



For Immediate Release

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Farmers & Merchants Bank's Kindness Project Continues.

Help Us Help Ella

It began on a winter Sunday at church when the mother of a little girl with cerebral palsy struggled to lift her daughter into their van. The parking lot was ice covered and the van didn't have a ramp. It was at that moment that Bob, an 86-year-old parishioner, took it upon himself to start a campaign to help.

Ella Weiske was born prematurely at 26 weeks and developed Cerebral Palsy. She is confined to a wheel chair and has been learning to drive a power chair. In order for her to bring that power chair home, she needed a handicapped accessible van. That's when Homan Ford of Ripon stepped up and held a van for the family until a down payment could be made. Over the past few months, with Bob's help, funds have been raised to help make that down payment, and the van came home just before Easter.

But the story doesn't stop there. The 3rd Graders of Princeton Elementary heard of Farmers & Merchants Bank's Kindness Project—an extension of CHN's 'Read. Run. Reach Program'. They wanted their act of kindness to make a difference in Ella's life, especially since her cousin was a third grader at Princeton Public School. The whole class thought it would be great to help another third grader. Together with Farmers & Merchants Bank, the children were able to gift Ella \$500 to help towards the van payments. On Wednesday, we met with the 3rd Graders, Ella, her mother Debbie, and Bob—their guardian angel who started it all. Each of the children gave Ella a hand-made note welcoming her to their classroom and they toured Ella's new van.

The whole experience with Ella was quite amazing and gives the powerful message that whether you're 86 or 8, you can make a difference in another's life. We want to continue to help Ella by accepting donations at the bank.