



# Retirement Wishes

FOR MARY LOU GOETTSCH, FISCAL MANAGER

November 18th we said farewell to Fiscal Manager Mary Lou Goettsch as she retired after more than 30 years with Golden Hills. Mary Lou oversaw our budget, tracked countless grants, and helped keep the organization financially solvent throughout the years. More than just a whiz with the numbers, Mary Lou was often the first to greet visitors (by phone or in person) and her warm demeanor made everyone feel at home. We miss her dearly already but know that she will keep plenty busy with the lights of her life, her grandchildren, and traveling across the United States with Fred in her RV.

We invite you to join us for a retirement celebration at the Oakland Community Center on Sunday, December 11th between 2 and 5 PM. If you are unable to attend but would like to share a card, please mail to PO Box 189, Oakland, IA 51560 or drop off at the Golden Hills office before December 9th.

# Thank You

Thank You for being an integral part of the Golden Hills Team, Mary Lou!

## Newsletter Highlights

RETIREMENT WISHES FOR MARY LOU

GIVING TUESDAY

NATIVE SEED PROJECTS

SOUTHWEST IOWA ART TOUR

**ENJOY YOUR RETIREMENT!**



# Reflections

## ON MARY LOU'S TIME AT GOLDEN HILLS

Mary Lou played an important role in helping Golden Hills transition to a sustainable, community-based nonprofit. Her knowledge of the history of the organization is priceless. I'm honored to have worked with her and grateful for her support and friendship during my time with Golden Hills.

- Michelle Wodtke Franks, Former Executive Director

Mary Lou has been our constant at Golden Hills, she has been our rock. Although most of us know the calm, sensible side of Mary Lou she has a fun-loving, adventure-seeking side that I am sure she will embrace in retirement. I am glad that I can not only call Mary Lou my co-worker but also my lifelong friend. Enjoy retirement Mary Lou, you have earned it!

- Cara Morgan, Executive Director

My first encounters with Mary Lou were about 20 years ago when we were building the Southern Loess Hills Welcome Center on I-29 in Fremont County. Even though the phone conversations were brief and businesslike Mary Lou always managed to make them pleasant and I always got an answer to my questions. It wasn't until I became a Board member that we actually met. She is even more pleasant and knowledgeable in person! Mary Lou is a fountain of information packaged in a diminutive fashionable smiling lady. We will all miss you but be assured your retirement will be fulfilling and fun, well deserved and well earned.

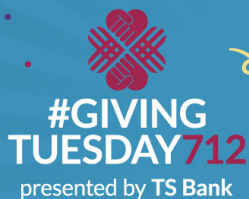
- Sheryl Sanders, Board Member



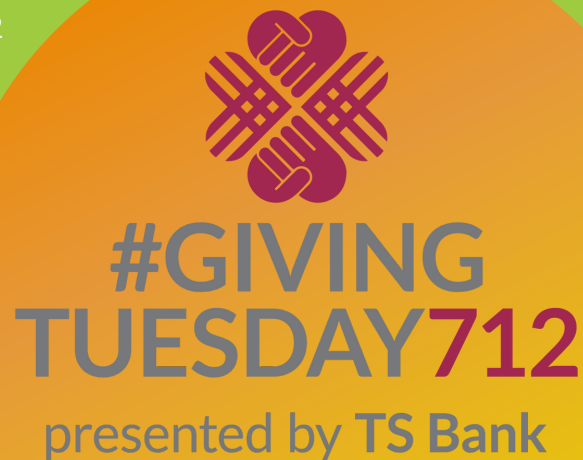
She always has a great smile, always willing to help and a great friend. ~ Barry Deuel, Board Member

# Giving Tuesday

Golden Hills is again participating in Share Omaha's #GIVINGTUESDAY712 event! Join thousands of others from the metro and beyond to celebrate nonprofits by sharing your donations, contributing items from Amazon Wishlists, or signing up for a volunteer opportunity!



SHAREiowa.org



# Prairie Seed Harvests

LANCE BRISBOIS

Thank you to the nearly 150 volunteers who helped us harvest prairie seed in the Loess Hills this season! We had at least one event in each of the seven Loess Hills counties, partnering with County Conservation Boards and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.



We also help educate people on the many benefits of growing native plants in their yards, gardens, and farms. Funding for this project was made possible in part by grants from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Specialty Crop Block Grant, the Gilchrist Foundation, The Clif Bar Family Foundation, and Pottawattamie Conservation Foundation. Learn more at [www.goldenhillsrcd.org/prairieseeds](http://www.goldenhillsrcd.org/prairieseeds).

*Photos by Lance Brisbois*



Most of the seed was given back to the land managers for prairie restoration and reconstruction projects. With permission from some of the county conservation boards, we are keeping a small amount to grow native plants in a greenhouse this winter as part of our partnership with Iowa Western Community College. Stay tuned next spring for a local ecotype native plant sale. We are also working with growers to develop seed plots for easier seed harvesting of certain species in the future, and developing a small native seed bank for future use.



## Southwest Iowa Art Tour

Golden Hills coordinated the 9th Annual Southwest Iowa Art Tour this fall. With over 75 participating artists at 16 locations in 11 different communities, this event continues to help make the arts a viable career path in southwest Iowa. Besides promoting the arts, the tour provides economic impact from those traveling between locations, grabbing a bite from local eateries, and stopping at other retailers along the way. Planning will begin soon for the 10th Annual Southwest Iowa Art Tour, to be held September 15th, 16th, and 17th of 2023. For more information on being a participating artist, please email [rebecca.castle@goldenhillsrcd.org](mailto:rebecca.castle@goldenhillsrcd.org) or visit [www.swiarttour.com](http://www.swiarttour.com).

