

For immediate release

Faith in Action + RSVP: Transporting the elderly from point A to point B

It might be a visit to the doctor or podiatrist or optometrist. It might be a trip to the grocery or drug store. But in all these cases, the elderly, the disabled, and the infirm have a problem: they don't have the transportation to get from point A to point B.

That's where Faith in Action and the volunteers from RSVP show up with cars ready for action. Some 50 volunteers spring into action to take people who need rides – and some companionship – to those critical doctor appointments and food shopping trips. There is more than just driving. Some elderly need company. Others just need a smoke detector battery replaced.

There's a big need. Some 5,000 seniors in Lake County – about one in five – have a mobility or self-care limitation. Another 4,000 younger citizens have a mobility or self-care limitation. They are spread out over 979 square miles of Lake County.

Who are these volunteers? Most are senior citizens themselves, with an average age of 75. Eight out of ten are male, and most have been with Faith in Action for at least five years. Pam Lewis, Director of Faith in Action, says,

“Our 50 wonderful volunteers are spread pretty thinly across Lake County, and we could use some more drivers. So if anyone out there is willing, give RSVP a call! We get most of our volunteers from local religious congregations, but RSVP has always been there to add those precious extra volunteers.”

Faith in Action is almost entirely funded from United Way, with Senior Independent Living making up any shortfalls.

Pam also said, “We are so grateful for their generous support, especially with so many other needs in Lake County. But it's clear from how many trips our volunteers take that we could double our capacity in order to serve our mission adequately. It's a great investment. Right now, our leverage from staff and money resources to service is 1:4, a great return on investment for the community.”

To volunteer, contact Cristen Kane, Director, RSVP, at 440-269-3015, cristen.kane@weschools.org, or go to www.rsvplc.org. For information on Faith in Action, contact Pam Lewis, Director, 440.953.1256. xt. 2012

ABOUT RSVP

RSVP of Lake County matches the skills, talents, and experience of adults age 55 and over with important community-needed volunteer opportunities. Currently, RSVP of Lake County has over 800 active volunteers serving over 70 non-profits and health care agencies. Our volunteers tutor children, repair roofs and garages, and fill in with office work for over-burdened government and non-profits. They serve on boards of directors, help with fundraising and publicity, drive invalids to medical and other appointments, and they deliver meals-on-wheels to those who can't cook for themselves. The program is funded locally by the Lake County Senior Citizen Services Levy, federally by the CNCS, and by the Ohio Department of Aging. RSVP has been sponsored since its inception in 1973 by the Willoughby-Eastlake City School District, which provides office space, internet, phones, and bookkeeping services. RSVP'S office is in Willoughby at the Willoughby-Eastlake Technical Center of the W-E School District.