

## ‘Tis the Season to “Share the Love” With Washburn County Meals on Wheels Recipients

Join the ADRC of Washburn County in the CELEBRATION OF THE 2023 SUBARU SHARE THE LOVE® EVENT



SUBMITTED BY  
**LINDA HAND**  
ADRC Director/  
Aging Director

As part of a national partnership with Meals on Wheels America, Subaru of America, Inc. and its retailers will donate a minimum of

\$300 to charity, like Meals on Wheels, for every new vehicle leased or sold from November 16, 2023, to January 2, 2024. Since the Subaru Share the Love Event began in 2008; Subaru and its participating retailers have donated more than 4.3 million meals and helped provide friendly visits to seniors being served by local Meals on Wheels programs across the country. For more information, visit

[www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/sharethelove](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/sharethelove).

The ADRC of Washburn County has been participating in the annual Share the Love event since 2018. Each year we work with community members, organizations, businesses, and our own staff to do special things for our Meals on Wheels recipients. We currently deliver meals daily to over 170 homebound rural seniors throughout Washburn County. For many this is the only food they will eat that day and our drivers are the only people that they will ever see outside of going to the doctor or for other appointments. The donations and Subaru Share the Love revenue that we receive due to being part of these events is used to provide special services, items, and social activities for our Meals on Wheels participants, congregate diners, and caregivers throughout Washburn County.

### OUR VOLUNTEER MEALS ON WHEELS DRIVERS ARE ANGELS IN DISGUISE

These drivers are the eyes and ears for our participants. When they bring the food to the door, they are looking for Red Flags. Is the participant not acting usual? Are they slurring their words or face drooping? Is the participant not answering the door? Does the driver see the participant lying on the floor through the window? These drivers have emergency plans in place when something is not right. This could include calling the site manager or our ADRC office for someone to call the listed emergency contacts or calling 911 for immediate assistance. Each of our volunteer drivers are Angels in Disguise.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

### 2018 – \$6,299.01, \$4,825.01 SUBARU REVENUE AND \$1,474.00 FROM LOCAL BUSINESS

**DONATIONS.** Donation from the Realtors Association of Northwestern Wisconsin - staff and volunteers distributed over 240 emergency Nutrition kits of shelf stable meals in case of power outage with funds they received from the Share the Love Campaign Realtors donation.

Drivers have routes that originate from one of our four nutrition meal sites in Birchwood, Minong, Shell Lake, or Spooner. Our dedicated staff cook hot homemade meals, which are freshly packaged and picked up by these drivers Monday-Friday. The staff also package and the drivers deliver premade frozen meals for those who need meals to get them through the weekends. Many of our participants are unable to access food or have the ability to cook food on their own. There is no requirement as to how many days per week a driver needs to volunteer. Some do it five days, others one, and some are on call as back-up for those who do it on a regular basis so others can take time off as needed. We have had businesses and organizations who have taken a route and rotate between their employees or members to cover it for a day or the week. The Shell Lake Lions have been doing a route for years. Our routes vary from in town to those that reach out into the very rural areas of the county, with round trips of up to 80 miles. Most drivers pick-up around 10:30 a.m. and are back to the sites with their delivery bags by 1:00 p.m. or earlier. We are always looking for additional drivers. Drivers are reimbursed mileage at the current federal reimbursement rate. Some want to help, but do not want to drive. Our site managers gladly welcome volunteers to assist in the kitchen with food prep, packaging, and clean up. Working in the kitchen may require a food handling certification for those who will assist with food prep. If you are interested, but not sure, you can contact our Nutrition Director Valerie VanderBent to discuss what might be right for you. You can also request to do a ride along so that you can experience what it is to deliver “*More than Just a Meal*”.

### OUR MEALS ON WHEELS IS MUCH “MORE

### THAN JUST A MEAL”

These programs deliver much more than just a meal to their senior clients, including: nutrition services, social companionship, regular safety and wellness checks, and access to a myriad of other community-based information. We regularly send home information as to:

- ▶ Transportation services we can provide with the ADRC Washburn County Transit.
- ▶ Our Information & Assistance Specialists to connect participants to local community resources to allow participants to remain in their homes.
- ▶ Nutrition Education and in-home assessments provided by our Nutrition Director.
- ▶ Dementia Care and Caregiver Support information and services from our Dementia Care/Caregiver Support Specialist.
- ▶ Pet Care from our “Seniors Love their Pets” grant through Meals on Wheels America and PetSmart Charities. This service is done in partnership with local Beautiful Hearts Rescue to provide in-home vaccinations, Heart Guard, flea/tic treatments, and additional veterinarian care as needed.
- ▶ Elder Benefit Specialist provides assistance for local, state, and federal benefits, such as Food Share, Medicare, and Social Security.
- ▶ If we cannot deliver due to weather or natural disaster, we have an emergency plan in place where our staff provide wellness check calls to each participant.

### SO HOW HAVE WE “SHARED THE LOVE” IN THE PAST AND HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Here are some examples since 2018 of the ways local individuals, organizations, and businesses have gotten involved.

# DIRECTOR NEWS

FROM FRONT PAGE



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

### 2019 – \$4,247.61 SUBARU REVENUE.

Spooener Senior’s hand sewn & stuffed Christmas Stockings, 2nd, 3rd, and Middle School students decorated cookies, 5th graders and Cub Scouts made cards, other donations included Hot Coco Packages, Gift Bags, and Homemade Cards from local students.

SEE **DIRECTOR NEWS** PAGE 18

33rd Annual **Virtual Love Light Ceremony**

Join us on Spooner Health’s Facebook Page  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2023**  
**2:00 PM**

**PURCHASE A LIGHT:**  
 (\$5 Minimum Donation per Light)  
**WHITE - In memory of someone • RED - In honor of someone**  
**BLUE - For peace or for someone who has or is serving our country**

Donations along with the information below may be dropped off or mailed to:  
**LOVE LIGHT PROJECT**  
 Volunteers of Spooner Health • 1280 Chandler Drive, Spooner, WI 54801

**PLEASE PLACE A LIGHT:**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
 In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
 For Peace or Someone in Service \_\_\_\_\_  
 This gift is given by (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Proceeds will be used for the 2024 Scholarship Fund

**Planning For Long-Term Care**

You’ll likely be living on a fixed income when you retire, so being able to afford a new insurance policy may be more difficult than you think. Consider enrolling in long-term care insurance while you’re still working.

**CALL OR VISIT TODAY!**  
 715-635-3136  
 www.davidpford.net

**Ford Financial Group**  
 Helping Chart Your Financial Course  
 Located in the Shell Lake State Bank:  
 Spooner - Minong - Hayward - Stone Lake

**David P. Ford**  
 CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

**Lynn Ford**  
 Certified Retirement Planning Counselor<sup>SM</sup>

**Tom Sutton**  
 LPL Financial Advisor

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Not insured by FDIC or any government agency | Not bank guaranteed  
 Not bank deposits or obligations | May lose value

# The Greatest Gift

WRITTEN BY: CASSI FEIERTAG



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
**Cassi Feiertag**

sometimes the snow, and the extra time spent with my loved ones. 2017 was a challenging year for our family, but that Christmas is one I will always remember. It was a year of sadness, but also a year of blessings.

On June 1st of 2017, my Grandfather passed away unexpectedly, and for the first time in my adult life, I felt my heart truly break for the first time. Little did

we know at the time, this was only the beginning. Towards the end of July, my Dad had started feeling poorly and after a visit to the Emergency room, we received some not so great news. After 2 ½ years in remission, my dad's leukemia had returned. We knew that chemo alone would not be enough this

time around, so my dad would be facing a bone marrow transplant. As scared as we all were, my dad managed to stay strong. We received the news of the hospital finding a bone-marrow match mid-to late September and on October 11, my dad received his transplant. After a few days in the hospital, my parents were released to their "home away from home," where they would be living for the next 100 days.

My siblings and I worked together, to make sure that things were being taken care of at home and on the weekends, we would travel to Rochester and visit. Before we knew it, November had arrived and with it more sad news. On November 11th, after fighting her own battles, my grandmother passed away and my half-healed heart broke once again. This presented more challenges for our family, but like always, we made it through.

We celebrated Thanksgiving that year in Rochester with my parents. To us, it did not matter where we were, it just mattered that we were all together. We played board games, told stories, and ate way too much food. It was a great Thanksgiving. Once December came, it just did not feel like Christmas. We all made the best of it and decorated our houses, did our Christmas shopping, and baked cookies. We knew this would be the first Christmas without

our grandparents and that made us sad, but we were so thankful that our dad was doing so well. We all agreed we would be celebrating Christmas in Rochester, and we were counting down the days until we could all be together again.

While my siblings and I were finalizing our travel plans to Rochester for the holidays, my parents received some news. They kept it a secret, and a few days before Christmas, we received the greatest gift of all. My dad was doing so well, that he and my mom were told their long stay was over. We would not be going to Rochester; we would be spending Christmas together at home. We had a nice dinner and spent the night catching up on all that happened during the past three months. Looking back on all of the Christmases we have shared, the Christmas of 2017 has been the most meaningful. We faced so many challenges that year, but we faced them together. We missed my grandparents dearly, but celebrating together in the home we grew up in was truly special. Despite everything, we had so many blessings to be thankful for. Family truly is a gift. The year 2017 taught me that it does not matter what is under the Christmas tree, what truly matters, is who is around it. Merry Christmas!



**715-635-4460 and 833-728-3400**  
304 2nd Street, PO Box 316,  
Shell Lake, WI 54871  
**HOURS: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F**

[www.co.washburn.wi.us](http://www.co.washburn.wi.us)  
<https://adrcwashburncounty.org/>  
**ADRC/Aging Director:**  
Linda Hand • 715-634-4460

**Linda Hand, ADRC/Aging Director**  
715-634-4460

**ADRC of Washburn County Staff Contacts as of December 2023**  
This is a list of our staff by position, with contact information. If they are unavailable to answer your call, please make sure to include a detailed message, which includes your full name, phone, and description of the information and services that you are seeking. If a staff member's message states they are out of the office, you can still call our main number to see if another staff member can assist you at 715-635-4460.

**Anna Brown**  
**Information & Assistance Specialist (I&A)**  
715-635-4460

**Nichole Caudill**  
**Information & Assistance Specialist (I&A)**  
715-635-4460

Our I&A staff provide support to all adults regarding the needs of persons with disabilities, older adults and their caregivers, and they explore what programs or services meet those needs. They take the time to get to know your situation, and collaborate with you and your support network on next steps.

**Kelly Weisenbeck**  
**Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS)**  
715-635-4478

The EBS helps people ages 60+ navigate both private and public benefits, including Medicaid, Social Security, Medicare, prescription plans,

Food Share and many other options to help seniors.

**Theodore Hampe**  
**Disability Benefit Specialist (DBS)**  
715-635-4466  
A DBS assists people age 17 ½ - 59 who have a disability. They can help with questions and applications related to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Food Share and other public and private benefits for adults with disabilities.

**Patryce Garcia**  
**Dementia Care Specialist (DCS)/Caregiver Support Coordinator**  
715-635-4477  
DCS provide information and support to adults with dementia and their caregivers. The role of Caregiver Support Coordinator assists residents throughout the county who act as caregivers for elderly, disabled, and grandparents raising children in many capacities.

**Valerie VanderBent**  
**Nutrition Director**  
715-635-4467  
The Nutrition Director oversees the Washburn County Elder Nutrition Program, which provides congregate Meals and Home Delivered Meals through our sites.  
**Washburn County Nutrition Site Mangers**  
Kristi Shoop (Birchwood) • Laura Gomez (Minong) • Char Jaeger (Shell Lake) • Mary Lawson (Spooner) • Jennifer Ganske (Spooner Cook)

**Amber Anderson**  
**Mobility Manager**  
715-635-4465  
Washburn County Transit provides medical, nutritional, and social rides for residents age 60+ and adults with disabilities.  
**Washburn County Transit Drivers**  
Jeremy Driesch • Kerry Moore • Dean Martin • Kathy Rowland

**Sheila Pierquet**  
**Fiscal Assistant**  
715-635-4463

**Cassi Feiertag**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
715-635-4460

**Washburn County Vaccine Outreach Coordinators**  
Katy Allred 715-645-2754  
Marilee Morris 715-645-2710

**Aging & Disability Services Committee**  
Bob Olsgard • Linda Featherly • Kasey King  
George Cusick • Joe Hoy

**ADRC Governing Board**  
Bob Olsgard - Chair  
Cathy Peterson • Danielle Larson  
Colleen Cook • Char Snarski • Kathy Fabert  
Mark Van Etten • Mike Linton • Mike Schroeder

## SENIOR NEWS

# Winter's On The Way Part #1

As the Colors fade we move into the snow season. How do we prepare? It is as individual as we all are. Some of leave for a warmer climate to return in the spring. The rest of us just tough it out.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Don Posh**

Exercise is important to maintain our bodies and minds. Winter changes our habits and with shorter days that can leave us on the couch. If you have been walking or bike riding, how do you continue with heavy snow or frost-bite temperatures? There are fitness centers in some towns which may be good for someone that needs the group for motivation. You may check with your Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to inquire on exercise classes they may provide or just do it on your own. My 88-year-old father uses a stationary bike daily to maintain the mobility he has. It strengthens his leg muscles and helps to pump blood to his brain. Exercise bikes are sometimes available for free or very low investment. It doesn't need to be fancy or computer controlled. For the most part it just needs to be used regularly.

My situation is a bit different. I have lower back and neck injuries from an auto accident. Over the decades I have been a guinea pig for pain relief medications that really didn't help much. Is this it? How will the household chores like shoveling snow get done? Will I still be able to fish when I retire? What about travel and all those other goodies that

come with retirement? What did help is a regular routine of stretching and exercise. I was always limiting myself, so afraid to do things that may aggravate the injuries that would lead to severe pain. What I found was all my muscles were so tight from avoiding pain that it created pain. A PBS TV show called Classical Stretch helped to educate me and get more out of life. The host Miranda Esmonde White has some videos on aging backwards which state, at any age you can improve your mobility and quality of life. It took over a year of daily stretching and strengthening to get me where I am today. I am so glad I did it. I am in much better shape now at 62 than I was at 45 and no more pain meds with their side effects. It's not just me, but my friend that was severely injured from a 20+ foot fall on to rocks was told by doctors he should get used to his wheelchair. He forced himself to take a step, then another. If you saw him today, you would never think he was expected to not walk again. He got his life back! Sometimes being told what we can't do discourages us from focusing on what **we can do**.

### *Be Well... We're All in This Together!*

For more information on independent living contact: indiGO serving Douglas, Bayfield, Iron, Price, Sawyer, Washburn, and Burnett Counties including Tribal communities of Red Cliff, Bad River, La Courte Oreilles and St Croix.

Main office: 800-924-1220 V/TTY

Our non-profit agency, indiGO, aims to empower individuals living with disabilities and we are available to assist ALL ages and disabilities. We are not a vendor and do not sell any products, but we are here as a resource.



# Do Your Teeth Affect The Heart?



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Paul A. Kloek DDS**

**GREEN VALLEY DENTAL CARE**  
715-635-7888  
W7154 Green Valley Rd  
Spooner, WI 54801



WRITTEN BY PAUL A. KLOEK, DDS

A common question I receive is whether your teeth can affect other parts of your body, especially the heart. Specifically, there has been much research as to whether gum disease contributes to heart disease. According to the American Heart Association, there is an association between gum disease and heart disease, but there has yet to have been a study proving that simply having gum disease can lead to more heart attacks or strokes. This does not mean that you should neglect your teeth! A study published by the Journal of Endodontics in 2013 found that between 2000 and 2008, 61,000 people were hospitalized with tooth infections. Bacteria from tooth infections can travel through the bloodstream and spread to other parts of your body, including the heart, brain or even artificial joints. These infections can lead to serious complications and even death (about 1 in every 150 cases).

As important as heart health is, a very common disease diagnosed by dentists is oral and oropharyngeal cancer. Often detected in routine cleanings and exams, oral cancer is very serious and, if found early, very treatable. According to the American Cancer Society, in 2023 55,450 people will be diagnosed with oral and oropharyngeal cancer this year and 11,580 will die. This number has improved dramatically over the years as smoking has decreased and the number of patients receiving routine oral cancer screenings at their dentist has increased. Even if you have no natural teeth it is important to see the dentist at least once a year to check for conditions of the oral cavity that are often only detected by dentists.

COVID-19 has affected many facets of life and caused many to neglect their routine dental care. Over time, it has become clear that dental offices are very safe and according to the National Institute of Health, there is minimal evidence of post exposure transmission even if exposure were to occur.

Routine dental care will help you hold on to your teeth and improve your overall health. Twice and day brushing and flossing, along with eating a balanced diet and seeing your dentist regularly is an extremely important part of taking care of yourself and will reduce your risk of potentially life threatening complications.

# 2024's Word of the Year is Grace

WRITTEN BY PATRYCE GARCIA

The holidays are the most wonderful time of the year. Unless they aren't. Caregiving struggles, financial concerns, health concerns, and the loss of



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Patryce Garcia**

loved ones are just a few of the reasons we might find ourselves struggling with the holiday season. However you're feeling, you are not alone. With holidays, there are almost always expectations of how things are "supposed" to be or how things are "supposed" to feel. For those times when it feels like we just aren't meeting the expectations we have for ourselves, please allow me introduce the word of the year: Grace.

Grace is a simple, unassuming word. It is defined as elegance, refinement, and poise; more importantly, however, it means goodwill, patience, and consideration.

I, myself, can give others grace without a second thought. My true belief is that people deserve grace

as we are all human and to be human is to be imperfect. Never the less, looking in the mirror and giving that woman grace is quite a different story. I've heard this sentiment from many: for some reason we just cannot give ourselves a break from being on top of everything and expecting perfection from ourselves. While having high expectations is absolutely not a negative thing, when we allow those expectations to take away from enjoying the moment, it can become an issue.

Think about your best friend in the whole world. Would you ever berate them for forgetting to put the mashed potatoes out on time, or not decorating? Would you judge them for not getting things completely clean knowing that they are a full time caregiver? Would you expect them to smile and entertain you after they lost a loved one? Absolutely not. You know that person who you love is putting their very best effort into everything they are doing. Please do not give yourself any less credit. This holiday season, and all the way through 2024, I want you to think about this, and try to give yourself the same grace you would give any other person walking in your shoes.

*"Give yourself grace when reality refuses to cooperate with your best intentions" ~Melissa Wilkens*

# Will You Help Us Help You?

SUBMITTED BY  
**ANNA MARIE BROWN**

Information & Assistance Specialist

The ADRC in Washburn County opened its doors in early 2009. Many have been using our services since the start, while others may be new to us. Our call volume and usage has increased dramatically since then (which is a good thing). We encourage folks to “Know us before you need us.”



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
**Anna Marie Brown**

We can help people via office appointments, home visits, video/virtual meetings, phone appointments, walk-ins (if available), and, of course, by returning calls. **The ADRC does not provide emergency/urgent services.**

All specialists in our agency schedule their own appointments. Scheduled appointments take priority over walk-ins and phone calls as this is your dedicated time. Please remember, our schedules may be out 1-2 weeks on our

calendars. However, we may be able to help you over the phone.

Our return call/contact policy is simple: Calls (and emails) are returned in the order they are received, by the end of the next business day. For example: if you leave or send an email message on Monday at 8:01 a.m., you will be contacted before someone leaving a message on Monday at 10 a.m. **Here are some suggestions of how you can help us help you:**

**Make a list of your questions/concerns before calling.** Making a note of what you called us about and who you left the message with will be helpful for both of us. We know you get busy during the day while waiting for our contact, the reason you called may slip your mind or may change. That’s okay. We’ll do our best to assist you when we connect.

**Please listen to our voice mail greeting.** We will let you know if we are out of the office so you can plan accordingly.

If you reach our voice mail, **leave a message. Include in your message: your name, who you are calling about (if not yourself), a phone number you can be reached at through the end of the next business day, and a detailed message regarding the reason you are calling.** We ask for a detailed message because if you leave a message for a specialist and what you are calling

about is not their forte, the specialist will transfer your message to the best person to assist you with the issue. We each have our own areas of expertise/scope of services as established by the State of Wisconsin. This helps insure the best person assists you with the issue(s) you are encountering. Your call may actually involve talking to more than one specialist to assure you are served by the person with the expertise in that area.

**Please leave only one message.** Whenever you leave your first message, that is what sets the order in which you will be contacted. Leaving more than one message only takes time away from specialists returning calls, it does not (and will not) change the order in which you will be called back. **Every call is important.**

When we return calls, the number that shows up on your caller ID is our agency main line (715-635-4460), regardless of who is calling you from our office. If you have voice mail set up, **please check your messages before calling us back.** We will leave a message if able when we return the call; the answer to your question may be in that message. Direct numbers will be provided by the person returning your call.

**Please maintain your voice mail system by checking your messages and deleting messages no longer needed.** If your voice mail box is full

or if you choose not to use an answering system, we will try to reach you again at a later time. We make two attempts to reach you if we are unable to leave a message or connect with you. If we are unable to reach you during those tries, we have done our due diligence and our mission is complete until/unless we hear from you again. (If you call again after hearing from us, your call will again join the call-back schedule of being returned by the end of the next business day.)

If you don’t remember how to check your messages, this feature is of no value. Please disable it so there is no confusion. We will leave a message if given the opportunity and as such we think we have returned your call and note it as such. Please note calls are documented.

**Please don’t call our agency number when returning our calls** unless directed to do so by us in our message left for you. Our reception/front office staff are awesome, but they don’t know who in our office tried to call you. Our services are confidential.

Our hope is to serve Washburn County in the best way(s) we are able. Helping you is not only our mission and purpose, but also our desire. Please help us with our mission by doing what you are able to do and we will do our part by doing what we can do for you to live well and age well in Washburn County.

## Washburn County Transit Has Very Exciting News

Washburn County Transit has some very exciting news for all Washburn County residents 60+ or under 60 with a disability! Our van is up and running and ready to take you on your next shopping trip, to the NEW



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
**Amber Anderson**

Wellness Center 50+ in Spooner, to the wonderful local senior centers for lunch or an activity or to the library to get that book you have reserved! We are all very excited here at the ADRC of Washburn County to get these wheels on the road and to make this wonderful program even better with this new added service. We will still be offering non-emergency medical trips for medical appointments as well, but the van is geared toward social and shopping trips. To start, we will be offering daily trips Tuesdays-Fridays. The van will be up and running at 9am daily and run until 4pm. Tuesdays will be reserved for Spooner and Shell Lake trips, Wednesdays and Thursdays for Minong and Birchwood trips, and Friday will be designated

for trips to Rice Lake. The cost to ride the van is \$3 for all county rides and \$5 for out of county rides. We will keep the same billing as the medical run. Amber will send you a statement at the beginning of each month and you can pop a check in the mail payable the ADRC of Washburn County. Call Amber @ (715) 635-4465 for more information or to reserve your seat on the van. Thanks for all your support with our Transit program. We couldn’t do this without our passengers and a great community! We are so blessed to live where we do!



PHOTO SUBMITTED

*I really appreciate the transit van. I’ve ridden on it 3 times now. The drivers are very polite and even carry my bags of groceries in for me! It’s a good way to get my shopping done. Sincerely, Shell Lake resident*



DECEMBER		LUNCH & HOME DELIVERED MEALS MENU				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY		
				Roasted Pork Tenderloin with an Apple Glaze Baked Potato Buttered Beets Fresh Orange Whole Wheat Bread	1	
Tuna Salad on Whole Grain Bread Cucumber & Tomato Salad with Dill Crisp Grapes  <b>Minong Dining at 5</b>	<b>Brunch for Lunch</b> Sausage & Spinach Egg Bake, Potato Hash Whole Grain Bread V8 Vegetable Juice Banana	Swiss Steak Garlic Baby Reds Asparagus Whole Grain Bread Pistachio Fluff Fruit Salad	Chicken & Broccoli Fettuccini Alfredo Roasted Brussel Sprouts WG Breadstick Peaches	Basil Crusted Chicken "Three Sisters" Wild Rice Salad Buttered Green Beans, Apricots Peanut Butter Brownie	4	5
Waldorf Chicken Sandwich on Whole Grain Bread Three Bean Salad Carrot Sticks Applesauce  <b>Shell Lake Dining at 5</b>	BBQ Baked Ribs Baked Potato Cheesy California Blend Veggies Whole Grain Bread Baked Pineapple Dessert	Porcupine Meatballs Whipped Sweet Potatoes Roasted Brussel Sprouts Whole Grain Bread Mandarin Oranges	Baked Fish with Lemon Dill Sauce Baby Red Potatoes Garlic Green Beans Whole Grain Bread Fruited Jell-O Cake	Chicken Enchilada's w/Refried Beans Spanish Rice Spinach Salad Fruit Salad	11	12
<b>Kitchen Takeover at the Wellness Center</b> Pulled Pork Sandwich on a Whole Grain Bun, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Apple Walnut Crisp	Garlic Ginger Pork Loin w/Broccoli over Asian Noodles Roasted Red Cabbage Pears  <b>Birchwood Dining at 5</b>	Hearty Italian Lasagna Garden Salad WG Garlic Breadstick Banana Pudding Parfait	<b>Christmas Dinner</b> Holiday Baked Ham Scalloped Potatoes Honey Glazed Carrots Whole Grain Bread Apricots Stained Glass Cookie	Beef Stroganoff over Egg Noodles Buttered Green Beans Tossed Casesar Salad Baked Apples	18	19
<b>NO MEALS SERVED Holiday Observance</b>	<b>NO MEALS SERVED Holiday Observance</b>	Chicken Burrito Bowl w/Black Beans, Tomatoes, Corn, Onions, Salsa, S.C. Brown Rice Triple Berry Crisp	Swedish Meatballs w/Creamy Mushroom Sauce over Egg Noodles Walnut-Candied Squash Apple Salad	Baked Pork Chop Baked Potato Garden Salad Whole Grain Bread Peaches	25	26
					27	28
					29	

• ALL MEALS SERVED WITH 1% MILK  
• MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE DUE TO FOOD AVAILABILITY  
**FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:**

**Spooner Wellness Center: 715-635-8283 • Shell Lake Senior Center: 715-468-4750  
Birchwood Senior Center: 715-354-3001 • Minong Senior Center: 715-466-4448**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME:** Those eligible to participate on a contribution basis include anyone age sixty and older. Suggested contribution is \$6 - \$8 per meal. Individuals under the age of sixty are welcome, but must pay the full meal cost of \$15 to participate.



DECEMBER

**DINING @ 5**

Suggested donation is \$8.00 - \$10  
Cost: \$15.00 for anyone under 60 years old.  
**PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS  
24 HOURS IN ADVANCE**  
Shell Lake: 715-468-4750 • Spooner: 715-635-8283  
Minong: 715-466-4448 • Birchwood: 715-354-3001

**MINONG MENU  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 4**  
BBQ Ribs, Reception Cheesy Potatoes  
Green Beans, Holiday Charcuterie Cup  
Laura's Surprise Holiday Dessert

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**SHELL LAKE MENU  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 11**  
Chicken Breast with a Garlic Mushroom Sauce  
Parsley Buttered Baby Reds, Carrots,  
Dinner Roll, Mousse Tiramisu Torte

-----

**SPOONER MENU  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 18**  
**Kitchen Takeover**  
**Top Chef Angie Mueller**  
**Appetizer:** Charcuterie & Crudit : Meats, cheeses, nuts, seeds, seasonal fruits, preserves, chutney, honeycomb, mustard, pickles, olives, tapenade, raw assorted vegetables & dip  
**Plated Entree:** Fried Brussels Sprouts over arugula, pancetta, parmesan & balsamic. Short Rib Ragu (beef, carrots, mushrooms) served over pasta with saut ed broccoli & cauliflower.  
**Dessert:** Eggnog Budino (baked custard served chilled) with cranberry comote & Gingerbread Crumble

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**BIRCHWOOD MENU  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19**  
Classic Italian Lasagna, Garlic Brussel Sprouts  
Salad Bar, Garlic Breadstick  
Kristi's Choice Dessert

**VOLUNTEER!**  
*Make a Difference*

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

- Would you like to do something meaningful to give back to the community?
- Do you like helping people in need?
- Would you like to make people smile?

**Make a difference! Become a Home Delivered Meals Volunteer Today!**

**YOU GIVE US:**

- One day per week (approximately 3 hrs.)
- Compassion for people in need
- You own transportation

**WE GIVE YOU:**

- A hot, nutritious lunch
- Equipment needed to keep food safe

- Mileage reimbursement
- A bunch of new friends and the best feeling of fulfillment

**If interested in volunteering for meal delivery, please contact Valerie at the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 715-635-4467**

**LINDA ROGERS**  
**FRIENDSHIP COMMONS**  
 Shell Lake Senior Center

Shell Lake Senior Center is now serving meals 5 days a week. Those eligible to participate on a contribution basis include anyone sixty and older. Suggested contribution is \$6-\$8 per meal. Individuals under the age of 60 are welcome, but must pay the full meal cost of \$15 to participate. Sign-up sheets are available at our center but you can also call in one to two days prior to sign up. The phone number for the Shell Lake senior center is 715-468-4750. Meals are served at 11:30 a.m. each day. Come enjoy a warm meal and a chance to socialize. Our site manager/cook is Char Jaeger. She is a wonderful cook and providing us with delicious homemade nutritious meals.

At the end of October, we traveled to Fort Folle Avalon in Danbury, Wisconsin. Thirteen of our members enjoyed a Murder Mystery Dinner. Our upcoming plans are to go on a shopping trip to buy a new and larger interior Christmas tree for the center. We will also choose a new location for our outdoor tree so the snowplow piles are not blocking its view.

Call (715) 468-7491 for information about activities at our center.

For Meals on Wheels delivery in Washburn County or if you would be interested in volunteering in the kitchen or delivering meals call Valerie VanderBent, Nutrition Director at (715) 635-4460.

**JOANN MALEK AND CATHY PEDERSON**  
**CHICOG NEWS**

*Let's paint a jeep red and have our own fire department!!*

These words were spoken half in jest. Yet in 1979 Chicog residents were thinking in earnest about setting up their own firefighting services. Until then Chicog was serviced by the Minong Fire Department. But costs were going up. Webb Lake agreed to provide fire protection for Chicog for one year, and to assist with the development of a volunteer fire department.

Organization proceeded rapidly. Volunteers were recruited. A telephone communication system was set up. First purchases included coat, gloves, boots, helmet and a light for each. Next were a 1961 Dodge tanker and a 1950 Ford pumper. Remodeling of the old town hall included a block structure to house equipment.

January 1, 1981 the Chicog Volunteer Fire Department began protecting lives and property, with Max Clayton as the first fire chief. CVFD is funded through a contract with the township. This contract is renewed annually at a rate that has remained the same for the past twenty years, even with inflation and ever-increasing mandates. Through this mutual cooperation the CVFD is proud that services are provided at a cost level at or well below other departments.

Careful management of finances are key. Betty Harrison has been bookkeeper since 2010. She has corrected mistakes and keeps books to the penny. "This is a business" she quips. By planning ahead, the fire department has been able to pay off all equipment without needing additional funding, and has set aside reserve funds for emergency and unexpected capital needs.

SEE **CHICOG** PAGE 12

**SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER**  
**FRIENDSHIP COMMONS**

210 4th Avenue, Shell Lake | 715.468.4750

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: CHAR JAEGER  
 CO-PRESIDENTS: LINDA ROGERS | 952.288.9961 & JUNE WILLIS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1 Congregate Dining 11:30
4 Congregate Dining 11:30	5 Congregate Dining 11:30	6 Wii Bowling & Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	7 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	8 Congregate Dining 11:30
11 Congregate Dining 11:30 <b>Dining @ 5</b>	12 Congregate Dining 11:30	13 Wii Bowling & Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	14 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	15 Congregate Dining 11:30
18 Congregate Dining 11:30	19 Congregate Dining 11:30	20 Wii Bowling & Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	21 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	22 Congregate Dining 11:30
25 Center Closed <b>Merry Christmas!</b>	26 Center Closed <b>Happy Holidays!</b>	27 Wii Bowling & Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	28 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	29 Congregate Dining 11:30

**MINONG AREA SENIOR CENTER**

700 Houston Street, Minong | 715.466.4448

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: CHRIS CLOSE - 715.466.4448  
 PRESIDENT: JERRY SMITH - 715.338.2019

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1
4 <b>Dining @ 5</b>	5 Farkle 12 pm Wii Bowling 12 pm	6 Pocket of Prayer 7 am	7 Northwoods School Kids Christmas Party 9 - 11 am Cribbage 12:30 pm	8
11	12 Cards 12 pm Wii Bowling 12 pm	13 Pocket of Prayer 7 am MASC Board Meeting 1 pm	14 Cribbage 12:30 pm	15 <hr/> 16 Potluck & Bingo 12 pm
18	19 Farkle 12 pm Wii Bowling 12 pm	20 Pocket of Prayer 7 am	21 Cribbage 12:30 pm	22
25	26 Cards 12 pm	27 Pocket of Prayer 7 am	28 Cribbage 12:30 pm	29

**CAROL ADDINGTON**  
Birchwood Senior Center

So here, we are at Gobble time, we made it another month (accentuating the positive as I write this in October) and we are getting a taste of it now with a preview of what has to come. Oh well. The good news is that word has it our turkeys are cheaper this year (remember that word?).

Hope you caught all those ghosts and goblins parading on Halloween! Sorry about the wrong day. I have no explanation for that, but surprised no one caught it before it was printed. It is always such a fun treat and even some of the teachers get right into the spirit.

I may not have lost all my marbles yet...but there



PHOTO SUBMITTED

IS a small hole in the bag somewhere.

Breaking 'good' news bet you could use some by now. If you are hankering to play bridge or just learn to play come on down to the Senior Center on 1st and 3rd Mondays at 12:30 (or better yet, come for lunch 1st). Bridge has been playing all month and bringing joy to those who have been wanting to play/learn and have a fun day. Thanks to Shirley Hokanson for putting this all together!

Always make sure someone in your relationship has good credit! That is why it is called 'significant other' (sign-if-i-can't). I will have more tips for you later.

The book club has been enjoying "Stolen" a new book I saw 'infoed' on TV. Looks like a good read. They have decided to meet the first and third Wednesday of the month at 3 p.m. One of the librarians joined them on November 1st to share what is available and discuss "Stolen" with the girls. The next book they will read is "Sourdough" which is

about baking the bread, good timing before the holidays. Do check into the Center with any questions and plan to check them out in December.

The problem with the 'gene pool' is there is no lifeguard.

So hope you have made a satisfying choice for your Medicare part C & D. Also, hope you have talked with Kelly at ADRC of Washburn County for help. If you are not a Washburn County resident, contact the ADRC in your county to speak to their Elder Benefit Specialist, they know their stuff. I have changed suppliers often for the best ones and the one you pick one year may not be the best one always.

Here we are at the end of another year. It almost seems we are going backward instead of forward when the news is on. I do not know about you but my prayers are getting longer and longer.

Have a happy HOLIDAY SEASON!

**WINTER WEATHER REMINDER**

It's winter weather season again! Snow will soon be upon us and I want to remind everyone of the policy for Senior Dining and Home-Delivered Meals in the event of inclement weather. We value all our seniors and want them to be safe on days that bring ice and snow.

Senior nutrition programs may be cancelled and there will be no home delivered meals if the roads are slippery or dangerous due to a snowstorm or freezing rain. Please tune in to the local radio stations for announcements for your area: **WCSW (94.0 AM) and WGMO (95.3 FM) Shell Lake; WJMC-FM (96.1 FM) Rice Lake; and WHSM (101.1 FM) Hayward.**

There may be instances where some areas of the county are experiencing inclement weather and others are not, so the rule of thumb is **"If the school in your area is closed, so is the nutrition site."**

You are encouraged to keep a 2-3 day supply of nonperishable food on hand in the event of an emergency that may force us to cancel our meal programs. Everyone on the Home Delivered Meal program will receive an **Emergency Nutrition Kit** to be used during these times.

**DELIVERY WILL BE LIMITED TO PLOWED ROADS ONLY!** Our volunteer drivers will only deliver meals on roads and driveways that are plowed. Sidewalks to your residence should be shoveled and ice-free. The safety of our drivers is very important to us. If your driveway or road is not sufficiently plowed, call the Washburn County Aging & Disability Resource Center at 715-635-4460 and tell us of your problem. There may be funds available to reimburse your expenses of having your driveway plowed and sidewalks cleared. This will save the volunteer driver a trip out on bad roads.

**HAVE A SAFE AND WARM WINTER!**

**CHICOG FROM PAGE 11**



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Brad Harrison stepped in as temporary fire chief in 2009 and continued in the role for ten years. "It was a steep learning curve." He talks with pride of the fine fleet of equipment the department has gathered and restored. He cites the tanker purchased from California that we converted from natural gas to diesel. A 6x6 truck found in the Federal surplus lot, with necessary reconditioning used as a training by the Hayward National Guard. Equipment is tested and supplies are updated regularly. Current fire Chief Jim Frasheski continues tight management to keep the department on track.

CVFD has mutual aid agreements with the DNR, Washburn County, and neighboring fire departments. The latest purchase, a 2020 Rescue Hovercraft for lake and river recoveries, will be shared. Other departments also own specialized equipment for use by all.

After the 2012 blowdown an Emergency Support Group was developed in coordination with then town chairman Pat Wilcox, town clerk Terri Corrie, Millie Thiesen and others. Chicog Township was divided into five quads, for use if evacuation is necessary. Many volunteer hours went into compiling an ESG calling list. Disaster relief plans were put

into place. Following a long tradition of community fund-raising events, the ESG now hosts the Hunter's Feed and fall raffle. Donations from Chicog citizens are also welcomed and have been an important asset to the department.

Chicog, like most communities, has an ongoing need for new firefighters. State training requirements are increasing. It takes commitment, but the training promises excellent results. Volunteers are the backbone of the CVFD. Through the years countless volunteer hours have been logged by a great number of concerned Chicog citizens. We extend to each of them a huge thank you. Residents are encouraged to consider whether you might have hours, funds or expertise to contribute to this capable, well-equipped, dedicated fire department.

**IMPORTANT DECEMBER DATES**

Tuesday 12/5, 12:45-1:45, Books and Bread, Trego  
Wednesday 12/13, 6pm, monthly Chicog meeting  
Wednesdays 12/13&27 Namekagon Transit service  
Thursdays, 11-3, Chicog Walkabouts, town hall  
Thursday 12/28, 11-1, Bibliodragon, town hall

*Get on a waiting list **NOW** for your housing needs **LATER***

**Washburn County Housing Authority**  
is accepting applications for their rental properties.  
1 & 2 bedroom units

Schricker Manor & Goslin Court (Spoooner)  
West Side Manor (Shell Lake) • Birch Haven Manor (Birchwood)

**Call for details: 715-635-2321**

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**VERDELL PETTEY**  
**WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER**  
**50+ NEWS**  
 Verdellpettey@gmail.com

This fall was filled with activities for sure! Looking back to October 9th, we traveled by two coaches to the North Shore of Lake Superior. Residents 60+, with disabilities, and caregivers were invited. We all acted like school kids when the coaches stopped at the Great Lakes Candy Kitchen and Betty's Pies. The Gooseberry Falls destination was a great sight with a good amount of rushing water and roars of the current. Even though I went with old friends, I came back with new friends. It was so much fun. And speaking of caregiver, I have a wonderful neighbor, Marty, to care for my dog while I am gone. October 13th was the grand opening of the new center. It was spectacular in every way and gave us a chance to "see into the future" with a lot more events and fun planned. Along with all the good food and special Mocktails, The SongSmiths provided wonderful music for the party. If I had, it to do over again; I would have rolled away the salad bar to clear the dance floor. Then I would have grabbed my sunflower glasses, which seem to make my feet move, and DANCED. Thank you again ADRC for making this event possible. Thank you also to Linda Hand for assisting me with my first story in the November Focus News. The deadline for January Focus News is December 8th. Please contact me with any news items you would like to share. My phone is 507-696-8263 or verdellpettey@gmail.com.

Take a Peek at the center now - a few more things arrived. The new signs on the outside of the building make it easier to find.

I like the word "wellness" in the signs. We need to focus on wellness to enjoy every day. Pictures are displayed in the dining room and mirrors installed on the walls in the fitness room for chair dance and Tai Chi. The big TV screens make watching football so great. The October 29th game was attended by 9 people who brought their own snacks and beverages.

We will continue with fine dining events using area chefs. Dining dates will change each month according to the chef's availability...so be sure to check our Facebook page or call 715-635-4460 for

**SPOONER SENIOR CENTER**  
**WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER 50+**  
 850 W. Beaverbrook Ave., Spooner | 715.635.8283

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: MARY LAWSON  
 CO-CHAIRMEN: CARYL LIGLER | 715-635-8215 and LYNN BEARD | 715.520.3569

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1 Congregate Dining 12 pm
4 Congregate Dining 12 pm	5 Mah-Jongg Lessons 10 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Mah-Jongg 1 pm	6 Chair Dance 9:30 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Bridge and 500 1 pm	7 Congregate Dining 12 pm Cards - Hand and Foot 1 pm	8 Congregate Dining 12 pm
11 Congregate Dining 12 pm	12 Mah-Jongg Lessons 10 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Mah-Jongg 1 pm	13 Chair Dance 9:30 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Bridge and 500 1 pm	14 Congregate Dining 12 pm Cards - Hand and Foot 1 pm	15 Congregate Dining 12 pm
18 Congregate Dining 12 pm	19 Mah-Jongg Lessons 10 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Mah-Jongg 1 pm	20 Chair Dance 9:30 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Bridge and 500 1 pm	21 Congregate Dining 12 pm Cards - Hand and Foot 1 pm	22 Congregate Dining 12 pm
25 <b>CLOSED MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	26 <b>CLOSED MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	27 Chair Dance 9:30 am Congregate Dining 12 pm Bridge and 500 1 pm	28 Congregate Dining 12 pm Cards - Hand and Foot 1 pm	29 Congregate Dining 12 pm

more information and to sign up to attend. One more note, our Mocktails bar will feature drinks specific to the time of year. It will be especially festive for the holidays I am sure! HO HO HO. Happy Holidays to you all.

Our activities this month include Mah Jong 1PM Tuesdays; 500 cards 1PM Wednesdays, Bridge 1PM Wednesdays; Hand and Foot Cards 1PM Thursdays; Chair Dancing 9:30AM Wednesdays; Savvy Sr. Book Club the third Friday of the month

at 11AM. You could also stay for lunch after the book club. Call 715-635-4460 to sign up for lunch. The board committee meets the 4th Monday of the month at 1PM. In the next Focus News for January, I will share some previous November events such as the dining event with the chef from Laughing Goat Food Truck of Shell Lake, WI and Spooner's Ladies Night Out with the senior center's salad bar luncheon and the appointment of a new treasurer for the center.

**SHARE THE LOVE**

**Help Us Share the Love with a Homebound Washburn County Senior Resident This Holiday Season**

We are looking for local partners and organizations to help us "Share the Love" this holiday season in Washburn County with our Meals on Wheels participants. This event runs from November 16, 2023, to January 2, 2024. If you are interested, please contact Linda or Valerie at 715-635-4460 and join us in brightening a homebound senior's day during this holiday season! Join us in 2023 for another great event! Examples are: Round Man Brewing Co. has provided Thanksgiving Meals to be delivered to their homes, school kids have decorated placemats and made cards, 4-H has decorated Christmas cookies, and seniors have sewn Christmas stockings and filled them with treats. The ideas are endless. We can always use volunteers at our meal sites to help in the kitchen or deliver Meals on Wheels. What is your talent?

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MEALS ON WHEELS OF AMERICA



# A Local Caregiver Shares His Story

A local caregiver recently reached out to me, with a request to share his story. It is a very honest and compelling description of what we as caregivers are faced with, during the care of a loved one. No one is ever prepared until you are living it straight on. As professionals in the field of Human Services, we attend numerous trainings, certifications, and some have achieved very high degrees in education. Every situation faced is different and when it is your own loved one we find out that what the books taught us do not always work. You and we are not failures. We are human beings, trying the best we can every day. Do not ever feel that you are alone, we are here for you. Several of our staff are caregivers in their own capacities. We also cry, scream, and get frustrated, but that is where we all need to reach out for help. It took a lot for Steve to share his story with you and we hope that he shares more along his journey.

Patryce Garcia, our Caregiver Support Specialist is in the process of starting a support group and has established a Caregiver Coalition in Washburn County. If you are interested in finding out more, she can be contacted at 715-635-4460. We also have funding for assisting Washburn County Caregivers; Patryce can provide you with those applications also.

Take Care, Linda Hand, ADRC Director

## GOD BLESS THE CAREGIVERS

By Steve Carlson

It is one thing to read media coverage about the understaffing crisis in America's nursing homes and home care agencies, but it is quite another to experience it directly for yourself.

Two years ago, my elderly parents, after visiting a pair of assisted living facilities, decided they wanted to stay in their home of 60 years for as long as they possibly could. At 87 years of age my father's mobility and balance had begun to decline though my mother, at 86, was still quite spry and capable. She decided she could take care of dad at home, and as the retired child closest to them (190 miles away) I decided to do whatever I could to help. So began my journey as a caregiver for my father, and a respite caregiver for my mother.

One of the main drivers frequently cited regarding the home care/long term care staffing crisis is low wages, and it's not uncommon to see reporters and other officials use the phrase "unskilled labor" when describing caregiving positions. I found out firsthand that nothing could be further from the truth.

Over the course of the last two years I've done everything from cooking, dishwashing and housecleaning, to medication management, monitoring vital signs, overseeing home modifications like bathtub cutouts and the installation of grab bars, researching various assistive devices to help with activities of daily living, personal cares like showering and toileting, and more. At various times I

have functioned as a social worker, pseudo-nurse, marriage counselor, advocate, disability specialist, and physical and occupational therapy aide. In addition, all of these tasks require a great degree of patience, tolerance, empathy and compassion. While this work is rewarding, it is also difficult, demanding, and can be physically and emotionally exhausting. Unskilled, it is not.

As my dad's physical condition slowly deteriorated and the strain on my mom, and me, increased. I made more long road trips, spent more days per month away from home, and the inevitable tension with my siblings arose as a couple of them were convinced that our parents, and dad in particular, should be in a facility. Still, mom was determined to soldier on and as long as she was willing to persevere, so was I. However, we knew we needed help, and that is when things got even more difficult.

I contacted multiple home care agencies in both LaCrosse WI, and Winona MN, each about 25 miles from my parents home, and all of them told me they didn't have the necessary staff to handle the requests they already had coming in. I eventually found an agency in Rochester, MN, 60 miles away, and they had a personal care worker in our area who could provide eight hours a week of care, but only in four-hour blocks of time, so we took what we could get. I spent even more time at my parents' home as my dad continued to decline and my mother grew exhausted. After repeated social media posts among friends in the area I was able to find a neighbor willing to come a couple of hours a day to cook and wash dishes, and with things somewhat stabilized I started looking into a nursing home placement.

I immediately found that the same staffing shortages that plagued local home care agencies was also stressing local nursing homes. The facility in my hometown had open beds but not enough staff to fill them. Placing dad outside of my hometown would mean that family and friends, many of whom are close to my dad's age, would find it difficult to visit, including my mom. Fortunately, we were able to hold on for a few more weeks until the hometown nursing home was able to take him in. The day I told my dad we could not take care of him at home anymore was one of the most emotional of my life, but it was also a great relief to know he was safe and cared for in the county he has lived in his entire life. Fortunately, our story worked out well, but I know there are many people nationwide who are not so lucky.

All over the country our elders, and family, friends and neighbors with disabilities are struggling to find the help they need to continue living in their homes, or to find long-term care in a facility. This is the result of many variables, not the least of which is the fact that we, as a society, have not treated caregiving as worthy of respect or compensation as a valued occupation. That has to change. Our elected officials at every level of government: local, state and federal, need to come together to solve this crisis. Age and disability will eventually affect every family. We are truly all in this together.

In the meantime, if you are someone caring for a family member, or a professional providing care to an elder or person with a disability, my hat's off to you. I hope you know that there are people out here who see you and know that what you do is special. You deserve respect, dignity, and compensation that can afford you a decent living. God bless the caregivers.

Steve Carlson is a retired social worker who lives in Trego. He can be reached at [carlsonbbv@gmail.com](mailto:carlsonbbv@gmail.com)

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- BlueCross BlueShield
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- MetLife
- Health Partners
- Liberty Dental Plan
- Humana
- United Concordia
- United Health Care



**GREEN VALLEY  
DENTAL CARE**

Paul A. Kloek, D.D.S.  
W7154 Green Valley Rd.,  
Spooner, WI

## CAREGIVER CONNECTION NIGHT

Are you looking for a caregiver?

OR are you someone who can provide care services such as housekeeping, respite, personal care, etc.?

**We want to connect!**

**December 6th at 5:00 PM**  
**Spooner 50+ Wellness Center**

850 W Beaverbrook Ave., Spooner, WI  
Light snacks will be provided

All are encouraged to bring a recent background check.

If you do not have one complete, information on how to attain one will be available.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Washburn County does not sponsor or endorse ANY provider or caregiver.

# In 1940, Wisconsin Was Hit With the Worst Blizzard In State History



Most often in Wisconsin, blizzards don't hit the whole state. Typically, only parts of the state suffer from a winter storm; however, that's not always the case. On November 11 and 12, 1940, for example, Wisconsin's worst blizzard, otherwise known as the Armistice Day Blizzard, wreaked havoc on the entire state. Striking out of nowhere, Wisconsin's worst blizzard dumped a foot of snow on the state and was accompanied by 50 to 80 mph winds that created 20-foot drifts. When all was said and done, the blizzard claimed the lives of more than 150 people, making it one of the deadliest natural disasters in Wisconsin. It wasn't just one of the worst natural disasters in Wisconsin, though. The storm was so big that it stretched across Wisconsin and Minnesota and into Illinois and Michigan, devastating the Midwest.

The reason this storm was so deadly is that it seemed to come out of nowhere. The day it hit, temperatures were in the 50s and 60s!

People left their houses in light jackets and without any of the things they'd need to survive the cold, wind, and snow. Cold northern air collided with warm Gulf Coast moisture to create what meteorologists call a "bomb" - or massive drop of air pressure. Winds whipped up above 50 miles per hour and created what were basically hurricane-like conditions.

Trains collided in the white-out, cars were stuck and stranded, and more than 60 men died on Lake Michigan as five boats sank in the storm.

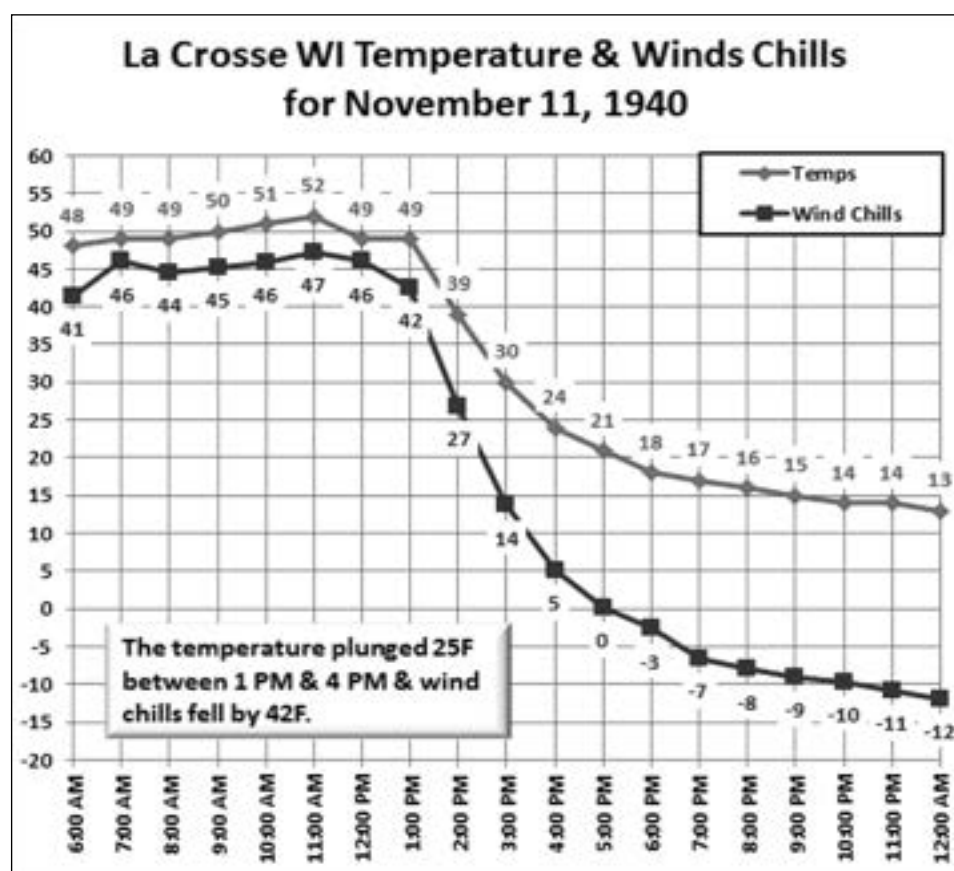
Parts of Minnesota saw more than two feet of snow. Temperatures dropped about 40 degrees from the morning to the late afternoon. Folks left for work or school dressed for a warm fall day and were totally unprepared to be outside in the cold winter conditions that arrived.

As it was a warm fall day, duck hunters were out and having a fabulous hunt.

Out on boats, they were caught out in the rising winds and struggled to return to shore. Dozens of men were stranded and froze to death, as they could not escape the storm and were not dressed or prepared to be in it.

Those who remember the storm talk about the moisture in the air, making the cold extra painful and difficult to breathe.

It's a running joke to never leave the house in the winter without a full trunk of winter accessories, but for our grandparents, that was a concept that originat-



ed with the Armistice Day Blizzard. Girls only wore skirts at this time and many of them were in light sweaters and bare legs the day of the blizzard. Getting caught out in this storm taught them to be prepared for anything when it comes to Wisconsin winters.

Cars had to be abandoned and streetcars were stuck.

Tow trucks couldn't keep up and families had to walk home in the wind and snow to get out of the conditions. Many homes were warmed by coal, which was manually added. As it had been warm early in the day, no one was prepared to have their houses warm in this storm. So even when they finally got inside, soaked and freezing cold, it took a long time for their homes to heat up.

This likelihood of another storm like this one is low, though not impossible.

A similar drop in pressure on Halloween in 1991 created another super storm. Though technology and knowledge had advanced 50 years between the two storms, in the end, it can be difficult to know or prepare for this

kind of crazy storm occurrence.

When people left home on November 21, the forecast was for a small weather change and maybe an inch of snow overnight.

Meteorologists grossly underestimated the storm and misread the situation. According to Wikipedia, "Prior to this event, all of the weather forecasts for the region originated in Chicago. After the failure to provide an accurate forecast for this blizzard, forecasting responsibilities were expanded to include 24-hour coverage and more forecasting offices were created, yielding more accurate local forecasts." It's a shame that it took such a tragic storm to make these changes that likely saved lives in the future.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF Weather.gov

By Nicole | Updated on September 28, 2021 (Originally published September 25, 2021)

[https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/wisconsin/worst-blizzard-in-history-wi/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=newsletter&utm\\_source=wisconsin&utm\\_content=nlbuttonB5&eh\\_s2=d312b29c646f3269dc2312dbd2bb2ead-c34e0bf212112e80059a4ebda3e41d5c](https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/wisconsin/worst-blizzard-in-history-wi/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter&utm_source=wisconsin&utm_content=nlbuttonB5&eh_s2=d312b29c646f3269dc2312dbd2bb2ead-c34e0bf212112e80059a4ebda3e41d5c)

# Washburn County Top Chef Kitchen Takeover - December 2023

The ADRC of Washburn County is pleased to introduce Angie Mueller. Angie Mueller was born and raised in Wisconsin and recently returned to Spooner from San Diego, CA where she received her doctorate degree from California Western School of Law and founded The Beauty Bakery, a small online cake and pastry delivery business. Since then, Angie has sought opportunities around the world to further develop her own creativity, technique, and business practices.

Angie's career flourished under Chef Joe Magnanelli at Cucina Urbana Restaurant in San Diego, where she developed and refined her culinary techniques not just as a pastry chef, but also as a fine dining cuisine chef and caterer. Angie's travels have afforded her the opportunity to infuse otherworldly flavors and techniques into her cooking while staying true to her founding principles of simplicity, creativity, affordability, and sustainability. Her repertoire of international comfort food ranges from fried chicken and donuts to artisanal sausages/salamis, pasta, and pastries.

In 2019, Angie traveled to Thailand to attend cooking classes in Bangkok and explore the local produce and cuisine offered in some of the world's busiest open-air markets. In an effort to diversify her business acumen, she continues to partake in all



ANGIE MUELLER

PHOTO SUBMITTED

outlets of the industry, including pop-up restaurants, catering events, and local farmers markets.

In 2020, the pandemic forced many restaurants in

San Diego to close their doors permanently. With such a tremendous impact on the industry and its workers, Angie decided to focus her attention on those less fortunate and started a local meal prep delivery business. She also developed an alternate meal program for several local schools within the San Diego Unified School District in an effort to address food scarcity by offering nutritious meals independent of the existing school lunch program at no cost to families of K-6 students who had been impacted by the pandemic and were without the means to pay.

Since returning to Spooner in August of 2022, Angie has collaborated with several local businesses and restaurateurs with the intention of offering her fresh perspective on food. She currently works in the bakery department at Schmitz's Economart in Spooner. By focusing on how to incorporate local, seasonal ingredients with basic pantry items, and in an effort to minimize waste and unnecessary expense, Angie's goal is to create simple, nutritious, and affordable food that can easily be customized to meet just about anyone's dietary needs, goals, and/or restrictions.

It is with great excitement Angie finds herself back home in the Midwest, and she welcomes the opportunity to feed, teach, and inspire people with her fresh, affordable, and balanced take on nutritious

## The Search is on for Washburn County's Top Chefs!

### "KITCHEN TAKEOVER WASHBURN COUNTY"

Join us in showing off your culinary expertise for Living, Eating, & Aging Well in Washburn County

1. Washburn County area Chefs, Cooks, Bakers, & BBQ Extraordinaires are encouraged to apply.

2. A \$250 stipend will be paid to the participant.

3. Washburn County ADRC staff will serve as Sous Chefs or you can bring your own staff to assist.

4. Chef will have full reign of the Washburn Wellness Center's new commercial kitchen for prep and cooking.

5. Purchase of food can be coordinated through the ADRC Nutrition Director and purchased by the county to serve up to 100 people with a budget of \$12 per person.

6. We will allow the Chef to pick one (1) of the ten (10) months listed with the theme as assigned, since some Chefs may prefer a specific condition. The months of June and July will be outdoor events – two (2) Food Trucks for each month are encouraged to apply.

7. Menu will be approved by a nutritionist to make sure that it contains all of the nutrition guidelines of our programming, which includes eating healthy, homemade from scratch when possible, and delish.

8. Chef is willing to give a short demo of one of the menu items, interact, and socialize with the audience.

9. Chef will be allowed to promote their local business as a partner of the ADRC.

10. The ADRC will provide marketing for each month's event, with a bio of the Chef and ask that you will share on your social media channels.

11. All applicants will need to provide proof of current ServSafe Food Manager Certification.

The ADRC of Washburn County recently submitted a grant application to Meals on Wheels America for the Unmet Needs Grant. Agency staff wanted to highlight different types of health conditions each month. After a brainstorming session, it was agreed to create a monthly theme with prioritized health conditions that align with national awareness campaigns.

► October - Breast and other Cancer Awareness – Chef Rick Saletris of Papa Saletris Italian Beefs Food Truck

- November - Diabetes Awareness – Chefs Paul Restad and Shannon Klopp of the Laughing Goat Food Truck
- December - COPD/Dental – Chef Angie Mueller expertise Fine Dining, Pastry, & Catering
- January - Thyroid Conditions – Chef Melissa Brady of Cobblehaus Café Food Wagon
- February - Heart Health
- March - Kidney Awareness
- April - Arthritis Awareness
- May - Hypertension/High Blood Pressure Education
- June - Alzheimer's/Brain Awareness - LOOKING FOR (2) FOOD TRUCKS OUTDOOR EVENT
- July - Healthy Vision - LOOKING FOR (2) FOOD TRUCKS OUTDOOR EVENT

This exciting medically tailored dining experience incorporates social & educational activities in partnership with local chefs, dietitians, farmers, health care agencies, and food suppliers. Washburn County Transit will provide transportation to residents 60+, caregivers, and adults with disabilities.

If you are interested in applying, please contact Valerie VanderBent, Nutrition Director or Linda Hand, ADRC/Aging Director at 715-635-4460.



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*Thank you for your consideration in propelling the goal of the elderly nutrition program in Washburn County, Wisconsin. The Elderly Nutrition Program provides nutritionally balanced meals to individuals 60 years of age and over, spouses, and caregivers. The program offers these adults the opportunity to live independently in their community by providing socialization and informal support networks.*

**MEMORY CAFE**

**WASHBURN COUNTY  
MEMORY CAFE**

**WHEN:** The Second Wednesday of every month Starting in November

**TIME:** 10 am - 11 am

**WHERE:** Spooner 50+ Wellness Center  
850 W. Beaverbrook Ave., Spooner, WI 54801

**CONTACT:** Patryce Garcia, Dementia Care Specialist, Caregiver Support Coordinator  
pgarcia@co.washburn.wi.us • 715-635-4477

Memory Cafés are social gatherings where people living with memory changes and their caregivers can come together in a safe and supportive environment, share conversation over a cup of coffee, or participate in fun, simple activities with the group.

**FOOD PANTRY**

ICAA Washburn County Food Pantry Shell Lake location is closed permanently.

**NEW PICK UP LOCATIONS  
STARTING OCTOBER 30, 2023**

**BURNETT COUNTY FOOD PANTRY**

26456 Lakeland Ave. S., Webster, 715-349-8155  
Mon., Tue., Fri. 10 am to 3 pm

**HAYWARD COMMUNITY FOOD SHELF**

16216 W Hwy. 63, Hayward, 715-634-4237  
Monday 9 am to 12 pm

**DHS Marks 25 Years of Aging and Disability  
Resource Centers Serving Wisconsin Communities**

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is celebrating the 25th anniversary of aging and disability resource centers (ADRCs) helping older adults and people with disabilities in our state to thrive. ADRCs were first piloted in 1998 in nine counties and have since expanded to cover all 72 Wisconsin counties and 11 federally recognized Tribal Nations in the state, providing connections to resources like adaptive equipment, dementia care services, meal delivery, and more.

“ADRCs play a vital role in helping our friends, neighbors, and loved ones remain connected and engaged in their communities,” said DHS Secretary-designee Kirsten Johnson. “Wisconsin’s person-centered, full-service approach to long-term care education and assistance has become a national standard. We look forward to continuing this important work and ensuring we will be able to provide the high-quality, supportive community-based services people want and need for years to come.”

Every year, ADRCs and Tribal aging and disability resource specialist (ADRS) programs log hundreds of thousands of contacts with customers around the state. In 2022, they served over 141,000 unique customers and made over 535,000 direct contacts. In the same year, clients of elder benefit specialists and disability benefit specialists accessed over \$224 million worth of services, helping stabilize household budgets and lessen reliance on local crisis and emergency services.

ADRC services are available to families, friends, caregivers, and others who work with or care about

older people or people with disabilities. Today there are 49 ADRCs and nine Tribal ADRSs providing a central source of reliable and objective information about a broad range of programs and services for our most vulnerable populations. ADRCs help people conserve their personal resources, maintain self-sufficiency, and delay or prevent the need for potentially expensive long-term care by enabling people to find resources in their communities and make informed decisions about long-term care.

DHS has dedicated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to improve and modernize ADRCs throughout the state. This initiative aims to improve access to ADRC resources, increase awareness of ADRCs throughout Wisconsin, diversify and modernize ADRC services with a focus on equity, and support the increasing demand for ADRC services. Additionally, select ADRCs are taking part in an independent living supports pilot program, which will offer short-term, flexible, and limited services and supports for people at risk of entering Medicaid long-term care. The pilot program will help improve people’s ability to stay in their own homes, potentially easing the burden on Wisconsin’s long-term care system as Wisconsin’s older adult population continues to grow.

To learn more about ADRCs or find your local ADRC or Tribal ADRS visit the DHS website or contact the local ADRC of Washburn County at 715-635-4460 and LIKE our Facebook Page at: <https://www.facebook.com/AgeWellLiveWellWashburn-County>

**INFORMATION TIDBITS**

SUBMITTED BY

**ANNA MARIE BROWN**

Information & Assistance Specialist

*Following are information “tidbits” that may be of interest to you.*

**HOUSING:** The ADRC cannot find a place for you to live. Housing here, like everywhere else, is at a premium. If you are considering selling your home/downsizing, or relocating, please be aware we are in a housing crisis and plan accordingly. (Most surrounding counties are in the same predicament.) We do not keep a list of all landlords throughout the county.

Washburn County has several subsidized housing units. The ADRC does not manage the housing units nor

do we maintain their applications. It is our understanding all have waiting lists. We can provide you with contact information so you can connect with those units you are interested in. Contact them for information and to obtain their application. An application must be completed and submitted to them for you to be considered for tenancy and added to their wait list. You may want to ask about how they manage their wait list so you have an idea about when you may be able to move in/rent from them. If you have a legal history (i.e. felony), please ask if you can be considered as a possible tenant before requesting an application. Each housing unit has their own rules and regulations.

If you need help to complete the housing application(s), please contact an Information & Assistance Specialist.

**HOME DELIVERY OF PRESCRIPTIONS:** Red Cross Pharmacy in Spooner, WI may deliver prescriptions to you if you live within 5 miles of Spooner. They provide delivery once a day. There is a fee of \$1 for this service. For more information or to see if you are eligible, please contact Red Cross directly at 715-635-2117.

**LONG TERM CARE:** Many things fall under the category of “long term care”. Many have heard the words Includa, MyChoice, and IRIS. All of these are related to the State of Wisconsin’s long term care services programs of Family Care and Include, Respect, I Self-direct (IRIS) which allow people more of a choice of where they receive cares. Please note there are non-financial and financial eligibility criteria. This is a process that can take 4-8 weeks or more, depending. The State’s programs do invoke estate recovery when a person has been determined eligible and enrolls in either Family Care or IRIS. Estate recovery means that when you (and your spouse, if married), both pass away, the State will try to recoup from your estate to be repaid for the services provided. For more information about long term care, please contact an Information & Assistance Specialist.

**CAREGIVERS/SERVICE PROVIDERS:** We, like many other counties, have a shortage of caregivers and care providers. If you are willing and able to help out by providing assistance to others on a private-pay basis, and are a LLC (limited liability corporation),

please contact our office. We would love to add you to our list of providers!

If you are willing to volunteer to help others, we need your help as well. It takes a village so if you are able to help in any way, please contact us.

**HOME HEALTH CARE VS. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:** Home health care means different things to different people. To us, home health care means skilled medical cares needed in the home. This may be a covered service under Medicare with a doctor’s order for those who are homebound.

Supportive services are those things that help/support us with our activities of daily living: perhaps someone to clean, take out the trash, do grocery shopping, help with mail, shovel snow, help with bathing, trim toe nails and fingernails, etc.

Washburn County does not provide home health care services nor in-home supportive services at this time.

The ADRC is able to provide you with information about those who do provide these services and discuss resources and options available. Contact an Information & Assistance Specialist for more information.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Anna Marie Brown**

### SHARE THE LOVE PHOTOS - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

#### 2020 - \$4,614.10 SUBARU REVENUE.

This was a challenging time since we had been shut down from COVID, but we were still delivering meals to the homebound. Now our deliveries included deliveries to all Washburn County seniors 60+ in need of meals, since our senior centers were closed to congregate dining and many seniors were now contained to their homes.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Roundman providing Thanksgiving Dinner to all of our participants and volunteer drivers.



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

**2022 - REVENUE RECEIVED FROM LOCAL DONATIONS: \$12,394.50 AND \$3,947.33 SUBARU REVENUE.** Birchwood Senior Bake Sale, Roundman Thanksgiving Dinner, Share the Love Cards from Spooner 5th Graders, and the Share the Love Charter Bus Trip to Duluth.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

#### 2021 - \$2,923.24 SUBARU REVENUE.

Due to COVID, we recognized that the local caregivers were in need of some special attention. Caregiver Packages, Gift Cards, and Thanksgiving Dinner from Roundman to all participants.



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

**JUST A FEW OF OUR 2022 "ANGELS IN DISGUISE"**  
We LOVE you for "Sharing the Love" every day with our participants!



My Choice Wisconsin provides government-funded programs to frail seniors, adults with disabilities, individuals, and families.

We care for the whole person and well-being of all by offering services that promote independence, value diversity, and inspire self-advocacy.

[www.mychoicewi.org/SA](http://www.mychoicewi.org/SA)  
**800-963-0035 TTY 711**

For Long-Term Care options contact your local [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#).  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/)

DHS Approved 8/16/2021



Caring starts here.

## VEHICLE EMERGENCY KIT

Keeping an emergency kit in your vehicle can ensure you have crucial supplies available if you become stranded while driving or are unable to return home due to a disaster.

### ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN A VEHICLE EMERGENCY KIT:

- Cell phone car charger
- Drinking water
- Duct tape
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Foam tire sealant
- Jumper cables
- Multipurpose utility tool
- Nonperishable snacks



- Portable electric tire air pump
- Rags
- Rain poncho
- Reflective warning triangles or roadside flares
- Tire pressure gauge
- Tow strap or tow rope

### DURING COLDER WEATHER MONTHS, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Blankets and extra warm clothing, hats, and gloves
- Cat litter or sand to provide traction
- Snow shovel
- Windshield ice scraper
- Winter boots

# Five Tips for Exercising Safely During Cold Weather

Don't let falling temperatures stop your outdoor exercise plans! You can walk, ski, ice skate, shovel snow, and more.

### TAKE A FEW EXTRA STEPS TO STAY SAFE:

- 1. Warm up and cool down**, such as stretching or walking in place, to prepare and restore your muscles before and after a workout.
- 2. Pick the right clothes.** Dress in several layers of loose clothing to trap warm air between them. Wear a waterproof coat or jacket if it's snowing or rainy, and don't forget a hat, scarf, and gloves.

- 3. Be extra careful** around snow and icy sidewalks so you won't slip and fall. Wear sturdy shoes to give you proper footing.
- 4. Learn about the signs of hypothermia**, a drop in body temperature that can cause serious health problems.
- 5. Check the forecast.** If it's too windy, cold, or wet outside, consider an indoor workout instead using an online video or your own routine.

Visit [www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercising-outdoors](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercising-outdoors) to learn more.



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I have been truly blessed with the best staff. The reorganization and expansion of the ADRC of Washburn County in 2023 has brought such great vibes to the agency. The addition of new energetic staff to the ones we already had has enhanced the services we can provide to the community as a whole. If you have not met them in person, you need to. Stop on by one of our senior meal sites, the office, or for one of our outreach events. Read their articles in the Focus, as they share their own stories. Cassi, our Star Wars geek, as she calls herself, jumped right in with the others to spread cheer throughout the office. Between her and Sheila, they have assisted on the county Sunshine Committee and dragged the rest of us with them. For the Halloween costume contest, it was not a choice as they assigned each of us characters and decorated the office and lobby. If you missed it, here it is. We may not have won the contest, but in my book, we are all winners to have such a great team. Just wait to see what they already have in store for Christmas decorating as they spread cheer throughout the year.

Linda



PHOTO SUBMITTED

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