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# RAFT Annual Report 2023

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# Rural Alternative for Transportation



**MISSION:** The mission of RAFT is to augment existing public transportation systems in Berthoud and surrounding areas with a volunteer driver program. This will ensure that rural residents 60 years of age and older and adults with disabilities (who are unable to drive) maintain their independence in order to remain in their homes as long as feasible. RAFT will accomplish this by primarily providing access from qualifying areas into Berthoud, Loveland, and Longmont for medical, employment, educational, wellness, professional, nutritional, and social purposes.

***“Without transportation, there is no freedom or choice.”***



## 2023 Board of Directors

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# Letter From the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Across the 2023 year, we saw unprecedented growth in demand for transportation services. An increasing need for transportation to medical appointments, social engagements, education, and employment only highlights the dwindling availability of low to no-cost transportation options for our seniors and adults with disabilities. The vulnerability and isolation of seniors in our community is crying out for attention and our RAFT volunteers showed up with an overwhelmingly compassionate response. RAFT did not deny a single ride this year to our eligible passengers!

To meet the growing demand, RAFT invested in and implemented Spedsta, an award-winning AI based transportation scheduling, dispatching, and routing software system. Users reinforce that the ease of access to transportation requests has allowed them the flexibility to pick up more rides. We can serve more people and coordinate more drivers with reduced effort and time spent communicating. With Spedsta, we're now able to generate reports efficiently and accurately to the public and funders. We are excited at the prospect of reaching more individuals in need, and with this software we are positioned for growth.

There were many exciting events of note in 2023, but none were more reluctantly awaited than the retirement of our founder, Ruth Fletcher-Carter. In the dormancy of winter, Ruth transitioned years of transportation expertise to 2 new staff members. In December, I proudly stepped into the role as Executive Director. There is no question that we will do all that we can to become the keepers of RAFT history and to carry it forward into a new era. We are thankful to Ruth and honor her and the many volunteers who gave everything to build RAFT. There is no doubt that 2024 will bring more demand, more growth, and a deeper connection to the needs of our community.

Steven Conaway  
Executive Director

***"Thanks to all of you at RAFT for all you do to help those of us  
who rely on your kindness!" -Rider***