



PHOTO SUBMITTED

WASHBURN COUNTY VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION: *Honoring Our Community Heroes*

CELEBRATING VOLUNTEER IMPACT

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization and programming – bringing passion, dedication, and invaluable support to our mission. We would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude and celebrate the incredible contributions of our volunteers.

We are so fortunate to have over 70 dedicated volunteers involved in the Senior Nutrition Program. In 2024 alone, more than 30,000 meals were delivered to homebound participants throughout Washburn County. This would not have been possible without the help of our wonderful volunteers. Additionally, our Washburn County Transit volunteer drivers assist

with taking older adults and adults with disabilities to their medical appointments, social trips, and general transportation needs. In addition to volunteer drivers, we also have volunteers who help prep and serve meals in the dining sites, lead health promotion classes, serve on our Advisory Councils, and assist with administrative support tasks. We would like to put a special “thank you” out to all of our volunteers, past and present, for making our programs what they are!

GET INVOLVED!

If you are inspired by your fellow volunteers in our community and want to make a differ-

ence, we welcome you to join us! Whether you can commit an hour a week or a day a month, every bit helps. There is a variety of opportunities to volunteer at the ADRC. Stop in at our office to pick up a volunteer application packet or call us at 715-635-4460 to learn more. As the older adult population grows, so does the need for volunteers to assist in serving them.

TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS: THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND COMMITMENT!

Your efforts do not go unnoticed, and we are incredibly grateful for everything you do. Let's keep working together to help older adults in our community thrive!

The ADRC of Washburn County 2024 WRAP-UP



SUBMITTED BY
LINDA HAND
ADRC Director/
Aging Director

With 2025 approaching, the ADRC staff and volunteers would like to start by saying thank you. Despite the craziness

in this world, we still get up each day to move forward. There are many needs to meet, and without community support, we could not do what we do.

Washburn County is a largely rural area in northwest Wisconsin, covering 853 square miles and bordered by Douglas, Burnett, Barron, and Sawyer Counties. With an aging population, Washburn County faces unique challenges in addressing the health and social service needs of its senior residents. The total county population stands at 16,685, with 37% over age 60 and

a median age of 52.2, significantly higher than Wisconsin's median of 39.9. Population projections indicate that by 2040, residents aged 60+ will make up 41.3% of the county's total population. Additionally, residents aged 65+ living alone account for 24%, which reflects potential vulnerability to health and social isolation risks. According to the 2022-2025 Washburn County Community Health Needs Assessment, priority needs include mental health, substance use, and access to care.

What exactly is it that the Aging & Disability Resource Center does all day? In retrospect, a lot, but...we could not do what we do without the help of our great team of staff, committee members, volunteers, partner agencies, businesses, organizations, community advocacy efforts, financial support from the federal, state, and local levels, along with additional grants applied for, in-kind and monetary contributions and donations.

The goals of the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) 2025-2027 Aging Plan include increasing access to nutrition services through congregate dining and home-delivered meals. Social connections for seniors, especially those homebound, are crucial for mental and physical health. Addressing social isolation

is paramount, as it can significantly impact seniors' mental and physical health and lead to increased healthcare usage. The team has a long history of successfully working together to address the health and well-being of the older adult population in Washburn County.

The ADRC of Washburn County has experienced success in supporting vaccine education and clinics for older adults during 2023-2024 with a generous grant from USAging. This opportunity allowed us to offer incentives through collaboration with local chambers to provide Chamber Dollars, putting back over \$60,000 into the local economy.

Since COVID, the team has launched social programs like the Summer Senior Social Dinner & Concert Series in Shell Lake, which marked its fourth successful year in 2024. In addition, with an Unmet Needs grant award from Meals on Wheels America, we were able to offer monthly local Top Chef Takeovers at the Washburn County Wellness Center 50+ and then with food trucks this summer at the social events, providing meals and education focusing on healthy eating themes addressing critical health conditions.

JOIN OUR TEAM!



PHOTO SUBMITTED

ADRC OF WASHBURN COUNTY TEAM MEMBERS DOING OUTREACH AT OUR SENIOR SUMMER SOCIAL, JOINED BY OUTREACH STAFF FROM INDIGO.

JOIN OUR TEAM! Information and Assistance Specialist

The ADRC of Washburn County is seeking applicants for an Information and Assistance Specialist to provide Washburn County residents with information, linkage to resources, and assistance with access to services for the elderly, adults with physical or developmental disabilities, and family caregivers. The work is performed under the direction and supervision of the ADRC Director. Desired Education/Experience: Bachelor of Arts or Science degree or a license to practice as a registered nurse in WI, and the equivalent of at least one year of full-time experience in a health or human service field, working with one or more of the client populations served by the ADRC. Qualifying work experience may be paid or unpaid, including internships, field placements, and volunteer work. If a candidate lacks the degree or experience described, approval can be requested from DHS. Starting wage \$25.01-\$40.11 DOQ and Excellent Benefits. For an application, contact the Washburn County Personnel Department at P.O. Box 337, Shell Lake, WI 54871, Ph. 715-468-4624, fax 715-468-4628. Email adminper@co.washburn.wi.us or download an application from our County website at www.co.washburn.wi.us. Resumes will be accepted, but will not take the place of a completed application. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. EOE

NEW VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

My name is Adam Smith and I want to introduce myself as the newly appointed Washburn County Veterans Service Officer. I have worked in the assistant role for approximately the past two years. I look forward to continuing to serve Washburn County Veterans and their families.

As county employees, our office works on the Veteran's behalf in helping file for Federal and State VA Benefits, as well as help to provide resources for at risk

Veterans. It is important to remember that our office is not the VA. Some benefits our office assists with include service-connected disability compensation, pension, burial and survivor, education, and health. Each Veteran is unique and therefore not all Veterans are eligible for the same benefits. Our office helps educate and navigate this process for the Veteran and their dependents.

Please contact the Washburn County Veterans Service Office at 715-635-4470 with any questions or to set up an appointment to review your eligibility options.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

SENIOR HEALTH NEWS

PREVENTING SPREAD OF RESPIRATORY VIRUSES WHEN YOU'RE SICK

WHAT TO KNOW

- Taking steps to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses when you are sick is a core prevention strategy to lower risk from respiratory viruses.
- Core prevention strategies are important steps you can take to protect yourself and others from respiratory viruses.

While COVID-19 still poses a significant health threat to people at higher risk, its health impacts are now similar to other respiratory viruses, like flu, which are also important causes of illness and death, especially for people at higher risk. As a result, this is the right time to issue unified Respiratory Virus Guidance, rather than additional guidance for each specific virus. This Respiratory Virus Guidance update brings a unified, practical approach to protecting against a range of common respiratory viral illnesses so that people can protect themselves and loved ones from these illnesses.

<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/prevention/precautions-when-sick.html>

STAY HOME AND AWAY FROM OTHERS IF YOU HAVE RESPIRATORY VIRUS SYMPTOMS.

Stay home and away from others (including people you live with who are not sick) if you have respiratory virus symptoms that aren't better explained by another cause. These symptoms can include fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny nose, and headache, among others.*

You can go back to your normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, both are true:

- Your symptoms are getting better overall, and
- You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication).



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neighborhood

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Vein Treatment • Urology
Wound Care

Learn more: SPOONERHEALTH.COM



MEET LANA BALTS



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Greeting! My name is Lana Balts. I'm a lifelong resident of Washburn County, and I'm proud to call this place home. I serve as a fiscal assistant for ADRC Washburn County, where I focus on grant fund management,

ensuring funds stay organized and on track. I enjoy the challenge of managing budgets and supporting projects that benefit our community.

Family is everything to me. I'm a mother of three, a nana to two, and a wife, and I treasure every moment spent with my loved ones. Watching my kids and grandkids grow and make their own memories is a true joy. Outside of family, I enjoy traveling and discovering new places. I also find fulfillment in helping others, whether through my work or in everyday interactions. I believe it's the small acts of kindness that make life meaningful, and I try to bring that spirit into everything I do.

SENIOR NEWS

Who Would Know?

SUBMITTED BY
ANNA MARIE BROWN
Information & Assistance Specialist

Caregivers often have to think about "what ifs". Whether it's about an interruption in the daily routine, an impending storm, a household emergency, a change in condition.... We're always thinking. We go about our day, planning for the next care activity, household activity, and, as winter is here, all that that entails. We do our routine chores.

In doing those chores, have we planned for ourselves? (This time I'm not talking about doctor check-ups, having legal paperwork in order, etc.) I'm talking about the "what if" something happened to us? "What if" we're doing our routine, perhaps shopping, and have a health emergency? Your information is probably in your wallet. However, if someone at

home needs you to assist with basic cares/activities of daily living, how is that information relayed? Who should be notified?

The ADRC has a campaign to identify caregivers in partnership with Washburn County Sheriff's Department, which includes a seat belt cover, visor information packet, and a bracelet. (You can provide additional information to the Washburn County Sheriff's Dept. that may be helpful for them to know in case of an emergency?) What happens if we're not in Washburn County or maybe not in this state? Who will know someone at home needs our support?

In the State of Minnesota, legislation was enacted to include a caregiver designation on drivers licenses. Language would need to be drafted and support obtained for this to happen in the State of Wisconsin. Janet Zander, Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator, for the Greater

Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR), is working on this. It always takes time and exactly what the language would look like is unknown at this time. Is this something of benefit to you or someone you know? Is this something you could support, when the time comes, and make a call to your legislator? (Please stayed tuned for more information as it becomes available.)

Whether a single parent or an adult being the primary/sole caregiver for another, make a plan for relaying information about your care recipient's needs. Just in case....of a "what if".

If you have questions about Washburn County's caregiver campaign and caregiver support programs, please contact Patryce Garcia, Dementia Care Specialist/Caregiver Support Coordinator at 715-635-4477 or pgarcia@co.washburn.wi.us.



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
<https://adrcwashburncounty.org/>

Linda Hand, ADRC/Aging Director
715-635-4460

ADRC of Washburn County Staff Contacts as of DECEMBER 2024

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.

Tara Macone
Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) In Training
Unable to take appointments
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 (Ted) 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
• Dean Martin • Mike Schroeder
• Victoria Corton • Jeff Hanson

Lana Balts
Fiscal Assistant
715-635-4463

Cassi Feiertag
Administrative Assistant
715-635-4460

Aging & Disability Services Committee
Joe Hoy - Chair • George Cusick - Vice Chair
Kasey King • Jocelyn Ford • Lolita Olson

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

DIRECTOR NEWS

FROM FRONT PAGE

GETTING RESIDENTS AGE 60+ AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES WHERE THEY NEED TO BE
Amber Anderson,
Washburn County Transit Mobility Manager

The transportation section of the ADRC has rebranded and expanded, offering more than just non-emergency medical services. With a new transit van and the addition of a county Mobility Manager and Van Driver, we have been able to transport residents throughout Washburn County for shopping and social events. Starting in 2022, Washburn County Transit offered a charter bus trip to Fitzgeralds and Bentleyville in Duluth, followed by a Fall Color Tour up the North Shore in 2023. The 2024 trip will be taking place in early 2025, with additional information coming out soon!

WASHBURN COUNTY NUTRITION PROGRAM CELEBRATES A YEAR OF IMPACT AND GROWTH**Valerie VanderBent, Nutrition Director**

As 2024 comes to a close, the Washburn County Nutrition Program is proud to reflect on a year of significant achievements in improving the health and well-being of those in our community. Through nutritious meals, education, and outreach, the program has reached hundreds of individuals, ensuring that older adults have the resources they need to lead healthier, more active lives.

One of the more significant achievements of 2024 was the program's increase in meals served. Over the course of the year, the Senior Nutrition Program served more than 38,000 nutritious meals to local seniors through our Home Delivered Meal and Congregate Dining Programs in Washburn County. Through our efforts in combating social isolation and building community connections, we focused on improving the Congregate Dining Program by organizing community events, group meals, and social gatherings such as the Kitchen Takeover Events, Shell Lake Resource Fair and Open House, 2024 Summer Senior Dinner & Concert Event Series, special themed Dining at 5, flu clinics, Ladies Night Out, and more. These events provided opportunities for seniors to connect with others, share experiences, and build lasting friendships over a nutritious, homemade meal. We are proud to share that in 2024, the Congregate Dining Program has seen a 40% increase in the number of meals served compared to the previous year.

The Senior Nutrition Program's accomplishments over the past year are a testament to the power of community and collaboration. By providing not only meals but also a sense of connection and empowerment, the program has enhanced the lives of hundreds of seniors within the Washburn County community. As we look forward, we remain focused on sustaining this momentum. Plans for the coming year include increasing outreach to underserved areas, continued collaboration and fun events, and expanding the meal delivery network. The program also hopes to attract more volunteers, whose dedication continues to be the backbone of its success.

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY**Patryce Garcia, Dementia Care Specialist/
Caregiver Support Coordinator**

What a year it has been. I feel so incredibly honored to have been part of the ADRC team and looking back at all the things we've accomplished. I will start this off by saying that writing this article makes me uncomfortable. I will sing the ADRC staff's praises all day, but asking me to write about myself? Ufta.

While at the beginning of the year I still felt very new to this position, I felt ready and excited to really get into the Dementia Care Specialist and Caregiver Support Coordinator position. The Dementia Care Specialist position is given three main pillars of people who we serve. The ADRC staff, The Community, and Individuals.

The ADRC staff here at Washburn County are beyond incredible. To support the constant pursuit of being a Dementia Capable organization, they participated in a Dementia Live presentation, and while allowing me to practice my public speaking skills, also attended Dementia 101 and Dementia Friendly presentations. They all are subscribed to my monthly newsletter: Brain Connections.

For our community, I have offered multiple Boost your Brain and Memory Classes –A class on brain health that is held one day a week for six weeks. Nichole Caudill (Information and Assistance Specialist) and I hosted Caregiver Connections: a time for caregivers and potential providers to get together in a no stress, no commitment environment in order to attempt to bridge the need of our caregivers. I was able to attend multiple Dining at 5 meals in order to provide outreach and offer information on my programs. Memory Screen Mondays were enacted in 2024, ensuring that I am in the office the first Monday of every month in the afternoon for any and all who would like to get their brain health assessed. I attended multiple other outreach activities including the Summer Senior Concert Series, Barron Electric, The 12 days of Christmas in Minong, and Vaccine Incentive programs to allow our communities to get to know who I am and all the supports I am able to provide.

Washburn County Memory Café is another activity I have been able to be part of. This is held on the second Tuesday of the month for caregivers and people living with dementia. We have an activity, a snack and great conversation. I offered Brain Breaks which included Trivia and the Robin William's documentary to continue to bring awareness to brain health. Nichole, Valerie, and I offered Trivia Nights in the month of June as it is Dementia Awareness Month. During June I also offered Brain Health assessments at all four Senior Centers in Washburn County.

Perhaps the highlight of my year was getting to head the Washburn County Caregiver Coalition in the development of the 2024 Washburn County Caregiver Conference. Our incredible group was able to put together an agenda with Washburn County's caregivers at its heart. We offered information on advocacy and emergency management, as well as a self-care filled afternoon of breakout sessions, then ending with the wonderful Susanne White, Caregiver Warrior, speaking on empowerment and giving ourselves grace. Our nutrition team whipped us up the most delicious lunch of chili and baked

potatoes with a full salad bar and ice cream sundae bar for dessert.

Lastly, I wanted to talk about how I have had the honor of meeting with and supporting the incredible families in Washburn County in their journey with caregiving and dementia. These families and individuals are the reason I am here doing what I do. I feel incredibly blessed to be here with you all. Thank you so much.

INFORMING & ASSISTING THE COMMUNITY (ADRC I&A SPECIALISTS)**Anna Marie Brown**

Asking veteran I&A Specialist, Anna Marie Brown, of her accomplishments this last year, "Well, I guess I haven't done much...." Well for those who know Anna, which many do, she is not taking credit when due. Anna is about to embark upon the life of "retirement". With over 30+ years of dedication to the County of Washburn, serving thousands of residents, caregivers, and families throughout her tenure, she will be greatly missed. Our hope is that she will continue to serve in other capacities, as the knowledge and experience she has gained is of great value to those who will follow in her footsteps.

Besides the day-to-day calls, meeting with clients, providing the critical functional screens for long term care applications, outreach at social events, serving as guest speaker at the Caregiver Conference, organizing meetings with local nursing homes, hospitals, assisted livings, clinics, and other agencies, serving on State committees for the State Resource Directory and new ADRC/Aging computer system, whew! Then in turn, all of these duties create piles and piles of paperwork and documentation. Most important, Anna has left a legacy, a mark in our local community history with her advocacy efforts this year and into the future for getting handrails installed at the ADRC and Wellness Center, seatbelt covers for caregivers, along with a hope of a future caregiver designation on the WI Drivers' licenses. Not much in the scheme of things....

Nichole Caudill, I&A

Only through our connectedness to others can we really know and enhance the self. And only through working on the self can we begin to enhance our connectedness to others – Harriet Lerner

Looking back at 2024 the common theme that comes to mind is connection. In order to be an effective Information and Assistance Specialist for Washburn County, I've recognize that I must have strong connection with our community. As a Washburn County employee and resident myself, I strive to create a community where we all want to live and work.

Over the past year I've had the pleasure of learning from the best, Anna Brown, Information and Assistance Specialist. She has challenged me every day to be a better because our customers deserve it. Anna has taught me what it means to be a true public servant: to empower people to advocate for themselves.

This spring was the commencement of my participation in Leadership Washburn County. A 9 month long training which focused on understanding what and who runs our county. It created an opportunity for me to connect

HAPPY DAY CLUB

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER FOR SOMEONE WITH MEMORY LOSS?

Let 'Happy Day Club' (an adult daycare program) help you! We meet every Monday and Thursday at Trinity Lutheran Church in Spooner WI from 9 a.m. to 2 pm.

Caregivers, you can leave your loved one with memory loss/dementia in a safe and fun environment so you can get some well-deserved free time. Those with memory loss/dementia can enjoy socializing, music and games, just to name some of the fun things that happen at Happy Day Club. The atmosphere is very relaxed and easy-going so folks can feel comfortable around one another. They can just be themselves.

Morning snacks and lunch are provided. We are staffed by one paid Director and a group of very well-trained and experienced volunteers. Happy Day Club is a nonprofit program that has been in existence for over twenty years, the only one in the Washburn County area! There is a \$30 daily fee. Financial help is available if assistance is needed.

Happy Day Club hopes you stop in for coffee and check our program out. Let us serve you on your journey with dementia. We are here to help.

Call us at 715-416-2942 or email happydayclub65@gmail.com.

Also, the Dementia/Alzheimer's Day Respite Program's **CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP** meets on the first Monday of each month at 9 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Spooner. Please check out this very informative, helpful and fun support group. We would love to have you join us! EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND. Snacks and coffee available.

Call 715-416-2942 or email happydayclub65@gmail.com with any questions you may have.

SHARE THE LOVE

ADRC OF WASHBURN COUNTY TO CELEBRATE THE 2024 SUBARU SHARE THE LOVE® EVENT NOVEMBER 21, 2024 THROUGH JANUARY 2, 2025

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 a charity, like Meals on Wheels, for every new vehicle leased or sold from November 21, 2024, to January 2, 2025. Since the Subaru Share the Love Event began in 2008, Subaru and its participating retailers have donated more than 4.6 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.

This annual event has brought in almost \$38,000 to our Washburn County nutrition programming since 2018, so we can provide extra special services, equipment, and supplies to those we serve throughout Washburn County.

WE WOULD LOVE YOU TO JOIN US!

Until January 2, 2025, the ADRC and volunteers provide extra special services to our Home Delivered Meal participants. In the past volunteers have helped:

- Help clean-up and wash dishes kitchens
- Deliver meals
- Provided transportation to homebound family members, friends, and neighbors to attend special activities at our senior centers
- Make or donate gift items to be packaged and delivered to homebound with their meals
- Businesses, churches, or organizations

- sponsor an activity at a senior center
- Musical groups provide entertainment at one of our centers in Birchwood, Minong, Shell Lake, or Spooner
- Local restaurants provide a meal or dessert to be delivered around the holidays
- Grocery stores or other businesses donate fresh fruit to be delivered to homebound
- Youth groups have decorated cards and placemats for participants
- Our staff organize special activities in conjunction with the meals and are always looking for volunteers to assist

Cash donations are always welcome, as funding is limited and our numbers increase annually. Projected through the end of 2024, it is estimated that the Senior Nutrition Program will serve more than 38,000 nutritious meals to local seniors through our Home Delivered Meal and Congregate Dining Programs in Washburn County.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Call the ADRC at 715-635-4460 and we will assist you in the process. Donations can be sent to:

Attn: Share the Love
ADRC of Washburn County,
P.O. Box 316, Shell Lake, WI 54871
Alternatively, dropped off at the
ADRC of Washburn County
304 2nd Street, Shell Lake, WI.

To stay informed of upcoming ADRC of Washburn County and Senior Center events, LIKE our Facebook Page at: <https://www.facebook.com/AgeWellLiveWellWashburnCounty/>

DIRECTOR NEWS

FROM PAGE 8

with leaders in other industries to learn how they serve the people of Washburn County. It was through this program that our new Elder Benefits Specialist, Tara Macone, learned of the ADRC and what we do. A connection was made!

This spring I also had the opportunity to attend a meeting of the Aging and Disability Professional Association of Wisconsin while attending the Wisconsin Aging, Disability, and Independent Living Network Conference. I learned how to engage with advisory and governing boards to support our mission and how to foster a greater connection between these boards and the daily work of the ADRC. This led to the creation of a binder of information provided to governing board to help them understand our everyday work.

With the goal of providing quality information and referral services, I obtained my Inform USA Community Resource Specialist Certification. Inform USA a credentialing organization who holds the standards on how to provide

information and referral services. They offer connection to other organizations that offer information and referral services such as 211, 988, libraries and family resource centers. Building that connection between information and referral agencies strengthens our ability to serve the public.

With all the professional connections I've made in the last year, I have truly enjoyed my work in our community the best. I was able to attend multiple outreach activities including all Summer Senior Concert Series, Spooner Kitchen Takeovers, Trivia Nights, Vaccine Incentive events and much more. ***The goal is to have you know me before you need me.***

FROM THE FRONT DESK OF CASSI FEIERTAG Administrative Assistant, Marketing, & a Bit of Everything Else

The month of June kicks off the farmer's market season in the state of Wisconsin. I am honored to be ½ of the team that coordinates the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program for Washburn County. This program, which is open to low-income seniors (age 65+), offers \$45.00 in spendable vouchers to be redeemed at par-

ticipating farmer's markets and roadside stands throughout the state of Wisconsin to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs. The program runs from June 1st through October 31st. This year the ADRC of Washburn County was issued 148 voucher booklets, equaling \$6,660.00, to be distributed by September 30. I am proud to report that by July 18th all 148 voucher booklets were distributed to residence of Washburn County via distribution events at the Spooner Memorial Library, The Minong Senior Center, The Birchwood Senior Center, The ADRC of Washburn County office, and the Spooner Farmers Market. It brought me so much joy to be able to attend these events and get the chance to meet and talk with so many residence from our amazing County. Thank you to my co-workers for manning the front office, which allowed me to attend these distributions and to Linda Featherly for manning the distribution events at the Spooner Farmers Market and for advocating to bring this amazing program to Washburn County. I absolutely love being a part of this program, and look forward to seeing how much it grows in the years to come.

DECEMBER		LUNCH & HOME DELIVERED MEALS MENU							
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY					
Seasoned Chicken Breast Sauteed White Beans with Garlic, Sage & Tomatoes Whole Grain Bread Buttered Carrots, Pears MINONG DINING AT 5	Swedish Meatballs with Creamy Mushroom Sauce over Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Whole Grain Bread Fresh Apple	Chicken, Vegetable & Dumpling Soup Garden Salad w/Dressing Whole Grain Dinner Roll Ambrosia Salad	Fish Sandwich with Leaf Lettuce served with a side of Tartar Sauce Sweet Potato Fries Apple-Cranberry Coleslaw	Roasted Pork Tenderloin with an Apple Glaze Baked Potato Buttered Beets WG Bread Triple Berry Crisp	2	3	4	5	6
Tuna Salad w/Leaf Lettuce on WG Bread Cucumber & Tomato Salad with Dill Carrot Sticks Crisp Grapes SHELL LAKE DINING AT 5	BRUNCH FOR LUNCH Sausage, Green Pepper & Spinach Egg Bake, Breakfast Potatoes, Buttermilk Biscuit, Orange Juice, Yogurt Parfait with Berries	Oven-Roasted Turkey Cheesy Twice-Baked Sweet Potato Asparagus Whole Grain Bread Pistachio Fluff Fruit Salad	White Bean, Pumpkin & Sausage Ravioli Bake Buttered Peas Whole Grain Bread Peaches	Basil Crusted Chicken "Three Sisters" Wild Rice Salad WG Bread Buttered Green Beans Cherry Cheese Delight	9	10	11	12	13
Spaghetti & Meatballs over Whole Grain Noodles Walnut Caesar Salad WG Garlic Breadstick Pears SPOONER DINING AT 5	BBQ Baked Ribs Baked Potato Cheesy California Blend Veggies Whole Grain Bread Strawberry Pretzel Dessert BIRCHWOOD DINING AT 5	Breaded Chicken Sandwich with Lettuce, Tomato, Onion & Mayo Sweet Potato Puffs Creamy Coleslaw Fresh Clementine	Christmas Dinner Holiday Roast Beef Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Green Bean Almondine Christmas Crunch Salad, Cranberry Wild Rice Bread Frosted Sugar Cookie	Chicken & Black Bean Enchiladas served with Refried Beans, Spanish Rice, Mexican Coleslaw Fruit Salad	16	17	18	19	20
Pulled Pork Sandwich on a Whole Grain Bun Baked Beans Potato Salad Pineapple	HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE No Meals Served	HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE No Meals Served	Ham & Cheese Loaded Baked Potato Asparagus Buttered Carrots Whole Grain Bread Apricots	Beef Stroganoff over WG Egg Noodles Roasted Squash Tossed Caesar Salad Baked Apples	23	24	25	26	27
Chicken & Vegetable Stir Fry over Brown Rice Egg Roll Mandarin Oranges	Tomato Basil Soup Grilled Cheese Sticks, Baked Parmesan Broccoli Garden Salad w/ Dressing Cottage Cheese w/Peaches				30	31			

• 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 \$6.00 - \$8.00 per meal. Individuals under the age of sixty are welcome, but must pay the full meal cost of \$15.00 to participate.



Suggested donation is \$8.00 - \$10.00
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 2**
Holiday Salad Bar & Table
Tree Charcuterie
BBQ Baked Ribs
Twice Baked Potato
Holiday Truffles

**SHELL LAKE MENU
MONDAY, DECEMBER 9**
Christmas Candlelight Dinner
Slow Roasted Beef Roast with Gravy
Buttered & Seasoned Baby Red Potatoes
Garden Salad, Dinner Roll
Char's Choice Dessert

**SPOONER MENU
MONDAY, DECEMBER 16**
Prime Rib
Baked Potato, Roasted Brussels
Fresh Side Salad
Dinner Roll
Christmas Cake

**BIRCHWOOD MENU
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17**
Bacon Wrapped Chicken Breast
Cheesy Au Gratin Potatoes
Peas & Onions
Salad Bar, Fresh Baked Bread
Kristi's Choice Dessert

Make a Difference
VOLUNTEER!

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

SENIOR CENTER NEWS

VERDELL PETTEY

WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER

50+ NEWS

Verdellpettey@gmail.com

Spooner’s Christmas decorated main street is where I begin my journey through the holidays. Childhood memories surface easily - a new frilly dress for the Christmas Eve program at church, 1952. I could hardly recite my piece after shivering all the way to town sitting on VERY cold plastic seat covers in our cold car. So much for being cute and frilly.

Our Senior Night Out on October 24 at Summers on Long Lake was attended by 12 people. The last days of fall at Summers were very scenic! A large long table made visiting easy while enjoying great menu selections. Call Lynn Beard 715-520-3569 if you want to join us on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 5pm. November’s Night Out was held at Bona Casa at Cumberland. Watch our Facebook page/bulletin board at the center for December’s Night Out. Any destination suggestions, even for a noon time meal, are welcomed.

Several people attended the First Friday Flick of the movie “Reagan” on November 1st. These movies are free at 1PM. Donations welcomed. Just show up, bring your own snack and enjoy our big screen. Big screen football games at the center even included a Chili Cook-off November 3rd. Prizes were awarded for 1st and 2nd place. Those that didn’t cook chili brought a side dish or snack to share while the Packers played the Lions.

Three gals made our Dining @ 5 very special on November 18th. Thank you Pat Visger, Carol Jackson and Mary Gates for the table settings and decorations. We’re averaging 80 plus attendees each month with room for more. The meal of creamy herb style pork chops with wild rice was followed by a pumpkin cheese-cake dessert. Make plans to come on December 16th for a prime rib dinner. Come early to hear John Sedor with 70’s and 80’s style guitar music, 3PM until 4:30PM. There will be festive Christmas table settings and holiday mock-tails you won’t want to miss. Call the center at 715-635-8283 after the first of the month to sign up for the meal. We have been in our new center for over a year. It’s getting better all the time as more people are volunteering.

“Dining with Darrel” took us to the center for October Dining @ 5 to enjoy beef stew in a bread bowl. “He took the lid off of this meal” remarked the cooks, Mary and Jen. Then Darrel grabbed his fork. Afterwards he stayed to play Bingo. Mary and Ed Schmocker lead us in 3 games. They are planning to do more Bingo for our events. Thank you for volunteering.

The ladies enjoyed a great time with their night out in Spooner November 25th. The center served a salad bar luncheon at noon, followed by fun filled trivia and then transit van shuttles to downtown. Spooner really knows how to cater to Ladies Night Out. Thank you to all the businesses who make this event happen.

Thank you to all who helped assemble the Christmas treat bags for Meals on Wheels. About 75 were distributed.

Check the list of Spooner Senior Center

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
2 Dining 12 pm Cribbage, Mexican Train 1 pm Tai Chi 1 pm	3 Dining 12 pm Mah Jongg 1 pm	4 Chair Dancing 9:30 am Dining 12 pm 500 & Bridge 1 pm	5 Mah Jongg 9 am Games 10 am Dining 12 pm Hand and Foot 1 pm	6 Dining 12 pm First Friday Flicks 1 pm
8 AmVets Christmas Party	10 Dining 12 pm Mah Jongg 1 pm	11 Chair Dancing 9:30 am Dining 12 pm 500 & Bridge 1 pm AmVets Monthly Meeting 6:30 pm	12 Mah Jongg 9 am Games 10 am Dining 12 pm Hand and Foot 1 pm	13 Dining 12 pm
9 Dining 12 pm Cribbage, Mexican Train 1 pm; Tai Chi 1pm	15 Packers Game 7:20 pm	17 Dining 12 pm Mah Jongg 1 pm	18 Chair Dancing 9:30 am Dining 12 pm 500 & Bridge 1 pm AmVets Monthly Meeting 6:30 pm	19 Mah Jongg 9 am Games 10 am Dining 12 pm Hand and Foot 1 pm
16 Dining 12 pm Cribbage, Mexican Train 1 pm; Tai Chi 1pm	23 Dining 12 pm Cribbage, Mexican Train 1 pm Tai Chi 1 pm	24 MERRY CHRISTMAS Dining Site Closed No Meals Served or Delivered	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS Dining Site Closed No Meals Served or Delivered	26 Mah Jongg 9 am Games 10 am Dining 12 pm Hand and Foot 1 pm
29 PACKER GAME 12 pm	30 Dining 12 pm Cribbage, Mexican Train 1 pm; Tai Chi 1pm	31 Dining 12 pm Mah Jongg 1 pm		

Committee members to contact for information including but not limited to requests for activity information, contact for gifting donations, and how to get involved, etc. Lynn Beard, Chair, lynnbear2001@yahoo.com; Verdell Pettey, Treasurer, verdellpettey@gmail.com; Marie Zellmer, Secretary, mariezellmer@gmail.com and Colleen Cook, Liaison, cac0553@gmail.com. According to our By-laws, these officers will continue in their current positions as no new nominations were made in October. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and look forward to 2025 as we continue to gather at the center. We received a wonderful compliment. After making the decision to move to Spooner to be near a daughter, a gal found our center and felt so happy to make new friends. We are here for each other and that’s so important. And we have fun.

The Scout Camp weather rock is white. It’s a rock hung outside in a teepee frame. You can tell the weather by looking at the rock. It’s snowing!



Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources

(GWAAR) News

Leadership opportunities: GWAAR Board of Directors and GWAAR Advisory Council GWAAR is looking for thoughtful, civic-minded, energetic individuals to serve on its 11-member board and 9-member Advisory Council. Members play a critical role in guiding and overseeing the agency’s actions and initiatives. Candidates for these roles must live outside Dane and Milwaukee Counties and be able to devote time and energy to the GWAAR’s governance, including:

- Serve at least one 3-year term on the board.
 - Attend multiple meetings per year, often centrally located in the state. (Necessary expenses covered by GWAAR.)
 - GWAAR’s Board of Directors has 6-8 meetings/year
 - GWAAR’s Advisory Council has a minimum of four meetings/year
- Learn more: <https://gwaar.org/leadership-opportunities>

SENIOR CENTER NEWS

JUNE WILLIS FRIENDSHIP COMMONS Shell Lake Senior Center

Welcome December! As Andy Williams sings, "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!" The landscape is breathtaking with the snow and holiday lights. Folks are busy shopping for the many holiday parties and family dinners.

Decorations are up in homes and businesses and many wonderful holiday traditions are happening such as concerts, bazaars, and caroling.

The Salvation Army red kettles are hung and several of our members will be ringing the bell for donations to help those in need. Member Connee Brabec has been key in setting up the schedule for participating. If you have the time to give, call Connee at 715-635-2319, it would be greatly appreciated.

Friendship Commons is decorated for the holidays-our trees (inside and out) are up and so beautiful. We have warm apple cider and cookies on Wednesdays so stop in and have a snack with us.

Our quilters, the "Stitch and Chat" group have completed our "Gnomes for all Seasons" a whimsical, fun quilt with dozens of different gnomes doing fun things. One Gnome for each month of the year times three years to equal 36 Gnomes. It will be displayed in the Shell Lake State Bank, and they will have raffle tickets available.

We held our elections and have new Friendship Commons officers. Newly elected are Connee Brabec and Sue Worre as co-Presidents with former President June Willis now serving as Vice-President. Our new Secretary is Linda Magnus. They will take over their duties in December. Jerry Fabert will remain as our Treasurer.

We were unable to paint a cute scarecrow at our November painting class but are planning to paint Santa's sleigh full of presents in December. Thanks to Joni Campbell for another year of helping us paint beautiful pictures. Please call (715-468-7491) if you wish

SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER FRIENDSHIP COMMONS

210 4th Avenue, Shell Lake | 715.468.4750

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: CHAR JAEGER
PRESIDENT: JUNE WILLIS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2 Tai Chi 10-11 am Congregate Dining 11:30 Painting 1:00	3 Cribbage 9:30-11:30 Congregate Dining 11:30	4 Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	5 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	6 Congregate Dining 11:30
9 Tai Chi 10-11 am Congregate Dining 11:30 Painting 1:00 DINING @ 5	10 Cribbage 9:30-11:30 Congregate Dining 11:30	11 Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	12 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	13 Congregate Dining 11:30
16 CENTER CLOSED Happy Veteran's Day!	17 Cribbage 9:30-11:30 Congregate Dining 11:30	18 Wii Bowling & Games 9:00 Quilting 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Smear & Games 1:00	19 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	20 Congregate Dining 11:30
23 Tai Chi 10-11 am Congregate Dining 11:30	24 CENTER CLOSED Holiday Observance	25 CENTER CLOSED Merry Christmas!	26 Games 9:00 Congregate Dining 11:30 Cribbage 12:30-2:30	27 Congregate Dining 11:30
30 Congregate Dining 11:30 NO Membership Meeting	31 Cribbage 9:30-11:30 Congregate Dining 11:30			

to join us December, the 2d at 1:00. Prior to class, lunch will be served at 11:30 if you are interested. Please contact our wonderful Site Manager Char at (715-468-4750) if you wish to eat at the Center.

Our mailbox at the Shell Lake Post Office is PO Box 8 if you wish to reach us via mail. Our email address is: SLFriendshipCommons@gmail.com. Please feel free to contact

us with any questions or concerns, or to sign up for upcoming events.

Call (715-468-7491) for information about activities and (715-468-4750) to order eat-in meals at the Shell Lake Senior Center. Please make sure you order the day prior.

To order Meals on Wheels delivery in Washburn County, call Valerie VanderBent, Nutrition Director at (715-635-4460).

CHICOG - THEN AND NOW

JOANN MALEK

Chicog - Then and Now

WOULD YOU consider taking a position on the county Aging and Disabilities Resource Committee board? Meetings are held in the Shell Lake Government Center four times during the year. Before her move, Cathy Peterson represented Chicog, kept the board up-to-date on our work, and was the link to bring county news and opportunities to our township. Contact ADRC director, Linda Hand, at (715) 635-4460 for more information.

"I KNOW A WHOLE BUNCH OF STUFF!" That's not surprising when you've lived for 104 years. I was delighted to meet Agnes Jorgenson a few weeks ago. She is quirky and dear. Agnes was born and raised in the Chicog area. Her parents were Gilbert and Ettie Mae Mack. She was the

middle child in a family of ten children. Her youngest sister, Etta-Mae Rothenbuhler, is her only living sibling. Etta-Mae is 92 years old and lives in a care facility in Spooner. Agnes resides in a care facility in Hayward.

"We all did chores, with no complaints. I was ornery though." Not just as a young one, some folks might declare. Once Agnes crawled into a butter churn and got stuck. Butter churns are narrow on top. They tried but couldn't pull her back out and had to break the churn to free her.

Agnes attended Stuntz Brook School which was located on Bramer Road, the current site of the Loisselle home. Later she attended Red Brick School, located on the southwest corner of County Roads K and F. Schools had to be nearby so children could walk there. But there was this bull they had to pass. It must have



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Agnes Jorgenson

SENIOR CENTER NEWS

POLLY LEINWANDER

MASC President

Minong Area Senior Center

HELLO FROM THE MASC,

HELLO FALL! This was the theme for the October Dining at Five. As we embrace fall, the cooler days, the splendor of the colors that nature provides, the sight of the pumpkin patches and apple orchards, Laura, our chef prepared a delightful fall dinner for Dining at Five. It started with the Autumn Harvest Honey Crisp Apple Feta Salad, with a light dressing, followed by the very tasty Italian Sausage Stuffed Acorn Squash with Herbed Parmesan Chips and Tomato Jelly on the side. Loaves of fresh Honey Molasses bread were provided at the tables. Who couldn't resist the Pumpkin Cream Cheese Mousse!

The dining tables were decorated with brown tablecloths and gold filigree place mats. Colorful fall leaves were strewn across the tables as well as faux gourds and pumpkins. Laura provided a cookie to participants celebrating their birthday in October and everyone joined in to sing Happy Birthday. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by all. The evening ended with our "signature" Bingo game. We are truly grateful to Laura, her staff, the ADRC nutrition program, the volunteers that decorate and all involved to make this a memorable evening. Thank You!

On Tuesday, December 3rd, 10am, there will be a free session on ASAHI. ASAHI is derived from Finland and is a low impact exercise program. If there is enough interest the instructor will begin weekly classes next spring. This is a great program for seniors as the instructor advised me you can do the exercises sitting on a chair or standing. Come and check it out.

MINONG AREA SENIOR CENTER

700 Houston Street, Minong | 715.466.4448

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: LAURA GOMEZ - 715.466.4448

PRESIDENT: POLLY LEINWANDER

December is a busy month at the center. We will be hosting the annual (Northwood School) children's Christmas, shopping and packing Christmas bags for the homebound, planning the seniors Christmas party and welcoming the new 2025 Minong Area Senior Center board members. Dates for the Christmas parties are to be determined and will be posted on FB and the weekly Minong Area Senior Center News in the Advocate.

This is also the time of the year we begin planning our annual events for next year. We book our dates for our 4 major fundraisers which include the 3 bake and craft sales, and the Fall Community Get Together. The annual Chanhassen Dinner Theatre bus trip is booked a year in advance-September for the next year. The Chanhassen bus trip is not a fundraiser for the center. It has always been provided as a service to the community and surrounding area for all seniors to enjoy a day trip. I've been informed by the ladies who plan the Chanhassen bus trip that they have been doing this for more than 10 years and it has always been an event the seniors look forward to. With the ever popular musical "Grease" being the 2025 event, this will certainly be a hot ticket. It will be a beautiful fall bus trip - September 10th. 2025!

Happy Holidays to each and every one of you from the Minong Area Senior Center.

Please check the Spooner Advocate, "Minong Area Senior Center News", for weekly updates.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR DECEMBER:

December 2nd Dining at Five
 December 3rd Free ASAHI session, 10am
 December 11th MASC Board Meeting, 1:30pm
 December 14th Potluck/Bingo Noon
 December 24th Center Closed
 December 25th Center closed

WEEKLY/MONTHLY CALENDAR:

Congregate meals Monday-Friday, 11:30am. Need to register 1 day in advance. 715-466-4448

Tuesday: Duplicate Bridge 9:30am (2nd & 4th Tuesday)

Farkle: 12:00pm (1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday's of the month)

Cards: 12:00pm (2nd & 4th Tuesday's of the month)

WII Bowling: 12:00pm every Tuesday

Wednesday: Pocket of Prayer 7:00am

MASC Board Meeting: 1:30pm (2nd Wednesday monthly)

Foot Care 3rd Wednesday of the month) Call 715-466-4299 to schedule time.

Thursday: Cribbage 12:30

Saturday: 2nd Saturday each month (some exceptions but will be advertised if changed) + Potluck-noon, Bingo-1:00pm

See you at the center!

SENIOR CENTERS DINING & ACTIVITIES

Valerie VanderBent - Nutrition Director
 Email: vvanderb@co.washburn.wi.us
 ADRC of Washburn County
 (715) 635-4460 - Main • (715) 635-4464 Fax

SENIOR CENTERS DINING & ACTIVITIES

DINING: Congregate dining is provided at four nutrition sites in Washburn County, Wisconsin: Birchwood, Minong, Shell Lake, and Spooner. Diners can partake of low-cost, nutritionally balanced meals in a warm atmosphere where they can enjoy being with other people and gain access to social activities.

SERVING TIMES: Serving times vary depending on the site. Call to make meal reservations: Reservations are required 24 hours in advance at the following sites:

BIRCHWOOD SENIOR CENTER

110 Euclid Ave., Birchwood, WI 54817
 (715) 354-3001
 Serving M-F, 11:45 am

MINONG SENIOR CENTER

700 Houston Ave., Minong, WI 54859
 (715) 466-4448
 Serving M-F, 11:30 am

SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER

210 4th Avenue, Shell Lake, WI 54871
 715-468-4750
 Serving M-F, 11:30 am

WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER 50+

850 W. Beaverbrook Avenue, Spooner, WI 54801
 (715) 635-8283
 Serving M-F, 12:00 noon

MEAL COST: We accept Food Share (Quest Card).

~ 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.

*Caregivers Under Age 60 - Please contact the Nutrition Program Director at 715-635-4460.

No eligible participant age 60+ will be denied a

meal based on ability to contribute to the cost of the meal.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES: All four centers allow participants numerous opportunities to gather with long-time friends and meet new ones. Please see enclosed activity calendars/news for each site.

HOME DELIVERED MEALS: Our Home Delivered Meals Program assures that homebound seniors receive an adequate nutritious meal, social contact, and safety check. With increasing numbers of frail elderly and shortened hospital stays, home delivered meals have become a critical component of the growing community service system. The same meals enjoyed at the senior dining sites are delivered to the homes of the elderly and caregivers who are homebound and not able to cook.

ELIGIBILITY: Guidelines must be met to qualify for Home Delivered meals. For more information, please contact the Nutrition Program Director at 715-635-4460.

SOCIAL SECURITY NEWS

Social Security Benefit Adjustment lowest in 4 years

By Andy Markowitz, AARP

<https://www.aarp.org>

Published October 10, 2024/

Updated November 13, 2024

WITH INFLATION SLOWING, ANNUAL BENEFIT ADJUSTMENT WILL BE LOWEST IN 4 YEARS

Social Security beneficiaries will get a 2.5 percent increase in their monthly payments next year, the Social Security Administration (SSA) announced Oct. 10. The 2025 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is the lowest since 2021, reflecting a continued cooling of inflation following a surge in consumer prices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2.5 percent COLA will bump up the estimated average Social Security retirement benefit by \$49 a month, from about \$1,927 to \$1,976, starting in January, according to the SSA. The estimated average survivor benefit will rise from \$1,788 to \$1,832 and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) from \$1,542 to \$1,580. "Inflation is clearly top of mind, not just for retirees, but for Americans generally, and the annual COLA provided by Social Security is a critical feature of the system," says Rob Williams, managing director of financial planning at Charles Schwab. "Some may feel the increase for 2025 is low relative to the inflation they feel in their pocketbooks," Williams says. "Still, it's a welcome increase that builds on a 5.9 percent increase in payments in 2022, 8.7 percent in 2023 and 3.2 percent this year."

The COLA is determined by year-to-year changes in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W),

which tracks price trends for a market basket of goods and services. The CPI-W is a subset of the overall Consumer Price Index, the federal government's main gauge of inflation. The 2025 adjustment represents the difference between the average CPI-W for July, August and September 2024 and the average for those months in 2023. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Oct. 10 that the index rose at a 2.2 percent rate in September, following increases of 2.4 percent in August and 2.9 percent in July.

Because one year's COLA reflects the prior year's price trends, how it affects retirees' pocketbooks can lag. For example, 2022's 5.9 percent increase was outpaced by that year's inflation, which reached 9 percent. That produced an 8.7 percent COLA for 2023, a year when inflation ebbed to 3.4 percent by December. The 2025 COLA could still buttress beneficiaries' buying power if the inflation rate continues to drop. However, the Federal Reserve's Survey of Professional Forecasters is projecting that the main Consumer Price Index will hold steady at 2.4 percent through the first half of 2025.

"This adjustment means older Americans will receive needed relief to help better afford essential items from groceries to gas," Jo Ann Jenkins, AARP's chief executive officer who retired in early November, said in a statement. But even with the COLA, "we know many older Americans who rely on Social Security may find it hard to pay their bills. Social Security is the primary source of income for 40 percent of older Americans."

In some categories, such as health care, long-

SEE SOCIAL SECURITY PAGE 16

INDIGO NEWS

Retirement Assets!

SUBMITTED BY **DON POSH**

IndiGO Your Allies for Independence

Rarely does a day go by without the reminder of saving for retirement. The amount of money



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Don Posh

we have stashed over the years combined with our Social Security is to assure quality of life once we retire. There is one more to consider than just the money. Do you know what your most important asset is?

While I am approaching retirement, I have used the advantage of seeing how others retire. All those years of hearing that diet and exercise are important, now I'm seeing the big picture.

No matter how much money you have, without your health, it really does not matter. Your health is your most important asset. The bucket list doesn't get much attention when our health prevents it.

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.



FRIDAY FACTS RECIPE - APPLES FOR DINNER

EatingWell.com labels this fall dinner recipe, which was reviewed by a dietitian, as diabetes-friendly, low-sodium, heart-healthy, gluten-free, and low-calorie.

APPLE, BACON, & SWEET POTATO MINI CASSEROLES

INGREDIENTS

- 10 slices lower sodium, less fat bacon
- 2 cups chopped cooking apples
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 (10 oz.) sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 2 tsp snipped fresh thyme or 1/2 tsp dried thyme, crushed
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1-1/2 cups refrigerated or frozen egg product, thawed, or 6 eggs, lightly beaten
- 3/4 cup fat-free milk
- 3/4 cup shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese (3 oz.)

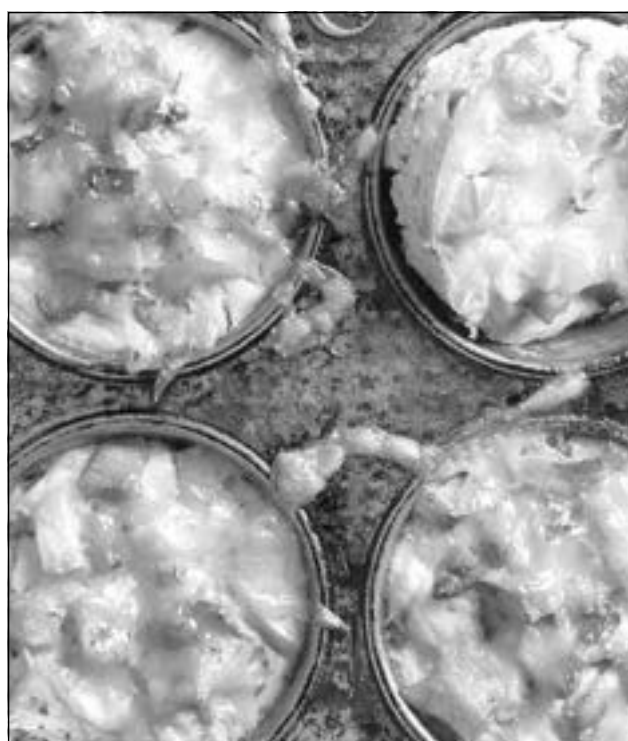


PHOTO SUBMITTED

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 12-cup muffin tin with cooking spray. Cut 4 of the bacon slices crosswise into thirds; chop the remaining bacon.
2. In a large skillet, cook large bacon pieces over medium until crisp. Drain bacon on paper towels; discard drippings. Add chopped bacon, apples and onion to skillet. Cook over medium for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add sweet potato; cook 10 minutes or just until potato is tender, stirring frequently. Stir in thyme and pepper.
3. Divide potato mixture among the prepared muffin cups. In a medium bowl, combine egg and milk; pour over potato mixture (cups will be full). Top with cheese.
4. Bake 25 minutes or until puffed and a knife comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 5 minutes. Remove from cups. Top with large bacon pieces. Serve warm.

www.REALiving.com

SENIOR NEWS

ALZHEIMER'S FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM (AFCSP)

ADRC of Washburn County Accepting Grant Applications for 2025

SUBMITTED BY PATRYCE GARCIA

Dementia Care Specialist/
Caregiver Support Coordinator

WHAT IS AFCSP?

This program provides support services to people living with dementia and their unpaid family members and friends who provide care for them. AFCSP is designed to provide a diverse array of community services to persons with dementia (PWD) and their caregiver(s) in order to:



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Patryce Garcia

to provide a diverse array of community services to persons with dementia (PWD) and their caregiver(s) in order to:

- Prevent or delay institutionalization
- Enhance quality of life
- Provide assistance to family and unpaid caregivers
- Priority is given to people living in private homes

- Educate the public about dementia and importance of early diagnosis

WHO QUALIFIES?

Eligibility Requirements *

- Written diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, related dementia, or other condition resulting in "irreversible dementia", must be signed by a qualified health professional. The ADRC Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) can assist the family to work with their health care professionals to determine if there is a diagnosis. If there is not, the family may qualify for the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP).
- Annual income \$48,000 or less – Alzheimer's related expenses can be deducted.
- Lives in the community or "residential facility". DHS 68.02 defines this to include a CBRF or Adult Family Home.
- Preference given to persons living in a home setting.

* PWD cannot be enrolled in Family Care.

Exception – if the person is receiving the non-nursing home level-of-care, they can still access AFCSP (policy memo dated 4-12-18).

HOW TO APPLY?

Contact the ADRC of Washburn County, Patryce Garcia, Dementia Care Specialist/Caregiver Support Coordinator at 715-635-4477. Patryce will schedule an appointment to complete an application.

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

The Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) will use the AFCSP Worksheets to Determine Eligibility.

1. Verify diagnosis signed by a qualified health



FILE PHOTO

professional.

2. Verify PWD lives in the community of Washburn County, which includes Adult Family Home, RCAC, CBRF and Assisted Living.
3. Verify PWD is not enrolled in Family Care, non-nursing home level of care is an exception.
4. Verify household income (individual and spouse).
5. Deduct Alzheimer's-related expenses if needed. Not sure what those expenses are? That is okay! The DCS will help you with what that information is and how to gather it.
6. If total income clearly exceeds the \$48,000 limit, no worries, you may still qualify for the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP).
7. If qualified, you will work closely with the DCS to determine immediate needs and options for the grant funds.

WHAT CAN AFCSP PAY FOR?

- **Respite**

- * In home respite
- * Adult day programming
- * Short term at an Adult Family Home, CBRF or other facility
- * Housecleaning, mowing and shoveling
- * Shopping, meal preparation, money management
- * Personal care (bathing, grooming, dressing, eating)

- **Transportation costs**

- * To medical appointments
- * To participate in recreational or social activities
- * Includes specialized transportation
- * Includes assisted transportation

- **Adaptive equipment and technology**

- * Mobility aids
- * Bathroom aids: grab bars, raised toilet seat
- * Adaptive aids for eating
- * Safety devices: door and bed alarms,

fridge/cabinet locks

- * Lift chair, audio monitor
- * Safe transfer equipment: gait belt, lifting aids, transfer pole
- * Home modifications: ramps, railings, widen doorways

- **Expenses related to keeping caregivers socially engaged with others**

- * Books, games, puzzles, crafts
- * Classes
- * Group activities
- * Entertainment (movies, concerts) outside of the home or subscriptions for inside the home
- * Caregiver Counseling (not covered by health insurance)
- * Professional individual counseling
- * Group therapy
- * Therapeutic Services (not covered by health insurance) Speech, occupational, physical
- * Recreation, music, art
- * Massage, aromatherapy, pet, etc.

- **Education and Training (For the PWD and/or their caregiver)**

- * Individual instruction on daily care (bathing, eating, mobility, etc.)
- * Fees and expenses related to attending classes such as Powerful Tools for Caregivers or other events related to dementia and/or caregiving
- * Books or DVDs
- * Online Classes (such as Teepa Snow or Oshkosh Dementia classes)

- **Other goods and services necessary to maintain the individual as a member of the household**

- * Personal supplies (incontinence pads, briefs, OTC medications)
- * Emergency response system, Safe Return, GPS monitor
- * Yard fencing to protect against wandering
- * Most reasonable requests made by the caregiver to address a need identified using the Caregiver Needs Assessment

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CHICOG

FROM PAGE 12

been pretty frightening as Agnes still mentions the huge animal. “We carried our lunch in a pail. Mother shined up those pails. I think she liked that shiny thing.”

Their dog Gruff wasn’t cowed by him though. “Gruff would grab that bull’s nose. He was a wonderful dog. But he got old.”

Agnes and first husband, Earl Swearingen, were proprietors of the Buck and Wing, on Nancy Lake Road. This establishment, which is now Gruzy’s Italian Beef House and Pub, is on the west side of Pokegama Lake. Later Agnes, and second husband Jerome Jorgensen, owned the McClain Lake Tavern, a bar plus three cabins on the north end of McClain. The bar burned to the ground, but Agnes was surprised to learn that the trailer they lived in still sits on the property.

There were no children born to her, but she has plenty of nieces and nephews.

“That was a long time ago. I got to think back” replied Agnes when I asked her to reminisce about childhood Christmases. Sure, they’d go to the woods to cut a tree. They’d drag the tree home, but if it was too big they’d bring the horse to pull it. The family would string popcorn and cranberries for decoration. Yes, there were candles. One year when her next youngest brother, Gilbert, Jr., was small he reached out to grab a pretty, lighted candle. “We were sent to the cellar for potatoes, which were sliced and

used to suck the fire out of his hands. He never had scars.”

“We’d go to Uncle George Pierce’s home for Christmas dinner. We rode the eight miles in the horse-drawn sleigh.” Pa always carried a gun because wolves were known to attack the horses. Rocks were heated and wrapped to keep feet warm but “my feet would get so cold. ‘Get out and run behind,’ pa would command. But that never warmed me.”

“Ma made all of our clothes. Even fancy things. One year I had an organdy dress for Christmas. She made all of our Christmas presents, too.”

It is fascinating to visit with a woman who has gathered memories from an entire century. It is important to listen to those who have decades of living and stories they are still able to remember and relate.

IMPORTANT DECEMBER DATES

- Wednesday 12/11, 6pm, monthly Chicog meeting
- Wednesday 12/11, Namekagen Transit Service
- Thursday, 12/12, 11-1, Bibliodragon, town hall
- Tuesday, 12/18, 10:30-12, Books&Bread, Beaverbrook

Town Website: www.townofchicog.com

Thank you for reading Chicog-Then and Now

SOCIAL SECURITY

FROM PAGE 14

term care and home and auto insurance, costs have risen at a greater clip than inflation overall, putting a bite on those on a fixed income who rely on Social Security. Home insurance premiums increased by more than 20 percent from 2021 to 2023, according to Insurify, an online insurance marketplace. “It’s likely that premiums will continue to increase into 2025 as natural disasters grow more frequent and damaging,” says Betsy Stella, vice president of carrier management and operations at Insurify. “For many retirees, homeownership represented financial security, but rising home insurance is turning it into a substantial financial strain for some.”

COLA gains can also be offset in part by increases in premiums for Medicare Part B, which covers outpatient services such as doctor visits. For most Part B participants, premiums are deducted directly from their Social Security payments.

In their 2024 annual report, Medicare’s trustees projected the standard Part B premium that most Medicare beneficiaries pay — \$174.80 a month in 2024 — would rise to \$185 a month in 2025. The prediction proved correct in a Nov. 8 announcement that effectively reduces the Social Security COLA by \$10.20 a month for most recipients. “It may not feel like the cost of living is only at a 2.5 percent inflation rate, but that is where we are now,” says Lisa Featherngill, national director of wealth planning for Comerica Wealth Management.

“It’s also important to think about the fact that Social Security has built in increases from

the last three years,” she says. “We’re building on the compounding of those rates over time. It is factoring in where we’ve been, and the fact that some prices just haven’t gone down.”

A payroll tax of 12.4 percent on eligible wages almost entirely finances Social Security. Employers and employees each pay 6.2 percent. Self-employed people pay the full 12.4 percent.

The tax is applied to earnings up to a certain threshold, which will increase next year from \$168,600 to \$176,100. That revenue goes toward Social Security payments for current beneficiaries with any excess funneled into two trust funds — one for retirement and survivor benefits, the other for disability benefits.

The funds had combined cash reserves of nearly \$2.8 trillion at the end of 2023. But in recent years outlays for benefits have exceeded incoming tax revenue. That means the SSA has had to tap the trust fund reserves to fully cover scheduled benefits. In their most recent annual report, Social Security’s trustees project that the trust funds will run short by 2035 and the program will be able to pay only 83 percent of scheduled benefits unless Congress acts to stabilize the system’s finances.

“While this [cost-of-living] adjustment is important, there is more we must do to ensure older Americans can continue to count on Social Security,” Jenkins said. “AARP continues to call on Congress to take bipartisan action to strengthen Social Security and secure a long-term solution that Americans can rely on.”

This story, originally published Oct. 10, 2024, was updated with information on 2025 Medicare Part B premiums. Andy Markowitz is an AARP senior writer and editor covering Social Security and retirement. He is a former editor of the Prague Post and Baltimore City Paper.

72-HOUR DISASTER SUPPLY KIT**- FOOD and NUTRITION -**

1. Water - 1 gallon per person for at least 3 days
2. Food - 3 day supply of canned and non-perishable foods that could include: Canned meat, chicken, tuna, and sardines; Canned vegetables and beans; dried or canned fruit; crackers; granola or high protein bars; canned soups; ready-made pasta or instant rice; peanut butter and jam/jelly, and canned milk products to name a few
3. Aluminum foil/Ziploc Bags
4. Paper cups, plates, towels, utensils
5. Manual can opener

- PERSONAL COMFORT -

1. Blanket
2. Sleeping bag
3. Warm clothes
4. Sturdy shoes
5. Playing cards, books, puzzles

- EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT -

1. Flashlight
2. Battery operated radio/television
3. NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
4. Extra Batteries for flashlight & hearing aids
5. Whistle to signal for help

- PERSONAL SUPPLIES -

1. Hearing aids
2. Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap & hand sanitizer
3. Toilet paper
4. Baby wipes
5. Personal hygiene supplies

- OTHER NECESSITIES -

1. Mobile Phone - keep it fully charged
2. Candles & waterproof matches
3. Knife
4. Trash bags
5. Local maps
6. Duct tape
7. Extra set of keys for house & car
8. Cash, credit cards
9. Pet food, water, and supplies

- FIRST AID KIT & OTHER MEDICAL SUPPLIES -

1. Disposable gloves, bandages, antibiotic & hydrocortisone ointment
2. Medications for 3 days
3. Medical equipment such as oxygen, CPAP, nebulizer, cane, walker, wheelchair (identify all of your equipment with an ID tag)

Store all supplies in easy-to-identify, and easy to carry containers such as a backpack with ID tags. A tote or suitcase on wheels, with an extension handle, works well too.

Caregiving and the Holidays: FROM STRESS TO SUCCESS!

<https://www.caregiver.org/resource/caregiving-and-holidays-stress-success/>

For many caregivers the holiday season gives rise to stress, frustration and anger, instead of peace and good will. Caregivers may feel resentful towards other family members who they feel have not offered enough assistance. Managing care for someone who has a cognitive impairment may leave caregivers feeling that they will not be able to participate as fully as they would like in family gatherings. Already feeling overwhelmed with caregiving tasks, stressed-out caregivers may view traditional holiday preparations as more of a drain of precious energy than a joy.

Following are some suggestions that may help make the holidays more enjoyable for you and your loved ones. Keep in mind that the holidays can, in fact, provide unique opportunities to seek better communication, connection and support from family and friends.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNICATION

It's hard to know how much to communicate about a loved one's decline in cognitive functioning and personal care needs. Whom do you tell? How much do you tell?

Although it is understandable to have reservations about discussing a loved one's impairments, honest communication about the realities of the caregiving situation offers others the opportunity to respond with assistance. Sharing the truths of your situation may help reduce some of the feelings of isolation and lack of appreciation common in caregivers.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS AND A BRIEF NOTE

Some caregivers have had success in writing a brief note describing the person's condition and enclosing it in a holiday greeting card. This can be a nonthreatening way to inform distant or uninvolved relatives about the realities of the caregiving situation. If written in a tone that's not accusatory or guilt-inducing, family members may be more forthcoming with assistance or, at least, have a better understanding of the effort you are putting into providing care.

LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE?

It is common for caregivers to be disappointed with family members

who they feel are not "pulling their weight" in caregiving responsibilities. If this holds true for you, and your goal is to enjoy the holidays, you must decide how much and when to communicate this disappointment. Consider clearing the air before the holidays or perhaps resolve within yourself to put those feelings on hold, with the intention to discuss the matter after the holiday season passes. In the meantime, enjoy the holiday!

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR ENERGY LEVEL

Let family members know that your caregiving duties are keeping you very busy and that you only have so much energy for holiday preparation and hosting duties.

ACCEPT THE NEED TO ADAPT

Caregivers often have to adapt their traditional role or experience of the holidays. This may mean allowing another family member to host more time-intensive festivities. You may need to modify the amount of time away from home to match the comfort level of your impaired loved one. You may also have to choose which events to attend based on which would be the simplest, least exhausting and most enjoyable for the person for whom you provide care—and for you.

THE VISIT ROOM

Don't expect the person with cognitive impairment to be able to adapt to all situations; you may need to adapt the environment to their needs. See if you can arrange to have another room in the house designated as a quiet place for the impaired person. Many people with dementia find multiple conversations and background noise disturbing. To avoid this anxiety, the person may benefit from time in a quieter room with less stimulus where family members could take turns visiting with them.

SHARE YOUR WISH LIST

Respite: some caregivers ask for time off from caregiving duties as a gift for the holidays. This could mean another family member gives you a break. Sometimes asking for a Saturday off "in the next three months" is more accepted, as family members can then schedule it into their calendars. If this is not possible, perhaps they would consider paying for a home care

worker or a stay at a respite facility. Your FCA Family Consultant can help you locate these resources in your area.

Home repairs: Do light bulbs need changing, or grab bars need installation? That maddening pile of junk in the garage needs to go to the dump? Tasks such as these may be the perfect way for a family member to help out if providing personal care is too uncomfortable for them.

- Care for you! How about a gift certificate for a massage, facial or manicure? How about an opportunity to spend the day fishing or a walk in the outdoors?
- Book your homecare worker early! Speak with your home care worker or home care agency early about your holiday plans!
- Schedule one-on-one time
- While caregiving, it is easy to get caught up in all the tasks of personal care and homemaking chores. Make a point of setting some time aside this holiday season to enjoy the person you care for in a relaxed, one-on-one context. The best activities are those which take advantage of long-term memory—usually less impaired in people with dementia. Try looking through family photo albums or unpacking holiday decorations, which may stimulate memories.

REFLECT ON THE REWARDS

Reflecting on the rewards of caregiving can help maintain your self-esteem. It may feel very rewarding to know that you are fulfilling a vow or promise you have made to the person for whom you provide care. Your caregiving may be an expression of living up to your personal ideals or religious beliefs. You may also be experiencing a great deal of growth as you learn new skills and meet challenges in ways you never imagined possible.

A LITTLE THANK YOU GOES A LONG WAY

After the holidays, write a thank you note to family members or friends who spent time with your loved one. Emphasize the positive impact their visit or brief time spent with your loved one had on them. This may reinforce positive feelings from their visit and diminish any discomfort they experienced. They may then be more encouraged to visit again or be more supportive of your efforts.

For more information on support, training, and grant opportunities for Caregivers in Washburn County, please contact Patryce Garcia, Dementia Care Specialist/Caregiver Support Coordinator ADRC of Washburn County, 715-635-4477.

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“Baking” Memories

**SUBMITTED BY
CASSI FEIERTAG**

Administrative Assistant

Christmas seems to be a favorite among many for so many different reasons. Some like the joy that decorating their home brings, Christmas



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Cassi Feiertag

caroling for strangers, some enjoy a visit to the tree lot to find the perfect tree, for some it’s wrapping presents, and for others it’s taking a drive with your loved ones to look at the beautiful Christmas lights. For our family, it’s some of those things, but it is also the fun we share while baking Christmas cookies.

Every year, for as long back as I can remember

the ladies in my family have gotten together for a day of cookie dough, frosting, sprinkles, chocolate chips, flour fights, and whole lot of laughter. This tradition started at my grandmother’s house and through the years has moved from my parent’s home, to my home, and we have most recently landed at my sister’s home. It is a fun day that we can all spend together doing different tasks that will complete our cookie trays for Christmas Day. I am not much for the actual baking (I am not a huge fan of the kitchen) but I love the time we all spend together.

I don’t think there is a single member of our baking crew who doesn’t miss my grandma on our annual baking day. Growing up I can remember grandma always being so excited to bake the holiday pies. She would make flavors such as apple, banana cream, chocolate cream, pumpkin, pecan, and her highly coveted lemon

chiffon pie. Her kitchen always reminded me of a mini bakery with delicious aromas and her pie trays all stacked neatly on the counter. It brought her so much joy to bake pies for all of her loved ones.

We bake pies for Thanksgiving, but for Christmas, it’s all about cookies. We make chocolate chip, peanut butter with chocolate stars, no bake, m&m, peanut butter balls, almond bark pretzels, and (my personal favorite) my mom’s delicious sugar cookies. I love to sit at the table with my nieces and help frost and decorate (there may be some sampling that happens during this process too). I love that even though my nieces are grown now, they still look forward to our annual baking day. I guess you could the holiday season is a time for us to “bake” so many wonderful memories.

I hope this holiday season presents you with the opportunity to spend time with your loved ones and to create memories that last a lifetime. From my family to yours, Merry Christmas.

We would love it if you would share one of your favorite family recipes too.

Please submit a recipe by email (adrc@co.washburn.wi.us) by mail (ADRC of Washburn County PO Box 316, Shell Lake WI 54871 Attn: Cassi Feiertag)

or by dropping a copy off at one of our four Dining sites (Birchwood, Minong, Shell Lake, Spooner).

If you would like to add a special note or submit a photo letting us know why this recipe is special to you we would appreciate it. Please make sure recipes are in standard measurements (cups, teaspoons, etc.) We would love to feature your recipe with one of our lunches or in future publications. Please have recipes submitted no later than January 17th. Thank you!

THIS IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE FAMILY COOKIE RECIPES:

SUGAR CUTOUT COOKIES

- ¾ c butter
- 1 c sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 ½ c flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- Bake at 350°. Let cool before decorating.

POWDER SUGAR FROSTING

- 2 c powder sugar
- ¼ butter
- 2 – 3 tbs milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- Mix until smooth, add food coloring if desired.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

ADVOCACY CORNER

**SUBMITTED BY
JANET ZANDER**

Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator, MPA, CSW

Website: www.gwaar.org
Fb: //Facebook.com/WAAN.ACTION | X/tw.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Janet Zander

@ZanderWAAN
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.

REMINDER: ADVOCATE FOR ESSENTIAL OLDER AMERICANS ACT PROGRAMS: NEW EMAIL TOOL

We recently sent an email to all the individuals who registered for Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Day 2024 to offer them the option to use a new tool

to reach federal members of Congress while they are back in the state. This action alert is to raise awareness of the importance of fully funding the Older Americans Act.

If you were not on this mailing list, but would like to send an email, you can access this tool using the link: Use the tool to email your members of Congress: <https://oneclickpolitics.global.ssl.fastly.net/promo/625>

VIEW THE EMAIL:
greaterwisconsinagencyonagingresources.cmail20.com/t/i-e-fjlkddl-l-u/

If you use the new tool and would like to share your feedback, please contact janet.zander@gwaar.org.

**AARP WI VIRTUAL ADVOCACY SUMMIT
Wednesdays, December 4 & 11 | 9:00 a.m.**

Register today! AARP Wisconsin invites you to join its 2024 Virtual Advocacy Summit. The Legislative Advocacy Summit will be held virtually on Dec. 4 and Dec. 11. This will be an opportunity to review our work in 2024 and dive into our 2025 legislative priorities. Hear from local experts, national guest speakers, and legislative champions about the policies impacting Wisconsinites 50+.

There will be opportunities for participant input, so come prepared to participate in our legislative discussions. Register to receive all materials and links below. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Martin with any questions mshernandez@aarp.org

WED., DEC. 4, 9:00 A.M.
registration: https://events.aarp.org/event/SummitDay1_Advocacy/summary

WED., DEC. 11, 9:00 A.M.
registration: https://events.aarp.org/event/SummitDay2_Advocacy/summary

OKTOBERFEST AT THE SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER

SUBMITTED BY VALERIE VANDERBENT

Nutrition Director

On October 14, 2024, the Shell Lake Senior Center transformed into a lively Oktoberfest celebration. The tables were beautifully decorated, lively polka music was playing, and a tasty traditional German meal was prepared by Char, Shell Lake Site Manager. The evening started out with an appetizer of beer cheese soup served with a soft pretzel. The main entrée was Jägerschnitzel Chicken served with a delightfully rich mushroom gravy otopop, with a side of rice pilaf and sweet and sour red cabbage. The meal ended with a German apple cake. Thank you to all those who attended and helped make the evening special!

WHAT IS OKTOBERFEST?

The first Oktoberfest was celebrated at the wedding of Prince Ludwig and Princess Therese on October 12, 1810. If you know a bit of German, you'll remember that das Fest means "a celebration." And since the festivities took place in the month of October, it was decided that in subsequent years, the citizens of Munich would celebrate what would come to be known as Oktoberfest.

If you would like to join us for a fun evening out, be sure to check out the Dining at 5 events at the various centers in Washburn County. The monthly menus are curated by the talented Site Managers at each of the dining locations. Information about the Dining at 5 events can be found in the Focus, at the Dining Sites, or on our ADRC Facebook Page. Registration is required, as these events do tend to book up full. We hope to see you at one of our next events. Prost! (Cheers!)



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Washburn County Senior Nutrition Program WINTER WEATHER REMINDER

It's winter weather season again! Snow is upon us and I would like to remind everyone of the policy for Senior Dining and Home-Delivered Meals in the event of inclement weather. We value all of those who participate in our programs 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. There may be

instances where some areas of the county are experiencing inclement weather and others are not, so the general rule of thumb is: "If the school in your area is closed, so is the nutrition site." Please tune in to the local news channel or view the school district's website to check for school closures. Keep in mind that menus may have to be adjusted after any Nutrition Program closings so food does not get wasted.

We encourage everyone to fill their cupboard and freezer with their favorite "emergency" foods and keep a manual can opener handy in case of a power failure. For tips on preparing for an emergency, take a look at the 72-Hour

Disaster Supply Kit List.

As a reminder for those on the Home Delivered Meal Program – Driveways and steps must be cleared of snow and ice so that the driver is able to safely deliver your meal. If not cleared of snow or ice and it is dangerous, the driver may not be able to deliver your meal that day. If your driveway or road is not sufficiently plowed, call the Aging & Disability Resource Center at 715-635-4460 or your local meal site and tell us of your problem. This will save the volunteer driver a trip out on bad roads.

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