



Founded in 1942, Northlands Rescue Mission is one of the oldest operational homeless shelters in the country. It has been through quite a lot: wars, recessions, relocations, generations of clients, donors, and volunteers... After all of that, the Mission still stands. A big reason for this is that so many compassionate individuals have made the Mission part of their **legacy**. Year after year, people like yourself have supported the work of feeding and sheltering homeless men, women, and families. You have formed relationships with staff and with clients. You have recruited friends and family for the cause, and you have dedicated your time, money, faith, and passion. We want to thank you today, because without you the Mission would have no path forward. On that note, we are excited to share with you the story of **Ole Aasand**, a man who has made the Mission a part of his legacy and done much more than that.

If Ole were to be described in one word, many who know him might suggest “generous” or perhaps “selfless.” Philanthropy has always been an important part of Ole’s life. From the time he was growing up in Grafton, through his days as a successful farmer, while raising his six children alongside his wife Frances, Ole has always found it important to think about others. Even now, at age 92, Ole seems to be on a mission to do as much good as he possibly can. This recently came in the form of a trip – a journey around the region to the charitable organizations most important to Ole.



Necole hands Sue Shirek a check from Ole

With help from his granddaughter Necole, Ole brought checks to no less than ten places this summer. Lutheran Sunset Home in Grafton...Saint Gianna’s Maternity Home in Warsaw...Northlands Rescue Mission in Grand Forks...and then on to the next one and the next one. In all of these places, Ole is a friend as well as a donor, and through them he has been improving lives for many years.

In June, Necole delivered a \$2500 check to Northlands Rescue Mission from Ole. Originally, Ole planned to leave money in his will for each of his charitable organizations. Then, he came up with a better idea. Each year, he’d deliver a check on June 27th. The date is important, because that’s the day he married his late wife Frances.

Philanthropy was a passion that Ole and Frances shared throughout their marriage. “My grandma was a very generous person in faith and spirit,” Necole tells us. She describes the bond her grandparents had, how they found joy with each other and through giving to others. “With how he is financially giving now, I believe he is also sharing some of that generous spirit of my grandma,” Necole says.

Helping her grandfather deliver his checks has been a joy for Necole. “Since he’s decided to do this, I’ve been the fortunate family member to get to travel along to all these places and see the relationships he’s formed with people and the deep admiration and gratitude that all his organizations have for him,” says Necole.

Ole & Frances’ legacy doesn’t end with organizations like the Mission, however. Necole credits her grandparents for helping to inspire generosity in the whole family. Her parents enjoyed giving, and Necole and her husband support their own organizations today, such as the Women’s Pregnancy Center in Grand Forks.

Happily, Necole discovered recently that her daughter also makes regular donations to a favorite charity. “That was a defining moment for me,” Necole says. “As a parent, there are so many times you question what you’ve said or done or the example you’ve shown. I’m grateful that I had grandparents and parents to lay the groundwork for that along with me.”



Ole & Frances

We are blessed to have Ole as part of the Mission family. Over the years, he has changed countless lives through the Mission, and undoubtedly countless more outside of it. It is a legacy to be proud of. Thank you for reading Ole’s story and thank you for the ways that **you have contributed to the Mission’s legacy. With your support, the work continues!**

A Letter From:

Sue Shirek, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

It has been quite a year, to say the least. As both a local and worldwide community, we have worked to stay safe and healthy. We have worked to keep our economy moving forward and our children educated. Through it all, we have persevered.

We, at the Mission, have also persevered. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have worked hard to keep our clients safe and help them move into their own homes. We want them to find the security we have all sought as we shelter, socially distance, and maintain precautions like masking and sanitizing. In our last fiscal year, we provided 15,369 nights of shelter to 459 clients who entered the Mission. More than half are now in permanent housing, with an average stay of only 34 days.

We have been serving takeout meals to community members, rather than having them eat in our dining room. Every day, we send between 60 and 100 meals out into the community. Twice a week, we provide food baskets to households in need. We have delivered baskets to the homebound and set up mobile food pantries in Grand Forks and other communities. The Backpack Program has continued, with 30,000 bags of food distributed to local elementary students during the last school year. We will continue providing food to any individuals and families who need our help, in Grand Forks and neighbouring communities of the four counties we serve.

My staff has worked incredibly hard during this pandemic. The fear of the virus entering the Mission and impacting our work and our health is constantly on our minds. Since we have limited our volunteer opportunities, staff and clients have all pitched in to do what was needed during the most critical hours of this pandemic. I am so grateful for every one of them. They are dedicated to their job and to making a difference. We are all proud of our organization and the positive change that happens for our clients.

Through it all, you have been there with us. Your financial support, words of encouragement, donations of masks, sanitizer, toilet paper and other products have made it much easier to do our work. We worry about all of you, pray for you, and hope that you are safe and healthy. Thank you for joining the Mission and our clients in the life-changing work we do.

God bless you today and always,



Sue Shirek

***“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord,
... “plans to give you hope and a future.” - Jeremiah 29:11***

Volunteer Spotlight - *Matt & Josh*

Current circumstances remind us just how important volunteers are to Northlands Rescue Mission. Whether it be serving food, helping at events, packing food bags, or anything else, our volunteers form an incredible support system. Last year, more than 1000 community members volunteered for an incredible 3700 hours! Though volunteers have



been limited this year, many continue to stay involved. We recently had the pleasure of interviewing Matt and Josh, two of our most reliable volunteers. They have much in common: both are from the Bismarck area, they recently graduated from UND with degrees in biology, and both hope to pursue a career in medicine. One more thing they share? A passion for helping others!

What has kept you involved with the Mission as a volunteer? What have you enjoyed most during your time here?

Matt: It's important to me to help out those who are less fortunate. I've also come to feel like part of the Mission family. I always feel so welcomed to come through the doors and do my small part. My third reason is a selfish one. There aren't words to describe the feeling when you give to a cause bigger than yourself.

My favorite event I've been involved with would have to be the annual banquet. I enjoy "suiting up" and explaining to many generous donors why their donation is going to a great cause and why the mission means so much to me and many others.

Josh: The Mission really is a community of great people that share a common goal of giving people a chance and showing them love. I've been able to hear some amazing stories from people who have gone from tough times to thriving with the help of the Mission. Being even a tiny piece of those incredible stories is what keeps me coming back.

I've been able to help with directing traffic for a run and bike race, setting up silent auctions at the annual banquet, grilling hotdogs and hamburgers for donor appreciation nights... Every day is its own adventure, and you never know where they may need you to help. I think that's what makes it so fun.

What makes you passionate about homelessness as a community issue? Have you had any experiences that changed the way you thought about homelessness?

Matt: My passion stems from my Christian faith. Proverbs 14:31 says, "Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him." I believe that we are called to help those in need and I intend to do what I can to heed that call. The most moving interaction that I have had with a homeless person was when I visited a shelter in Guatemala. There was a man that I helped prepare food for and spent time with. We struggled to communicate with each other, as my Spanish is quite rough. But as I left, the look in his eye said more to me than he could have said with words. His thanks, not for the food, but for my willingness to spend time with him, pray with him, and care for him... This shook me to my soul and actually inspired me to start volunteering at the Mission.

Josh: For a long time I had a lot of misconceptions about homelessness. I used to think that the solution was as simple as gaining employment. However, after many conversations that I've been fortunate to have with clients over the past 3 years, I've realized just how challenging getting back on track can be.

What should UND students and the public know about Northlands Rescue Mission?

Matt: I think others should know that Northlands Rescue Mission is an organization with a goal to truly benefit the community. Giving, whether it is giving of one's own time or fiscally, is always welcome.

Josh: The Mission is its own community of amazing staff, clients, and volunteers all working together. I think anyone in the area should know that getting involved is easy and tons of fun. If you're on the fence about getting involved, then I say take a chance! Being a part of this organization is one of the most rewarding experiences I've had.



See current needs, upcoming events, client stories, and more online at: **NORTHLANDSRESCUEMISSION.ORG**

Phone: 701-772-6600



Address: 420 Division Ave. Grand Forks, ND 58201

CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



The Mission's Banquet is going virtual - join us free this year!



Virtual Banquet & Silent Auction
Thursday, November 12th, 2020

Program 7 PM @ northlandsrescuemission.org/auction

Online Auction open November 10th - November 12th

TO REGISTER FREE, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE VISIT US ONLINE AT
northlandsrescuemission.org/auction

Bid on more than 100 packages in our online auction, right from your computer or phone! Registration is free, and no credit card is required!

If you would like to support the Mission by contributing to the online auction, please contact **Cindy** at **(701) 772-6600 ext. 211** or email **cindy@jointhemission.org**.

Hunter Pinke



Our guest speaker this year is former UND football player Hunter Pinke. A skiing accident in December left Hunter partially paralyzed. Hunter will speak about how the accident has changed his outlook on life and where his faith is guiding him now.



Thank you, Jackie!

We would like to thank Jackie Petersen for her valuable work on the Mission's board over the past few years, as she is moving on to a new chapter. Jackie's leadership kept spirits high and has helped ensure an impactful future for the Mission. We have appreciated her eagerness to be involved with Mission events and to connect with clients, volunteers, and supporters. We will miss her cheerful perspective, levelheaded approach, and compassionate demeanor! We wish you all the best, Jackie!

2020 STATS



More than **1750 food baskets** have been distributed in 2020, a 62 percent increase over the same period last year.



About **383 clients** have received free clothing and essential items through **Rescued Treasures** in 2020.



So far this year, more than **160 clients** have experienced **positive housing outcomes**.

