

# RSVP Volunteer Program

RSVP IS A PROGRAM OF THE WESTERN DAIRYLAND COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

*Home-delivered Meal Drivers Deliver More Than a Meal* | Jan/Feb 2020



**Pictured: RSVP Volunteer Royal Ottum**

In the weeks before Christmas, the RSVP Program had the pleasure of visiting the Panther Café in rural Gilmanton. That day, we took away more than a newsletter story. Walking in, you are welcomed by colorful porch pots, hand-made wood art, and a smile. Sitting down at the table we were instantly greeted by RSVP volunteer Royal, and a couple of congregate meal patrons. Right away, one of the gentlemen declared that they had a total of 147 participants for their holiday meal! As our conversation progressed, we began to understand why. Not only do customers, congregate, and home-delivered meal participants receive a delicious and nutritious meal, they receive lots of socialization which is very important, especially in rural areas. There is definitely small town charm in this place- as many customers also received a holiday 'goody bag' filled by the Gilmanton community club.

Five days a week at the Panther Café, volunteer drivers help deliver a meal to homebound seniors and/or disabled individuals. RSVP volunteer, Royal Ottum, delivers meals 2-3 times a week. Typically he arrives at 10:30 to pick up the meals for the day and begin his route. Most days he drives an average of 60 miles and delivers, on average, 8 meals per day. Royal returns back to the café around 12 or 12:30 depending on the number of meals he delivers that day. RSVP volunteer, Sharon Meier "teams up" with Royal. Each volunteer has their designated delivery day and it offers a good balance to both volunteers. They both have other personal commitments and working together offers them more flexibility while still volunteering to make an impact in the community.

Royal has three children and five grandchildren. When he is not delivering meals, he is busy entertaining his grandchildren. Or are they entertaining him? Perhaps a little of both! During the visit, he shared delightful, fun stories of his time with them. He is definitely able to get the best of both worlds-volunteering and spending time with family.

Royal shared that he gets a lot out of volunteer driving as an RSVP volunteer. He likes to be social and volunteering a couple of days a week is a good balance for him.

**Continued Page 3...**

Western Dairyland EOC Inc. is a private, non-profit community action agency established in 1966 for the purpose of alleviating poverty-related conditions and assisting low-income families to achieve their economic self-reliance. We welcome your comments & suggestions about the Western Dairyland RSVP program.

#### **RSVP Contact Information**

##### **Address:**

Western Dairyland EOC Inc. RSVP Program  
23122 Whitehall Road  
PO Box 125  
Independence, WI 54747

##### **Office hours:**

Monday - Friday from 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

##### **Website:**

[www.westerndairyland.org/rsvp.phtml](http://www.westerndairyland.org/rsvp.phtml)

##### **RSVP Program Director**

Cheryl Padula 715-985-2391 Ext. 1205  
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##### **RSVP Program Coordinator**

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##### **RSVP Program Assistant**

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[Heahter.milas@wdeoc.org](mailto:Heahter.milas@wdeoc.org)

## **Welcome New Volunteers!!**

Ellen Gearing

Don Oesau

Mary Hansen

Wanda Amo

Rita Jumbeck

Delmar Plank

Julie Warmke

## **Have You Moved? We want to hear from you!**

The RSVP Program has had the pleasure of working with many wonderful volunteers and watching the impact each person has made in their own community through volunteerism.

We ask that you please help the RSVP office stay updated. Are you still volunteering? Perhaps you are not feeling well or maybe you have been physically unable to volunteer due to an illness or surgery? We also know summers are busy and you may be enjoying more time with your family which may result in being too busy to volunteer at this time.

Whatever the reason, we would really like to hear from you. To insure that you receive RSVP volunteer recognition and to assist you with future RSVP volunteer opportunities, we ask that you be sure to record all volunteer hours at your volunteer work site. Feel free to contact us at anytime; we welcome your input, concerns and volunteer stories.

**Call us at 1-800-782-1063 ext. 1205, 1207 or 1232.**

**We look forward to hearing from you!**



## **Continued from Page 1...**

Royal was asked if he had any advice for anyone in regards to volunteering for the RSVP Program. He replied, "Even if you have your health, it still helps you overall to volunteer because you benefit from getting out and being active." Studies have shown that volunteering helps keep individuals healthier. What better way to stay healthy than to help someone in need!

Royal began volunteering with his late wife, Gloria, who was also a RSVP volunteer. Prior to his retirement, Royal worked at the Winona Foundry for 36 years. When he retired, he was prompted by his wife to start volunteering as a driver for home-delivered meals. When Royal started delivering meals with his wife, he never really knew what to expect. He quickly learned that each visit to the rural homes throughout Buffalo County brings something different, but it's always more than delivering a meal. He wouldn't have it any other way.

He also realized that he really likes to help others and has developed a good rapport with the recipients of the meals. Royal has gotten comfortable with the clients through the years. He mentioned that they are also trusting of him. Many times the clients need an extra helping hand and Royal has been there to help. Sometimes it's as easy as grabbing the ketchup for a client and other times it's grabbing their mail just because it's difficult for them to do it on their own. For example, one meal recipient needs assistance opening her meal and Royal is always helpful in telling her what's on the menu for the day. He is also known to stick around a bit longer to make sure she starts to eat. Simple gestures like this are prime examples on how small acts of kindness (and a few hours of volunteering each day) serve as a big impact in your local community.

Royal is humble and simply does what is asked to help someone—he definitely goes above and beyond for meal recipients! Royal went on to share, "Sometimes I am the only person that a meal recipient sees in a day, or week." It makes him feel good to know that they are getting a well-balanced meal and someone to talk to, even if it's for a few minutes at a time. The meal recipients live in rural areas and are very appreciative to get the meals and have a quick chat with Royal. He knows this because they tell him so!

Royal also mentioned that the local community cares about home-delivered meal recipients. Each year around Christmas-time, care packages are put together for clients and delivered with their meal to their homes. Royal even bakes a couple dozen cookies to contribute to the packages!

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a home-delivered meal driver or would like to hear about other RSVP volunteer opportunities, please give our office a call at 715-985-2391.



## RSVP FEATURED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



**Volunteer Drivers (Pepin & Buffalo County Aging):** Volunteer drivers are needed to transport individuals to medical, social & personal appointments. This flexible volunteer opportunity is based on your schedule & availability, so you can choose or deny rides @ the time of booking. Use your own vehicle or possibly a county vehicle based on location/availability. Mileage reimbursement is paid monthly when you use your personal vehicle. Give us a call today at 715-985-2391 to start making a difference in your community!

**Durand Meal Site—(Pepin County):** The Pepin County Senior Nutrition Program is actively recruiting four volunteers to help out at the Durand Meal Site (located at Corral Bar & Riverside Grill) from 11:15am-1pm Tuesday-Friday. Duties would include; greeting participants, answering the telephone, & completing a small amount of paperwork. For more information, please contact us at 715-985-2391.



**Mission Thrift Store (Arcadia):** RSVP is seeking volunteers to work the sales floor on Fridays from 3-6 pm & Saturdays from 10-1 pm and/or every other month as needed. Please call 715-985-2391 to learn more.

**Heartland Hospice Services (Buffalo, Eau Claire, Pepin & Trempealeau County):** Compassionate individuals are needed to provide hospice services @ facilities & in homes in several locations including cities in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Pepin, & Trempealeau counties. Interested volunteers will attend an orientation & are trained @ the Heartland office in Eau Claire. This opportunity is very flexible & can be as little as an hour @ a time. (Includes friendly visits, reading, playing cards, singing to patients or playing music, or keeping patients company while family members take a break. Please contact us at 715-985-2391.



**Gundersen Tri-County (Whitehall):** The Care Center is seeking a committed volunteer to come in twice/week for 1 hour each time to wash the display windows, water the birds, and clean up the bottom of the display. Please call us to learn more about this opportunity at 715-985-2391!

RSVP is seeking volunteers to complete handyman jobs on an as-needed basis at homeless shelters throughout the Western Dairyland service area (Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson & Trempealeau counties). This can include assessing repairs needed at the shelters, patching drywall, drilling holes for/installing doors, etc. Please contact us at 715-985-2391 to learn more about this opportunity!



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**Trempealeau County Tax Assistance-** Do you enjoy doing Taxes or are you willing to learn? This short-term volunteer opportunity (February-April) offers a 3-day training in La Crosse. We are also looking for a volunteer to come to the Western Dairyland office in Independence to schedule tax appointments for the upcoming tax season. Call 715-985-2391!

**Tax Assistance - Jackson County** is in need of 3-4 volunteers to prepare individual tax returns. Volunteers attend a 3-day training in La Crosse or Eau Claire depending on preference; mileage reimbursed for training. This short-term opportunity makes a big impact. Call us @ 715-985-2391!



**RSVP Advisory Council (Buffalo, Jackson & Pepin counties):** The RSVP Program is looking for members in several counties to join the RSVP Advisory Council. This is a great opportunity to share ideas & come up with new ways to serve your community. Meetings are held three times a year at the Western Dairyland office located in Independence from 1:30-3:30 pm. Currently, RSVP is looking to fill one or two more spots on the Advisory Council in Pepin County, one more in Buffalo county, and one additional individual in Jackson County. Give us a call at 715-985-2391 to learn how you can make a difference!

**Volunteer Drivers (Trempealeau & Jackson County):** The ADRC's in Jackson & Trempealeau County are seeking volunteers to transport individuals to medical appointments. This is a very flexible opportunity; snow birds are welcome! If you are interested in making an impact by becoming a volunteer driver, give us a call at 715-985-2391!



**SITE SUPERVISORS!!!** If you are looking for a volunteer to fill short/long-term assignments, please contact our office at 715-985-2391. We can recruit volunteers in many ways for your volunteer site!

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<b>Ettrick-Thursday</b>  Living Hope Lutheran Church  February: 20	<b>Osseo– Wednesday</b>  City Hall  (Charles St. entrance across from Library)  March: 4	<b>Appointment Hours are 9-1 pm</b>  <b>Appointments are required.</b>  Please call Western Dairyland to schedule an appointment @ the number below.

**Call Heather at 715-985-2391 Ext. 1207**

**PLEASE BRING:** Identification, Last year's tax return, 2019 Property tax bill, Property taxes "paid" in 2019, Rent certificate, SSI amounts received, W2's (NO out of state earnings), 1099 or another form with federal & state tax paid (Retirement, Social Security [pink & white], Unemployment, Gambling), Health insurance costs, Childcare costs, Educational costs.

**ALL ADULTS MUST BE PRESENT TO SIGN UNLESS YOU HAVE POWER OF ATTORNEY!**



Each year, every active RSVP volunteer receives a Volunteer Satisfaction Survey. In 2019, the RSVP office sent out a total of 427 surveys. Of the surveys that we sent out, there were 250 respondents. That is a response rate of over 50%!

Thank you to those RSVP volunteers who took the time to respond to the volunteer satisfaction survey. By sharing your opinion/experience on the survey, you are giving the RSVP Program the feedback needed to make valuable changes-making the RSVP Volunteer Program the best it can be!

#### Here are the results:

**97% of volunteers are satisfied with their overall RSVP experiences.**

**96% of RSVP volunteers are satisfied with the recognition they receive as a volunteer.**

**95% of volunteers are satisfied with the positive impact they make as a RSVP volunteer.**

#### RENTAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE



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Call the Housing Authority for application, income guidelines, and other qualifications



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Western Dairyland, Independence, WI

C 4C 02-1030



When winter temperatures plummet and home heating systems run for hours the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning increases. Every year, at least 430 people die in the U.S. from accidental CO poisoning. Approximately 50,000 people in the U.S. visit the emergency department each year due to accidental CO poisoning. There are steps you can take to help protect yourself and your household from CO poisoning.

CO is found in fumes produced by furnaces, kerosene heaters, vehicles “warmed up” in garages, stoves, lanterns, and gas ranges, portable generators, or by burning charcoal and wood. CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned and can die from breathing CO.

**KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF  
CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING**

- SHORTNESS OF BREATH
- HEADACHE
- IMPAIRED COORDINATION
- NAUSEA/VOMITING
- DIZZINESS
- LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

\*See more at: <https://cutt.ly/Ie3VVVK>

**CARBON MONOXIDE  
THE INVISIBLE KILLER**

- FURNACES
- WATER HEATERS
- STOVES
- FIREPLACES

### CO Poisoning Prevention Tips:

- Change the batteries in your CO detector every 6 months. If you don't have a battery-powered or battery back-up CO detector, buy one soon.
- Have your heating system, water heater & any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Keep vents & flues free of debris. Debris can block ventilation lines.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space (garage).
- Never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine less than 20 ft. from an open window, door, or vent where exhaust can vent into an enclosed area.
- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.
- Never run a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open.
- If you suspect CO poisoning, call 911 or a health care professional right away.



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The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Jan. 20, 2020, marks the 25th anniversary of the day of service that celebrates the Civil Rights leader's life and legacy. Observed each year on the third Monday in January as "a day on, not a day off," MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities. The Corporation for National and Community Service has been charged to lead this effort for the last quarter century.

Dr. King recognized the power of service. He famously said, "Everyone can be great because everybody can serve." Observing the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday through service is a way to begin each year with a commitment to making your community a better place. Your service honors Dr. King's life and teachings and helps meet community challenges. Service also brings people together of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. The MLK Day of Service encourages all types of service, particularly projects that have a lasting impact and connect participants to ongoing service.

Service is called by many names; to some it may be outreach, to others it may be mission driven, general volunteerism, ministry, or even regarded as a calling—no matter what you call it, we recognize and thank those who serve.

## Thank you for your dedicated volunteer service with the RSVP Program

\*See more at: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/>

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## RECIPE: SIMPLE & HEALTHY PAD THAI

### SIMPLE & HEALTHY PAD THAI

#### Ingredients:

- 8 oz. pad thai noodles
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil, divided
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 cooked chicken breasts, sliced
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- 1/2 cup sliced scallion greens
- 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. fish sauce
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped peanuts
- Lime wedges



\*See more at: <https://cutt.ly/Ce3mvEs>

#### Directions:

Begin by preparing the pad thai noodles according to the package. While the noodles are cooking, heat 1 Tbsp. of canola oil in a deep skillet over high heat. Add in the garlic & eggs; cook until scrambled. Pour the remaining canola oil over the mixture, then stir in the cooked noodles & remaining ingredients except for the peanuts. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat & transfer into serving dishes. Sprinkle peanuts over the pad thai, add a lime wedge to each plate.

#### Variations:

You can easily swap in different ingredients and make it your own. If you're trying to incorporate more omega-3 fatty acids into your diet, try replacing the cooked chicken with a few dozen shrimp. You can simply add uncooked shrimp to the skillet after you scramble the eggs. Sauté the ingredients until your shrimp have turned pink, then continue on with the recipe as detailed.

Vegetarians can easily eliminate any animal-based ingredients from the recipe. Simply nix the chicken and replace it with some fresh peppers or tofu. Messy Vegetarian Cook recommended looking for a vegetarian fish sauce, but if you can't find one in your local grocery store, you can substitute in a little soy sauce to replace the flavor. Just be careful not to add too much, as soy sauce is notoriously high in sodium.



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Western Dairyland's RSVP program serves  
Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, Pepin and  
Trempealeau counties.

# RSVP Volunteer Program

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**WE LISTEN, WE ACT, WE CARE**