

# Land O' Lakes workers take on lawns full of leaves

## Volunteers gave time through NYFS Senior Chore program

BY PAUL RIGNELL SUN FOCUS

Many working people don't get a chance to do much fall yard work at their homes on weekdays. And with the changes of all clocks last weekend, there will be even less daylight available for that kind of thing in the late afternoons.

For any work that may be remaining for them around their own homes, 30 workers from the Land O' Lakes campus in Arden Hills last week left their offices and work stations one day to help take care of needed yard work for some seniors living in Roseville and other communities.

The Land O' Lakes employees were volunteering through Northwest Youth and Family Services' Senior Chore program, through which many volunteers — adults and youth — have helped take care of household jobs for many area seniors to make it easier for those seniors to continue living in their single-family homes.

Younger volunteers, according to Senior Chore program coordinator Debbie Petersen, have come from middle and high schools in the local school districts and from Bethel University and Northwestern College.

Adult volunteers have gotten involved with the Senior Chore program either individually or as part of a group or corporate team.

Some Toro employees helped mow lawns for area seniors last spring. It would figure that they brought their own equipment.

Yes, said Petersen. "They did a professional job, alright."

Nick Sullivan, a senior purchasing agent for Land O' Lakes, said while volunteering with a rake last week that Land O' Lakes workers have also gotten involved hands-on with other community projects including Habitat for Humanity and Meals on Wheels. Seniors who themselves spent decades in the working world can be the most fun to help, it would seem. Helping them with yard work or other chores could be seen as a way to honor them. "We're all going to get to a certain age, and we're all going to need help to a certain capacity. It just makes you feel good," said Sullivan about volunteering.

Much of what Land O' Lakes Vice President of Operations Ken Litke had to say seemed to echo Sullivan's comments. "It's very rewarding to help people," said Litke. "We all either have needed help or likely will need help at some point in our lives."

"Land O' Lakes is very committed to improving the communities that we work in, and it's great that the company affords us the time in which we can volunteer. It makes us all feel better about coming to work."

Volunteer efforts through the Senior Chore program have benefited senior homeowners living throughout suburban Ramsey County.

There can be opportunities for additional volunteers. For further information, call 651-379-3451.



Left: Nick Sullivan (l.), a senior purchasing agent, and Kim Dandeneau (r.), an executive assistant, were among the Land O' Lakes employees last week who seemed to appreciate a really slick way of keeping the lawn bags open when trying to fill them with grass and leaves.

Bottom left: Most of the Land O' Lakes employees volunteering last week stayed on the ground while helping a senior couple at their home in Roseville, but Vice President of Operations Ken Litke climbed a ladder to do some needed work on the house exterior. "It's very rewarding to help people," Litke said. "We all either have needed help or likely will need help at some point in our lives."

Bottom right: John Wood, a purchasing manager for Land O' Lakes, carries leaves from a pile he was gathering to be emptied into a lawn bag.

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