



Faith in Action of Bloomington-Normal

"Legacy of Serving Seniors"

A Letter From the Executive Director

I hope your holidays were happy and that you are keeping warm and cozy during these cold winter months.

Last year flew by, it seems like only yesterday that I became Director of Faith in Action and I'm loving every minute of it. Serving you and working with an amazing team of volunteers and office staff is a pleasure and I look forward to 2024 and all the blessings that will come our way.

In 2023, our fundraising events were very successful and we were the recipients of several grants, sponsorships and generous donations. We are back to pre-covid numbers of Care Receivers we serve!

Your donations are greatly appreciated and I want to remind you that our annual campaign is wrapping up and if you would like to make a contribution there is an envelope included with this mailing. Your donation is completely voluntary.

We also have new members joining the board of directors. Welcome to Emily Buhrow, Aggie Hedin, Bob Hillmer, Ravi Singhal, and Krista Sheppard.

Leaving the board after many years of dedicated service is Charlene Homan. The board of directors are committed to making Faith in Action the best it can be for which we are grateful.

Blessings to you and yours,

Darla Heath, Director

Congratulations Mike O'Donnell



Perhaps you've had the pleasure of being driven to a medical appointment or to the grocery store by Mike O'Donnell. He is an outstanding volunteer who was selected as a nominee for the Women United, Volunteer of the Year distinction.

Mike is 2024 President of the Board of Directors for Faith in Action and known for his compassion and commitment to Faith in Action and to care receivers. He picks up multiple rides a week and has also grocery shopped with some of you.

We are blessed to have Mike as a volunteer for Faith in Action. Congratulations on this well deserved recognition.

Winter Safety Tips

Winter is a magical time of year, but the season's harsh side can be especially dangerous for older adults. By understanding how cold affects seniors and taking the necessary precautions, you can stay warm and prevent illness and injury. Protect yourself during this winter with the following winter weather safety tips.



Stay Hydrated

Many people believe that dehydration is only a concern during the summer months. However, a variety of winter factors can cause moisture to leave our bodies quickly, leading to dehydration. Stay hydrated by drinking water throughout the day, especially if you are or have recently been ill with a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Monitor Indoor Temperature

The National Institute on Aging recommends setting the heat to at least 68–70 degrees Fahrenheit. Seniors struggling to afford higher electric bills to keep their home adequately heated should apply for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP helps eligible low-income seniors and families with their energy costs through bill payment assistance, weatherization, energy-related home repairs, and more. For help applying for LIHEAP benefits, call this toll-free number: 1-866-674-6327.

Avoid Slips & Falls

Falls are a frequent occurrence in older adults. When venturing outside of the home during the winter months, wear sturdy shoes or boots with good traction and non-skid soles and only walk on pathways clear of snow and ice. *Upon returning home, remove your shoes immediately. Because snow and ice often attach to your shoes' soles, this can lead to slippery conditions inside.*

Bundle Up

Our bodies become less effective at regulating heat with age. Because of this, older adults are at an increased risk of developing hypothermia. When outdoors wear multiple layers of clothes, including a hat, scarf, coat, and gloves. Even indoors, older adults should be dressed in warm, comfortable layers so you can easily remove layers if you are too hot or add more if you are too cold.

Fraud Prevention Tips

New scams emerge daily. It's important to continuously learn ways to stay safe.

One form of fraud to be aware of is an "Impersonation" scam. An Impersonation scam is an attempt to fraud victims by pretending to be someone else. Commonly the fraudster impersonates a friend or family member, and communicates an emergency with a need for money right away. This urgent request may come as an email, text message, direct message on a social media site, or even a phone call. Scammers also impersonate legitimate companies, organizations or government agencies and request a payment. They could claim that you owe them money for a past due charge, your water bill is late and the service will be stopped if you don't pay immediately, you were short on your taxes, or you failed to pay a traffic fine and a warrant will be issued for your arrest. They could also claim to be a charity or use any other con that will pull at your heartstrings.

If you receive this type of fraud attempt, do not give out your personal information, and report it to the Federal Trade Commission at www.ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

By CIBM Bank

TAX SERVICES AT ARC

Tax preparation by VITA volunteers will return to ARC on Thursdays starting February 1st. Appointments can begin to be made starting Monday, January 22nd by calling ARC at 888-9099 and press 2. This site will operate 9 AM-3 PM.

Services are free to: · Married taxpayers with combined income less than \$60,000. Single taxpayers with dependents and income less than \$60,000; Single taxpayers with no dependents and income less than \$40,000.

Bring the following documents to your drop-off appointment: Social Security Cards or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers for all individuals on the tax return. Valid Photo ID for taxpayer and spouse. All W-2s and 1099s to document your income, Form 1095A if you had marketplace insurance; Form 1098T for any college students on your return. Copy of last year's tax return, Bank account and routing number for direct deposit of refund. If you qualify for this service your monthly quality of life ride could be utilized for travel to the ARC.

INCLEMENT WEATHER REMINDER



Volunteers are not expected to transport during inclement weather.

Volunteers and care receivers are to use their own discretion regarding winter safety.

A volunteer may call you to discuss a possible cancellation of their ride due to weather.

Volunteers are free to offer an alternate date and time, if appropriate, and to make the arrangements directly with the care receiver. Please call FIA about any changes for our records.

SMOKE DETECTOR INSTALLATION PROGRAM

Smoke Detectors save lives!

Both the Bloomington and Normal Fire Departments offer free smoke detectors and installation.

For the City of Normal call 309.454.9613 or visit normalfire.org. In Bloomington call 309.434.2500 or email piofire@cityofblm.org to see if you qualify.

Smoke detectors provided by these programs will be installed by the fire department.

Detectors last only 10 years and need to be replaced.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- ◆ **There are NO income guidelines to be an FIA Care Receiver.**
- ◆ All scheduling calls should go through the Faith in Action Office, 309-827-7780.
- ◆ Schedule with FIA at least 7 days prior to an appointment. We can accept ride requests months in advance so scheduling into the future is recommended.
- ◆ Our volunteers arrange their schedules to provide rides and other services to you.

PLEASE KEEP CANCELLATIONS TO A MINIMUM.

- ◆ Please do not ask your volunteer for an unscheduled extra stop.
- ◆ If you have an upcoming appointment, please answer the phone and/or listen to your messages if you see an unfamiliar number, it could be a volunteer confirming your appointment.

Your gifts are greatly appreciated. If you would like to make a donation there is a gift envelope included with this newsletter for your convenience. Thank you!

Thank You to our Supporters

Grantors

John M. Scott Grant

The Christmas Eve Fund

A Donor Advised Fund of

Renaissance Charitable Foundation



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Bronze Sponsors



Phillips & Associates, CPAs, P.C.
Richard W. Phillips, CPA





600 E. Willow Suite 201
Normal, IL 61761

Return Service Requested

FIA Office Hours

Monday - Thursday:

9 AM - 4 PM

Friday: 9 AM - 12:30 PM

Closed Saturday & Sunday



Phone:

309-827-7780

Follow FIA on Facebook: @bnfia
Faith in Action - Bloomington/Normal

MARDI GRAS BINGO BONANZA!

Celebrate Mardi Gras with your friends while
raising funds to help seniors live independently.

Thursday, February 8th

5:30-8:30 PM | Destihl Brew Hall

Appetizers and Fabulous Bingo Prizes

\$50 per person

\$375 for a table of 8*

*includes drink tickets for the table



Register at bnfia.org/bingo

Questions? Contact Lisa at lisa@bnfia.org

