

Neighbors Driving Neighbors

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022



Mount Vernon resident, Terri Zacker, with her winning bid item from our summer online auction.







## President's Letter

In mid-2022 we finally were able to open up to all kinds of rides, from grocery-runs and medical appointments to visits to the hairdresser and social events. Our medical committee is meeting monthly to monitor Covid-19 risks and we still require vaccination (both shots + one booster) and masking in the car. These extra precautions are necessary because many of NDN's riders are in vulnerable groups. We will continue to monitor the situation and adjust our vaccination and masking policies as needed moving forward.

It is important to us to reach new riders. We have seen a drop in rides during Covid-19 and we are concerned that many may have become socially isolated. A top NDN priority is outreach and partnerships with other local groups to bring rides and other types of assistance to people in our communities. We want to get the word out that we also provide rides to social events or just to visit a friend.

We are blessed to have a broad community base of volunteers and good will including individuals helping out at events, local businesses, board members, this year's 120+ donors and, of course, the heart of NDN—the drivers. The drivers not only contribute their time and gas, but also provide and benefit from meaningful conversations and often, companionship. While other similar volunteer-based organizations have seen a decline in volunteers over the last years, we are proud and grateful for the continued strong commitment of NDN volunteer drivers.

As a final message I would like to encourage you to help spread the word that no rides are too small or "insignificant." After years of restrictions and limited social lives, we can't be happier to help bring people together.

Thank you!

Harald Bredesen  
President, NDN



## Remembering Dan Onion

*It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Dan K. Onion back in early July. He was one of our founders and a driving force behind Neighbors Driving Neighbors. From NDN's inception until shortly before he died, Dan's generosity of time, energy, and resources has been unmatched. While Dan is missed, his example stays with us. Neighbors Driving Neighbors will forever be grateful for his gifts. Below are a few remembrances from board members.*

"I had just signed up as an NDN driver and I remember well that Dan came by to personally welcome new drivers and took the time to talk to each of us. He demonstrated then, as I experienced since, an interest and curiosity in the people he met, and made them feel welcome and appreciated for their contributions to NDN. He will be greatly missed."

—Harald Bredesen, president, NDN

"As my boss [at Belgrade Lakes Regional Health Center], I saw him as a formidable medical and political force, but always fair and approachable. As his vice president, I saw the guy who would make pancakes at the community breakfast. As a parent, he sent me not one, but two, handwritten notes of condolence after the loss of my son."

—Shelly Fitzgerald, board member, NDN

"A new board member had a conversation with Dan not long before he passed. Dan wanted to make sure she was still going to join the Board. She was, in fact, thinking of declining as she had a very full plate. But Dan said, 'You *have* to join the board—I need to know that good people like you will continue the work we have started.' There was no way she could then say no."

—Libby Harville, board member, NDN

"Dan's example of 'leading by example' impressed me when I began coordinating rides in late 2019, as he consistently signed up to drive people at least once a week. He took time to know individuals, and with Pat at his side, delighted in their company. He led us all to meet the challenges of pandemic times. He encouraged me to apply for a new leadership position, and thus ushered in a coordinated team that has left NDN in great shape to continue to make a difference in the lives of people in the wide NDN community."

—Misty Beck, past co-executive director, NDN

"Dan, no doubt, adhered to Hippocrates' advice, 'first, do no harm.' But he also turned it on its head and did an amazing amount of good—from co-founding Neighbors Driving Neighbors, to driving riders, to sharing homemade maple syrup, to health officering, to Covid education Zoom sessions, to staffing vaccination clinics, to being great company. He seemed to be present and enriching lives 24/7."

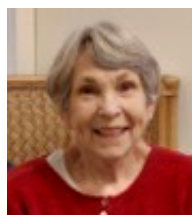
—Bill Rosenberg, board member, NDN

# Big Changes

*As the year comes to a close, we look back on a few of the significant changes to the board and leadership at Neighbors Driving Neighbors.*

It has been a year of big changes to the board membership and leadership. We congratulated (but were sad to see go) Misty Beck on her new full-time position at the University of Maine Farmington, while welcoming Joe Austin as NDN's Executive Director. We are grateful to Pat Onion, Deb Stahler and Tanna Witkin for their service as they retired from the Board this year, and also want to recognize the service of Board Members Kelli Burnham and Sarah Firth whose terms will expire by the end of this year. NDN welcomed new Board Members Maggie Chadwick of Fayette, Ken Elliott of Mount Vernon, Cindy Murphy of Mount Vernon and most recently, Sandy Colt of Belgrade.

Two of NDN's founders also retired from the Board—**Sandy Wright (at left)** and the late **Dan Onion**. You can read elsewhere in this report about Dan and his impact on the communities and people his life touched. Here I want to highlight Sandy and her steadfast dedication and hard work to growing NDN from an idea, to what the organization is today. Sandy has been a driving force for putting good ideas into action across the community—and while she has now retired from the NDN Board, it seems inevitable that she will continue her work for the people of Mount Vernon and neighboring communities.



—Bill Rosenberg, board member, NDN

## Facts & Figures

During 2022, volunteer drivers donated 450 hours of their time. The value of these hours, according to **independentsector.org**, is greater than \$13,478. Twenty-nine drivers completed 389 requests (rides and deliveries) for 21 riders and drove 9,454 miles (a value of \$5,909). Many additional hours and miles were donated this and every year by board, committee, and community members. Additionally, NDN added 11 new riders and 11 new drivers.



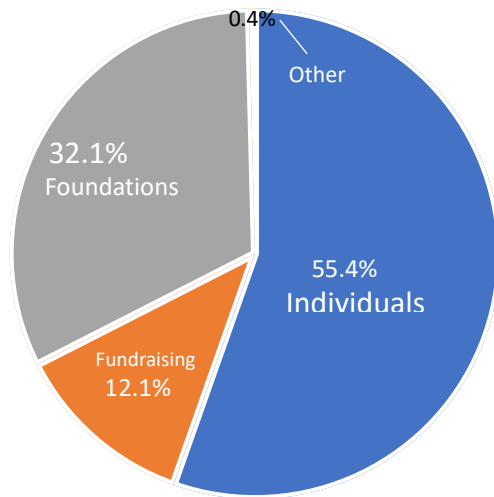
## Honored to Serve

NDN is proud to announce that we have been presented with the *Maine 2021 Spirit of America Foundation Award* for our “commitment to providing neighborly transportation to seniors...especially during a global pandemic.” For more than 30 years, the award has recognized individuals, organizations and projects for commendable community service. We share this honor with our many volunteers and donors who help to make our mission possible. To learn more about this foundation, visit **spirame.org**.

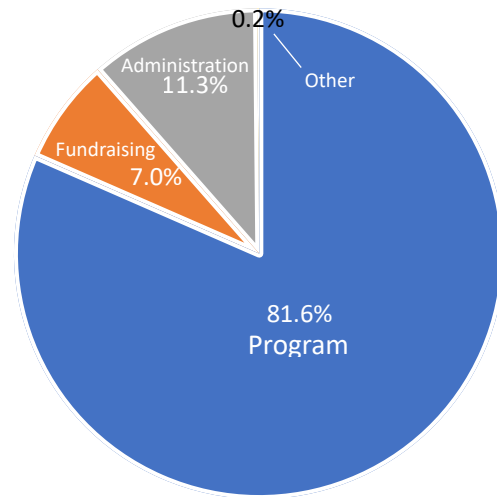


# Sources and Uses of Funds

*Neighbors Driving Neighbors, 12 months ending November 30, 2022*



**Sources**



**Uses**

## How You Can Give to NDN

*There are many ways to contribute your time, money and service to NDN.*

- Send a check to NDN, P.O. Box 142, Mount Vernon, ME 04352
- Apply to be a volunteer driver.
- Attend or participate in an NDN fundraiser.
- Spread the word to your neighbors that NDN provides free rides to folks in Belgrade, Fayette, Mount Vernon, Rome and Vienna.



And now, you can become an NDN Sustaining Member with our “Pit Crew.” By setting up an ongoing *monthly donation*, you will be helping to keep our volunteers and their cars on the road to assure our neighbors get the rides they need. Hats off to **Mark St. George** (pictured here), as the first member of the Pit Crew, which now has four members. We hope you can join us!



# Events

*From the online auction to the community breakfast, Neighbors Driving Neighbors not only had a successful fundraising season, but also enjoyed coming together with the community to enjoy each other's company and to get the message out that we are here to help.*

## Community Breakfast



At the Mount Vernon Community Center on August 6, we hosted a breakfast fundraiser. We were able to catch up with our neighbors and enjoy a delicious array of home baked treats. Thanks to all who baked, cooked, attended and donated!

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## Online Auction



Over the summer, we ran another fun and successful online auction. Many local residents and businesses donated some wonderful experiences and items, which were enthusiastically bid on during the month of July. Congratulations to the winners and our sincere thanks to all who donated and bid.