

BI-CAP Presents at Walker Rotary

President Lyndon B. Johnson waged “war on Poverty” in 1964 as his administrative theme. It seems Minnesota is still waging that war.

Beltrami County has the 2nd highest poverty rate in Minnesota and Cass County is 18th highest of 87 counties, according to the National Institutes of Health. What is being done to help address this situation?

Speaking at the weekly Rotary meeting were BI-CAP Executive Director Barb Moran and HR Generalist/Benefits Specialist Kelly Virden. BI-CAP (Bi-County Community Action Program), formed in 1966, and serves two counties (Cass and Beltrami) with programs that reduce poverty.

Federal, state and local grants fund an annual budget to eliminate poverty by funding the following programs:

- Head Start to prepare children for school.
- Supportive Housing to prevent homelessness and assist those who are homeless.
- Weatherization helps make homes energy efficient.
- Energy Assistance, to pay for a portion of households’ heating and electricity costs.
- YouthBuild to assist students completing high school, achieving a GED, and receive training and experience for the job market.

BI-CAP is committed to responsibly managing the resources entrusted to us and our community. Through ROMA (Results-Oriented Management and Accountability), BI-CAP monitors and reports its operations to ensure grant funds are used effectively.

However, current grant funding does not fully meet the needs of the individuals and families BI-CAP serves. In response to the growing demand for services and the increasing costs of program implementation, BI-CAP is opening a thrift and boutique store. Revenue from the store will help subsidize services and provide additional resources to meet the needs of clients.

The thrift and /boutique store will be called “Sweet Repeats,” located at the far end of the BI-CAP building in Walker. It is projected to open by the end of October 2026. Donations and volunteers are needed and deeply appreciated. Donated items in good condition for the thrift and boutique store may be dropped off at the Rotary room as part of their Acts of Kindness located at the WACC (Walker Area Community Center) on Tuesdays between noon and 1 PM during the month of October.

Please look forward to future notice of shop hours for direct donations to Sweet Repeats. If you are willing to help by volunteering your time and talent, volunteer application forms may be found at www.bicap.org.

Thank you. Together we can make a difference in our communities!

Representing BI-CAP are Executive Director Barb Moran (second from left), and HR Generalist Kelly Virden (far right). They are joined by Rotarian Jane Baker (far left) and Barb's Mother, Marie.

