage social skills she had perfected over the years. When asked about her favorite part of going to Heartland, Barbara doesn’t take long to answer. “It’s the people,” she says. “They are all so nice. It’s good to see them.”

HSS and Central Iowa RSVP Partner to Offer Grocery Ordering and Delivery Service for Homebound Seniors or Disabled Individuals of Any Age

For tech-savvy and able-bodied shoppers, ordering groceries on-line is easy. For a homebound senior or someone with a disability, it's not so simple. During the pandemic, it became evident that some members of our community needed additional support in getting their groceries.

Heartland Senior Services and Central Iowa RSVP formed a partnership to support individuals with a grocery ordering and delivery service. Trustworthy volunteers will help homebound seniors or disabled individuals of any age from start to finish; they will help order groceries online, pick them up at the selected store, and place them in the cupboard, if need be!

If you or someone you know could benefit from this service, visit our website at heartlandseniorservice.com or call 515-233-2906. Program details are listed, including a Participation Application Form. To volunteer for this program, visit the same website or telephone RSVP at 515-292-8890.



Volunteers will support program participants by picking up their ordered groceries.

Why Your Donation Counts

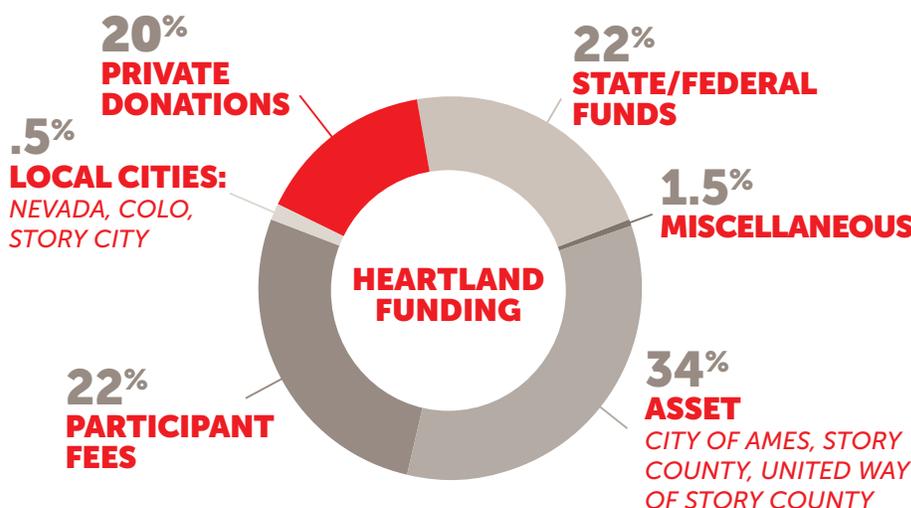
Donations comprise approximately 20% of Heartland's annual budget. They are critical to ensuring we meet pressing needs of seniors in Story County. "Private donations are needed so we can continue to support seniors," says Nancy Carroll, Executive Director of Heartland. "Private donations play a critical role in helping Heartland support all aspects of a senior's life."

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Your support is needed and appreciated

Have a heart for Heartland