

Pat Morshare—Creative Dynamo!

Getting the word out about Bridging happens in a number of different ways. Thankfully a lot of people talk about our mission, but at least one volunteer also writes about it. Pat's skills as a graphic designer have been used liberally in producing the printing needs that this growing non-profit is constantly facing. Pat came up with the theme of our new brochure "A World of Difference" and was instrumental in the design of the piece. She has worked on countless programs and themes, and has supplied Bridging with a great deal of public relations advice.

Pat, who brings more than 20 years of experience in communications and public relations to her volunteer efforts, enjoys her work behind-the-scenes. "Bridging has an important story to tell," Pat says, "and I'm happy to be able to help

Volunteer Highlight



Pat Morshare gives selflessly of her time to spread Bridging's message through her work with the Community Relations Committee.

them tell it."

"I volunteered in the office a couple of times, and it was great to work with the staff and other volunteers, talk with donors on the phone, and meet Bridging clients. But since I have a full-time job, working on communications projects at home suits my schedule better. I can work pretty much on my own, getting input and approvals from the staff along the way. I find the enthusiasm and appreciation expressed by the Bridging staff to be rewarding and energizing."

Pat's contributions as a Bridging volunteer prove that there are many ways to serve. Even if your schedule doesn't allow involvement during normal business hours, call to explore other opportunities so "You Can Make a World of Difference in Someone's Life."



Bridging, Inc.

200 West 88th Street, Suite 5, Bloomington, MN 55420-2752

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO.1042
MPLS MN



The Provider



Bridging Sets New Service Records

Out of all the wonderful things that have occurred here since our last newsletter, I would like to highlight a few of them. The first is the receipt of a \$20,000 grant from the McKnight Foundation, widely regarded as one of the most prestigious grant makers in the country. McKnight's Executive Vice-President, Michael O'Keefe stated the reasons for their funding most eloquently when he said that "in their review they found the service of Bridging, Inc. to be growing rapidly, of high quality, and very respectful of clients."

Just when you think that the service and activity levels could not get any higher here at Bridging, we have a second quarter like this. The following impressive Corporate donations have already been received, or

Target: 25 truckloads of new merchandise.

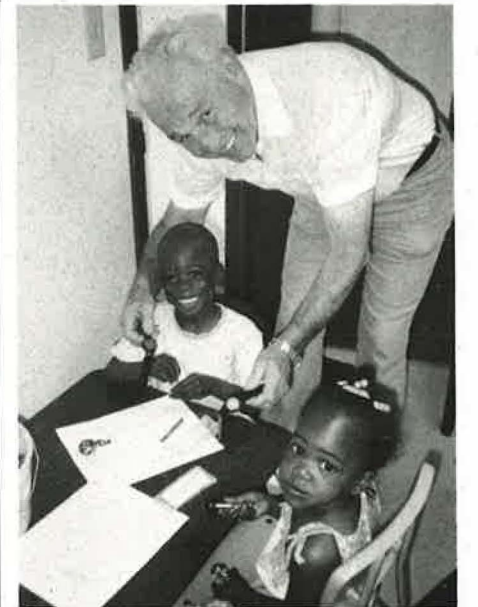
These major shipments are valued well in excess of \$100,000 and all of it is made possible because of your support.

I would like to share with you how our services have increased when compared with statistics at this time last year:

- Monetary Donations — up 260%**
- Outgoing Merchandise — up 100%**
- Volunteer Hours — up 36%**
- Clients Served — up 42%**
- Landfill Costs Saved — up 50%**

Without you, we wouldn't have the warehouse, staff, trucks, and volunteers that make all of this possible! As Fran says so well, "It takes all of us!"

By Chuck Waletzko



Two of our smallest clients receive watches from Bridging's Founding Director, Fran Heitzman.

Bridging Stories

By Fran Heitzman

McKnight Foundation"...found the service of Bridging, Inc. to be growing rapidly, of high quality, and very respectful of clients."

are on the schedule to be received very shortly!

Fingerhut: 675 new sets of cookware, Crown Sterling Hotel: 180 chairs, Slumberland: 750 beds, Restwell Mattresses: 180 beds, Macalester College: 750+ desks, chairs and dressers, Gabberts: 15 pieces of new beds and furniture,

Her name was Brittany and she came to the warehouse with her mom. She was patiently coloring while her mom was allowed to shop. She was being very good. I noticed her because for such a little girl, she was so grown up. When they were packing up to leave, I went and got her a new Barbie Doll set that had just come in. I showed it to her mother and she told me that Brittany had been begging for such a doll, but she had no money to buy it. I wish you could have seen the joy on that little girl's face when she was given that doll set. It

made my day and made lots of things seem unimportant. That's Bridging!

One day one of our wonderful volunteers came up and told me he had just experienced a first. He had taken a woman on her shopping tour and when she was packed up and ready to go she said "I want to thank you, but I also want to give you a big hug." He said that hug was worth all of the time he had put in at Bridging. A hug is small payment for time and effort, but that was enough for this wonderful man. That is the reward.

That's Bridging!

Volunteer Appreciation Day A Big Success

Thursday, July 27th was the date of Bridging's Second Annual Volunteer Appreciation Day! Canterbury Park hosted Bridging volunteers for a fun day at the races. The staff at Canterbury Park gave volunteers a tour of the stables and back track, provided horses for picture taking, and helped Bridging supply box lunches for each volunteer and their guests. After lunch, everyone was given free admission to the afternoon races.

Bridging presented Certificates of Appreciation to all of our wonderful volunteers. Volunteers with 100 hours or more of service received a plaque commemorating their accomplishment. Special awards were given to the first 2 Bridging volunteers to donate over 1000 hours of service. The recipients of these awards were Don Elsen and Mary Ellen Smith. The awards were donated by Board Member Steve DeGonda's corporate recognition company, Awardcraft.

Bridging sincerely appreciates the efforts of every single volunteer who makes Bridging work!



Bridging volunteers are honored at the Second Annual Volunteer Appreciation Day hosted by Canterbury Park!



Volunteers of the Month... Bob and Hilda Chmielwski

Bob and Hilda Chmielwski have been loyal Bridging volunteers for 3 years. In that time, they have donated thousands of hours of volunteer time between the two of them.

Bob works with the transportation team, picking up furniture all over the Twin Cities. He comes in faithfully every Tuesday and Wednesday for regular pick-ups, but frequently helps with special pick-ups on Thursdays and Fridays, too! Bob and the transportation team on Tuesdays and Wednesdays pick up over half of all of the furniture that is given away at Bridging.

Hilda started volunteering in Bridging's sorting room, immediately after retiring three years ago. In addition to

the volunteer work she does, Hilda is also quick to help with other projects whenever she is needed. She is very generous and has treated the "Wednesday Lunch Bunch" to wonderful treats many times.

Bob and Hilda are also very involved with their church, Assumption Catholic Church. In fact, Bob was the 1st Co-Chair of Assumption's FunFest, 22 years ago, and has worked on it ever since. Bob also volunteers with Loaves and Fishes and at VEAP.

Bob and Hilda have 2 children and 3 grandchildren. Bob and Hilda's presence at Bridging makes such a phenomenal impact on what we are able to accomplish and we are endlessly thankful for the big difference they make.

Special thanks to Volunteers of the Month, Bob and Hilda Chmielwski

Bridging Looks to Immortalize Fran Heitzman's Dream

With the 10th anniversary of Bridging, Inc. coming up in 1996, the Board of Directors has made plans to insure Bridging's continued success for our second decade of service to those most in need. The best way to do that is to initiate an endowment fund which will continue to financially support Bridging's Mission in perpetuity. We have therefore kicked off the "Fran Heitzman/Bridging, Inc. Endowment Fund" with the goal of raising \$100,000 in direct and deferred giving by the end of 1996!

There are a number of ways to support the Bridging endowment and at the same time further your financial and estate-planning needs:

1. Contributions of cash or securities that can be readily converted into cash.
2. Donation of assets which can be sold.
3. Deferred gifts such as life insurance, wills/bequests, life estates and other tax advantaged gifts.
4. Reinvestment of a portion of the endowment earnings each year while keeping the principle intact.

Seeking endowment funds is a critical objective for all charitable organizations, and is crucial to Bridging at this point in our growth. An adequate endowment better enables us to meet the ever-changing demand for our services, to help offset unexpected

revenue reductions, and to provide the necessary capital base for growth and expansion. In a phrase, an endowment will allow us "to immortalize Fran Heitzman's Bridging dream."

The heart of philanthropic tradition rests in the principle of repaying the benefits we have re-

We have kicked off the "Fran Heitzman/Bridging, Inc. Endowment Fund with the goal of raising \$100,000 in direct and deferred giving by the end of 1996!"

ceived with the good works we do in kind for others. Here at Bridging we are very proud of the fact that over 30% of our donations comes from individuals, just like you. You are the true source of

the generosity that allows us to exist. The availability of our services depend on your capacity and willingness to give. Funding the endowment is a great way to cherish the memory of a friend or loved one, or to recognize a birthday, anniversary or special event with a gift that keeps on giving.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, October 12th for the "Heitzman/Bridging, Inc. Endowment" Kickoff Party. We will have food, fun, and auction new furniture and sports memorabilia as well as a program to explain how an endowment gift might allow you to leave a living legacy with Bridging. Please join with others in this new partnership to launch Bridging, Inc. into the 21st Century!!!

Your Donation Makes a World of Difference

As always, donations picked up at individuals homes continue to be the cornerstone of our existence. Please clip out this friendly reminder and call us if you should have usable furniture to donate.

To receive more information or to schedule a pick-up,

CALL 888-1105

Warehouse Hours for drop offs

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday:
9 A.M. to 2 P.M.**

**Saturday:
9 A.M. to Noon**



Bridging, Inc., 200 W. 88th St, Bloomington, MN 55420

Local and National Media Features Bridging

One of the big blessings that has helped to fuel Bridging's enormous growth over the past few years has been the ability to spread the word about Bridging's mission through the major media networks. Two years ago, FOX 29 did a feature about Bridging on its Minnesota Voices program. Then Don Boxmeyer from the St. Paul Pioneer Press did a very flattering story on Bridging about the thousands of families that we are empowering to take charge of their lives. That was followed by nationally syndicated columnist Jacquelyn Mitchard (author of the best selling novel *Deep End of the Ocean*) doing an article featuring Fran Heitzman entitled "Minnesota's King of Good Will" which was seen by thousands of readers across the country.

This past spring, Channel 5 KSTP's "On the Road" reporter Jason Davis did a very touching special on how Bridging had



The Kare 11 crew prepares a feature story on Bridging.

helped the Tom and Janet Davis family of Prior Lake after a fire had not only destroyed their home and all of their possessions but most tragically had killed their 6 year old son Nathan also.

This month The Marke-

ter Magazine which has a circulation of over 24,000 Minnesota businesses is spotlighting Bridging and our dramatic growth.

Then, this past week, KARE 11 TV featured Bridging on it's KARE 11 Today program. One of the program hosts, Pat Evans spent a day at Bridging seeing how pieces of furniture are first picked up by our trucks and then processed in the warehouse to be picked out by a client family. The show focused on Bridging as a model of efficiency to enable those with furniture to easily get them to families most in need with the help of all of our wonderful volunteers. As Bridging continues to grow and strives to be even more efficient, this type of major media exposure the will only increase in importance to share our vital message.



The Provider



Summer 1997

Volume 1 Issue 1

Bridging Breaks Ground on New Site

Bridging Inc. launched its second decade of service with the groundbreaking of a new warehouse on Monday, July 7. Bridging is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year with the move into its new 26,000 square foot Bloomington warehouse located directly north of our current facility.

In attendance for the ground breaking ceremonies were 3rd District Congressman Jim Ramstad, Hennepin County Commissioner Randy Johnson, and Bloomington Mayor Coral Houle, along with a host of volunteers and long time supporters of the Bridging project. They all spoke in glowing terms about what a perfect model Bridging is for the rest of the country. They expressed their appreciation for Bridging truly helping to build community by being a volunteer based, grass roots organization that helps those most in need without government assistance.

Having worked towards this goal for over a year, we are all very excited and most confident of our success for our "Building Hope for a Brighter Future" Capital Campaign, and invite you to help us. We have secured sizable donations from over a dozen generous contractors whose help is making this project a reality. We are anxious to show our appreciation to them throughout construction and at a special event in their honor in the new building soon. Without the substantial donations from these tremendous benefactors, our dream of a new building would not be possible.

This \$2,000,000 campaign has \$1,225,000 earmarked for the new facility which will allow us to expand our services and enable us to put the \$100,500 per year that we currently pay in rent, towards our program services. Please call Chuck Waletzko at 888 - 1183 with any questions or if you would like to know how you can help make Bridging's new home a reality!



3rd District Congressman Jim Ramstad, Hennepin County Commissioner Randy Johnson, and Bloomington Mayor Coral Houle at the July 7th ground breaking ceremony at Bridging's new warehouse.

Bridging Stories

by Fran Heitzman

A woman came to Bridging for a bed. In her letter she stated that she was sleeping on a mattress that was moldy and the springs were sticking out which made for very uncomfortable sleeping. She came with a fifteen year old boy and her neighbor. She walked with a cane and her feet in her sandals were gnarled and bent with arthritis. She was given a wonderful, almost new bed complete with bedding and pillows. She came up to me and said "God Bless you and God Bless this organization. I want to give you a hug." I accepted that hug in the name of all of you who in any way

contributed to making Bridging what it is today. Because...

That's Bridging!

Bridging is also in the process of completely furnishing a home for a Lutheran Minister and his family who are from Norway. They are being sponsored by a Lutheran church, but were referred to us through Pax Christi Catholic Community. That is what makes Bridging happen. Bridging reaches out to all races, creeds and colors. These are all real people just like you and me. With your help Bridging can continue to do this work. May God Bless all of you. I have love for you all.

That's Bridging!



Bridging, Inc.

200 West 88th St., Bloomington, MN 55420 (612)888-1105

****Please Note**** While our lists are purged of duplicates and regularly updated, it is impossible to eliminate all duplicates. Please pass duplicate letters to a friend and call our office to request a correction.

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1042
MPLS MN

Bridging Hosts 1st Free Furniture Agency Conference

The first ever Free Furniture Agency National Conference was hosted by Bridging on June 3rd.

Participants for the meeting were Marjory Rice, Director of Furnish a Future in New York, NY, Tom Polk, Founder of Metro Atlanta Furniture Bank in Atlanta, GA, Shane Rock, Director of The Share House in Seattle, WA, Carol Kane founder of The Mustard Seed in Orlando, FL, Allen & Rose Anderson, volunteers with Project Welcome Home in Rockford, IL and Frank Forsberg and Hank Keshi with Catholic Charities free furniture program in St. Paul.

The first order of business was a description and history of each of the organizations represented at the conference. Then over the next two days participants shared their experiences and program ideas so that all could benefit and take those ideas back to their organizations. A wide array of topics was covered ranging from fund raising, special projects, government

grants and staffing issues. Also discussed were relationships with referring agencies, screening of client families, deliveries and organizational issues such as budgets, volunteers, strategic planning, facilities and furniture pickup procedures.

Everyone left the conference overwhelmed with their new found in-

formation, anxious to implement new ideas back home. They were also most gratified to have had the opportunity to share experiences and ideas in this wonderful collaborative effort for the mutual benefit of all of the participants. We have already made plans for next year's conference and are ready to build on the momentum that started here at Bridging!



Bridging hosts national conference for other free furniture giveaway programs from around the country.

Kevin Swartout wins Humanitarian Award

Olson Junior High End of the Year Awards Banquet honored Kevin Swartout with the Humanitarian Award plus a \$1000 scholarship. Kevin volunteers over 200 hours per year at Bridging. He is always helpful, hardworking, and cheerful. Thank you and congratulations from all of us at Bridging, Kevin!



Kevin Swartout, who has volunteered many hours at Bridging, with his recently awarded Humanitarian metal.

Wish List for New Site Grows

The needs for items at the new Bridging warehouse are growing. Please let us know if you can help us with any of the following items.

- New Blinds for office windows
- New stove and refrigerator
- New office furniture
- New pick-up truck
- Late model truck with a fourteen foot box
- Office Supplies

Bridging Grows to Serve the Poor

With all of the rapid growth and non-stop action around here, it is sometimes easy to lose our focus. Whenever that happens, we regroup and realize that we are here to serve those who, for whatever reason are down on their luck and need a helping hand to get back on their feet. When our families are at last offered affordable housing, a harsh reality confronts them. Their house is empty. Without beds, dishes and a sofa, their house is not home. Unfortunately, once rent and utilities are paid and food and childcare provided, there is no money left for furnishings. The fragile confidence and success of this family is dealt another serious blow, as they lie down to sleep on the cold, hard floor. We have seen the faces and we have heard the stories of the people who walk through our doors. There is no doubt in our minds that we are offering a valuable service.

You have read in previous newsletters about how "Bridging Providence" has always come through for our families whenever we needed it most. One more wonderful example of this is having received three 50 foot semi loads of new clothing from Fingerhut in July. The retail value of this great merchandise is well over \$1,000,000. Once again we were able to "bridge the gap" and immediately get these much needed items in to the hands of those who need them most.

None of our incredible growth is possible without your partnership and financial support. Thank you for sharing and thank you for caring enough to stand up for those most in need!

Bridging's Astonishing Growth from 1994 through June 1997

	1994	1995	1996	1997(YTD 6/97)
Families Served	1,303	1,897	2,278	1,221
Children/Parents Served	4,600	6,640	8,220	4,390
Beds Donated	1,546	3,238	4,954	2,332
Sofas Donated	648	1,147	1,505	949
IRS "thrift shop value"	\$532,000	\$821,000	\$1,587,407	\$680,000
Volunteers/Volunt. Hours	130/8,60	175/12,974	344/19,173	390/10,662
Dumping Fees Saved	\$95,000	\$173,000	\$262,000	\$134,495



With your help, Bridging is able to make an empty house into a home!

Bridging Staff Available for Speaking Engagements at Your Next Meeting!

During the past year, Fran and members of the Bridging staff have made numerous appearances in front of churches, and civic, service, and fraternal organizations. These appearances help out both the organization that is in need of speakers, and of course, Bridging.

Appearances of this type are available free of charge to any organization in our service area. These speaking engagements give us the opportunity to get the Bridging message to the involved people in our community.

As a result of such appearances, Bridging has received household do-

nations, furniture drives, offers of further media coverage, and even gifts of cash.

If you are the person in charge of finding speakers for a civic group or if you belong to such a group, suggest a speaker from Bridging. While Fran is most in demand with a compassionate speech which really pulls at the heart strings, Chuck or any other member of the staff is also available. Presentation time can be adjusted to fit your organization's needs.

This is a great opportunity to spread Bridging's message. Call Char at 888-0745 for further information and assistance in this matter.

Businesses and Civic Groups Tour Bridging

For years, Bridging has grown and prospered due to people of goodwill sharing it with the people within their circle of influence through word of mouth. We have now been blessed to be able to take this one step further. Dale Alberts of Equitable Financial, a member of Bridging's Board of Directors, started inviting business leaders from the area for a luncheon and a tour of our facilities. Nothing tells the story of Bridging better than seeing the warehouse and viewing first hand the organization in operation. The mutual benefits of these meetings are numerous. The business people have an



The first of many luncheons held at the Bridging warehouse to introduce the business community to Bridging, Inc. and its mission.

opportunity to network with other companies and Bridging gets a chance to tell its marvelous story.

Soon thereafter, civic clubs started to catch on to the idea. Now some civic organizations have started to hold their meetings right at Bridging, Inc. They get to see what a direct impact their commitment has made to the local community by seeing it in action. Please consider having your company or civic group out to see how Bridging is changing lives, one family at a time. To schedule time for a luncheon, please call either Char Pfeiffer at 888-0745 or Chuck Waletzko at 888-1183. Thank you.



The Provider



Winter 1997

Volume 4 Issue 1

Bridging, Inc. Thanks You For A Wonderful 1996!!

Since you have been willing to share so generously, 1996 was yet another banner year for Bridging and the families we are committed to serving. This is evidenced by the following interesting comparisons from 1994, 1995, and 1996.

I also encourage you to review the condensed annual report in this issue to note our efforts to expand our financial foundation. In 1996 we expanded our operating support to 10 churches, 12 civic clubs, 33 corporations, 29 foundations, 197 individuals as well as Hennepin County.

Bridging collaborates with case-workers at 73 social service agencies who rely on us to provide the furniture and household goods that their client families need. It is important to remember that when you help Bridging, you are really helping 73 non-profit agencies all at once! The activity around here is always so fast-paced that we do not always take enough time to reflect

94, 95, and 96 Year End Figures

	1994	1995	1996
Families Served	1,303	1,897	2,278
Children/Parents Served	4,600	6,640	8,220
Beds Donated	1,546	3,238	4,954
Sofas Donated	648	1,147	1,696
IRS "thrift shop value"	\$532,000	\$821,000	\$1,587,407
# of Volunteers	130	175	344
# of Volunteer Hours	8,600	12,974	19,173
Dumping Fees Saved	\$95,000	\$173,000	\$262,000
Square Footage Leased	5,200	8,900	13,300



Bridging, Inc.

200 West 88th Street, Suite 5, Bloomington, MN 55420-2752

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1042
MPLS MN

...when you help Bridging, you are really helping 73 non-profit agencies all at once!

on the human impact behind the numbers in this report. Since you have chosen to partner with us there are now 2,278 more families with couches to sit on and tables to eat off of as well as over 6,000 children who are no longer sleeping on the floor, all because you cared. For this and so much more, on behalf of the entire Bridging staff and Board of Directors, I thank you for making it possible.

By Chuck Waletzko

Bridging Stories

by Fran Heitzman

Another incredible year has passed at Bridging. It doesn't seem possible that July 10th of this year will be our 10th anniversary. We have increased in every area whether it be number of volunteers, product procurement, or fund raising. We have added some wonderful new people to our Board of Directors and look forward to 1997 as a banner year.

It seems like every time we need something or someone, it or they appear. I like to think we are but a pawn in God's design for a better world.

I don't pray for the poor anymore. I pray for people to come forward and say "Yes, I can do something to change people's lives for the better." Our volunteers are living testimonials of this. They are my idea of saints in the modern world. I have love for everyone of them and I pray for them daily. I say to each one, "I LOVE YOU!"

Sincerely,

Fran Heitzman
Founding Director

Bridging Receives 50 Tons of New Dishes

We have a long standing quote that guides us here at Bridging which states "we don't just believe in Providence — we rely on it on a day to day basis!" Never was that more apparent than when we received a call from Marjorie Rice, the director of Furnish a Future, a program of The Partnership for the Homeless. This is an organization in New York City that is similar to Bridging. They recently had a New Jersey restaurant supply company down size their operation and donate 750,000 new dishes to them. Luckily they called to share their good fortune with us.

We wanted to jump at the possibility of receiving three 48 foot semi loads of new dishes, but we had two hurdles to overcome — where to store them and how to pay the transportation costs. First we called our landlord and a new benefactor who owned warehouse space. They gave us the temporary space we needed. Then Paul Scheunemann from Air-Lite Transport, Inc. helped out by keeping the transportation costs as low as possible.

The last piece came in to place that very same day. Dale Alberts from our Board of Directors was hosting a lunch for local business leaders. We shared our opportunity/challenge and immediately two of the executives responded by offering to pay for all of the transportation costs!

All in one day, we had gotten the opportunity for dishes that we always need, found space to store them, the means to transport them, and the funds

to get them transported 1,300 miles from New York to our families. Now the little girl who exclaimed "just think Mommy, now we don't have to share spoons anymore" as they got their silverware in the warehouse, can now have new dishes to eat off of. Our sincerest thanks to everyone who had a part in getting the dishes to our clients who needed them. Isn't Providence a wonderful thing?



Just a few of the 75,000 new dishes that Bridging is receiving from Furnish a Future (a program of The Partnership for the Homeless) has already found their way on to the shelves, ready to go home with client families who are in need of them.

Bridging Volunteers of the Month

Bridging is blessed to have volunteers from a variety of walks of life. One group of volunteers include the students from a variety of local schools, including Kennedy, Olson, Benilde, St. Thomas, Breck, Blake, Eden Prairie, as well as Normandale College. Students volunteer to meet community service and confirmation requirements, and just because they love working here at Bridging.

We wanted to highlight two of these students in particular for their outstanding service, Kevin Swartout and Mike Slobodnik. Kevin volunteered an astounding 347 hours in 1996. Mike volunteered an incredible 308 hours in 1996. Both boys come in 3 to 4

days a week during their summer vacation. During the school year they come in on holidays and Saturdays. They always have a smile and are willing to do anything asked of them. We are in need of their strong, young muscles to haul and move furniture. They are great at pulling pranks on me, hiding things around my office, and leaving little treasures on my desk. We all love having these young people around. Their gifts of laughter, warmth and caring touch us all.

Thank you to all the students who have graced our warehouse and continue to do so. You do make a difference! Keep up the great work. You are a joy and a treasure to us.

Love,
Char and the Bridging Staff



Kevin Swartout and Mike Slobodnik are two outstanding Bridging volunteers.

Howdy Pawdners!! Come Join the Fun!

Bridging invites you to attend our first Gala Celebration of the Old West!

Dress casual and get ready for the fun!!!

The festivities will be held at the Design Group on

Saturday, April 5, 1997 from 6:30 p.m. to 12:00 Midnight

Raffle, Silent and Live auction,
Dinner,
Music and Dancing,
Casino Night,
and lots of Fun!



Former MN Vikings and Purple People Eaters Jim Marshall and Carl Eller will be on hand to sign autographs and meet you!

Invitations will be coming to you at the end of February.

Mark your calendars and *please* join us. Space is limited to the first 500 people.

Pull out those cowboy/girl boots

(that you have but never have anywhere to wear them!)

and kick up 'yer heels for a great time!

Proceeds to benefit Bridging, Inc.

If you have questions or can help with a silent auction prize call Char at 888-0745.

Welcome Kristine Swan!!!

Kristine joins Bridging as the Assistant Director, replacing Nicole Gates who recently had a baby.

Kristine has her B.A. in Business Administration from North Park College in Chicago. Her volunteer experience in the inner city of Chicago has helped her develop a strong understanding of the needs of disadvantaged families. She is in charge of the day to day program operations, inventory reporting and recordkeeping, and coordinating all 73 Bridging registered agencies.

Kristine is a newlywed. She

married Eric Swan May 4, 1996. Eric is a Saturday transportation volunteer and is always willing to come in at the last minute when we are in need of an extra driver.

Kristine is warm, funny, caring and a great new asset to Bridging. We all feel like we have known her forever and are so glad she is part of the Bridging team.

When asked how she was enjoying her new position, Kristine said "I love it and I feel good about how I am helping others."





BRIDGING, INC.

201 West 87th Street
Bloomington, MN 55420

PHONE 952/888-1105

FAX 952/888-1239

E-MAIL info@bridging.org

WE ARE ON THE WEB!

Visit us at www.bridging.org

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 21
FARIBAULT MN



The PROVIDER

BRIDGING, INC. • SERVING FAMILIES IN TRANSITION

Bridging, Inc. Coming Events

SUBWAY® BEDRACE FOR BRIDGING

Sunday, March 7, 2004, 10:30 am

Teams of four are invited to race down Buck Hill atop a bed (mattress provided). All proceeds go directly to Bridging, Inc. For further details, see page 4 of this issue or go to www.subwaybedrace.org—Sponsorships invited.



SPRING GALA

Saturday, May 8 at the Airport Hilton

Think Hollywood and your favorite movie and then start thinking about what you will wear to the Spring Gala. Save your money for fabulous silent and live auction prizes.

Call your friends, put a table together and make your reservations early! Call 952/888-0745.

Volunteers Needed

Can you or someone you know spare four hours a week to help Bridging? We have vacancies on a continuing basis in the departments listed here. We will work to find a shift that will fit your schedule.

Call 952/888-0745 for more information or to volunteer.

Volunteers Needed

Drivers, Movers, Schedulers (Phone), Warehouse Help, Data Entry	Monday-Saturday
Wood Shop Workers, Electric Shop Workers, Product Sorters and Merchandisers	Monday-Friday
Shopping Assistants	Monday-Thursday, Saturday

When

IN THIS ISSUE

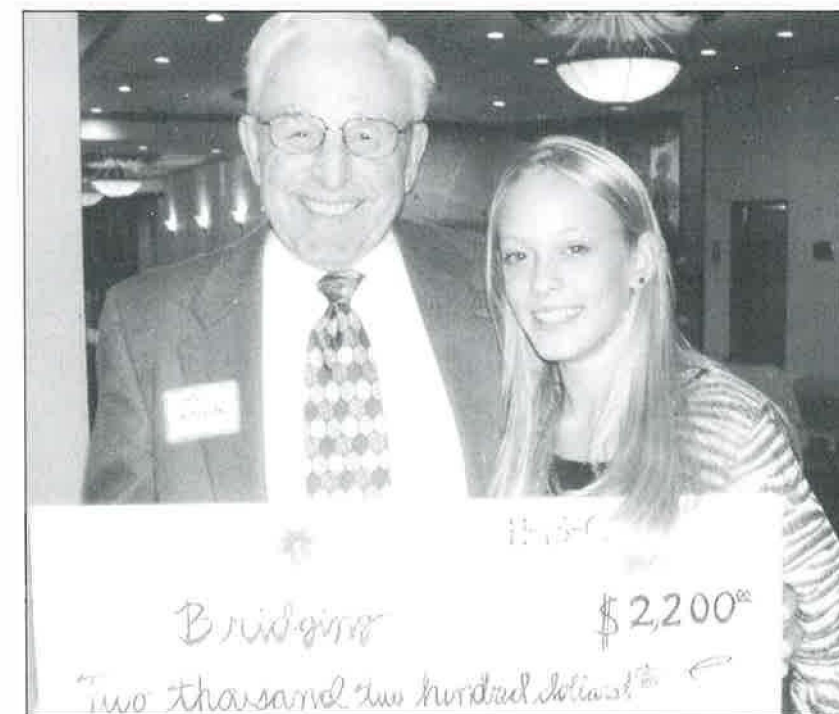
FROM OUR PRESIDENT	2
STAFF/BOARD	2
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	3
HELP WITH GALA AUCTION NEEDED	3
HOW YOU CAN HELP	3
BRIDGING STORIES	5
LOU SCHILLING HONORED	5
FRAN HEITZMAN WINS BLOOMINGTON AWARD	5
SUBWAY KITCHEN KOLLECTION	5
LEGACY AWARD FOR SLUMBERLAND	6
PAX CHRISTI AWARD TO ST. STEPHEN'S HOUSE	6
ITEMS RECEIVED IN 2003	6
THANK YOU, DONORS	7
COMING EVENTS	8

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Bridging provides over \$1,700 worth of good used furniture to every family served.
- Dressers manufactured in Bridging's Dresser shop and valued at \$75 are provided to needy families.
- An apartment full of furniture can be sponsored for \$250.
- You can help by donating your money, your furniture, or your time.

Call Bridging
at 952/888-1105

Bridging, Inc. Benefits from Teens' Initiative and Hard Work



Heather Flugstad, 13, presented Bridging founder Fran Heitzman with a \$2,200. She and her friends raised the money for Bridging at a silent auction. Another teen, Jon Morimoto, made a contribution of \$565 by selling chances on a DVD player.

"It's all about helping out others in need, and that's a wonderful feeling," says 13-year-old

TWO area teenagers recently accepted a challenge from their church to each take \$100 dollars and use it to help those in need. Both Jon Morimoto and Heather Flugstad chose to help Bridging, Inc. as a nonprofit agency close to their hearts. Thanks to their entrepreneurial thinking and plain hard work, they made that seed money grow. Between the two of them they raised over \$2,700 dollars to donate to Bridging.

Jon, a member of Peace Lutheran Church, sold chances on a DVD player he bought with his \$100 and later presented Bridging with a \$565 check from the proceeds.

Heather Flugstad, 13, also a member of Peace Lutheran, accepted the \$100 and set to work by recruiting her friends Anna Koehler and Bailey Hanson. They in turn asked friends to donate items for a silent auction that was held at Olympic Hills Golf Club as

part of Peace Lutheran's 25th anniversary celebration. Heather's personal contribution to the auction was a night of babysitting. Working together, the girls raised a total of \$2,200 for Bridging, Inc. Going a step further, they also collected a trailerful and truckload of furniture including several sofas, chairs, dishes, household goods and other useful items.

Heather learned about Bridging, Inc. last year when her confirmation class toured

From Our President/ MIKE VOOSSEN

A Stronger, Expanded Bridging

2003 was a year of transition for Bridging and I am happy to report that the changes made have strengthened the organization. Many new initiatives are in the works to allow Bridging to expand and serve more clients. Watch *The Provider* for news of these exciting events.

Part of the excitement is the addition of several new Board members to help guide and steer Bridging in the future. The Board meets quarterly to review operations and provide policy for the operation of Bridging. Here are our new and returning Board members:

Reelected to three-year terms:

John Brintnall Serving as Treasurer, John is a very valuable member of the Board. His financial savvy, reflected in the reports and updates he has developed for fellow Board members, has proved very beneficial. John is Vice President of Finance at CVRx, Inc.

Jerry Grebin Since retiring as manager of the Minneapolis Athletic Club, Jerry has been a dedicated volunteer at Bridging. He chaired our Personnel Committee and was instrumental in hiring our new Executive Director. As a member of the Thursday volunteer crew, Jerry has also organized several fund-

raisers for Bridging.

Newly elected to three-year terms:

J. Marie Fieger J. Marie, Senior Vice President of Nemer/Fieger, is not a newcomer to Bridging. She has been the creative force behind many of the highly successful Bridging events including the Subway Blanket Drive and the Subway Bedrace. J. Marie's untiring energy will be a welcome addition to our Board.

Steve Hoyt Steve is a familiar face at Bridging as well. He was instrumental in the start of the organization by donating use of our first warehouses. Over the years, he has continued to find us extra space to help store larger donations of furniture and his expertise will be a welcome addition to our Board team. Steve is the owner of Hoyt Properties.

Ruthe Batulis Ruthe is President of the Northern Dakota County Chamber of Commerce. We welcome her networking expertise as we expand into the Twin Cities community for support. Her background in youth and education will also provide valuable insight as we build for the future.

Bill Cook Bill has been a long-time volunteer for Bridging. Not only does he work in the warehouse, but he also pro-

vides the staff with insight on various funding opportunities. He is Donaldson Companies' Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President of International.

Welcome to all our veteran and new Board members. The next few years provide many exciting opportunities and we look forward to having them as members of our team.

Happy New Year! ●



BRIDGING, INC.

Board of Directors

Ruthe Batulis Northern Dakota County Chamber of Commerce	Bob Flammang Donaldson Co.
John Brintnall CVRx, Inc.	Jerry Grebin Minneapolis Athletic Club
Bill Cook Donaldson Co.	Steve Hoyt Hoyt Properties
Susan Cowsert Edina Realty	Anne Knapp GMAC-RFC
Peter Coyle Larkin, Hoffman	Jeff Urban Senior & Family Solutions
J. Marie Fieger Nemer/Fieger	Mike Voosen Microm, Inc., Retired

Staff

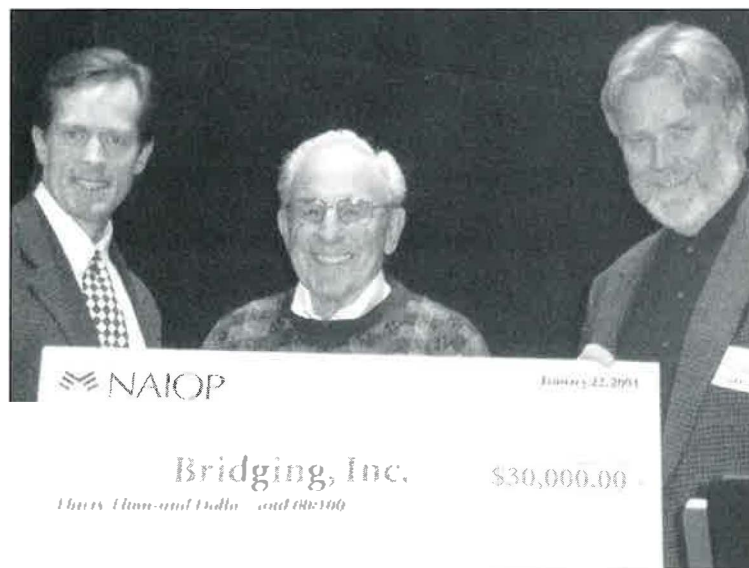
Ron Osterbauer
Executive Director

Megan Peterson Program Coordinator	Jen Weiler Finance/ Office Manager
Mary Parker Warehouse Coordinator	Char Pfeiffer Marketing and Special Events Manager
Roger Lussier Warehouse Assistant	Jim Elfering Operations Manager
Jeff Busta Warehouse Assistant	Greg Clark Warehouse Assistant

Printing of *The Provider* donated
by Donaldson Company, Inc.

BRIDGING, INC.
201 W. 87th Street
Bloomington, MN 55420
952/888-1105

NAIOP Presents a \$30,000 Gift to Bridging



Representing the 700 members of the Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP), Eling Olson, Chair of the Community Enhancement Committee, (left), presented a \$30,000 check to Bridging Founder Fran Heitzman (center) and Executive Director Ron Osterbauer (right) at the association's annual awards ceremony on January 22, 2004.

Many Thanks for Donations Received in 2003

Furniture Given	Quantity
Twin Bed	1324
Full Size Bed	1114
Queen Size Bed	1390
King Size Bed	114
Bunk Bed	86
Bed Frame	1664
Headboard/Footboard	831
Sofa	2312
Loveseat	859
Stuffed Chair (i.e. recliner, easy chair)	2110
Straight Back Chair (i.e. rocking chair, wood-framed chair)	717
Dresser	2462
Desk	727
Bookcase/Cabinet	1151
Footstool/Ottoman	226
Kitchen/Dining Table	1872
Kitchen/Dining Chair	4061
Coffee Table	1154
Microwave or TV	365
End Table/Nightstand	2014
Lamp	2246
Vacuum Cleaner	201
Mirror/picture	1004
Boxes of Household Items*	6883
Bags of Household Items**	3842

*Box of household items includes dishes, flatware, pots, pans, kitchen utensils, etc.
 **Bag of household items includes linens, pillows, rugs, towels, blankets, etc.

In 2003.....

Families served:	2750
Appointments made:	3533
Total family members:	8610
Children under 15	3921
% children	46%

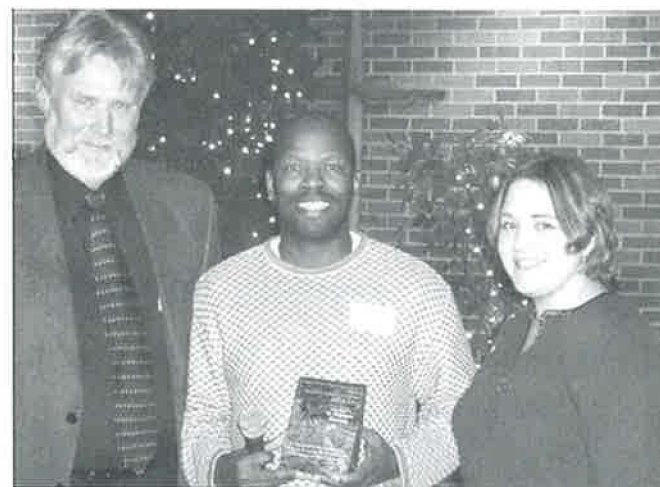


Bridging founder Fran Heitzman (center) presents Kenny Larson (left) and Ken Larson (right) of Slumberland, with the 2003 Fran Heitzman Legacy Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to Bridging.

2003 Francis Heitzman Legacy Award Presented to Slumberland for Great Contribution

THE Legacy Award is presented annually to an outstanding individual or organization whose contribution related to finance, merchandise or service has significantly assisted Bridging, Inc. as personified by our founding director. This year's winner, Slumberland Furniture, has been a community partner for many years, donating beds and furniture on a weekly basis to the Bridging warehouse. This past year Slumberland matched funds with Bubba Gumps Shrimp Company and donated 177 new beds to Bridging and will be the Platinum sponsor for the Subway Bedrace for Bridging on March 7. In addition to countless product donations, Slumberland also donated \$11,000 for operating expenses. We are grateful for their friendship and partnership. Thank you, Ken Larson and Kenny Larson. ●

2003 Pax Christi Catholic Community Legacy Award Goes to St. Stephen's Housing



Ron Osterbauer, Executive Director, left, and Megan Peterson, Program Coordinator, present Richard Amos with the 2003 Pax Christi award.

St. Stephen's Housing was recognized with the 2003 Pax Christi Catholic Community Legacy Award for its collaboration with Bridging in fulfilling its mission. Since 1998, St. Stephen's has referred 813 clients to Bridging. Caseworkers at St. Stephen's support their clients in numerous aspects of their lives including housing, employment and family services. ●

Teens' Contribution

Continued from page 1

the facility. She was especially touched by a story Bridging founder Fran Heitzman told of a little girl who went through the warehouse with her mother. As they were offered silverware, the little girl said to her mom, "Now we don't have to share a spoon when we eat anymore." Heather came home and started unloading her parent's silverware drawer. When Mom and Dad questioned her, she told them how important it was to do something to help others who don't have anything. Later she wrote a letter asking for help from anyone who would listen.

During the Subway Bedrace for Bridging last March, Heather and her friends collected enough donations to fill the Bridging truck at Buck Hill. It was such a rewarding experience, that when the new opportunity from Peace Lutheran came up, Heather was thrilled to be a part of it. As she remarked, "It's all about helping out others in need, and that's a wonderful feeling." ●

WANTED

Enthusiastic Go-Getters to Solicit Auction Prizes for Annual Spring Gala on Saturday, May 8

Prize Ideas: Cash, Condos, Cabins, Resorts, Jet Skis, Bikes, Boats, Plane Tickets, Trips, Framed Art Work, Theater Tickets, Sporting Event Tickets, Gift Certificates, Golf Packages, Restaurants, Wine, Collectibles, TV's etc.

To busy to solicit?

Bridging supporters are always invited to donate an item without serving on the committee.

Call or E-mail Suzanne Wunsch, Auction Chair
 612-670-1991 sgwunsch@aol.com

Want to enter a team in the Subway Bedrace for Bridging? Go to www.subwaybedrace.org for online registration details.

From Our Executive Director/ RON OSTERBAUER

Year Ends with Balanced Budget

AS I write this on December 31, 2003, I am reflecting on an incredible year for Bridging. Soon staff and Board will gather to celebrate this year, which includes a balanced budget, a first in the past three years, thanks to the efforts of many people. When I started with Bridging in July, we were facing a shortfall of \$250,000. Through the hard work and dedication of Board, staff, and volunteers, it is very gratifying to have eliminated this deficit and balance the budget. This feat speaks volumes for the quality of people associated with Bridging and for the support of our mission. A big thank you to all donors who also helped make this possible.

But more important is the fulfillment of our mission, helping those in need. It was a record year as well. By year end, Bridging had provided services to 2,750 clients. In addition to the number of clients, we also distributed over 4,000 beds, an increase of 10 percent over the previous year. Add to the beds, sofas, dining room tables, lamps, chairs, mirrors, etc., all the items to make a house a home, and the total number of items distributed totals over 45,000. That's an average of 16 items per client or 900 items per week that pass through our warehouse. Each client receives approxi-

mately \$1,709 worth of furniture, based on thrift shop value.

It was a very gratifying year, and at 12:01 a.m. tomorrow, the process begins all over with the start of 2004. The budget for Bridging next year is approximately \$850,000 and our plan is to increase our clients-served to 3,000 or more. Extra shopping days will be added in 2004 to make this possible. As the budget and client base grow, so do our space needs.

In December, we were informed that we needed to vacate our extra warehouse in Burnsville. As the economy strengthens, free space is becoming sparse, meaning we will need to rent space to help store extra furniture that comes in large quantities from hotels and all the major furniture outlets in the Twin Cities. The space we are renting is conveniently located directly adjacent to Bridging. As we move forward, our strategic planning will need to include storage options. Watch for more details in upcoming issues.

The team at Bridging is a key to our success. Special thanks to the 2,000-plus dedicated individuals who make this all happen. Without them, we couldn't do it. Thanks to all who have helped Bridging enjoy a banner year. On to 2004! ●

How You Can Help Bridging

- Deliver donations to the Bridging warehouse.
- Call to schedule a pick-up of donated items.
- Make a monetary gift. Call 952/888-1105.
- Become a Bridging volunteer. Call 952/888-0745.
- Tell friends, family, neighbors, business associates about Bridging.
- Make a planned gift to Bridging through bequests and estate plans.
- Schedule a Bridging representative to make a presentation at your corporate, community, school or church function.



SUBWAY



BEDRACE FOR BRIDGING

Sunday, March 7, 2004
10:30 am

Buck Hill Ski Area
Burnsville

Help others by having fun!

Teams of four are invited to race down Buck Hill atop a bed (mattress provided).

Register in advance or register on-site the morning of the event at Buck Hill at 8:30 a.m. A minimum donation of \$75 in advance/\$100 day of race is requested. Come dressed in matching outfits for a chance to win the **Cities 97 Costume Contest**.

Prizes for the race and costume contest include trips for four from Trans Global Vacations, movie tickets, CD's and SUBWAY® Giant Subs.

Pick-up information at any participating SUBWAY® restaurant or visit www.subwaybedrace.org.

Must be 18-years-old or older to participate.

All proceeds go directly to Bridging, Inc. to help people in transition.



Volunteer Lou Schilling Receives 2003 Howie Boeser Legacy Award



LOU SCHILLING was named 2003's winner of the Howie Boeser Legacy Award, which is bestowed annually on a volunteer who exemplifies the outstanding characteristics of selfless, generous and caring volunteerism as personified by Howie Boeser. Lou has given tirelessly of her time and effort to advance the mission of Bridging since its inception 16 years ago.

Thank you, Lou. ●

Bridging Stories/ FRAN HEITZMAN

ON January 12, 2004 I had the privilege of speaking to The Families of Faith group at Pax Christi Church. These families in the congregation meet to study their faith, and this quarter they are focusing on the eight Beatitudes. My topic was, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." Jesus teaches that those who are not poor can become meek by sharing what they have with the needy and by treating everyone with equality, respect and honor.

I couldn't help but think of all our volunteers at Bridging and how they treat the poor who come through our doors. They truly live out this Beatitude. As one woman said, "You have given me back my dignity." Another woman, Virginia, was so excited to completely outfit her house she just broke down and cried and hugged us. That's Bridging!!!! ●

Fran Heitzman Honored with Bloomington Community Foundation's 2003 Legacy Award

BRIDGING founder Fran Heitzman was awarded the Bloomington Community Foundation's 2003 Legacy Award for his service to others.

The award is given each year for notable achievements in community leadership, support of community projects and high ethical standards. Fran more than fills the bill in all of those categories.

In a November *Sun Newspapers* article, Harvey Rockwood wrote: "A typical busy day for Fran might include a talk before a civic group, rushing to a northern suburb to finalize the gift of several hundred mattresses and box springs, and accepting a few dozen couches from a furniture store that found the color didn't match its expectations."

He also noted that in recent weeks Fran had talked to students at St. Olaf College in Northfield and Shattuck Academy in Faribault. "What I wanted

from them is a commitment to come up and drive the truck, pick up the materials and bring it here," said Fran.

Typically, Fran credits the corps of about 2,000 volunteers for the phenomenal success of Bridging since it first opened in 1987. "Without our volunteers we'd be dead in the water," he said. "The volunteers—they're wonderful."

Fran told Rockwood that older citizens are often the easiest people to convince to get involved. "I just say, 'You gray-haired people, save yourselves the trouble of going through all your stuff.' It's crazy the way we hoard stuff."

Today, Bridging's warehouse of 26,000 square feet is filled with household items ranging from dishes and linens to furniture and children's toys to be distributed to individuals and families dealing with transitions in their lives.

Last year alone, Bridging served 2,750 clients. ●



Subway® Kitchen Kollektion

FOR BRIDGING
January 19-February 15

Bring new or used kitchenware, including cookware, silverware and dishes, for donation to any one of the six Twin Cities Warners' Stellian locations from January 19 to February 15 and receive a certificate for a FREE regular six-inch Subway sub. Donate a new set of pots and pans or dishes and purchase any major appliance from Warner's Stellian and receive the extended warranty (a \$69.99 value) FREE.

All kitchenware will be distributed through Bridging, Inc. This offer is sponsored by Subway, Warner's Stellian and Mix 104.1.

Recycling Furniture Helps the Environment and Bridging Families, Too!

Bridging's furniture donors are doing more than helping families in need—they're also protecting the environment. Good used furniture that is recycled rather than dumped saves thousands of acres of landfill. It also saves money! To dispose of the volume of furniture we distribute annually would cost donors over \$350,000!



BRIDGING, INC.

201 West 87th Street
Bloomington, MN 55420

Phone: 952.888.1105
Fax: 952.888.1239
email: info@bridging.org
www.bridging.org



NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Faribault, MN 55021
PERMIT NO. 21

The PROVIDER

2005 - SEPTEMBER ISSUE

BRIDGING, INC. • SERVING FAMILIES IN TRANSITION

With all of the Bells & Whistles, Bridging's New Web Site is a Hit!

Have you been to the hottest site on the Web? No? Well, now is the time! Web technologies and trends are always changing. Bridging's new online partner **AWARE WEB SOLUTIONS** (www.AWAREWEBSOLUTIONS.COM), one of the region's fastest growing Web development firms, recently donated their talents to the planning, design, and development of the site and implemented the new online presence for Bridging. Now live at www.BRIDGING.ORG, Bridging's new site offers updated information, online donations, urgent donation needs and highlights of what is happening around the organization.



Asked what the Bridging staff thinks of it, Bridging's Executive Director Ron Osterbauer says, "We are so excited. We have a whole new look! This new site will be helpful to all of our users – donors, volunteers, agencies and supporters. It will also be helpful for us in communicating our clients' needs. I hope that everyone will take moment to check it out and don't forget to tell others about it – www.bridging.org."

Bridging, established in 1987, is on its third generation Web Site. The organization is growing each year – nearly 100% over just two years ago. Serving nearly 4,000 families and giving away almost 6,000 beds this year, Bridging needed a new site to communicate the varied needs of the organization, including financial and product donations, volunteer needs, press information and how to find help. Through Aware, this latest site offers increased visibility of the organizations' success stories and statistics on how Bridging helps the community.

"As a Web company, we can't do a lot to directly impact those in need. We want to help the people that help other people. Bridging serves families in transition and that resonated with us. This new site is a great way to tell Bridging's stories. Our role was to take their powerful success stories and weave them together to make a strong, high-impact Web presence," explains Jeremy Ziegler, Aware Web Solutions Chairman. "Bridging has longevity; this is evident through their statistics on the families they serve. We toured the facility, met the staff and volunteers, and saw the clients and volunteers interact, and that gave us a good idea of how to create Bridging's online presence. We wanted to communicate the warmth at the location and the wonderful services that this organization offers. I hope that we delivered."

Diana Dalsin, Bridging's Volunteer Manager wanted to send "special thanks to Jeremy Zielger and Trevor Olson, owners of Aware Web Solutions. The Aware team worked tirelessly to achieve exactly what we were looking for in a new site. Brooke Lueders, the site architect and designer, along with Deb Francis, the account manager, ensured that our needs were met and went above and beyond our expectations. Thank you!"

Please visit the new site and send us your comments. We are always looking forward to hearing from you.



CALENDAR OF
EVENTS
PAGE 11



MISSION

Extending community resources by distributing free beds, furniture and household goods to people in transition.

BLOOMINGTON WAREHOUSE

201 West 87th St.
Bloomington, MN 55420
Tel: 952.888.1105
Fax: 952.888.1239
Email: info@bridging.org

Hours:

Monday to Thursday
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday & Saturday
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

SAUK RAPIDS WAREHOUSE

SERVING THE ST. CLOUD AREA

800 Industrial Drive
Suite 202
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379
Tel: 320.229.7636
Fax: 320.229.8867
Email: info@bridging.org

Hours:

Monday to Friday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Join the Friendly Office Team!

Provide valuable assistance to Bridging by working one day a week for a few hours. Become part of the Office Volunteer Team. Current volunteers, refer a friend to the volunteer program. You are our greatest asset and know what it takes to be part of the Bridging community.

FLEXIBLE SHIFTS - THREE TO FOUR HOURS IN LENGTH - TRAINING PROVIDED

Like to work on the phone? Try your hand on the front lines of Bridging, by providing information to donors on the phones and greeting clients.

Available Shifts:

Tuesday, 8:30 am – 3:00 pm
Thursday, 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Thursday, 8:30 am – 3:00 pm
Saturday, Noon – 3:00 pm



Are you a person who likes to dot your Is and cross your Ts? Love to take on a project that requires detail and accuracy? We have the job just for you! Provide assistance by entering information in our database and in Excel files. Competency on the computer and ability to work carefully on details required.

Available Shifts:

Friday 8:30 am – 3:00 pm Saturday Noon – 3:00 pm

CONTACT DIANA DALSIN, 952-888-0746 OR EMAIL DIANA@BRIDGING.ORG, TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS AMAZING OPPORTUNITY. IMMEDIATE OPENINGS! CALL TODAY.





Bridging, Inc.
Board of Directors

Fran Heitzman

Founder, Honorary Member

- | | |
|---|--|
| Denise Brigham
Subway Restaurants | Jerry Grebin
Minneapolis Athletic Club |
| John Brintnall
CVRx, Inc. | Steve Hoyt
Hoyt Properties |
| Barry Butzow
C.H. Robinson | Anne Knapp
GMAC-RFC |
| Bill Cook
Donaldson Co. | Rod Kunkel
Donaldson Co. |
| Peter Coyle
Larkin, Hoffman | Lori A. Larson
CB Richard Ellis |
| J. Marie Fieger
Nemer/Fieger | Mary O'Neill
Clear Channel Radio |
| Bob Flammang
Donaldson Co. | Jeff Urban
Solution Design Group, Inc. |

Staff

Ron Osterbauer
Executive Director

- | | |
|---|--|
| Diana Dalsin
Volunteer Manager | Jane Pavkovich
Program Coordinator |
| Jim Elfering
Operations Manager | Steve Pavkovich
Facility Manager |
| Kara Good
Volunteer Coordinator | Cheryl Peters-Lewis
Program Coordinator |
| Roger Lussier
Warehouse Assistant | Megan Peterson
Program Manager |
| Brom Nikrad
Assistant Warehouse Coordinator | Char Pfeiffer
Marketing and Special Events Manager |
| Erika Pascale
Assistant Office Coordinator | Jen Weiler
Finance/Office Manager |

From The President's Pen

By J. Marie Fieger, Board Chair



Each time I visit the Bridging warehouse, I am amazed by the miracles that continue to take place. My heart is filled with gratitude each day for the hundreds of people who help

Bridging get youth and families off the floor and into a bed.

Being the mother of a soon-to-be-kindergartener, I know the challenges of school clothes, shoes, supplies and more that parents face this time of year as they try to prepare their children for school.

It is exciting to imagine the hundreds of kids, thanks to Bridging, will be able to go to school well rested after sleeping in a bed, store their school clothes in their new dressers, turn on lamps to do their homework and sit on a chair at a table to do their homework.

Now that we serve 24 Minnesota counties, the Board is thrilled to know that additional children will be sleeping in beds, not on the floor tonight, thanks to the efforts of Bridging staff, volunteers and sponsors. Yet, there are thousands more who need our help.

Board members and staff have been meeting to find new ways to decrease the number of weeks that potential donors spend waiting for furniture pick-up, as well as new ways to provide service to more areas in the Twin Cities.

One part of the solution is clear, we need more volunteer truck drivers. If you, or someone you know, can help on our trucks as a driver and/or handler, please contact Diana Dalsin, 952-888-0746. If your neighborhood, church or civic group, or company is interested in a presentation about the opportunity to support Bridging by providing drivers or volunteers, we are happy to make a presentation.

One of the other big projects in the works is the creation of a DVD about Bridging. Thanks to the efforts of DREAMWORLD STUDIOS, located in Eden Prairie, we have been filming Fran, staff, volunteers and community supporters this summer to develop a captivating marketing tool for Bridging. After twenty plus hours of filming, we are sure to have a winner.

The DVD will be linked to our new website which was unveiled in August. The redesigned website is easier to navigate and provides tools to connect volunteers, donors, clients and the community. Thank you to AWARE WEB SOLUTIONS for donating their time and talents to make this happen!

In the next few months, the Board will begin discussions on ways to expand our reach in other parts of the state and strive to meet the needs of more Minnesota families.

All of your energy, financial donations and time fit together to make a huge difference in the lives of thousands.

Thank you for all that you do, and please continue to promote Bridging to family and friends. We could not do it without you.

Calendar of Events

Thrilling events and fundraisers are right around the corner! Mark your calendars for the next season of Bridging support and excitement.

Sunday, November 13, 2005

Subway Blanket Drive, held throughout Minnesota

Thursday, December 1, 2005

Volunteer Holiday Party at St. Edwards in Bloomington

Saturday, March 4, 2006

Subway Bed Race for Bridging at Buck Hill, Burnsville

Saturday, April 22, 2006

Bridging Spring Gala, Holiday Inn, Bloomington



Subway Partners with Bridging to Launch the Winning Non-profit Race

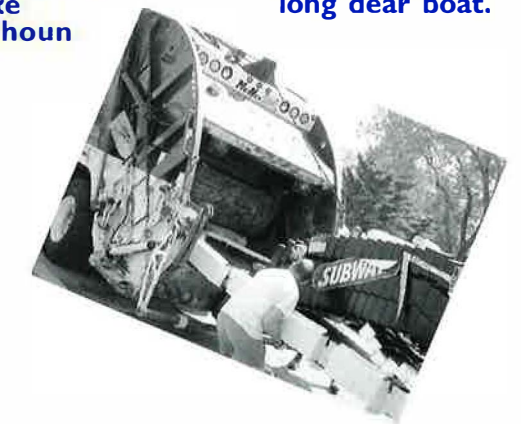
On Sunday, July 24, Bridging, Inc. raced in the **Minneapolis Aquatennial Milk Carton Boat Race** for the first time.

Our entry placed **First in the Nonprofit Race** due to the powerful paddling talents of KEVIN KUNKEL, SARAH COOK, AND ANDY SEBOR (left to right in team photo.)

We also placed **First for Most Creative Boat** in the Non-profit division, thanks to the help of HOWIE BOESER, MOE FAILER, TOM HEITZMAN, FRAN HEITZMAN, SARA COOK, ANDY SEBOR, CHAR PFEIFFER AND CHARLIE CASSERLY.

Paddling towards victory on Lake Calhoun

Recycling at the end of the day - so long dear boat.



We had a great time creating, building and launching our maiden milk carton boat. We were not sure if it would float, even though we glued and taped over 700 milk cartons. That famous silver tape really held it together!

A BIG THANK YOU to **SUBWAY**, who was there for us once again as an underwriter and supporter of this awesome event and to our volunteers who helped build, paddle and cheer us on to victory.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!



The Winning Team!

Donaldson Company Donation to our Dresser Shop

Throughout the warehouse, volunteer carpenters have been busy making dressers, repairing furniture and constructing table legs this past summer. These wood working shops are key to providing quality items to our families. On top of the day to day work completed, the Dresser Shop volunteers made a record 170 dressers in June and surpassed the 5,000 mark for total dressers built in July.

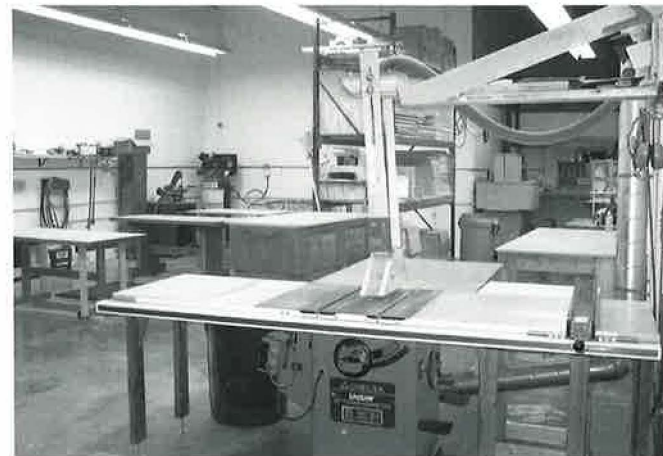


The new Torit runs beautifully! This state-of-the-art vacuum keeps us moving right along and breathing cleaner air.



All of these efforts are to ensure that we have the necessary inventory to meet the needs of our client families. This level of activity generates a fair amount of sawdust.

This past summer, our friends at the **Donaldson Company** helped out by donating two new Torit vacuum systems to collect dust from our two workshops. In addition to the two new systems, they also donated the expertise to design the systems to collect the dust in each of the shops. Our thanks to volunteers **HOWIE BOESER** and **MOE FAILOR** for installing these systems.



Stop by for a tour of the new shop located in our Pilsbury warehouse.

And a huge thank you to the Donaldson Company for your continued support of our efforts. We appreciate it.



Extra! Extra!

As of 10:45 am on Friday, July 29th, dresser number 5,000 was completed. The volunteer team worked hard to meet their goal of reaching 5,000 built by the end of July. Volunteers **Chuck Dorniden** (left) and **Chuck LeCount** were on hand to finish and tag the monumental dresser. All volunteers who have assisted in the shop are signing the back. We will keep this prized dresser on hand to share the story of how the Boeser Dresser began in 1998.

From Our Executive Director

By Ron Osterbauer, Executive Director



Bridging continues to expand our services to families in need and through July 31st our staff and volunteers have served a record 2,000 families. This represents a 18% increase over 2004. Unfortunately, there is more to do and Bridging is committed to help those in need.

The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless reports over 20,000 people are homeless or precariously housed. Within that, 50% are children under the age of 18. It is a staggering statistic which supports the need for Bridging in our communities.

One of the unique characteristics of Bridging, is our ability to engage various members of the community to provide solutions to the problem. Volunteers are the lifeblood of Bridging. Every day, members of our community donate time to help people become more financially independent. In the first six months of the year, our volunteers have contributed over 35,000 hours to Bridging, a 28% increase over the first seven months of 2004.

So, what does this mean? Simply stated, we could not do it without them. These 35,924 hours represent the equivalent of 29 full time positions. Using the hourly wage from the National Council of Volunteers, through July of this year, this amounts to an in-kind contribution of over \$630,000. By year end, it is estimate to total over \$1 million. This is not only a huge savings to Bridging, but also a key

factor in allowing us to reach out and serve more families in need.

Who are these volunteers? A walk through our facilities on any given day reveals the multi-generational approach Bridging uses to help provide our service. The bulk of our daily volunteers are retired adults who are committed to the mission of Bridging. However, on any given day, there are adult groups as well as several youth from high school to college age who volunteer many hours a week.

Corporate volunteerism and support has also risen. Corporate America has joined the volunteer forces and within the last 9 months, Bridging has been host to several large corporate events. It all started last September, when the **DONALDSON COMPANY** sent over 125 volunteers to reorganize the warehouse. The reorganization pioneered the potential of enlisting large groups of volunteers in the effort to fight homelessness. The Donaldson volunteer event resulted in a warehouse with 30% more room for storage and paved the way for Bridging to increase the number of clients served in a week during 2005. It was an impressive event that led the way to enlisting the support of other corporations.

Last December, **TARGET** donated 13 semis of unassembled furniture to Bridging for distribution. Thanks to the support of **HOYT PROPERTIES** and **FIRST INDUSTRIAL TRUST**, additional warehouse space was secured to store the furniture. Slowly, volunteers from corporations began forming groups to help assemble the furniture for distribution. Volunteers came from; **GMAC-RFC**, **KATUN CORP.**, **BEST BUY**, **DAKOTA COUNTY**, **PAX CHRISTI**, **CONGREGATIONS IN COMMUNITIES**, **JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS**,

COMMUNITIES HEALTH CHARITIES MN, **CHURCH OF ALL NATIONS**, **NATIONAL CONCIERGE ASSOCIATION - MN CHAPTER**.

The momentum of this donation added many volunteers to our force when **MEDTRONIC** stepped forward to enlist their employees in a **MISSION IN MOTION** project called **Furniture Fridays**. **Christy Eichers** and her staff from **Medtronic** orchestrated the largest volunteer project to date in Bridging history.

Each week contributions from **SLUMBERLAND**, **HOM**, **ROOM AND BOARD**, **SELECT COMFORT**, and **ORIGINAL MATTRESS FACTORY** arrive at Bridging for distribution. In addition to furniture donations, financial support from our foundations, corporations, and individuals allow us to meet the demand of these families. Every week, the equivalent of 15 semi loads leaves our warehouse to make our client's house a home.

It takes the cooperative efforts of many in the community to make this happen. Bridging is the conduit that allows it to happen and there is more to do. On behalf of our Board and staff, thank you for being a part of this valuable team. We could not do it without you.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Board Member **Jeff Urban**, Medtronic's **Christy Eichers**, Star Tribune's **Chad Brown** and **Ron Osterbauer** enjoy their time at **WHQ** for the first event on June 17. Highlights on page 8 and 9.

In Honor of Two Outstanding Volunteers

Over the past summer months, two members of our volunteer community passed away. Our friend Floyd Williams, Repair Shop volunteer for the last five years, passed away on June 25, 2005, and friend Marcella Welter, dedicated Sorting Room volunteer on Monday and Tuesdays for the last 10 years, passed away on July 8, 2005.

Founder Fran Pays Tribute

Marcella ~ It is very hard to put into words what Marcella Welter meant to me and to Bridging. I have known her family for many years. Marcella had that big smile all the time at Bridging. She never went at a slow pace. She was always in high gear. When it was her turn to bring treats, they were always homemade and delicious. It is very hard to say goodbye to such a great and beautiful lady. Her welcoming nature and commitment to serving our families will be missed dearly! Marcella rest in peace and be sure to tell God to be good to all of the staff and wonderful volunteers at Bridging.



Floyd ~ A gentleman is a very good description of my friend. I have known him since 1930...75 years. He could make something out of nothing. Give him a few tools and a fold-out carpenters' ruler and he could do great things. He called me one morning five years ago and asked what I was doing. I told him about Bridging and he immediately came out and started volunteering in our Fix-It Shop, a perfect fit for this great mechanic. Now, when Floyd got to heaven God welcomed him and said, "Boy, do we need you up here! I want to show you the Banquet Hall; the tables are falling apart, the chairs are in dire need of repair and when you are done there, you can start working on the plumbing, which definitely needs repair." Floyd, I will dearly miss you.



All of the wonderful people at Bridging who have come to love you both will miss you. Rest in peace, my dear friends. I love you.

Fran Helgman

Donations and Distribution Climbs in 2005

Total Items Distributed To Clients

	2004	YTD JULY 2005
Bed Frames	1,804	1,434
Beds	4,416	3,365
Uplstered Chairs	2,845	2,602
Dressers	3,043	2,353
Kitchen Chairs	7,578	6,059
Kitchen Tables	2,225	1,566
Lamps	3,251	2,247
Sofa & Loveseats	3,760	1,800

Welcome New Agencies

Children's Hospitals – Hospice and Home Care

Living Word Church

LSS Rezek House and Transitional Living Project for Youth

The Jeremiah Program

Project Quest and Jackson Street (Wilder Foundation)

Social Adjustment Program for South East Asians (Wilder Foundation)

St. Anne's Place

For a complete listing of registered Agencies, go to www.bridging.org and click on **Get Help**.



Christy Eichers and Shera Lund spent countless hours preparing for all three events. Their dedication and enthusiasm is what made this a huge success for both organizations!



Armed with power tools, these employees are ready to build!

Focused and hard at work in the premier shade spots on a sweltering day in July at the Shoreview location.



Furniture Fridays

A MEDTRONIC MISSION IN MOTION PROGRAM



Once they pass **QUALITY CONTROL**, they team lift their furniture on to the **TARGET** truck.



Even in 95 degree heat, these dedicated Foremen would not slow down! We could NOT have done it without them!



Medtronic Employee, and Event Photographer, Christine Altenhofen, climbs on top of WHQ to get an arial shot of this landmark event in June.



Retired Medtronic Employees "drive home" the point that Volunteerism is a great use of time and talents.

MEDTRONIC FURNITURE FRIDAYS hit record highs, both in volunteer hours and heat index!

Three Days and Over 900 Pieces Assembled

What an incredible three day event! Little did we know how or what this project would turn in to during the initial planning session back in early March. In the end, our three MEDTRONIC FURNITURE FRIDAYS achieved staggering statistics;

**928 Pieces of Target Furniture Assembled
By 676 Volunteers
In 1,507 Hours
Equal to a \$26,448 In-Kind Donation of Time**

Throughout the summer, one Friday each month, we spent the day with Medtronic team members while they assembled a large portion of our Target furniture donation which came in earlier this year. Our success on this project is due to the fantastic organizational skills of Christy Eichers and Shera Lund, Medtronic Community Affairs, and Jim Elfering, Bridging Operations Manager. They made sure furniture was ready to build, the semis were properly loaded, water was chilled, and an appetizing lunch was served. Several Bridging volunteers joined us to answer questions and take product donations; DON EISEN, JOE MARTIN, JERRY ARSENEAU, SHEL AND ARLEEN KLASKY, GERI MEYER AND JUNE HEINZ. Thank you for going the extra mile!



Bridging Volunteers, Don Eisen and Joe Martin, offer supplies and assembly wisdom in the Tool Shed for all three events.



Founders, Earl Bakken and Fran Heitzman, take time to connect about this amazing event. Fran does not wait long before he hands Earl a Hug Card.

Corporate and Nonprofit Founders Join Forces

On Friday, August 12, the founders of a major Twin Cities corporation and a nonprofit corporation joined forces to help families in need. Earl Bakken, founder of Medtronic, Inc. and Fran Heitzman, founder of Bridging, Inc. were present to encourage Medtronic volunteers as they assembled new furniture to assist families in need in the Twin Cities. The two encouraged Medtronic volunteers at the Cardiac Rhythm Management West facility in Fridley during our third and final date for Furniture Fridays.

About Medtronic

Medtronic, Inc. (www.medtronic.com) headquartered in Minneapolis, is the global leader in medical technology – alleviating pain, restoring health, and extending life for millions of people around the world.

About Target

Target gives back more than \$2 million a week to its local communities through grants and special programs. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs.

Target donated semis to transport the assembled furniture while our friends from **TWO MEN AND A TRUCK** transported the pallets of furniture to be assembled to Medtronic facilities.

The Bridging Team Grows



Staff pose for a photo at the Summer Volunteer Appreciation Picnic - held on August 4th. *Front Row* - left to right: Cheryl Peters-Lewis, Jane Pavkovich, Erika Pascale, Megan Peterson, Mary Parker, Char Pfeiffer, and Diana Dalsin. *Back Row* - left to right: Steve Pavkovich, Ron Osterbauer, Jen Weiler, Jim Elfering, Fran Heitzman, Brom Nikrad and Roger Lussier.

Please welcome the three newest members of the Bridging staff team, Erika Pascale, Brom Nikrad and Kara Good. They are a welcome addition to the team—we can not imagine how we got along with out them in the past!

Erika Pascale

ASSISTANT OFFICE COORDINATOR
Start Date: June 1, 2005

Erika is a Connecticut native and recently moved to Minnesota in search of a new adventure. She has a B.A. in history with a M.A. in International Affairs. She is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer from the Dominican Republic. As a volunteer, she worked with an organic coffee cooperative on coffee production, reforestation, biodiversity, soil conservation and organic pesticides and fertilizers. Erika has a strong background in education. She has a passion for learning about Latin America and is very interested in the different issues affecting the developing world. She is fluent in Spanish and proficient in Portuguese.

Brom Nikrad

ASSISTANT WAREHOUSE COORDINATOR
Start Date: June 7, 2005

Brom comes to us with 14+ years of non-profit from the former Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (Minneapolis). After losing his job due to company relocation he

has landed a job with us and we are happy to have him! Brom has an A.S. in Law Enforcement and has a strong background in shipping, mail and administrative. He has numerous volunteer experiences, such as Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child" among other things. He has also volunteered his singing and musical leadership talents in numerous groups since 1987. His passion is ministry and singing. He loves people and loves helping others in need, and looks forward to every opportunity to do so!

Kara Good

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
Start Date: August 29, 2005

A Wisconsin native, Kara received her B.S. in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse and recently completed her MS in Social Responsibility at St. Cloud State University. She has three years of experience recruiting and coordinating volunteers and recently completed a year with the AmeriCorps Program as a Volunteer Coordinator with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Central Minnesota. Kara has worked for non-profits in various positions over the past three years. Kara's favorite past times include riding her motorcycle and playing the piano, and watching the Packers.

Bush Grant Helps St. Cloud Facility

The **Bush Foundation** Board of Directors awarded a \$50,000 grant to Bridging to be used to hire a Volunteer Coordinator for our Sauk Rapids facility. Staff had begun the search process in July and hired Kara Good (see biography on left) by September 1. Diana Dalsin, Volunteer Manager, head up the search activities and filtered through over 505 applicants. Our thanks to the Bush Foundation for their support which allows Bridging to expand services in the mid central part of Minnesota.