



community thread

# Annual Report 2011



connecting people. enriching lives.

# GREETINGS FROM COMMUNITY THREAD'S BOARD PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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February 2012

Welcome to this reflection on the year 2011. Preparing our annual report is a time of celebration for the board and staff at Community Thread. The stories, statistics, and images that fill these pages are the result of our best efforts to bring to life our mission of promoting, supporting and encouraging volunteerism to serve the needs of the community. We are honored to share our work with you now and hope that what you read, see, and learn leaves you feeling inspired and hopeful about our communities.



As the board and staff paused to reflect on the events, activities and accomplishments of 2011, a couple of themes emerged. The first is gratitude. We feel a profound sense gratitude for the support and efforts of Community Thread's donors, volunteers, program participants, and friends in the community. That gratitude is one of our primary motivations for doing what we do. When we think of the past year, we feel grateful.

The second theme we noticed in our reflections is how much better our work becomes when we work in partnership. This past year brought us many opportunities to grow into new and mutually beneficial partnerships. We strongly believe that by partnering with other local human service agencies, the resources that you so generously share with us will stretch farther and do more to preserve a quality of life that assures we all feel a sense of happiness and belonging. In 2011, we launched partnerships with ESR, Valley Outreach, transportation service providers and many others that are proving to be successful both for the organizations and the people we serve. We are proud to be champions of collaboration and work hard to be a trustworthy partner.

The third theme is hope. One of the greatest gifts of 2011 is the hope that we are contributing to the common good by making it easy for people to connect to services they need and to volunteer opportunities that enrich their lives, and by being a place in the world where, to be welcomed and needed, all it takes is to walk in our door.

Community Thread is a remarkable organization that is accomplishing remarkable deeds. We are grateful that you are with us on our journey to connect people and enrich lives. We promise to be authentic partners in the work that remains. And we are hopeful that the results will be a community where people help each other.

Thank you for your support, interest, and belief in our mission.

Jennifer Cates Peterson  
President, Board of Directors

Valerie A. Jones  
Executive Director

# 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Karla Anderson, Management, Marketing and Planning Consultant  
Bill Armstrong, Attorney, Lawson, Marshall, McDonald, Galowitz and Wolle, P.A.  
Fred Banister, Retired Civil Engineer  
Connie Carlson, Owner, Pony Preschool  
Jennifer Cates Peterson, Cates Fine Homes, LLC  
Dr. Scott Edlin, Chiropractor, Inspired Chiropractic  
Joyce Flynn, Director of Development and Community Relations, HSI, Inc.  
Connie Fredkove, Retired, 3M  
Al Godfrey, Retired, Andersen Corporation  
Jim Hiniker, Stillwater Township Supervisor  
Kerri Kolstad, Owner, Wahoo! Adventures  
Kit Ridgway, Community Volunteer

## Special Members

Vi Russell, First Executive Director, Board Member Emeritus  
Amy Skare, Youth Enrichment Coordinator, ISD 834,  
Board Liaison to the School District

## Board Members Retiring in 2011

Paul Erickson, Vice President, Lakeview Health  
Betsy Thomas, Owner, Wango Tango



## MISSION STATEMENT

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Our mission is to promote, support and encourage volunteerism to serve the needs of the community. Through direct and indirect services we impact issues of poverty, volunteer management, and senior involvement and isolation. We sustain volunteerism by connecting people and enriching lives.

## VISION STATEMENT

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Our vision is a community where people help each other.

## VALUES STATEMENT

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Community Thread's mission and vision reflect a set of enduring values that guide its actions internally and externally:

- The field of volunteerism must uphold the public's trust.
- Volunteerism is a cornerstone of a democratic society and is essential to the success of the nonprofit sector.
- Responsible and effective volunteerism depends on accountability, integrity, and respect for others.
- Inclusiveness and diversity in their many forms are fundamental to the responsiveness and effectiveness of Community Thread and the field of volunteerism.
- Community Thread's effectiveness requires an ongoing commitment to quality, communication, collaboration, discovery, reflection and learning.

# 2011 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

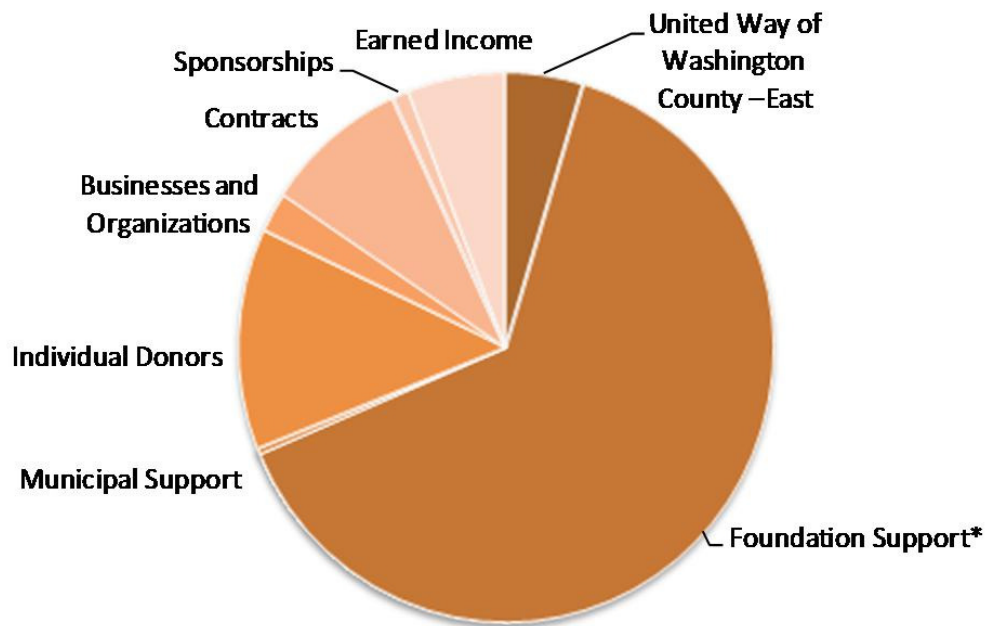
The following figures are not audited. The Community Thread 2011 Annual Audit will be available at the end of April 2012 and this report will be updated with audited financial information at that time. Please contact Valerie Jones at (651) 439-7434 for a copy of the 2011 Community Thread Audit. Thank you!

## 2011 Revenue and Support

Total Revenue and Support: \$729,077

Source	Amount
United Way of Washington County –East	\$34,298
Foundation Support*	\$466,456
Municipal Support	\$2,500
Individual Donors	\$94,442
Businesses and Organizations	\$17,222
Contracts	\$63,334
Sponsorships	\$7,400
Earned Income	\$43,425

\*In 2011, Community Thread received a special grant in the amount of \$170,712 to make lease held capital improvements to the Bayport Senior Center. These restricted funds represent 23% of all grant funds received by Community Thread in 2011.

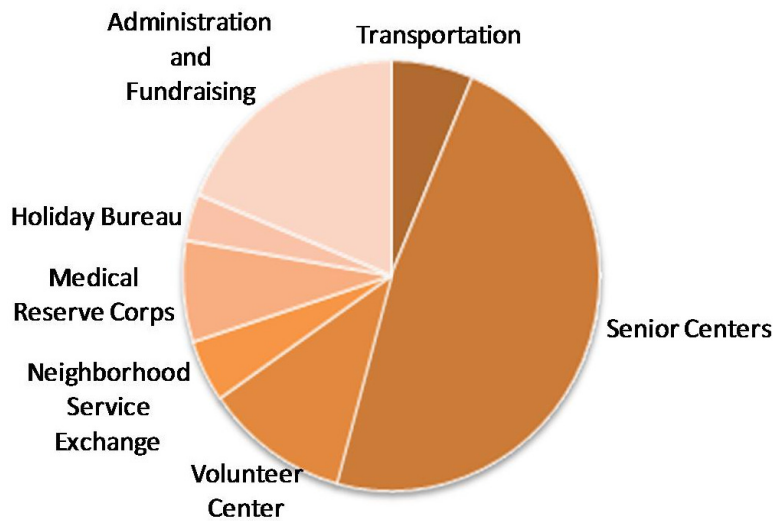


## 2011 Expenses

Total Expenses: \$674,206

Program	Amount
Transportation	\$42,920
Senior Centers	\$322,752
Volunteer Center	\$75,006
Neighborhood Service Exchange	\$31,376
Medical Reserve Corps	\$51,414
Holiday Bureau	\$23,711
Administration and Fundraising	\$127,027

\*2011 Senior Center Expenses include \$122,742 in renovation expenses to the Bayport Senior Center.



## The Value of Volunteers

**Bill Funari of Stillwater:** "I enjoy helping people and learning from them."

Bill is just one of the more than 2,100 Community Thread volunteers who are connecting to our communities one act of service at a time. Throughout 2011, a dedicated team of 2,173 volunteers contributed 9,160 hours of volunteer time and talent. As calculated by Independent Sector, the value of a volunteer hour in Minnesota is \$20.90. That means Community Thread volunteers contributed time and talent valued at \$240,559!

Community Thread's accomplishments are due in large part to our incredible volunteers who share their skills so generously with us. Thank you Community Thread volunteers for your amazing efforts!

# PROGRAMS WITH A PURPOSE

## Volunteer Center

**The purpose:** Community Thread's Volunteer Center makes finding the right volunteer opportunity for the right person an easy process, and creates opportunities that allow volunteers to have direct, personal interaction with the people they serve. These personal interactions allow people of different backgrounds to form positive relationships that strengthen the community even as it changes. Our wide range of listed opportunities and programs are also a great way for anyone to contribute regardless of age, language proficiency, mobility, personal income or any other factor. Any willing volunteer is a great asset to our community and is treated that way at Community Thread.



**The story:** In 2011, Community Thread launched its Chore Service Initiative. One of the first chore requests was from a senior named Mike, a widower in Stillwater, who is in his 90s and still lives in his own home. He is very independent and able to tackle most household chores, but needs help with regular lawn mowing. We matched him with a college-age volunteer named Noah who was looking to volunteer once or twice a week. Noah and Mike created a schedule, and Noah continued to mow Mike's lawn throughout the summer. Mike greatly appreciated the help.

**The numbers:**

- More than 13,670 visits to our 1-800-Volunteer.org database
- 934 volunteers worked during one-day service events
- 1,332 volunteers referred to local agencies
- 100 volunteer managers supported and trained
- 52 local nonprofit organizations connected to volunteer management resources

## Transportation



**The purpose:** The Transportation Program connects volunteer drivers with senior citizens, people with disabilities or chronic illness, and lower-income residents without access to a vehicle to take them to medical appointments. Transportation clients are able to get the medical attention they need to maintain or improve their health because of this program.

**The story:** Transportation client Lisa Van De Steeg of St. Paul Park wrote to us in a thank you letter about the difference this service has made to her. "I'm legally blind and have two young children. My husband can't always take off from work to take us to medical appointments. The Transportation Program has been a God-send for me. I tried public transportation and it was too difficult to use for my situation. Thank you."

**The numbers:**

- 20,912 miles driven
- 1,532 trips to medical appointments
- 89 clients served
- 45 volunteers worked 2,327 hours

## Stillwater and Bayport Senior Centers

**The purpose:** The Senior Center programs enhance the lives of seniors of all ages. Perhaps they come to keep active and fit, volunteer, learn, laugh, or just have some fun. But they have made the choice to be here. The Senior Centers are not places to be alone; they are places to be with others. This is a place where stories and common interests are shared, where lifelong friends meet to stay connected and where new friends are found. Many of today's seniors are living busy lives caregiving, working part-time, volunteering, traveling and dealing with their own health or family issues. Knowing that people intentionally seek out our programs and services to fit into their lives is gratifying. A quote from a Senior Center Vision Team member says it all, "I may not be here all the time, but I know you're here when I need you...and that feels good."



**The story:** Volunteers from the Bayport Senior Center started the Cribbage Mentoring Program at Rutherford Elementary School. Twelve men volunteered to teach and play cribbage with the 4<sup>th</sup> graders to help them learn math skills. Two girls greeted the team of volunteers at the door and served as wonderful hosts. All the students were so confident and happy. Three of the volunteers were brand new and after one session with the students they all decided to come back and keep teaching. The effort is a fantastic way to provide real life applications of math skills while building relationships across generations.

### The numbers:

18,482 visits for Senior Center activities  
2,821 hours of programming  
285 volunteers worked 3,631 hours  
732 people received free tax preparation  
497 hours of intergenerational programs with more than 1,200 students from local elementary schools  
343 drivers participated in 22 defensive driving courses  
76 quilts handmade for the Crisis Nursery

## Neighborhood Service Exchange

**The purpose:** The Neighborhood Service Exchange (NSE) was created in 1998 based on the premise that each person can help and be helped using a time bank/service bartering system. One hour of service earns members one credit of service. Participants may use their earned credits to receive a service they need, like transportation, wallpapering or dog walking.

**The story:** Dawn and her family enjoy doing things for other NSE members as a family. This year one of their family volunteer efforts was baking Christmas cookies to share with other NSE members. Dawn said, "Our family enjoys volunteering and being part of a program that makes a difference." With the NSE program, it's often the simple things - fresh baked cookies, a call or a visit - that make the biggest difference.



### The numbers:

62 volunteer members worked 1,896 hours  
1,645 time bank service exchanges  
1,504 people received services

## Medical Reserve Corps

**The purpose:** The Washington County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a community-based volunteer program that supports and strengthens local public health efforts and emergency preparedness. The work of the MRC unit helps create a stronger, healthier, more resilient population while building relationships and connections among diverse members of our community.



**The story:** Two MRC nurses participated in a seasonal flu vaccination event at the Landfall Community Center in October. One nurse is retired and hadn't given injections for a while but said the training provided by county staff prior to the event made her feel very comfortable. "I was nervous that maybe I had lost my touch but I really wanted to volunteer and it all came back to me once I started. I really enjoyed being back at it!" This opportunity raised the spirits and confidence of one of our volunteers, and it had a significant impact on the community. Getting vaccinated against the flu each year is one of the most important steps people can take to help protect themselves from seasonal flu and its complications. By offering vaccinations to underserved communities like Landfall, Washington County and MRC nurses are able to reach folks who often have limited access to preventative healthcare or who may forgo vaccinations due to financial constraints.

### The numbers:

423 Washington County Residents are members of the MRC  
MRC volunteers worked 286 hours at 18 different events covering everything from Flu Clinics to Environmental Center's Reuse Room  
19 MRC Volunteers participated in Emergency Preparedness training and exercise opportunities

## Holiday Bureau

**The purpose:** Simply put, the Holiday Bureau provides a Christmas for those who would otherwise not have one. Although the families who apply are struggling with many challenging life circumstances the Holiday Bureau cannot help with - be it unemployment, health issues, or single parenting - the Holiday Bureau is able to take away the stress of providing holiday gifts. Sponsors provide Christmas trees, a holiday meal, much needed household items to parents, gifts for the whole family, and smiles to children!



**The story:** Sarah, a single mother, started volunteering for the Holiday Bureau program once a week. She completed tasks such as writing Santa letters, hanging flyers in the community, wrapping presents, and more. In November, however, due to changing life circumstances, Sarah found herself facing financial troubles and needing some help for the holidays. The Holiday Bureau matched Sarah with a sponsor who provided clothing and gifts for Sarah and her son. Sarah continued to volunteer through the entire season and plans to return as a Volunteer Center volunteer. "I'm so glad I have this opportunity to give back," she said. "One day I hope to be able to sponsor another family, just as I was sponsored this year. Thank you for all you've done for my son."

### The numbers:

986 people received gifts and food (including 547 children)  
254 letters from Santa were sent to Holiday Bureau children  
175 donors  
115 sponsors  
52 Christmas trees donated  
87 volunteers worked 306 hours

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Into Service Event

### Event Statistics

1 morning  
240 total volunteers  
10 nonprofit service sites  
11 volunteer leaders  
720 hours of service  
\$15,379 value

### Many thanks to our Event Sponsors!

#### Connecting Sponsors:

ANDERSEN WINDOWS  
LAKEVIEW HEALTH

#### Service Sponsors:

ANASTASI & ASSOCIATES  
CATES FINE HOMES  
DONNA STENBERG, DDS  
ECKBERG LAMMERS LAW FIRM  
STILLWATER MEDICAL GROUP  
SLETTEN & BRETTIN ORTHODONTICS  
THE CCP FOUNDATION

#### Supporting Sponsor:

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OSI PHYSICAL THERAPY  
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THE FOUNTAIN  
VALLEY ORTHODONTICS

### Impact:

"Thanks so very much for the great volunteers AND the delightful group leader. Awesome group! Our backyard garden looks 150% better mulched, planted with hostas and lilies, and the staining of our boards is almost done. Weeding around the perimeter and raking was a wonderful improvement. Thanks again for your leadership and gift of service. You are appreciated!" – *Nancy Okerman, HOPE Adoption and Family Services*

## 2011 SPECIAL EVENTS AND NEW EFFORTS

### 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Baubles and Bangles Used Jewelry and Bake Sale

1 Day  
54 Volunteers  
403 Volunteer hours (cumulative June-August)  
\$12,500 Raised to support Community Thread's Senior Centers

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Building Better Lives Volunteer Expo

Provided in Partnership with United Way of Washington County – East

1 Evening  
27 Nonprofit organizations  
150 Community members "shopping" for volunteer opportunities

### 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Rake A Difference Day

Two weekends in October  
27 Groups raking yards  
700 Individual rakers  
85 Yards raked  
1,750 Hours of service donated to the community  
\$37,380 Value to the community

### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Thread Connections Breakfast

1 Hour  
46 Volunteers  
128 Guests  
\$25,274 Raised to support Community Thread's mission

### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior Housing Fair

1 Morning  
13 Senior housing organizations represented  
100 People looking for information about senior housing options  
2 In-Kind Donors: Golden-Living Centers - Linden  
Century College Service Learning students

### Chore Services Initiative (NEW!)

This new service matches volunteers with senior homeowners to assist in household maintenance and chores. We help seniors remain living independently and safely in their own homes.  
41 Requests for assistance were filled  
25 Seniors were referred to other chore service programs or to professional service providers.

### 2011 Spring Flood Relief Efforts

7 Cities assisted (Afton, Bayport, Hudson, Lake St. Croix Beach, St. Mary's Point and Stillwater)  
749 Volunteers activated  
1,439 Volunteers scheduled but deactivated when the river held  
2,247 Hours of volunteer time  
\$47,995 in value to the community

# 2011 AWARDS

## 2011 Vi Russell Award for Excellence in Volunteer Leadership

### Kim Klisch, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Lakeview Hospital

Kim Klisch, the Coordinator of Volunteer Services at Lakeview Hospital, received the 2011 Vi Russell Award for Excellence in Volunteer Leadership in honor of her outstanding leadership of volunteers. The Lakeview Hospital Volunteer Program has nearly 200 volunteers who serve the hospital in many areas. Kim speaks with enthusiasm about how the Volunteer Program contributes to a “healing environment” at Lakeview Hospital. Her aim is to complement what is happening medically for the patients, to help ease stress and support healing through efforts such as music in the lobby, pet therapy, and art galleries. She also introduces the hospital to young people with the Teddy Bear Clinic for kindergarteners and a student volunteer program for high school and college students.



The Vi Russell Award for Excellence in Volunteer Leadership was established to honor extraordinary leaders who have led and inspired volunteers to meet local needs through citizenry and service. The Vi Russell Award honors leaders who are “driving forces” in our community, meeting local needs through their personal dedication and leadership.

## 2011 Community Involvement Awards

### 2011 Outstanding Group Volunteers: STORM in the Valley

The Outstanding Group Volunteer Award recognizes a group of volunteers for outstanding volunteer service to the community. This year’s recipients of the Outstanding Group Award are the members of STORM in the Valley. STORM in the Valley is a servant mission of St. Croix Valley United Methodist Church. Their purpose is to serve Jesus by serving others.



STORM accomplishes this by providing volunteer labor to assist people in need. There is no charge to the recipients for the services and any donations given are used in the groups’ next projects. The group’s leaders, Sue and Daryl Rielander, organize groups of volunteers to assist with the projects. Since August 2007 more than 55 families have been assisted by STORM in the Valley volunteers who have given more than 3,100 hours of service. STORM volunteers have helped pack, move and unpack 7 individuals. They have painted 11 homes. They have cleaned out, hauled away, and organized 26 garages that were crowded with “stuff.”

### 2011 Outstanding Youth Volunteer: Samyuktha Melachuri

The Outstanding Youth Volunteer Award recognizes a young person under the age of 18 for volunteer service with an organization or project that helps to meet the needs of the community. Samyuktha (Sammie) Melachuri of Woodbury is the 2011 Outstanding Youth Volunteer for her volunteer work at the Minnesota Children’s Museum. In addition to volunteering with the Minnesota Children’s Museum, Sammie volunteers at Feed My Starving Children and hopes to one day volunteer at Como Zoo, teaching classes.



Samyuktha also likes to perform traditional Indian dancing at community events, often with her sister. At the Minnesota Children’s Museum, where the mission is “sparking learning through play,” Sammie’s tasks range from doing arts and crafts with the children, to helping with preparations for parties and helping families as they check in at the museum.

### 2011 Outstanding Volunteer: Susan Edseth

The Outstanding Volunteer Award recognizes a single volunteer for commendable volunteer service in at least one organization during a span of one or more years. Susan Edseth of Forest Lake has been an AmeriCorps volunteer with FamilyMeans for the last two years. She has over 25 years of administrative management experience, and a tremendous love of volunteering. Susan was drawn to join AmeriCorps because it was a way for her to serve her country without carrying a gun. It was a new and different kind of volunteer experience that she was excited to try. Susan has spent more than 900 hours visiting people who have chronic illnesses and disabilities. In addition to respite volunteering, Susan is one of FamilyMeans' first Ambassadors, sharing information in Washington County about services provided by FamilyMeans. Susan has a passion for serving as is evidenced by her resume of volunteer work with a diverse group of organizations including FamilyMeans, Great River Greening, Washington County 4-H, and Forest Lake Area Music Boosters/Pep Band/Drumline Parent Group.



### 2011 Lifetime Volunteer: Dixie Ewing

The Lifetime Volunteer Award recognizes a single volunteer for a lifetime of commitment to volunteerism. The first of this year's award recipients is Dixie Ewing, a resident of Woodbury since 1978. She began her lifetime of volunteer work with her young son's Boy Scout troop and became an active member of the Woodbury United Methodist Church. Dixie got involved with the Woodbury Children's Hospital Guild thirty years ago. Dixie has also been a member of the Woodbury Chamber of Commerce for the past 25 years and was named the Chamber's Citizen of the Year in 1995. In 1993, Dixie volunteered for the capital campaign to create and build the Woodbury YMCA where she served on the Board of Directors until just recently. Dixie's lifetime of volunteer efforts extend far and wide. Numerous community organizations have received the benefit of Dixie's passions, including the Woodbury Yellow Ribbon Network, Woodbury Lions Veterans Memorial, SOS Players, SA/VE (Suicide Awareness/Voices of Education), Woodbury Christian Cupboard, Woodbury Prayer Breakfast, Wilder Foundation and others. In 2003 Dixie, along with fellow Lifetime Award recipient Dick Stafford, and other dedicated community leaders created Friends of Woodbury, now called the Woodbury Community Foundation. Dixie feels fortunate to have the energy and gifts to help others. She sees her work more as a success story for Woodbury organizations and says humbly, "The village of Woodbury supports me, so I help them out as I can."



### 2011 Lifetime Volunteer: Dick Stafford, Posthumously, Award accepted by Bruce and Donna Stafford

The Lifetime Volunteer Award recognizes a single volunteer for a lifetime of commitment to volunteerism. A special honoree this year, Dick Stafford, passed away suddenly, just before being named as a co-recipient of the 2011 Lifetime Volunteer Award. Dick Stafford's legacy is a lifetime of giving and serving. Dick's volunteer resume lists participation and leadership roles in no less than a dozen organizations including the Woodbury Community Foundation, the YMCA, the Woodbury Lions Club, the Woodbury Yellow Ribbon Network, the Woodbury Ambulance Council, Woodbury Chamber of Commerce, Woodbury Lions Veterans Memorial Council, and the Jaycees in South St. Paul, Woodbury and at the national level. Dick was a valued and engaged citizen, participating in his community by volunteering on committees and boards for groups such as the Law Library Board, Public Health Advisory Committee, Regional Rail Authority Board, East Metro Radio Communications Board, Metropolitan Energy Task Force, and many, many more. To celebrate Dick Stafford's life and legacy of volunteering from military service, to public service, to community organizing, it was an honor to bestow the 2011 Lifetime Volunteer Award to his family as a sign of appreciation for a life well lived.



## Enriching Donors (\$2,500 and more)

Andersen Corporate Foundation  
Fred C. & Katherine B. Andersen Foundation  
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Cub Cares Community Foundation  
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Margaret Rivers Fund  
Stevens Square Foundation  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Thiele  
United Way of Washington County East  
Lee S. & Dorothy N. Whitson Fund of the Saint Paul Foundation

## Connecting Donors (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

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Andersen Corporation  
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Eileen & Dallas Zimmerman

# 2011 DONORS

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St. Croix Valley Foundation  
St. Croix Valley Labor Assembly AFL-CIO  
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# A Very Special Donor Tribute

Many of us remember Lyman Geary as a community-minded neighbor dedicated to making Stillwater a better place to live. Lyman was also a beloved philanthropist who supported many local organizations. Community Thread's programs benefitted from Lyman's generosity during his lifetime. We were also humbled to learn that Lyman included Community Thread in his estate plans, naming us as the beneficiary of a 3M stock account. Remembering Community Thread in your estate plans is an easy way to leave a legacy for your community. Thank you Lyman!



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In memory of Linda Thaemut, daughter of Joyce Schreffler  
In memory of Mary Lou Larson  
In memory of Al Krueger  
In memory of my late family  
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Special thanks to volunteer Heather Voight for her talent and skill in designing Community Thread's 2011 Annual Report and the Community Thread Senior Center newsletters throughout the year!



community thread

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